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**MARTYRDOM IN LATIN AMERICA:  
GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ CHALLENGES THE TRADITIONAL  
CONCEPT OF AUTHENTICATED MARTYRDOM IN  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**BY**

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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of martyrdom emerged in the pre-Constantinian Church. Many Christians believed that the martyrs, imitators of Jesus Christ in life and death, would be saved in imitation of his resurrection. The local communities where they died authenticated them. Bishops started authenticating them in the third and fourth centuries. Since 1234, the popes alone have authenticated them by means of canonization. Martyrs have continued to be the ideal Christians for nearly two thousand years due to their willingness to die on account of the faith. The first part of the thesis examines the evolution of the concept of authenticated martyrdom up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

Many Christians in contemporary Latin America have committed themselves to the process of liberation, convinced that widespread poverty contradicts the will of God. Many have been killed and thereafter popularly recognized as martyrs by the poor. Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, a Peruvian priest, formulated the methodology of the theology of liberation. In 1978, he began to designate as martyrs many Christians killed for their commitment to the poor, and he recognizes the popular proclamations made by the poor. He is disappointed that the Latin American bishops do not officially recognize the martyrs. Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom is examined in the second part of the thesis. The objective of the thesis is to ascertain what is Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom by examining its evolution in his writings; to judge how it is continuous with the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Church, and how his concept differs from it, thereby challenging it. His concept has much in common with the traditional concept, but his concept also differs from it because he has a particular view of who God is and what he demands of believers. He is convinced that God loves all people unconditionally, but particularly the poor. Therefore, Christians are martyrs if they are killed on account of the ways in which they demonstrated their love of the poor and of the God who favours them. Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom challenges the traditional concept in the Roman Catholic Church by creatively contributing a new dimension to it, based on his endeavours to make sense of the deaths suffered by Christians committed to the process of liberation in contemporary Latin America.

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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of martyrdom emerged in the pre-Constantinian Church when the survivors of repressions, perpetrated from time to time by Jewish and Roman mobs and authorities, endeavoured to comprehend the significance of the violent deaths suffered by their fellow Christians. They believed that the repressers were persecutors motivated by a hatred of the witness which their victims had borne to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the second half of the second century, Christians in Asia Minor began to employ the terms "martyrdom" and "martyr" in a specialized manner. "Martyrdom" now signified the deaths suffered on account of the witness given to the faith, and "martyr" referred to the Christians who had died for this reason. This specialized usage of the terms spread to the Christians living outside this region, and it was generally recognized by the fourth century. Because martyrs had lived and died in imitation of Jesus Christ, the Early Christians believed that they would also certainly be saved in imitation of Jesus' resurrection. In the pre-Constantinian Church, the martyrs were usually authenticated by the surviving members of the local communities where they had died. These people had often known the alleged martyrs throughout their lives, so they could judge whether they had truly lived and died in imitation of Jesus Christ. The "classical age of martyrs" ended with the promulgation of the Edict of Milan in 313. Thereafter, the martyr continued to be viewed, both popularly and by many writers, as the ideal Christian, and new martyrs have continued to be popularly proclaimed up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. The method employed for scrutinizing and authenticating specific, popularly recognized martyrs has changed over the past two thousand years. Bishops began to authenticate some popularly venerated martyrs and to reject others in the third and fourth centuries. Episcopal authentication was the norm until the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In the late tenth century, bishops began to appeal to the popes in order to confirm episcopal decisions. Since 1234, the popes alone have enjoyed the right to make the definitive judgment whether to authenticate the popularly venerated martyrs by means of canonization. For nearly two thousand years, martyrs have continued to be viewed as Christians who have given the ultimate witness of faith by allowing themselves to die on account of it.

In the 1960s, many Christians in Latin America began to commit themselves to the process of liberation. They were motivated by their conviction that the dehumanizing condition of poverty suffered by most of the population sharply contradicted the will of the biblical God. They were scandalized by the reality that poverty pervaded the continent, even though the overwhelming majority of Latin Americans, both rich and poor, identified themselves as Christians. Many decided to become poor themselves in order to protest against the scandalous poverty suffered by the masses. They also committed themselves to

endeavour to change the existing social order so that the interests of the poor would be considered preferentially.

Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino is a Peruvian priest, born in 1928. He has worked pastorally with university students and with the poor since 1960. He was one of the early Christian contributors to the process of liberation. His pastoral work and his participation in seminars and in conferences throughout the 1960s impelled him to reconsider what it means to be a Christian and a Church in contemporary Latin America. He formulated the methodology of the theology of liberation, and first presented it publicly in July, 1968. He is often designated as the "father" of the theology of liberation, even though many of the ideas which characterize this theology were already circulating among many Latin American Christians during the decade leading up to 1968. Gutiérrez's pre-theology of liberation writings demonstrate that he was already concerned with many of the same issues that have continued to preoccupy him in his theology of liberation writings. These early concerns include (1) how the Church should be present in the world so that it can most effectively achieve the objective of leading all Latin Americans, particularly the poor masses, to their salvation; (2) what the relation is between historical activities and salvation; (3) what is the biblical meaning of poverty; (4) what does it mean to love all people unconditionally. Many other Christians also reflected theologically on these issues. They wondered how they could contribute to the advancement of the poor masses in a continent which was in the midst of revolutionary change. The concrete actions which they engaged in varied, but they nevertheless consistently claimed that their only motive was to transform society so that that it would more closely approximate the fully realized Kingdom of God.

Many Christians were killed because of the ways how they demonstrated their commitment to the poor. A number of them were popularly recognized as Christian martyrs by the poor and by the Christians committed to the process of liberation. Gutiérrez discerned the persecution of the Church as early as 1969. One of the first priests murdered for his commitment to the poor was Gutiérrez's intimate friend, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto. He was killed in Recife, Brazil on May 26, 1969. At this time, Gutiérrez did not explicitly designate him or anyone else as martyrs. In fact, Gutiérrez did not employ the term "martyr" in his writings to refer to the Christians killed in contemporary Latin America until 1978. Since then, he has consistently designated them as martyrs. He has designated many Christians as martyrs, and he has supplied the names of approximately twenty of them, after judging that they had lived and died in accordance with the demands of the gospel. Gutiérrez personally authenticates the martyrdom of many Christians, and he recognizes the judgments made by other Christians, especially by the poor masses, as evidenced in their popular proclamations of martyrdom, yet has nonetheless sought the episcopal recognition of the contemporary martyrs by CELAM (Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano). He is deeply disappointed by the reluctance of the Latin American bishops to recognize and to reflect theologically on the significance of the contemporary martyrs.

The objective of the thesis is to ascertain what is Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom by examining its evolution in his writings; to judge how it is continuous with the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church, and how his concept differs from it, thereby challenging it. By the word "challenge", I mean how Gutiérrez, as a committed member of the Roman Catholic Church, creatively contributes to the traditional concept of martyrdom in the Church as he reflects on the significance of the violent deaths suffered by Christians committed to the process of liberation in contemporary Latin America. The thesis is divided into two parts in order to achieve this objective. In the first part, there are four chapters: (1) the concept of martyrdom that evolved in the pre-Constantinian Church; (2) the concept of martyrdom that developed in the Church from the fourth century to the fifteenth century; (3) the basic elements of every true example of martyrdom and the changes in the process of canonization concerning the authentication of martyrs from the sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II; (4) the continuing importance of the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints in the Roman Catholic Church from the sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. In the second part, there are also four chapters. The evolution of Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom is examined in the first three chapters by dividing his writings into three periods: (1) his pre-theology of liberation writings (pre-July, 1968); (2) his writings between July, 1968 and 1982; (3) his writings between 1983 and 1995. Chapter eight, the final chapter of the thesis, is the evaluation of Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom based on the findings reported in chapters one to four. This chapter demonstrates that Gutiérrez's concept has much in common with the traditional concept in the Roman Catholic Church, but his concept also differs from it because he has a particular view of who God is and what God demands of all believers. Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom ultimately emerges from his conviction that the biblical God is a God of life who loves all people unconditionally, but who especially favours the poor and the suffering. From Gutiérrez's perspective, God demands that all believers do whatever they can to change people, by encouraging their conversion, and to transform the existing social order so that it more closely approximates the fully realized Kingdom of God, which will only be brought about when Jesus Christ returns at the end of history. Their motive should be their unconditional love of all people and of the God who favours the poor. Therefore Christians are martyrs if they are killed on account of the ways how they have demonstrated their love of the poor.

A final clarification should be made about the usage of specific terms in the thesis. Throughout the present study, "Church" refers to the Roman Catholic Church and to the pre-Constantinian Church (both in the East and in the West) from which it emerged. The expression "Early Church" is employed as a synonym of the pre-Constantinian Church, and "Early Christians" signifies the Christians who belonged to the pre-Constantinian Church. Because the specific Church considered is the Roman Catholic Church, "Christians" usually refers to the members of the Roman Catholic Church and to the members of the pre-Constantinian Church, except when Gustavo Gutiérrez speaks more generally about Roman Catholics and

other Christians as constituting one group. While Gutiérrez is clearly ecumenically-minded, he nevertheless usually means Roman Catholics when he speaks of Christians, particularly when he designates people as Christian martyrs. This issue is discussed in chapters seven and eight.

**PART ONE**  
**THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF MARTYRDOM FROM**  
**THE PRE-CONSTANTINIAN CHURCH TO THE PONTIFICATE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II**

## CHAPTER 1

### THE CONCEPT OF MARTYRDOM IN THE PRE-CONSTANTINIAN CHURCH

During the period of nearly three hundred years before the freedom of worship was guaranteed with the issue of a rescript by Licinius (d.325 C.E.; emperor 308-324 C.E.) at Nicomedia on June 13, 313 C.E. (which had probably resulted from Licinius' meeting with Constantine at Milan during the previous February), Christians were often, but not constantly, repressed and killed by Jewish and Roman mobs and authorities.<sup>1</sup> The reasons for perpetrating these repressions and murders were heterogeneous. Christians, however, almost uniformly believed that they were singled out to suffer and die on account of the witness which they had borne to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The objective of this chapter is to examine briefly the persecutions suffered by the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church, the principal elements that, together, constituted the evolving concept of martyrdom, and the characteristics of what Christians judged to be examples of true martyrdom.

Christians originally applied the term "μάρτυς" (i.e., "witness") to people who believed that Jesus of Nazareth had been resurrected from the dead. This is evident in the New Testament passage (Acts of the Apostles 6:8-8:2) that recounts the arrest and stoning of Stephen (d.35 C.E.), who is traditionally considered to be the first Christian martyr. In this episode, the author does not utilize the term "martyr" specifically because Stephen had been killed. In fact, the technical use of the term is not employed at all in the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> The witness which Stephen had borne up to the point of death, nevertheless, made a strong

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<sup>1</sup>A translation of Licinius' letter is available in S.A. Cook et al., eds., The Imperial Crisis and Recovery A.D.193-324, vol. 12 of The Cambridge Ancient History (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1939; repr., Cambridge, England: University Press, 1961), 689-690. See also Lactantius, De Mortibus Persecutorum 48, trans. and ed. J.L.Creed (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1984), 69-73, 121-123; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 10.5, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1955), 268-272; W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus (New York: New York University Press, 1967), 389-390. Constantine was born c.274/288 C.E. and died 337 C.E. He was the western emperor since 312 C.E., and the sole emperor 324-337 C.E. The designations "C.E." and "B.C.E." are used in chapter one. Thereafter, they are not used because all dates are from the Common Era.

<sup>2</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 66. See also Hippolyte Delehaye, Les origines du culte des martyrs, 2d rev. ed. (Brussels, Belgium: Société des Bollandistes, 1933), 22; Hippolyte Delehaye, Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints dans l'antiquité (Brussels, Belgium: Société des Bollandistes, 1927), 74-79; Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 2d rev. and expanded ed. (Brussels, Belgium: Palais des Académies, 1964), 238-239; B. de Gaiffier, "Réflexions sur les origines du culte des martyrs," La Maison Dieu 52 (1957): 23; Celestino Noce, Il martirio: Testimonianza e spiritualità nei primi secoli



impression on the Christians of the Early Church. Indeed, they judged that his faith must have been particularly firm and, therefore, worth imitating because he had even been willing to die on account of it. In subsequent years, many Christians recalled Stephen's steadfastness in the face of certain death as a clear and memorable demonstration of what it means to have a genuine faith. Stephen therefore became the prototype for all future Christians who did not renounce their faith in similar circumstances. In fact, the report of his experiences immediately before being stoned by a group of Jews (after undergoing a trial administered by a council of the Sanhedrin)<sup>3</sup> provided some conditions for testing the veracity of future claims that the given Christians had similarly remained true to their proclamation of faith when confronted by certain death: Stephen was described as being filled by the Holy Spirit; he had a vision of heaven; and he forgave his persecutors.<sup>4</sup> Eusebius of Caesarea (c.260-c.340 C.E.) supplies an example of the degree to which many Christians valued the model provided by Stephen regarding how they should act if they were ever confronted by the possibility of suffering grievously and of even dying on account of their faith. According to Eusebius, in the late second century, the church of Lyons and Vienne customarily called Stephen the "perfect martyr."<sup>5</sup> The first known occasion when the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" were explicitly employed in order to refer to the person killed and the actual death on account of the faith was in the letter, sent by the Christian community at Smyrna to the community at Philomelion, in which they

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<sup>3</sup>The Sanhedrin was the "supreme council and highest court of justice at Jerusalem in [New Testament] times....[It] dealt with the religious problems of the whole Jewish world, collected taxes, and acted as a civil court for Jerusalem." "Sanhedrin," The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F.L. Cross (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1957), 1215. Sherwin-White has examined the vital question of whether the Sanhedrin had the authority to exact the capital punishment of Stephen and later, of James the brother of Jesus. He suggests that the Sanhedrin probably did not have jurisdiction over capital punishment, with the exception of violators of the Temple. A.N. Sherwin-White, Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1963), 38-40.

<sup>4</sup>"They were infuriated when they heard this, and ground their teeth at him. But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at God's right hand. 'Look! I can see heaven thrown open,' he said, 'and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God.' All the members of the council shouted out and stopped their ears with their hands; then they made a concerted rush at him, thrust him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses put down their clothes at the feet of a young man called Saul. As they were stoning him, Stephen said in invocation, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and said aloud, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' And with these words he fell asleep. Saul approved of the killing. That day a bitter persecution started against the church in Jerusalem, and everyone except the apostles scattered to the country districts of Judea and Samaria. There were some devout people, however, who buried Stephen and made great mourning for him. Saul then began to do great harm to the church; he went from house to house arresting both men and women and sending them to prison." (Acts of the Apostles 7:54-8:3). For a study of the martyrdom of Stephen, see Victor Saxer, "La figura del santo nell'Antichità cristiana," in Santità e agiografia. Atti dell'VIII Congresso di Terni, ed. Gian Domenico Gordini (Genoa, Italy: Casa Editrice Marietti, 1991), 27.

<sup>5</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.2, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press), 288.

recounted the events related to the death of their bishop, Polycarp.<sup>6</sup> The date usually assigned for this death is February 23, 167.<sup>7</sup> The fact that the special meaning of these terms did not have to be explained in the letter suggests that the terms were probably already being used in this way for some time, at least in Asia Minor. (This letter is also the earliest surviving document in which martyrdom is the principal theme of theological reflection.)<sup>8</sup> Before this time, some elements of the concept of martyrdom were already evident in various Christian writings (for example in The Shepherd of Hermas, which was written in Rome around 140 to 150 C.E.), even though the specialized use of the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" had not yet emerged.<sup>9</sup> It is also important to recognize that, even after 167, the terms were sometimes still utilized in order to refer to Christians who had not yet died, but who had merely borne witness to the resurrection of Jesus. In some other writings, even when an actual death had not occurred, the idea was nevertheless present that the Christians who were designated as martyrs, at least, had suffered greatly on account of their faith. The continued use of the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" for Christians who had not died violently was more common in the communities which were distant from Asia Minor.

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<sup>6</sup>Theofried Baumeister, "Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity," trans. Robert Nowell, Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 3; Hippolyte Delehaye, Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints dans l'antiquité, 79-80; Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 241-242; Celestino Noce, Il martirio, 21. See also Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi. Concetto teologico-giuridico, morte psicologica e martirio bianco, procedura antica e moderna, riforma paolina, fermenti per ulteriori aggiornamenti (Rome, Italy: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1979), 17-21.

<sup>7</sup>There is considerable scholarly discussion about the date of Polycarp's trial and death. Lake, Cross, and Quasten, among others, assign the early date of 155/156 C.E., while Musurillo, Frend, and Brind'Amour favour the later date. The issue is centered around whether the "great sabbath" which is referred to fell on a Saturday or on a Sunday. See Kirsopp Lake, ed. of introduction to Polycarp, The Epistle to the Philippians, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 280; F.L. Cross, The Early Christian Fathers (London, England: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1960), 19; Johannes Quasten, The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1 of Patrology, 77; Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, xiii; W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 199; Pierre Brind'Amour, "La date du martyre de Saint Polycarpe (Le 23 février 167)," Analecta Bollandiana 98 (1980): 456-462. See also Henri Grégoire, "La véritable date du martyre de S. Polycarpe (23 février 177) et le 'Corpus Polycarpianum'," Analecta Bollandiana 69 (1951): 1-38; Henri-Irénée Marrou, "La date du martyre de S. Polycarpe," Analecta Bollandiana 71 (1953): 5-20; Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 108-114; Giuliana Lanata, Gli atti dei martiri come documento processuali (Milan, Italy: Giuffrè, 1973), 99-108.

<sup>8</sup>Theofried Baumeister, "Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity," trans. Robert Nowell, Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 5.

<sup>9</sup>Theofried Baumeister, "Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity," trans. Robert Nowell, Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 3. See also Hippolyte Delehaye, Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints dans l'antiquité, 82-83.

### A. The Persecutions of Christians

It would be a serious misrepresentation of the facts to view the entire period leading up to the reign of Emperor Constantine as one in which Romans were constantly persecuting the majority of Christians throughout the Roman Empire. The absence of any mention of Christians in the extant Roman records during the first thirty years subsequent to the execution of Jesus of Nazareth suggests that the Roman authorities did not distinguish between Christians and Jews. This means that Romans considered Christians to be members of the collective Jewish people. As Jews, many of the first Christians belonged to an officially recognized ancient religion with their own nameless god. The aforementioned death of Stephen (approximately 35 C.E.) and the persecution of Christians which apparently followed it should therefore be seen as a local manifestation of disagreement and division between Christians and Jews. Roman authorities did not play a major role in this conflict.<sup>10</sup> Even when Roman authorities began to demonstrate that they were aware of the existence of Christians, they often treated them as if they simply belonged to one more sect of Judaism. For example, Tacitus (c.55-120 C.E.) expressly refers to Christians as being members of a Jewish sect, rather than a distinct religion.<sup>11</sup>

Christians entered into Roman history when Emperor Nero blamed them for setting the fire that burned much of Rome in July, 64 C.E., and ordered their punishment on account of this. Even though Tacitus had little sympathy for Christians as a group, in The Annals, he expresses his doubt that they were truly responsible for the conflagration.<sup>12</sup> He suggests that Nero had used them as a scapegoat in order to

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<sup>10</sup>"Persecution in the first three decades after the Crucifixion was fratricidal clash between rival groups of Jews, and this element continued to be represented strongly until at least the end of the second century. The Roman authorities were only indirectly concerned." W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 116. Similarly, writing late in the first century, Clement of Rome describes the early persecutions of Christians (in this case, of Peter and Paul) by Jews as being precipitated "through jealousy and envy." Frend sees this as a reinforcement of his aforesaid assertion that conflict was within the context of Judaism. W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 125; Clement of Rome, The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, 5.2, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1914), 17.

<sup>11</sup>Tacitus, The Annals 15.44, trans. John Jackson, in Tacitus. The Histories. The Annals, vol. 4 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1937, repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951), 283. Similarly, if the reference to "Chrestus" signifies Jesus Christ, as does "Christus" in Tacitus' text, then Suetonius (c. 69-after 122) considers Christians to be the members of a Jewish sect. Suetonius, The Deified Claudius 25.4, in The Lives of the Caesars, trans. J.C. Rolfe, in Suetonius, vol. 2 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1930), 53.

<sup>12</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 123. Ronald Syme suggests that Tacitus probably began writing The Annals in 115 C.E. and may have finished writing it as late as 123 C.E. Ronald Syme, Tacitus, vol. 2 (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1958), 473. Sherwin-White proposes that the correspondence between Pliny and Emperor Trajan about Christians in Bithynia (probably 112 C.E.), predate Tacitus' relation of the Neronian persecution by "five or more years." A.N. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny: a Historical and Social Commentary (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1966), 693. See also H. Leclercq, Les temps néroniens et le deuxième siècle, vol. 1 of Les martyrs. Recueil de pièces

quash a rumour that he was the person who had ordered the fire, perhaps in order to clear an area of the city for the implementation of an urban replanning project. It was relatively simple for Nero to evade such a suspicion by accusing a group whom the populace generally mistrusted.<sup>13</sup> This fire lasted six days, thereby leaving many citizens homeless. Tacitus portrays the popular enmity towards Christians as one which was rooted in the widely held suspicions, first, that Christians customarily practised scandalous rituals and, second, that they hated all people outside of their group. Tacitus believes that, rather than incendiarism, it was the charge of Christian misanthropy—characterized, according to popular allegations, by their superstitious beliefs and by their malevolent acts—which lay behind their indictment and the ferocity with which the ambiguous "vast numbers" of Christians were punished. According to Tacitus, many Christians were thrown to vicious dogs, crucified, and burned like candles in order to illuminate the night.<sup>14</sup> He notes that some Roman citizens were even moved to pity because they believed that the members of this unquestionably guilty party were being punished in an unjustly severe manner.<sup>15</sup> Notably absent among these punishments were sacrifice tests or the option for Christians to renounce publicly their faith. Peter the apostle may have been one of the victims of this persecution.<sup>16</sup> Suetonius, starting his biography of Nero before 121 C.E. and completing it prior to 130 C.E.,<sup>17</sup> describes Christians as a "class of men given to a new and mischievous superstition," who were punished during Nero's reign.<sup>18</sup> Suetonius does not explain

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authentiques sur les martyrs depuis les origines du christianisme jusqu'au XXe siècle (Paris, France: H. Oudin, Libraire-Editeur, 1902), xxxvii-xxxix, 30-36; Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 2d rev. and expanded ed. (Brussels, Belgium: Palais des Académies, 1964), 23, 104-105; Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les quatre premiers siècles, Bibliothèque d'Histoire du Christianisme, no. 30 (Paris, France: Desclée, 1992), 8-17.

<sup>13</sup>K.R. Bradley, Suetonius' Life of Nero: An Historical Commentary (Brussels, Belgium: Revue D'Études Latines, 1978), 100.

<sup>14</sup>A.N. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny, 780-781.

<sup>15</sup>Tacitus, The Annals 15.44, 282-285.

<sup>16</sup>Clement of Rome, First Epistle 5.4-7, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 17. Sulpicius Severus also reported the tradition that Peter and Paul had been martyred during the time of Nero. Dana Carleton Munro and Edith Bramhall, eds., Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History, vol. 4 (Philadelphia, Penn.: University of Philadelphia Press, 1897, repr., New York: AMS Press, 1971), 5-6. See also Johannes Quasten, ed., The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1 of Patrology (Utrecht-Brussels: Spectrum Publishers, 1950), 44-45.

<sup>17</sup>Suetonius, Nero, ed. B.H. Warmington (Bedminster, Great Britain: Bristol Classical Press, 1977), 3-4.

<sup>18</sup>Suetonius, Nero 16.2, in The Lives of the Caesars 6, trans. J.C. Rolfe, in Suetonius, vol. 2 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1930), 111.

why the Christians were punished, but it may have been because Nero "despised all cults."<sup>19</sup> He also does not specify the nature of the punishment. Furthermore, contrary to Tacitus' account, Suetonius certainly does not link Christians to the famous fire.<sup>20</sup> Whatever may have occasioned this Neronian persecution of Christians, it is important to recognize that it was probably limited to the city of Rome. While Nero's accusation of incendiarism against Christians was not universally believed, the persecution itself afforded a precedent for future activities--both popular and official ones--against this mysterious new group.<sup>21</sup>

It is important to recognize that the Romans customarily saw their gods as their protectors, so they maintained appropriate traditional rites in order to help reinforce national unity. The concept of two types of religions, some which were permitted and others which were illicit, developed among the Romans, especially as the Empire absorbed a large number of diverse peoples, each with its own deities and rituals. Some local deities from the provinces were identified with Roman ones, whereas others remained distinct and were recognized as having a legitimate immemorial tradition. As was already noted, the God of the Jews was included among the legitimate deities. Thus "a 'religio' was 'licita' for a particular group" (either a tribe or a national group), and certain traditional practices were permitted, insofar as "the rites were not offensive to the Roman people or their gods."<sup>22</sup> Indeed, Cicero (c.106-43 B.C.E.), writing sometime between 52 and 44 B.C.E., observes that new and alien gods were not supposed to be worshipped unless the Roman state had expressly recognized them.<sup>23</sup> The libertinism of the Bacchanals was especially feared, and Druids and Christians were similarly shunned. Christianity was not authorized as a distinct religion according to Roman law.<sup>24</sup> Since Christians did not belong to an officially recognized religion, they were supposed to worship the Roman gods and, thereby, show their allegiance to the Roman state.

Before the third century, the persecutions of Christians were local events involving either mobs or the combination of private prosecutions and of the orders made by regional governors to inflict capital punishment. The popular suspicion of Christians, who were supposedly the practitioners of strange new rites, was reinforced as it became increasingly clear to Roman authorities that Christians were participants in a new and foreign cult, which was now largely divorced from its roots in the authorized religion of Judaism.

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<sup>19</sup>Suetonius, Nero 56, 185.

<sup>20</sup>Suetonius, Nero 38, 155-157.

<sup>21</sup>M.P. Charlesworth, The Roman Empire (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1968), 100-101.

<sup>22</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 79.

<sup>23</sup>Cicero. De Legibus 2.8, trans. Clinton Walker Keyes, in De Re Publica. De Legibus (London, England: William Heinemann, 1928, repr., London, England: William Heinemann, 1966), 393-395.

<sup>24</sup>Donald W. Riddle, The Martyrs: A Study in Social Control (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1931), 8-9.

Prior to the third century, the relatively small Christian population was the object of periodic local persecutions engendered by mobs who accused Christians of cannibalism, incest and orgies, black magic, and of causing natural disasters.<sup>25</sup> These were the characteristics of a false and perverse religion ("prava religio"). The alleged magic was particularly feared because it was perceived as a threat to public order, and as a force which polluted the Roman gods.<sup>26</sup> Non-Christians were sometimes willing to participate in these periodic local persecutions because these negative impressions of Christians were widely held. In fact, there seems to be little disagreement among scholars regarding the perceptions that persecuting mobs had of Christians. More controversial, however, are the specific charges and laws that could be officially brought against Christians, during the period prior to the third century, before governors would punish them. Sherwin-White and Frend have summarized the literature corresponding to this issue.<sup>27</sup> Because governors alone had the right to pronounce that capital punishment was to be inflicted, the important question is the nature of the crime for which Christians could be held accountable. A general law prohibiting the practice of Christianity probably did not exist. Christians were not rounded up as a regular part of police activity to feed an inquisitorial process, except perhaps during the Neronian persecution, which had been notably limited in locale and duration. Instead, charges against Christians were introduced by private prosecutors, that is, via "delation": making an accusation or informing privately against an individual.<sup>28</sup> The crux of the scholarly controversy is whether the charge against Christians was, as Tertullian (writing about 197 or 198 C.E.) suggests,<sup>29</sup> the persistent avowal of "the Name" (i.e., declaring oneself a Christian) or, contrariwise, the practice of immoral activities which were deemed as threats to the state (e.g., magic, incest,

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<sup>25</sup>Herbert B. Workman, Persecutions in the Early Church (London, England: C.H. Kelly: 1906; repr., Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1980), 50, 64; Henry C. Boren, Roman Society: A Social, Economic and Cultural History (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Company, 1979), 297. Writing about the end of the second century or the beginning of the third century, Minucius Felix places the popular impressions that Christians, as members of a depraved religion, engage in cannibalism, incest and other secret activities, into the mouth of the Christian Octavius' pagan dialogic partner, Caecilius Natalis. See Marcus Minucius Felix, The Octavius 9.1-6, trans. and ed. G.W. Clarke, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 39 (New York: Newman Press, 1974), 64-65.

<sup>26</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 83.

<sup>27</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 83; A.N. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny, 772-787; A.N. Sherwin-White, Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament, 1-47. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 155-167.

<sup>28</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 128.

<sup>29</sup>Tertullian (c. 160-c. 220) believes that Christians are always condemned for professing "the Name" (of Jesus Christ) rather than for committing despicable acts; he wonders why they are not tortured to confess their suspected practice of incest and murdering babies. Tertullian, The Apology 4.11, trans. T.R. Glover (London, England: William Heinemann, 1953), 27.

and cannibalism).<sup>30</sup> Individuals sometimes initiated prosecution processes against specific Christians because they suspected them of pronouncing illegal oaths, conspiring against Rome, engaging in shameful acts, and rejecting the worship of the long acknowledged gods, and thereby rejecting the community as well. It was up to the accused Christians to prove that these charges were incorrect. A general edict specifically aimed at undermining Christian worship was therefore unnecessary. The local persecutions in the period before the third century thus were not indicative of governors choosing to implement an Empire-wide anti-Christian edict on a regional basis.

The potential for conflicts between Christians and Roman authorities was significantly increased in 89 C.E., when Emperor Domitian began to refer to himself as "Our Master and our God" both in conversation and in letters. Around the same time, he introduced the obligatory oath to his "imperial genius" and the requirements of a libation and of lighting incense before his statue.<sup>31</sup> These innovations established a precedent for future emperors to make similar demands on all the people in the Empire, including Christians.

Around 112 C.E., Pliny the Younger (61/62-113 C.E.), as the governor of Bithynia, exchanged letters with Emperor Trajan (53-117 C.E.; emperor 98-117 C.E.) concerning the appropriate punishment that the official, who was previously inexperienced with Christians, should exact from some members of this troublesome group who had recently been privately delated.<sup>32</sup> In the first letter, Pliny expresses his uncertainty about whether Christians should be punished for "the name" (the charge of 'accusatio nominis': when membership in a group has been banned either by imperial or proconsular edict because detestable

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<sup>30</sup>Tertullian indicates his belief that an "edict of persecution" had continued against Christians ever since the Neronian persecution that had never been revoked; it was only nullified at times by emperors such as Trajan, Hadrian, Vespasian and Marcus Aurelian either by establishing protective counterlaws or by ignoring the existing edict. Tertullian, Apology, trans. Emily Joseph Daly, in Tertullian: Apologetic Works and Minucius Felix: Octavius, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 10 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1950), 21-22; Tertullian, Apology, trans. S. Thelwall, The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1963), 21-22.

<sup>31</sup>Suetonius, Domitian 13.2, in The Lives of the Caesars 8, trans. J.C. Rolfe (London: William Heinemann, 1930), 367-369. Martial refers to the passage of an edict by "our master and god." Martial, Epigrams 5.8, trans. Walter C.A. Kerr (London, England: William Heinemann, 1947), 301. Domitian was born 51 C.E., he died 96 C.E., and he was emperor 81-96 C.E.

<sup>32</sup>A.N. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny, 81; Pliny, Letters 10.96-97, trans. Betty Radice, in Letters and Panegyrics, vol. 2 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1919), 285-293. See also H. Leclercq, Les temps néroniens et le deuxième siècle, 57-62; Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 23-25; Pierre Allard, Dix leçons sur le martyre, 5th rev. and corrected ed. (Paris, France: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1913), 88-90; Celestino Noce, Il martirio, 24-29; Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les premiers quatre siècles, 20-26; Giuliana Lanata, Gli atti dei martiri come documenti processuali, 58-60.

rites are presumed to take place) or for the practice of specific, abhorrent acts (the charge of 'flagitia').<sup>33</sup> Pliny decided, first, to send the accused citizens to Rome in order to stand trial there and, second, to offer noncitizen defendants three opportunities to have their accusation dismissed by publicly denying their participation in the Christian cult. They were supposed to invoke the gods, to offer wine and incense to Trajan's statue, and to deride Jesus Christ's name before they would be acquitted. Trajan knew enough about Christians to state that he did not anticipate compliance by true members of the cult.<sup>34</sup> The Christians were to be executed for their "stubbornness and unshakeable obstinacy,"<sup>35</sup> so that he could persuade everyone else present to return to the traditional ways of worship.<sup>36</sup> Trajan sent a rescript which prohibited anonymous accusations and police manhunts of suspected Christians.<sup>37</sup> Private prosecution was thus recognized as the proper procedure for initiating a prosecution. Trajan also guaranteed a full pardon for anyone who publicly renounced Jesus Christ and who invoked the Roman gods.<sup>38</sup> The idea that Christians should allow themselves to die rather than to commit idolatry developed in such a context, as well as in akin situations thereafter, especially when edicts were promulgated between the mid-third century and the early fourth century, ordering sacrifices to the gods.

During the reign of Marcus Aurelius (121-180 C.E.; emperor 161-180 C.E.), "atheism" was the major charge brought against Christians in Asia, after a new rescript had been sent there which considerably diminished the delator's exposure to risk. This risk had been a significant part of Trajan's rescript.<sup>39</sup> Polycarp, charged with atheism, was tried and executed during this time.<sup>40</sup> Eusebius is the source for information concerning another example of a local persecution, this one limited to two provincial communities during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The persecution was recounted in an encyclical letter written by surviving members of the Christian communities of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul, and sent to the

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<sup>33</sup>A.N. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny, 696.

<sup>34</sup>Pliny, Letters 10.96.6, 289.

<sup>35</sup>Pliny, Letters 10.96.3-4, 287.

<sup>36</sup>Pliny, Letters 10.96.10, 291.

<sup>37</sup>Pliny, Letters 10.97.2, 291-293.

<sup>38</sup>Pliny, Letters 10.96-97, 285-293.

<sup>39</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 177, 197. See also Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les quatre premiers siècles, 32-45.

<sup>40</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 4.15, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 235-237; The Martyrdom of Polycarp 9, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 9. See also H. Leclercq, Les temps néroniens et le deuxième siècle, 65-76; Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 26-27.



churches in Asia and Phrygia.<sup>41</sup> This letter relates an incident that probably occurred in the summer of 177 C.E. The text reports that a mob of non-Christians (who constituted the majority of the local population) dragged some Christians before an official, who then incarcerated them. They were tried by the governor when he arrived in the community. He interrogated the suspected persons in regard to whether they were in fact Christians. Ten Christians originally denied their faith. Those who publicly acknowledged their faith were accused of "Oedipian marriages and dinners in the manner of Thyestes," that is, they were accused of incest and cannibalism, especially of eating babies.<sup>42</sup> This suggests that the primary charges at the trial were the popularly imagined unsavory acts.<sup>43</sup> Most of the indicted Christians died in prison, including Pothinus, the ninety-year-old bishop of Lyons, who perished after suffering extensive tortures. The tortures were applied to persuade the formal recantation of a faith that was viewed as leading to wayward behaviour. The few Christians who were still alive in prison were then tortured until they, too, died. Their steadfastness up to the point of death inspired some of the lapsed members, like Biblis, to reavow their faith. The most celebrated characters of this passion account are the two who were killed last: Ponticus, a fifteen-year-old boy, and Blandina, a servant.<sup>44</sup>

In 202 C.E., Emperor Septimus Severus (146-211 C.E.; emperor 193-211 C.E.) promulgated an edict which prohibited conversions to Judaism and to Christianity. The edict, directed toward people living in the urban centres of the entire Empire, precipitated the first general persecution of Christians. The

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<sup>41</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 272-287. See also Jean Colin, L'Empire des Antonins et les martyrs gaulois de 177 (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 1964); Giuliana Lanata, Gli atti dei martiri come documenti processuali, 125-136; Cardinal Renaud, "Le 18e centenaire des martyrs de Lyon," La Documentation Catholique no. 1723 (3 July 1977): 623-624; Les martyrs de Lyon (177). Lyon 20-23 Septembre 1977, Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, no. 575 (Paris, France: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1978).

<sup>42</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.1, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 276. See also Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1972), 67. These common charges were derived from the popular misconception of various Christian practices: the "kiss of peace", the baptism of children, the avowed consumption of Jesus Christ's body and blood, and their secrecy in performing these activities.

<sup>43</sup>During the same period, this charge was levelled against Christians in many parts of the Empire: at least, in Antioch, Rome, Asia Minor, Carthage. W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 423-424, n.33.

<sup>44</sup>For studies of Blandina, see William H.C. Frend, "Blandina and perpetua: Two Early Christian Heroines," in Les martyrs de Lyon (177), 166-177; Clementina Mazzucco, "Figure di donne cristiane: la martire," in Atti del II Convegno Nazionale de Studi su la Donna nel Mondo Antico. Torino 18-19-20 aprile 1988, ed. Renato Uglione (Turin, Italy: CELID Editrice, 1989), 167-195.

punishments included tortures, executions, and the placement of chaste women into brothels.<sup>45</sup> Most victims of this first general persecution were converts. They included Perpetua and Felicitas in Carthage, probably in 203 C.E.,<sup>46</sup> and Origen's father, Leonides, in Alexandria.<sup>47</sup>

In 235 C.E. Maximin Thrax (d.238 C.E.; emperor 235-238 C.E.) initiated a short-lived persecution that focused on executing the leaders of the Church.<sup>48</sup> This persecution occasioned Origen's Exhortation to Martyrdom.<sup>49</sup> The specific objective of this measure is unclear because it does not seem that the practice of Christian worship was prohibited. In fact, some Christian leaders were banished, while others were apparently simply ignored.<sup>50</sup>

Emperor Decius (c.201-251 C.E.; emperor 249-251 C.E.) promulgated an edict or a set of edicts that gave rise to a general persecution against Christians. The edict of 249 C.E., like that of Maximin, concentrated on curtailing the activities of leaders. In 250, Pope Fabian (pope since 236 C.E.) was arrested, examined, and judged by Maximin, and then he was executed. Babylas, the bishop of Antioch, was killed a few days later.<sup>51</sup> In 250, as well, an edict was promulgated which demanded that all free men, women, and children in the Empire were to express publicly their allegiance to it and their desire for its preservation by sacrificing to the gods, by pouring a libation, and by eating sacrificial meat. Failure to do these actions would lead to capital punishment. No detailed passion accounts have been clearly established as dating from

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<sup>45</sup>For example, Eusebius relates the story of Potamiaena, a virgin, who was told that she would be given to the soldiers for "bodily abuse". Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.5, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 13. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 33-36; Pierre Allard, Dix leçons sur le martyre, 97-98. Maraval questions whether such an edict really existed. See Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les premiers quatre siècles, 55-61.

<sup>46</sup>Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, 105-131. See also Giuliana Lanata, Gli atti dei martiri come documenti processuali, 158-161; James W. Halporn, Passio Sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis, Bryn Mawr Latin Commentaries (Bryn Mawr, Penn.: Bryn Mawr College, 1984); Clementina Mazzucco, "Figure di donne cristiane: la martire," in Atti del II Convegno Nazionale di Studi su la Donna nel Mondo Antico, ed. Renato Uglione, 167-195; Mary R. Lefkowitz, "The Motivations for St. Perpetua's Martyrdom," Journal of the American Academy of Religion 44 (March 1976): 417-421; Rebecca Lyman, "Perpetua: A Christian Quest for Self," Journal of Women and Religion 8 (Winter 1989): 26-33.

<sup>47</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 7.

<sup>48</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.28, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 52-53. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 39-40, 122-123; Pierre Allard, Dix leçons sur le martyre, 98-99; Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les premiers quatre siècles, 63.

<sup>49</sup>Johannes Quasten, The Ante-Nicene Literature After Irenaeus, vol.2 of Patrology (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1953), 70.

<sup>50</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 286.

<sup>51</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.29, 6.39, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 54, 66.

this period.<sup>52</sup> This persecution ended effectively with Decius' death in June, 251 C.E.<sup>53</sup>

In August 257 C.E., Emperor Valerian (reigning 253-260 C.E.) issued his first edict, which required that Christians, particularly clergy, show their allegiance to Rome by formally recognizing the Roman gods: "no Christian services were to be held, nor were there to be gatherings in the cemeteries."<sup>54</sup> Valerian's objective was to regain the approval of the Roman gods and, thereby, also the social order that corresponded to it. The punishments for not abiding by this edict were relatively mild, including banishment and forced labour in the mines. Valerian's second edict, in 258 C.E., was more severe: clergymen were punished immediately, while wealthy and prestigious Christians, including senators and knights, were stripped of their properties and positions; those Christians who persisted in their faith were to be killed.<sup>55</sup> Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, and Pope Sixtus were among the more prominent members of the clergy killed during that time.<sup>56</sup>

The final general persecution--the "Great Persecution"--commenced with Emperor Diocletian's order, on February 23, 303, to raze all the churches in the Empire, to burn all sacred books, to remove all Christians from government posts, and to limit greatly their recourse to initiating legal procedures.<sup>57</sup> It was at this time that Felix, the bishop of Tibiuca, was beheaded because he had refused to relinquish scriptures to the authorities.<sup>58</sup> It was with Diocletian's Fourth Edict (in January or February, 304 C.E.), however, that the general requirement of sacrifice was established, including for the members of the laity. Most deaths

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<sup>52</sup>The only passion account that may date from Decius' edict is that of Pionius. Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, xviii-xxix, 136-167. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 42-44, 124-130; Pierre Allard, Dix leçons sur le martyre, 99-105; Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les premiers quatre siècles, 69-82; Giuliana Lanata, Gli atti dei martiri come documenti processuali, 74-76.

<sup>53</sup>See Beresford J. Kidd, A History of the Church to A.D. 461, vol.1 (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1922; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1976), 429-442.

<sup>54</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 317. This suggests that in the mid-second century it was common for Christians to meet at cemeteries, probably to celebrate the anniversaries of their martyrs.

<sup>55</sup>Cyprian, Letters 80, trans. Rose Bernard Donna, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press), 323-324.

<sup>56</sup>Cyprian, Treatises, trans. and ed. Roy J. Deferrari, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958), ix. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 45-52, 136; Pierre Allard, Dix leçons sur le martyre, 105-106; Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les premiers quatre siècles, 84-92; Giuliana Lanata, Gli atti dei martiri come documento processuali, 76-79, 184-193.

<sup>57</sup>Beresford J. Kidd, A History of the Church to A.D. 461, vol. 1, 516; Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, xl. Diocletian was born in 245 C.E., he died in 313 C.E., and he reigned as emperor 284-305 C.E.

<sup>58</sup>Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, 267-271.

on account of the faith during this persecution took place as a result of this edict, including the martyrdoms of Irenaeus (the bishop of Sirmium), of Agapè and her companions, Crispina, Dasius, and, possibly, also of Euplus and Julius the Veteran.<sup>59</sup>

The classical age of Christian martyrs ended with the aforementioned edict promulgated by Licinius in 313 C.E.. This was reinforced by the rise of Constantine to the position as the sole emperor in 323 C.E..

### B. The Development of the Concept of Martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church

An important innovation in the concept of martyrdom, manifested impressively and unambiguously in some early texts, was the identification of the dying witnesses and their often grisly ordeals with Jesus Christ and his Passion. By calling Jesus Christ a martyr—in fact, the model for all Christian martyrs—the decision made by some Christians not to renounce their faith, even while being tortured, was clearly and boldly confirmed. Because the martyrs' willingness to die on account of their faith was equated with the decision Jesus Christ had made to allow himself to be executed, the view developed and then became universally accepted that the martyrs were also assured of their salvation in imitation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This was seen as the martyr's reward for imitating the Passion of Jesus Christ. The apostate, that is, the Christian who had publicly reviled Jesus Christ's name or who had sacrificed to the gods, on the other hand, could expect certain rejection at the final judgment because they were idolaters. Once they had so clearly rejected Jesus Christ, there was little they could do to avert this terrible end. This continued to be the commonly held belief until a heated controversy concerning the possibility of apostates being forgiven erupted after the experience of widespread apostasy during the Decian persecution in the mid-third century.

Ignatius of Antioch, writing sometime between 108 and 117 C.E.,<sup>60</sup> exemplified this concept of martyrdom (but without using the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" in the specialized manner that would later become conventional), when he communicated to his Roman audience that he was eagerly anticipating his violent death precisely because he wished to "follow the example of the Passion of My God." For Ignatius, imitating the suffering of Jesus Christ would be the perfect way to demonstrate that his actions

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<sup>59</sup>Beresford J. Kidd, A History of the Church to A.D. 461, vol.1, 520-521; Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, lviii. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 78-80; Giuliana Lanta, Gli atti dei martiri come documenti processuali, 209-226; Pierre Maraval, Les persécutions durant les premiers quatre siècles, 99-132.

<sup>60</sup>There is considerable debate among scholars concerning the accurate dating of Ignatius' letters. Corwinia has summarized the literature. Virgin Corwinia, St. Ignatius and Christianity in Antioch (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 3. See also Henri Grégoire, Les persécutions dans l'Empire Romain, 105-106.

were truly consistent with the words he had always uttered concerning his faith.<sup>61</sup> The reality that Ignatius was not alone in his zealotry is evidenced by Irenaeus' commendation of Ignatius for his resolve to follow Jesus Christ's path.<sup>62</sup> Because a martyr's trial and execution were closely identified with Jesus Christ's Passion, and because more and more examples could be cited of Christians who had already died as martyrs, this way of demonstrating one's faith became idealized, and it was even considered the only socially acceptable option for the Christians who considered themselves to be in situations analogous to that of Jesus of Nazareth, when he was confronted by his trial and imminent execution.

Polycarp is a notable example of a Church authority who disseminated martyrdom as a social ideal. Polycarp (who was probably killed on February 23, 167 C.E.) exhorted his audience to imitate Jesus Christ by suffering "for his [Jesus'] name's sake....For this is the example which he gave us in himself, and this is what we have believed."<sup>63</sup> The author who recounts Polycarp's martyrdom even draws a parallel between the interrogation of Polycarp and that of Jesus: he is placed on an ass and he faces a police captain named Herod. Pietri observes that the author of this account does not draw this parallel in order to suggest that Polycarp is another Christ, but so as to underscore the idea that he is an instrument through which the will of God works: Jesus Christ is present in Polycarp during his suffering, and he bestows Polycarp with the ability to endure it as he bears witness to the faith.<sup>64</sup> It became conventional to depict Jesus Christ as being present in the martyrs as they underwent the sufferings that led to their deaths. According to this view, it was precisely because Jesus was present in the martyrs that they were able to endure the tortures successfully without renouncing their faith.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Romans 6.3, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1914), 235. See Johannes Quasten, The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1 of Patrology, 70-72; Theofried Baumeister, trans. Robert Nowell, Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 4.

<sup>62</sup>Irenaeus lauds Ignatius as an example of a Christian who will be saved for the "royal banquet" when the world comes to an end after six thousand years because he did not apostasize when confronted by persecution. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.28.4, The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church Down to A.D. 325, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1963), 558.

<sup>63</sup>Polycarp, Epistle to the Philipppians 8.2, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 293.

<sup>64</sup>The Martyrdom of Polycarp 8.1-2, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1917), 323. See also Charles Pietri, "L'évolution du culte des saints aux premiers siècles chrétiens: du témoins à l'intercesseur," in Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental, 20.

<sup>65</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les origines du culte des martyrs, 9-10; Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 91-96.

The author of the letter that relates the particulars of the persecution in Lyons and Vienne (177 C.E.) notes that the future martyrs, while refusing to accept the title "martyr" because they had not yet been killed, "gladly conceded the name of martyrdom to Christ." He was the first martyr. Therefore he acted as the model for the many Christian martyrs who would later follow him to their deaths. Blandina, one of the martyrs of the persecution in 177 C.E., is even described evocatively as "hanging (on a stake or post) in the form of a cross."<sup>66</sup> It is notable that this letter from around 177 C.E. is also the first known occasion when Christians clearly established a distinction in regard to who should be properly designated by the titles "martyr" (i.e., Christians who had demonstrated their witness to the faith up to the point of death) and "confessor" (i.e., Christians who had suffered on account of their witness to the faith, but who had not yet been killed because of it).<sup>67</sup>

The Christians of the Early Church were able to locate in Paul's letter to the Romans an explanation of the function which the death of Jesus Christ had in expiating the sins of humanity (Romans 3:25-26). They surmised that a similarly positive function would result from the deaths of the persecuted followers of Jesus Christ.<sup>68</sup> For example, this idea appears in The Epistle of Barnabas (written sometime between and 130 and 138 C.E.).<sup>69</sup> According to the author of The Shepherd of Hermas (writing between

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<sup>66</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.1, 282; Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, 75.

<sup>67</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 5.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 288; Hippolyte Delehaye, Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints dans l'antiquité, 81-82. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr: The Monk as the Successor of the Martyr (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1950), 2-3

<sup>68</sup>"God appointed him [i.e., Christ Jesus] as a sacrifice for reconciliation, through faith, by the shedding of his blood, and so showed his justness; first for the past, when sins went unpunished because he held his hand, and now again for the present age, to show how he is just and justifies everyone who has faith in Jesus." (Romans 3:25-26). W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 60-64. This idea of Jesus Christ absorbing the burden of the sins of humanity and atoning for them is repeated in 1 Peter 2:24: Jesus Christ "was bearing our sins in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our sins and live for uprightness; through his bruises you have been healed." In his Epistle to the Philippians 8.1, Polycarp quotes Peter's letter so that the Christians suffering persecution might imitate the Jesus Christ's prototypical example. For a general study of martyrdom as an act which expiates sins, see Celestino Noce, Il martirio, 66-71.

<sup>69</sup>"For it was for this reason that the Lord endured to deliver up his flesh to corruption, that we should be sanctified by the remission of sin, that is, by his sprinkled blood." The Epistle of Barnabas 5.1, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1914), 355. The author also urges his audience to "glorify Him who redeemed thee from death," as a matter of course for those who desire to follow the "Way of Light." Ibid. 17.1-2, 401-403. Quasten summarizes the controversy around the dating and the authorship of the text. Johannes Quasten, The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1 of Patrology, 89-91.

140 and 150 C.E.),<sup>70</sup> the Christians who have died for the name of Jesus Christ will sit at his right hand during the final judgment because they have atoned for their sins (they are like trees that bear excellent fruit), while those who have derided Jesus Christ's name will suffer eternal punishment (they are like trees that bear inferior fruit).<sup>71</sup> Ignatius of Antioch, as well, viewed the death of Jesus Christ as functioning to expiate the sins of humanity.<sup>72</sup> He, too, was keen for his own purification, which he believed would accompany his martyrdom.<sup>73</sup> It is notable that Ignatius saw his upcoming martyrdom as a sacrifice by an innocent victim on behalf of the Christian community<sup>74</sup> and as the means by which the sins of its members would be expiated, just as Jesus Christ had previously done for all of humanity.<sup>75</sup>

Both Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215 C.E.) and Origen (185-254 C.E.) viewed martyrdom as "by definition an act of repentance and a cleansing...from sin."<sup>76</sup> Clement also believed that a sinless life was the best way to prepare oneself for "enduring, without stumbling, afflictions for the Church."<sup>77</sup> Clement elaborated his view of martyrdom in response to the question about whether an omnipotent and omniscient God disregards the welfare of his people while they are suffering persecution. He believed that

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<sup>70</sup>Quasten summarizes the discrepancy among sources that makes the dating of the text difficult. He favours the date of 148 C.E. Johannes Quasten, The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1 of Patrology, 92-93. Baumeister simply assigns the decade 140 to 150 C.E. as the probably time when it was written. Theofried Baumeister, "Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity," Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 3.

<sup>71</sup>Visions 3.1.9-3.2.1 and Similitudes 9.28, in The Shepherd of Hermas, trans. Kirsopp Lake, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1917), 29-31, 285-287. See Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 118; Theofried Baumeister, "Martyrdom and Persecution in Early Christianity," trans. Robert Nowell, Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 3.

<sup>72</sup>Ignatius tells the Trallians that Jesus Christ "died for our sake, that by believing on his death you may escape death." Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Trallians 2.1, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 213-215.

<sup>73</sup>Ignatius reports his desire to be consumed by wild animals: "I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread of Christ." Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Romans 4.1-3, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 231.

<sup>74</sup>Ignatius concludes his letter to the Ephesians by expressing his desire that "May my soul be given for yours, and for them whom you sent in the honour of God to Smyrna." Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Ephesians 21.1, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 195. He makes known his desire that "May my spirit be for your life, and my bonds, which you treated neither with haughtiness nor shame." Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Smyrnaeans 10.2, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 263.

<sup>75</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 152-153.

<sup>76</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 264.

<sup>77</sup>Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata 4.9, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, 422. This is an early example of equating the ascetic with the martyr; this would become more prevalent in the fourth century. It will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 2.

persecution is caused by the sins of the persecutors and that God always turns a bad situation into one that leads to the perfection of the person whose death is imminent.<sup>78</sup> Origen, enumerating the many ways of expiating sins that are evident in the gospels, designated the "suffering of martyrdom" as the second manner of purification after baptism; the other ways are almsgiving, the forgiveness of others' sins against oneself, the conversion of sinners, the love of others, and the laying of hands and anointment with oil in the name of Jesus Christ by the high priest.<sup>79</sup> Martyrdom, however, is the way that most perfectly imitates Jesus Christ's sacrifice for humanity.<sup>80</sup> Origen, like Ignatius, believed that, just as the martyrdom of Jesus Christ had remitted the sins of humanity, the martyrdom of a given Christian "serves to atone for many."<sup>81</sup> Tertullian, too, believed that the martyr, "by paying his own blood," has all his sins forgiven by God.<sup>82</sup> Quasten notes, however, that Tertullian, in his Montanist treatise De pudicitia, excluded the capital sins of idolatry, fornication, and murder subsequent to baptism from the sins which could be remitted by either the Church or by the intercession of the martyrs.<sup>83</sup>

Closely related to the concept of martyrdom as a vehicle for expiating the sins of oneself (and also the sins of others, according to Ignatius and Origen, is the idea that martyrdom is a second type of baptism--a "baptism of blood"--which perfects the first baptism by water. It can even substitute for fontal baptism,

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<sup>78</sup>Osborn believes that, for Clement, martyrdom was "the triumphal arch through which the Christian went to reign with his Lord, the means whereby, having suffered with him, he should be glorified together with him." E.F. Osborn, The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1957), 75-78.

<sup>79</sup>Origen, Homily on Leviticus 2.4.5, trans. Gary Wayne Barkley, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 83 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1990), 47-48. The true disciple of Jesus Christ is willing to follow his Passion in fact; given the uncertainty of actualizing martyrdom, the other ways of purification established a foundation for asceticism as a substitution for physically imitating Jesus Christ's death. Johannes Quasten, The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus, vol. 2 of Patrology, 84, 100. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 14-26.

<sup>80</sup>Robert J. Daly, Christian Sacrifice: The Judaeo-Christian Background Before Origen (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1978), 3.

<sup>81</sup>Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 30, trans. John J. O'Meara, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 171. See also Ibid., 50, p.195. Benjamin Drewery notes that Origen characterized martyrdom in three ways: (1) like Jesus Christ's sacrifice, martyrs purchase the remission of sins for those who pray and, as well, they are able to render the power of demons ineffective; (2) martyrdom is superior to righteousness, and it is thus the only human sacrifice that is able to expiate the sins of others; (3) unlike the power of Jesus Christ's sacrifice for cleansing the sins of all of humanity, the sacrifice of the martyr has a limited range. Benjamin Drewery, Origen and the Doctrine of Grace (London, England: The Epworth Press, 1960), 166.

<sup>82</sup>Tertullian, Apology 50.15, trans. T.R. Glover (London, England: William Heinemann, 1953), 227. See Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 119-120.

<sup>83</sup>Johannes Quasten, The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus, vol. 2 of Patrology, 313-314.



for example, in the case of catechumens. This view of martyrdom as a "baptism of blood" was clearly established among some Christian theologians in the first half of the third century, for example, among Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian. It is also evident in the account of the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas.<sup>84</sup> They were able to appeal to biblical texts for similar ideas. For example, the close relation between water and blood baptisms, with the first baptism sometimes preparing the way for the second, is underscored in Luke 12:50, where Jesus Christ is said to describe his upcoming Passion as a baptism.<sup>85</sup> A similar idea is present in 1 John 5:6-8, where Jesus Christ's life is described as comprising both water and blood.<sup>86</sup> This is also alluded to in John 19:34; in this passage, both water and blood effuse from Jesus Christ's side after it is pierced by a soldier's lance.<sup>87</sup> Tertullian, for example, believed that a baptism by blood could even "restore" a baptism by water which had been previously lost, apparently by renouncing the Christian faith or by some other dire sin.<sup>88</sup> Tertullian, in fact, claimed that the martyr's blood is the "sole key to unlock Paradise."<sup>89</sup> He believed that martyrs are the only people who are guaranteed a place in heaven prior to the final judgment, and that they ascend there instantly upon death. Tertullian, citing Perpetua as an example, also drew attention to the widely held perception that martyrs were the only people who ever appeared in the visions of heaven seen by Christians who were about to die as martyrs themselves.<sup>90</sup> In the passion account of Perpetua and Felicitas, Perpetua describes her baptism by water

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<sup>84</sup>Hippolyte Delchaye, Les origines du culte des martyrs, 4; Herbert B. Workman, Persecutions in the Early Church, 139; Celestino Noce, Il martirio, 71-73; Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 108-128; Edward E. Malone, "Martyrdom and Monastic Profession as a Second Baptism," in Vom Christlichen Mysterium. Gesammelte Arbeiten zum Gedächtnis von Odo Casel OSB (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1951), 117-118.

<sup>85</sup>"There is a baptism I must still receive, and what constraint I am under until it is completed!" (Luke 12:50). See Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 108.

<sup>86</sup>"He it is who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with water alone but with water and blood, and it is the Spirit that bears witness, for the Spirit is Truth. So there are three witnesses, the Spirit, water and blood; and the three of them coincide." (1 John 5:6-8).

<sup>87</sup>"When they came to Jesus, they saw he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance, and immediately there came out blood and water." (John 19:33-34).

<sup>88</sup>Tertullian, On Baptism 16, trans. S. Thelwall, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 677. See also Pier Franco Beatrice, "Il sermone *De centesima, sexagesima, tricesima* dello Ps. Cipriano e la teologia del martirio," Augustinianum 19 (1979): 235.

<sup>89</sup>Tertullian, A Treatise on the Soul 55, trans. Peter Holmes, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 219. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 1.

<sup>90</sup>Tertullian, On the Soul 55, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 231.

in prison as a preparation for her impending trial by torture, while Felicitas' combat with the wild animals in the arena is depicted as a "second baptism." It is curious that Felicitas first requires a "blood bath" by giving birth prematurely before she can join her fellow martyrs in a second cleansing by blood.<sup>91</sup> Origen, too, called martyrdom a "baptism of blood." As was already noted, Origen listed seven ways of remitting sins, but because martyrdom most closely imitates the expiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ, he believed that it remits not just one's own sins but the sins of others as well.<sup>92</sup> According to Cyprian of Carthage, martyrdom counts as the true baptism of catechumens,<sup>93</sup> and it restores the purity of Christians who have sinned subsequent to their original baptism by water because a baptism of blood is even more powerful than a baptism by water.<sup>94</sup> Cyprian also saw martyrdom as a way for apostates to be reconciled with the Church and with God. In this case, they had to re-confess their faith in Jesus Christ before they suffered the tortures

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<sup>91</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 3, 18.3, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 109, 127. See Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 120.

<sup>92</sup>Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 30, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 171. See also Pier Franco Beatrice, "Il sermone *De sesagesima, sexagesima, tricesima* dello Ps. Cipriano e la teologia del martirio," Augustinianum 19 (1979): 235-236.

<sup>93</sup>"...some, as if they could escape by human arguments the truth of the preaching of the Gospel, bring forward the catechumens to us, as to whether any of these, before he is baptized in the Church, should be seized and killed for the confession of the Name, should lose the hope of salvation and the reward of confession because he has not been born again of water first. Let men of this nature, partisans and promoters of the heretics, know, first, that those catechumens hold the upright faith and truth of the Church and advance to the warfare against the devil from the Divine Camp with the full and sincere knowledge of God the Father and of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. Then they are not deprived of the Sacrament of baptism, nay rather, they are baptized with the most glorious and greatest baptism of blood, concerning which the Lord also said that He had another baptism to be baptized with." Cyprian, Letters 73.22, trans. Sister Rose Bernard Donna, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 282-283.

<sup>94</sup>"...I have viewed the plan as useful and salutary in so necessary an exhortation as to make martyrs, that all delays and tardiness of our words must be cut out, and that the meanderings of human speech must be put aside, that those words alone must be set down which God speaks, by which Christ exhorts His servants to martyrdom....Let us only, who with the Lord's permission gave the first baptism to believers, prepare each one for another baptism also, urging and teaching that this baptism is greater in grace, more sublime in power, more precious in honor, a baptism in which the angels baptize, a baptism in which God and His Christ exult, a baptism after which no one sins again, a baptism which brings to completion the increases of our faith, a baptism which immediately joins us with God as we withdraw from the world. In the baptism of water is received the remission of sins; in that of blood the crown of virtues. This thing is to be embraced and longed for and sought after with all entreaties of our prayers, so that we who were servants of God may also be His friends." Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus 4, in Treatises, trans. and ed., Roy J. Deferrari, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958), 315-316.

leading to their deaths.<sup>95</sup>

The Maccabean Jews were adopted by some Christian groups as exemplary models of martyrs who had lived and died during the era prior to Jesus Christ. The reflections which Christians made on the Second Book of Maccabees particularly influenced the development among them of the view that martyrdom is a way of atoning for one's own sins, though not necessarily for the sins of other people in the community. The author of the Second Book of Maccabees explains that God had allowed the persecution of the Jews in order to discipline them. In this way, God had mercifully provided them with an opportunity to atone for their own sins. Daly argues that this text strongly evidences the idea of substituting for other people so that they need not suffer punishment, but he emphasizes that the later notion of atoning for the sins of others, which is present in 4 Maccabees, had not yet developed in 2 Maccabees.<sup>96</sup>

In 167 B.C.E., the Maccabean Jews revolted against the orders given by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (d.163 B.C.E.), the Seleucid king since 175 B.C.E., which, first, prohibited the Mosaic sacrifice in the temple, circumcision, and the meeting of Jews to observe the sabbath; second, demanded that they surrender all copies of the Torah; and, third, required that Jews sacrifice pigs and consume the meat. The specific event which engendered the revolt, however, was the defilement of the temple's altar.<sup>97</sup> Subsequently, the many Jews who had chosen to die instead of renouncing their faith were popularly considered to be martyrs for the witness which they had borne to their faith. Among the Jews who died were two women who were humiliated publicly before they were killed for having their children circumcised. Other people were burned to death for gathering together to observe the sabbath (2 Maccabees 6:10-11).<sup>98</sup> The ninety-year-old Eleazar

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<sup>95</sup>In speaking about the "lapsed", that is the apostates, who are particularly eager to be reconciled with God and with the Church, Cyprian suggests that the quickest way to do this would be to die as martyrs in the present environment of persecution: "If any [of the 'lapsed'] are in a very great hurry, they have what they are asking in their own power since the time itself provides more than what they ask. The battle is still going on and the struggle is daily renewed. If they repent truly and steadfastly of the fault committed and ardor of faith prevails, he who cannot be put off may be crowned." Cyprian, Letters 19.2, trans. Sister Rose Bernard Donna, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 53. Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 108-115, 122-124; Pier Franco Beatrice, "Il sermone *De centesima, sexagesima, tricesima* dello Ps. Cipriano e la teologia del martirio," Augustinianum 19 (1979): 235-242; Giovanni Toso, Cristiani con coraggio. Il nostro essere oggi secondo san Cipriano (Turin, Italy: Edizioni Paoline, 1985), 517-518.

<sup>96</sup>Robert J. Daly, Christian Sacrifice, 125-126.

<sup>97</sup>Elias Bickerman, The God of the Maccabees, trans. Horst R. Moehring (Berlin: Schocken Verlag/Jüdischer Buchverlag, repr., Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1979), 53-54.

<sup>98</sup>For example, two women were charged with having circumcised their children. They were paraded publicly around the town, with their babies hung at their breasts, and then hurled over the city wall. Other people, who had assembled in some near-by caves to keep the seventh day without attracting attention, were denounced to Philip, and were then all burnt together, since their consciences would not allow them to

consented to die by means of a torture wheel instead of even feigning to eat the forbidden pork (2 Maccabees 6:18-31). Seven brothers were submitted to grisly tortures before they were executed for refusing to eat pork. They were then followed to this same end by their mother (2 Maccabees 7:1-42). The Maccabean Jews hoped for the resurrection of all these victims, whom they believed had remained righteous up to the point of death. They hoped, as well, for "vengeance on apostates and persecuting powers hereafter."<sup>99</sup> The mother of the seven brothers believed that God in his mercy would give life back to her sons because they had upheld the divine law rather than concern themselves with their personal safety (2 Maccabees 7:23).<sup>100</sup> She also hoped that her children would be returned to her on the "day of mercy" (2 Maccabees 7:29).

The experiences of the Maccabean Jews helped the Early Christians to comprehend the persecutions and the violent deaths of their companions. For example, the mother of the martyr Marian,<sup>101</sup> the mother of Flavian,<sup>102</sup> and Blandina<sup>103</sup> are all likened by the Christian authors of their passion accounts to the aforementioned mother who had urged her seven sons to persist in their resolve to resist Antiochus' orders. The previously cited example of Ignatius of Antioch believing that his expiatory sacrifice as an innocent victim would be beneficial to the larger Christian community is certainly indebted to the same body of ideas as those expressed by the Maccabean Jews. Origen, too, drew attention to the stories of Eleazar and the seven brothers when he explained to Ambrose and Prococtetus what true martyrdom signifies.<sup>104</sup> Cyprian of Carthage (d.258), writing in 252 C.E. to the Christians of Thibarais, spoke of the seven brothers and their mother as "blessed martyrs" whom the recipients of his letter ought to imitate.<sup>105</sup> Cyprian (most probably

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defend themselves, out of respect for the holiness of the day." (2 Maccabees 6:10-11).

<sup>99</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 34. See 2 Maccabees 7:29, when the mother told one of her sons: "Do not fear this executioner, but prove yourself worthy of your brother and accept death, so that I may receive you back with them in the day of mercy." See also Solomon Zeitlin, ed., The Second Book of Maccabees, trans. Sidney Tedesche (New York: Harper & Bros., 1954), 48.

<sup>100</sup>"And hence, the Creator of the world, who made everyone and ordained the origin of all things, will in his mercy give you back breath and life, since for the sake of his laws you have no concern for yourselves." (2 Maccabees 7:23).

<sup>101</sup>The Martyrdom of Marian and James 13.1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 213.

<sup>102</sup>The Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius 16.4, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 231.

<sup>103</sup>The Martyrs of Lyons 55, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 79.

<sup>104</sup>Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 22, 23-27, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 162-167.

<sup>105</sup>Cyprian, Letters 58.6, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 167.

writing in 257 C.E.)<sup>106</sup> again recalled the example of the seven brothers, and he also added the example of the ninety-year-old Eleazar, when he responded to a request, made by Fortunatus (perhaps the bishop of Tucca by the same name in 256 C.E.), for advice on how to prepare his community so that it might remain constant during an anticipated wave of persecution.<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, it is notable that Christians had included the Maccabean martyrs on both the Carthaginian and Syrian lists of martyrs.<sup>108</sup>

A major reason why many Christians so readily allowed themselves to die on account of the faith was their fear of committing idolatry, that is, the worship of something or someone other than or in addition to the biblical God. The obligation of Christians to reject idolatry publicly therefore became a major element in the early formulation of their concept of martyrdom, especially as this concept was articulated by Tertullian and by Cyprian of Carthage.<sup>109</sup> According to Tertullian, martyrdoms occur precisely because idolatry is rampant in the world. Christians are murdered because their persecutors do not hold this true faith in the biblical God, and they actively and violently oppose people who express this faith. Christians overcome the temptation to commit idolatry by allowing themselves to die as martyrs. God rewards them with their salvation.<sup>110</sup> In his Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus, Cyprian of Carthage recommends that Christians should always prepare themselves beforehand to resist every order to sacrifice to idols, even if it means that they will be executed for doing this. They should nevertheless feel comfortable about the possibility of this occurring because they would be dying as martyrs, and therefore God would reward them with salvation.<sup>111</sup> The grave fear of committing idolatry was clearly heightened by the various edicts promulgated by Decius and Diocletian, which ordered that all Roman citizens, including Christians, had to make public sacrifices to the gods.

The Devil was often expressly named as the enemy of the martyrs, or the persecutors were depicted

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<sup>106</sup>Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus, trans. and ed. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 36 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958), 313, 311.

<sup>107</sup>Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, To Fortunatus 11, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 36, 334-339.

<sup>108</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 19.

<sup>109</sup>Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to Cyprian of Carthage, 34-39.

<sup>110</sup>Tertullian, Scorpiace 4-5, trans. S. Thalwell, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325, eds. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), 636-638.

<sup>111</sup>Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus 5, in Treatises, trans. and ed. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 36, 316-344.

as being at the service of the Devil.<sup>112</sup> Ignatius of Antioch, for example, believed that he was living during "the last times," and that his imminent martyrdom would help God defeat the Devil in a cosmic battle that was now quickly approaching a decisive climax.<sup>113</sup> Furthermore, the Devil fought Polycarp as the "evil one",<sup>114</sup> the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne as the "Adversary",<sup>115</sup> and Perpetua as well.<sup>116</sup> The persecutors were described as "the Devil's Henchmen",<sup>117</sup> the "priests of the Devil",<sup>118</sup> and "the Devil's servant".<sup>119</sup>

In the first half of the third century, a number of authors expressed their views that the martyrs would not be judged at the end of time, but that they would instead accompany and aid Jesus Christ with this task. Origen, for example, stated that "he who drinks the chalice that Jesus drank will sit, reign, and judge beside the King of Kings."<sup>120</sup> This belief was also shared by Tertullian,<sup>121</sup> and by Cyprian.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>112</sup>See Jean Daniélou and Henri Marrou, The First Six Hundred Years, trans. Vincent Cronin, vol. 1 of The Christian Centuries (London, England: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), 125; Celestino Noce, Il martirio, 80-93; Marc Lods, Confesseurs et martyrs: Successeurs des prophètes dans l'Église des trois premiers siècles, Cahiers Théologiques, 41 (Neuchâtel, Switzerland and Paris, France: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1958), 45-51; Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 56-90.

<sup>113</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Ephesians 11.1, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 185.

<sup>114</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 4.15, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 241.

<sup>115</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.1, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 273.

<sup>116</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 20, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 129. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 66-68.

<sup>117</sup>The Martyrdom of Carpus, Papyrus, and Agathonice 4, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 33.

<sup>118</sup>The Martyrdom of Marian and James 5, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 201.

<sup>119</sup>The Martyrdom of Julius the Veteran 4, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 265.

<sup>120</sup>Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 28, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 168.

<sup>121</sup>Tertullian notes that "no one, on becoming absent from the body, is at once a dweller in the presence of the Lord, except by the prerogative of martyrdom"; all others must wait for the final judgment. Tertullian does not explicitly state in this verse that the martyrs share in the judgment of the rest. Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh 43, trans. Dr. Holmes, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 577. Pietri, however, provides several passages which, he believes, prove that Tertullian, too, considered the martyrs to be co-judges with Jesus: Tertullian, Adv. Marc. IV, 21, 9; 39, 8; De Resurr. 35, 13. Charles Pietri, "L'évolution du culte des saints aux premiers siècles chrétiens: du témoin à l'intercesseur," in Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental (IIIe-XIIIe siècle). Actes du colloque organisé par l'École française de Rome avec le concours de l'Université de Rome "La Sapienza". Rome, 27-29 octobre 1988. Collection de l'École Française de Rome, 149 (Paris, France: École Française de Rome and Palais Farnèse, 1991), 21.

Furthermore, Eusebius of Caesarea quotes Dionysius of Alexandria's letter to Fabius, the bishop of Antiochenes, in which he states his belief that the martyrs of the local persecution in Alexandria (about 249 C.E.) are now in heaven with Jesus Christ, and that they will help him with the final judgment.<sup>123</sup>

The practice of voluntary martyrdom engendered controversy among the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church. The major issue was whether martyrdom, aside from being desired, should actually be sought and possibly even provoked. The usual motives for volunteering oneself for such a violent death were the zealous desire to imitate the Passion of Jesus Christ and the aforesaid common belief that only the baptism of blood could certainly reconcile with God those Christians who had sinned subsequent to their baptism. For example, Origen yearned to die as a martyr. When he was seventeen years old (about 202 C.E., during the reign of Septimius Severus), he clearly demonstrated this eagerness for martyrdom during a local persecution in Alexandria. He would have rushed to join the crowd of future martyrs that included his father, Leonides, if his mother had not taken the precaution of hiding his clothes. Instead, he sent a letter to his father urging him to persevere up to the point of death.<sup>124</sup> Thereafter, Origen saw his whole life as a preparation for its ultimate perfection in martyrdom.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, the accounts of specific martyrdoms which Christians have traditionally valued highly also indicate that sought martyrdom was sometimes considered to be acceptable. For example, Agathonice (probably during the reign of Marcus Aurelius),<sup>126</sup> "realizing that this [i.e., the martyrdoms of Carpus and Pappylus] was a call from heaven," introduced herself to the authorities as a Christian and thus was executed for refusing to make a sacrifice to the gods.<sup>127</sup> Euplus made a similarly bold presentation of himself on April 29, 304 (during the reign of Diocletian) to

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<sup>122</sup>Cyprian believes that the martyrs will "accompany Him [Jesus Christ] when He begins to come to receive vengeance on the enemies, to stand at His side when He sits to judge, to become co-heir of Christ, to be made equal to the angels, to rejoice with the patriarchs, with the apostles, with the prophets in the possession of the heavenly kingdom." Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus 13, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 36, 344. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 1-2.

<sup>123</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.41, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 29, 70, 77.

<sup>124</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.1-2, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 29, 4-7. The martyr's death shares in Jesus Christ's victory over the Devil. See Jean Daniélou, Origen, trans. Walter Mitchell (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1955), 6-7, 273; Jos Janssens, "Il cristiano di fronte al martirio imminente. Testimonianze e Dottrina nella Chiesa Antica," Gregorianum 66 (1985): 411-412.

<sup>125</sup>Robert J. Daly, Christian Sacrifice, 494.

<sup>126</sup>Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, xv. See also Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 4.15, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 19, 243.

<sup>127</sup>Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs 2A, 2B.6, 27-29, 35.

the governor, Calvisianus, in order to provoke his martyrdom.<sup>128</sup>

The advocacy of voluntary martyrdom, however, was not a favoured position among the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church. Martyrdom was generally viewed as an end which was to be embraced only if the victim of the persecution was in a situation that required a clear decision between rejecting Jesus Christ's name, thereby apostatizing, and patiently accepting death. Otherwise, the potential victim was supposed to flee to a place of refuge. For example, the author of Polycarp's passion account explained that Polycarp had originally fled to the outskirts of the city on the grounds that the "Gospel does not give this teaching" of voluntary martyrdom. In order to demonstrate that a real risk corresponds to voluntary martyrdom, the author of Polycarp's passion account cites the unfortunate example of Quintus, the Phrygian, who had come forward freely to the authorities, but who then weakened when he directly faced the proconsul, took an oath, and sacrificed to the gods. He therefore placed himself unnecessarily into a situation in which he apostatized.<sup>129</sup> The author of The Shepherd of Hermas, however, is more ambiguous concerning this issue: while the author does not exhort Christians to seek martyrdom, they are nevertheless not supposed to fear persecution, nor even to think about denying Jesus Christ "in their hearts."<sup>130</sup> Tertullian is another interesting case: originally he permitted fleeing for those confronted by certain persecution; as a Montanist, however, he rejected this option.<sup>131</sup> Clement of Alexandria, as well, praised martyrdom as one form of perfection but he emphasized that it needed to be the culmination of one's true love of God, and it should just be suffered when the only other option was to deny Jesus Christ.<sup>132</sup> Indeed, for Clement, the goal of the Christian's life should be "gnostic martyrdom," rather than blood martyrdom. This means that one's whole life should be lived according to the gospels, and not just the last act of one's

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<sup>128</sup>Euplus cried out, "I want to die; I am a Christian!" The Acts of Euplus 1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 311. See also Jos Janssens, "Il cristiano di fronte al martirio imminente. Testimonianze e Dottrina nella Chiesa Antica," Gregorianum 66 (1985): 413.

<sup>129</sup>The Martyrdom of Polycarp 4, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 317. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 3; Jos Janssens, "Il cristiano di fronte al martirio imminente. Testimonianze e Dottrina nella Chiesa Antica," Gregorianum 66 (1985): 406-407.

<sup>130</sup>The Similitudes 9.28.4, in The Shepherd of Hermas, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 287.

<sup>131</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 276. See also Jos Janssens, "Il cristiano di fronte al martirio imminente. Testimonianze e Dottrina nella Chiesa Antica," Gregorianum 66 (1985): 407-409. Malone, citing De fuga in persecutione 15, judges that "Tertullian would not allow a Christian to take any steps to escape persecution or martyrdom. He could not make use of bribes or any other device. He might by such means actually avoid speaking words of apostasy, but in his heart and will he was a denier. His very freedom would condemn such a Christian." Unlike Frend, Malone does not contrast Tertullian's concept of martyrdom as a Montanist and as a Christian. Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 34. See also Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 51.

<sup>132</sup>Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata 4.9, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, 422.



life.<sup>133</sup> Clement therefore vehemently opposed voluntary martyrdom. He believed that those people who rush to their deaths do not really know the true God. They are Christians only in name, not in fact.<sup>134</sup> They are, minimally, acting childish and immaturely, but more seriously, they are likely to be guilty of being complicit with, if not the authors of, their own murders. They should therefore flee whenever it is at all possible.<sup>135</sup>

As was already mentioned, many Christians were killed, and thereafter designated as martyrs, including Pope Fabian, as a result of the promulgation of Decius' edict against Christians in late 249 C.E. or in January, 250 C.E.<sup>136</sup> Many other Christians, however, apostatized, including several members of the clergy--most notably, Euctemon, the bishop of Smyrna.<sup>137</sup> Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, provided a test case for the clash between rigorous and lax views regarding the status of the large number of Christians who had publicly renounced the faith when they were threatened violently (i.e., these apostates were designated as the "lapsed"), but who later humbly asked for forgiveness and the restitution of their standing as Christians, and even as members of the clergy. Although Cyprian himself did not apostatize, he did have to explain how he could justify fleeing into hiding and, thereby, abandoning his responsibilities as a bishop, when he was confronted by the persecution. Bishop Germanus accused Cyprian, along with Dionysius, the bishop of Alexandria (247/8 to 264/5), of cowardly running away to safety when they faced persecution.<sup>138</sup> Cyprian contended, however, that it was much better, in fact, it was commanded by God, to flee persecution rather than to risk renouncing the faith.<sup>139</sup> Therefore, he did not support the readmittance of those lapsed members who had either sacrificed or who had avoided sacrifice by using bribery or some other manner of trickery. They should have fled instead of risking apostasy. Nevertheless, the argument that the apostates should be forgiven eventually won under Pope Stephen (d.257 C.E.; pope 254-257 C.E.). Cyprian, ironically,

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<sup>133</sup>Robert J. Daly, Christian Sacrifice, 479-480; Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 5-14.

<sup>134</sup>Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata 4.4, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, 411-412. See also Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 9-10, 14.

<sup>135</sup>Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata 4.10, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, 423.

<sup>136</sup>Roy J. Deferrari, trans and ed., introduction of Cyprian, Treatises, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, vi-vii.

<sup>137</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 301.

<sup>138</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.40, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 67-68.

<sup>139</sup>Cyprian, The Lapsed 10, trans. Roy Deferrari, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 66. See Edward Malone, The Monk and the Martyr, 35-40; Jos Janssens, "Il cristiano di fronte al martirio imminente. Testimonianze e Dottrina nella Chiesa Antica," Gregorianum 66 (1985): 409-411.

was subsequently killed in 258 C.E. as a consequence of Emperor Valerian's second edict.<sup>140</sup> In the context of future chapters, the explanation that Cyprian gave for the prevalence of apostasy during the Decian persecution is especially interesting: he rebuked the lapsed Christians for storing their "treasures" on earth instead of in heaven; they had cared more about their worldly riches than about heavenly things. He accused them of giving "an enemy and a domestic conqueror" something to vanquish in the world.<sup>141</sup>

### C. The Characteristics of True Martyrdom

It was only early in the third century that bishops began to assume the right and the responsibility of determining the definition of genuine martyrdom.<sup>142</sup> Until that time, one was normally judged to be a martyr by a community of Christians who perceived that the cause of the alleged martyrs' deaths had indeed followed from their refusal to renounce their witness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The decision was largely a popular one, with the stories of martyrdoms recalled orally within a geographically limited region. (The starting point for judging the genuineness of martyrdom up to the present day has continued to be a spontaneous but persistent reputation of martyrdom among a populace; thus the popular veneration of alleged martyrs should always precede the institutional recognition of martyrdom.)<sup>143</sup> The more widely remembered accounts were the ones that were recorded and then circulated by letters (as in the case of the martyrs of Lyons) among various communities or those that were preserved in the writings of theologians and which were the subject of their theological reflections. As well, the account of Polycarp's martyrdom indicates that already in the mid-second century some communities of Christians tried to preserve the martyr's bones, which they considered to be "more valuable than precious stones and more to be esteemed than gold," in order to store and to safeguard them in an appropriate place where Christians could gather on the anniversary of the death in order to celebrate the martyr's "birthday into heaven."<sup>144</sup> The veneration of relics developed from this practice; this topic is examined in chapter

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<sup>140</sup>Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, xxx-xxxi.

<sup>141</sup>Cyprian, The Lapsed 11, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 66.

<sup>142</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 254.

<sup>143</sup>Pierre Delooy, Sociologie et canonisations (The Hague, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), 23.

<sup>144</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 4.15, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 242; The Martyrdom of Polycarp 18.2-3, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 337. See also B. de Gaiffier, "Réflexions sur les origines du culte des martyrs," La Maison Dieu 52 (1957): 27-28; Yvette Duval, Auprès des saints corps et âme. L'inhumation "ad sanctos" dans la chrétienté d'Orient et d'Occident du IIIe au VIIe siècle (Paris, France: Études Augustiniennes, 1988), 24-25; Pierre Allard, Dix leçons sur le martyre, 345-346; Charles Pietri,

two. The account of Pionius' martyrdom, supposedly during the Decian persecution (250 C.E.),<sup>145</sup> provides evidence that Christians used to gather in Smyrna in order to celebrate the anniversary of the martyrdom of Polycarp during the mid-third century.<sup>146</sup>

It is not clear whether Tertullian's reference, from about 200 C.E., to the birthday offerings made for the dead on the dates of their passing pertains to martyrs alone, to other saintly persons, or to all deceased members of the Christian community in Carthage.<sup>147</sup> The fact that Tertullian believed that only martyrs immediately went to heaven, however, suggests that his reference is specifically for them.<sup>148</sup> The annual celebration of the martyrs' "birthdays into heaven" was thus another way that the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church used to indicate whom they believed were the truly Christian martyrs.

The death accounts recorded in the genuine accounts of martyrdom, that is, those accounts which apparently date back to the martyrs' deaths, at least in the original forms, but which are sometimes no longer extant (Delehaye and the other Bollandists have always clearly distinguished these authentic accounts from the legends of the saints),<sup>149</sup> and the remarks made by theologians about the deaths of those persons whom they designated as martyrs do seem to identify some notable characteristics that are evident among many accounts of martyrdom, even if not among all of them.<sup>150</sup> For example, the only Jews who were

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"L'évolution du culte des saints aux premiers siècles chrétiens: du témoins à l'intercesseur," in Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental, 24.

<sup>145</sup>Musurillo, however, suggests that this date is doubtful. Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, xxix.

<sup>146</sup>The Martyrdom of Pionius the Presbyter and His Companions 2, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 137. The story of Polycarp's martyrdom is the oldest detailed extant account of the martyring of an individual; it also provides the earliest evidence for the cult of martyrs. Johannes Quasten, The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1, of Patrology, 77-78.

<sup>147</sup>Tertullian, De Corona 3, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 94.

<sup>148</sup>Chapter two considers more formally the development of the cult of martyrs and their relics, as well as, the institutionalization of the process of canonization for authenticating martyrs.

<sup>149</sup>For example, see Hippolyte Delehaye, The Legends of the Saints, trans. Donald Attwater (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962).

<sup>150</sup>See, for example, the twenty eight accounts of martyrdom that are included in Herbert Musurillo's The Acts of the Christian Martyrs. These acts were often preserved so as to be read at the anniversary of the martyr's death. See also F.L. Cross, The Early Christian Fathers, 192-198. Johannes Quasten distinguishes between three groups of accounts of martyrdom: (1) the properly named "acts of the martyrs", reserved exclusively for the records of official court proceedings; (2) contemporary or eyewitness accounts, named "passions" or "martyria"; (3) the legendary accounts of martyrdoms which were fabricated considerably after the event occurred for didactic and spiritually edifying purposes. This thesis will use the term "act of martyr" for those accounts that Musurillo has included in his text, all of which belong to the first two categories. Johannes Quasten, The Beginnings of Patristic Literature, vol. 1 of Patrology, 176. See

called Christian martyrs were those who were Jewish Christians (for example, Stephen, Peter, and Paul). Even though the Maccabean martyrs were cited by some Christian writers (e.g., Origen and Cyprian) as true martyrs for God, and they were even included on the Carthaginian and Syrian lists of martyrs, they nevertheless were not specifically identified as Christian martyrs. Furthermore, Christians never designated the Jews who were killed in clashes with Rome in the first and second centuries as Christian martyrs.

In an akin manner, other outsiders, such as those persons who were judged to be heretics, were not called Christian martyrs by their opponents. Ignatius of Antioch is the first known writer who linked genuine Christian martyrdom explicitly with orthodox Christianity.<sup>151</sup> He warned the Smyrneans about the heretics (in this case, Docetists)<sup>152</sup> who denied the humanity of Jesus Christ, including, most notably, his crucifixion.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, it would have been impossible even to call Jesus Christ the original Christian martyr if his Passion had been a sham and thereby inimitable. Furthermore, Ignatius believed that his own willingness to die on account of his faith clearly distinguished him from such heretics.<sup>154</sup> Irenaeus (c.130-c.200 C.E.), writing between 182 and 188 C.E.,<sup>155</sup> denounced the Gnostics, as a group, for their unwillingness to demonstrate their witness to the faith by means of martyrdom, except the "one or two, during the whole time which has elapsed since the Lord appeared on earth," who had been mistaken by the persecutors for the true Christians.<sup>156</sup> Many Montanists, on the other hand, were unusually eager for martyrdom because they expected the imminent end of the world anyway.<sup>157</sup> They were rejected as a heresy and excommunicated for the stated reason that Montanus' two prophets, Prisca and Maximilla, had

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Ibid, 178-185 for Quasten's classification of the stories.

<sup>151</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 153.

<sup>152</sup>"In the early Church, [Docetism was] a tendency, rather than a formulated and unified doctrine, which considered the humanity and sufferings of the earthly Christ as apparent rather than real...In some forms it held that Christ miraculously escaped the ignominy of death, e.g. by Judas Iscariot or Simon of Cyrene changing places with Him just before the Crucifixion." "Docetism," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 409.

<sup>153</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Smyrnaeans 2-7, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 253-259.

<sup>154</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Smyrnaeans 4.2, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 257.

<sup>155</sup>Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, 312.

<sup>156</sup>Irenaeus, Against Heresies 4.33.9, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, 508. See also W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 10-11, 425 n.51.

<sup>157</sup>Montanism was an "apocalyptic movement in the second half of the 2nd cent. which is to be traced back to one Montanus in Phrygia. It lived in expectation of the speedy outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church, of which it saw the first manifestation in its own prophets and prophetesses." "Montanism," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 918-919.

experienced prophecies that were excessively frantic and ecstatic, especially for a progressively institutionalized orthodox Church.<sup>158</sup> Because they were considered to be heretics, their many martyrs were usually not designated as Christian martyrs. Cyprian, for example, stated very clearly that all heretics, even if they were killed for confessing Jesus Christ's name, would not be saved: "He cannot be a martyr who is not in the Church." Heretics therefore could not be martyrs because they had consciously opposed the Church.<sup>159</sup>

Although Origen and the authors of the accounts of the martyrdoms of Agathonice and Euplus employ the term "martyr" for those persons who could have fled but who, instead, voluntarily went to their deaths, most martyr accounts reserve this special title for those Christians who had allowed themselves to die when the only other option was renouncing their faith. It is notable, however, that Eusebius praises two chaste women (probably named Dorothea and Sophronia) who had committed suicide to avoid being sexually abused by the emperors, Maximin and Maxentius, respectively. He includes their deaths alongside a series of martyrdom accounts.<sup>160</sup> Sometimes the title of "martyr" was also conferred to the Christians who had died in prison while awaiting torture or even to the Christians who had died some time later as a result of fatal injuries sustained during interrogation. Furthermore, Cyprian, writing in 250 C.E. during the Decian persecution, advised the priests and deacons who were the recipients of his letter to recognize as "blessed martyrs" even those Christians who had died in prison while preparing themselves for the imminent tortures because he believed that they "did not fail the torments, but the torments failed [them]."<sup>161</sup>

Martyrs, as well, are usually depicted as suffering their executions patiently, humbly, courageously, and joyfully. They allowed themselves to die as an expression of their love of God. They also died loving their enemies who had persecuted them. They had prayed for the forgiveness of their sins and even for their

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<sup>158</sup>Eusebius refers to an anonymous book directed against Montanism from about 190 C.E. Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.16, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 314-319. See also W.H.C. Frend, The Rise of Christianity (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 253-256, 265-266.

<sup>159</sup>Cyprian, The Unity of the Church 14, trans. and ed. Roy J. Deferrari, in Treatises, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 109; Johannes Quasten, The Ante-Nicene Literature after Irenaeus, vol. 2 of Patrology, 351. See also Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 119-122.

<sup>160</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 8.14, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 196-198. See also Jos Janssens, "Il cristiano di fronte al martirio imminente. Testimonianze e Dottrina nella Chiesa Antica," Gregorianum 66 (1985): 418-424.

<sup>161</sup>Cyprian, Letters 12.1, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 34-35. Chapter two will examine in detail the progressive ascription of bloodless martyrdom to ascetics and virgins in the fourth and fifth centuries.

conversion.<sup>162</sup> Irenaeus, the bishop of Sirmium, for example, associated his own imminent execution with the idea that Jesus Christ had patiently endured his Passion. In fact, he stated explicitly that Jesus Christ had "suffered for the world's salvation" and that now he was going to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>163</sup>

People who are going to die as martyrs in the near future are sometimes presented as the recipients of divine visions or of auditory messages that reveal the nature of their upcoming trials. This was already seen in the case of the first martyr, Stephen. These visions and messages sometimes even promise the martyrs their entrance into heaven. Polycarp, for example, had a trance in which he saw his pillow afire. He interpreted this to mean that he would be burned to death. He also heard a clear message from heaven (as did everyone else who was present) which encouraged him to "be strong...and have courage," and which also assured him of his entrance into heaven.<sup>164</sup> Perpetua's visions are even more vivid. She saw her deceased brother, Dinocrates, suffering in the hereafter (either because he had not been baptized or because he had sinned subsequent to baptism), but she was able to aid him successfully by praying for the expiation of his sins.<sup>165</sup> Then she had a vision in which she metamorphosed into the shape of a man, found herself in an amphitheatre, and then proceeded to engage in a combat to the death with an Egyptian. When she defeated him and walked towards the stadium's Gate of Life, she realized that, in her imminent trial, she in fact would fight and vanquish the Devil and, consequently, receive the martyr's reward of everlasting life in heaven.<sup>166</sup> Whenever these visions depicted specific Christians as having successfully entered into heaven, subsequent to their violent deaths, these appearances were seen as confirmations that, in fact, they

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<sup>162</sup>For example, rather than protest their imminent deaths, Polycarp, Felix the Bishop, and Irenaeus, the bishop of Sirmium prayed thanksgiving for their selection as martyrs. Herbert Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, pp.13-14, 271, 301. See also Marc Lods, Confesseurs et martyrs, 31-33; Edelhard L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 54-55, 101, 106.

<sup>163</sup>The Martyrdom of Irenaeus, Bishop of Sirmium 5, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 299.

<sup>164</sup>The Martyrdom of Polycarp 5, 9, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 7, 9. See also Marc Lods, Confesseurs et martyrs, 29-31.

<sup>165</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 7-8, in The Acts of the Christian Fathers, Herbert Musurillo, 115-117. For an analysis of Perpetua's visions, see Cées Mertens, "Les premiers martyrs et leurs rêves. Cohésion de l'histoire et des rêves dans quelques 'passions' latines de l'Afrique du Nord," Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique 81 (1986): 20-28.

<sup>166</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 10, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 117-119. Rader notes that although Perpetua's story was probably written by a woman, she "appears male in battle and female in victory." The account, thus, was universally applicable for both male and female members of the church. Rosemary Rader, "The Martyrdom of Perpetua: A Protest of Third-Century Christianity," in A Lost Tradition: Women Writers of the Early Church, eds. Patricia Wilson-Kastner, et al. (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1981), 9-11.

had truly died as martyrs. Perpetua, for example, saw four people in her vision of heaven who had died previously in the same persecution: Jucundus, Saturninus, Artaxius, and Quintus. (It is notable that this vision of Quintus in heaven represents another example of the bestowal of the title "martyr" to someone who had perished in prison.)<sup>167</sup> Tertullian cited Perpetua's vision, in which the only Christians present in heaven were martyrs, as proof that the martyrs alone were guaranteed entrance into heaven. All other souls would be "detained in safe keeping in Hades until the day of the Lord."<sup>168</sup>

Because it was commonly believed that martyrs were already with Jesus Christ in heaven, they were customarily viewed as possessing a special ability to intercede on behalf of the living Christians. For example, the martyred Cyprian appeared to Marian in a vision, and he gave him a drink of water from paradise. This helped Marian to maintain his resolve to be faithful instead of following the wayward path of the other people present in his vision, who had renounced their faith, and who were now confronted by a judge who ordered their eternal death.<sup>169</sup> The same martyrdom account reports that the martyred Agapius, conscious of the merits he had earned, prayed repeatedly, now that he was in heaven, for the martyrdom of Tertulla and Antonia, two young women whom he had loved like daughters. God granted Agapius this request as a divine favour, though he told him that one prayer would have been sufficient to effect his cause.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, Perpetua's case suggests a belief that people on the verge of being killed as martyrs can also intercede for the hastening of the purification process which supposedly torments uncleaned souls until their sins are remitted.

Those who are designated as martyrs are frequently depicted as the recipients of divine miracles, which demonstrate that they are "filled" with or surrounded by the Holy Spirit. For example, after Polycarp completed his prayer of thanksgiving to God, a fire was lit to destroy him; it miraculously surrounded his body and extracted a sweet fragrance from his flesh, rather than a fetid odour. He only died when a dagger was thrust into his body.<sup>171</sup> Blandina is described as being "filled with such power" that she was easily

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<sup>167</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 11, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 121.

<sup>168</sup>Tertullian, A Treatise on the Soul 55, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 231.

<sup>169</sup>The Martyrdom of Marian and James 6, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 203. See also Celestino Noce, Il martiro, 73-75.

<sup>170</sup>The Martyrdom of Marian and James 11, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 209.

<sup>171</sup>The Martyrdom of Polycarp 15-16, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 15. See also Marc Lods, Confesseurs et martyrs, 31.

able to exhaust her torturers by enduring more torments than they were physically capable of performing.<sup>172</sup> Perpetua did not know that she had been trampled by a rushing mad heifer because "so absorbed had she been in ecstasy in the Spirit."<sup>173</sup> The author of Perpetua's martyrdom account suggests that Perpetua probably needed to consent explicitly to her death before an "unclean spirit" could kill her.<sup>174</sup>

Martyrs were also seen as providing suitable models of the faith which all Christians should imitate. Aside from encouraging the steadfastness of other Christians, the martyrs also attracted converts and regained apostates. Justin Martyr (c.100-c.165 C.E.), for example, recalled the impression that was made on him before his conversion by the surprising firmness of some Christians in the face of execution, who, according to popular opinion were immoral persons who should have been clinging desperately to the world of senses.<sup>175</sup> Biblis, who had been among the apostates of Lyons, declared that she was now a Christian once again because she had been emboldened by those who had allowed themselves to be executed on account of an accusation that they had drunk the blood of children. She realized that this accusation was completely false because Christians were not even permitted to consume the blood of animals. She therefore decided to join these other martyrs.<sup>176</sup> Thus Tertullian made his famous observation that, whenever Christians are killed, the number of Christians multiplies thereafter because "the blood is the seed."<sup>177</sup> The willingness of some Christians to suffer and to die on account of the faith shows that they take it seriously and it encourages other people to imitate the ways how they demonstrated their faith in life and, if necessary, in death as well.

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<sup>172</sup>The Martyrs of Lyons 1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 67.

<sup>173</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 20, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 129.

<sup>174</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 21, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 131.

<sup>175</sup>Justin Martyr, 2 Apology 12, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, 192. Concerning the apologetic and edifying functions of the martyrs in the Church, see Marc Lods, Confesseurs et martyrs, 36-44.

<sup>176</sup>The Martyrs of Lyons 1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 71. Thus her sins were expiated when she returned to Christianity as a martyr. Oscar Watkins, A History of Penance, vol. 1 (London: n.p., 1920, repr. New York: Burt Franklin, 1961), 102-103.

<sup>177</sup>Tertullian, The Apology 50.13, trans. T.R. Glover, 227; Tertullian, The Apology 50, trans. S. Thelwall, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 55.



**Summary:**

In the pre-Constantinian Church, Christians already examined many of the same issues that have emerged over the past three decades in contemporary Latin America: who the martyrs are; what their motive was to remain steadfast and to die on account of the faith; how they died; who the persecutors are; what motivated the persecutors' violent actions; how the alleged martyrs are authenticated; and what the effects are of the deaths on the martyrs themselves, on the Christian communities, and on non-Christians. Their responses represent an important resource for the Christians living in subsequent periods so that they can make sense of the violent deaths suffered in their own historical circumstances. In chapter eight, Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom is compared and contrasted with the responses which the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church gave to these issues.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE CONCEPT OF MARTYRDOM FROM THE FOURTH CENTURY TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

From the death of Stephen, the Christian protomartyr, up to the proclamation of the Edict of Milan in 313, Christian writers identified many occasions when Jewish and Roman mobs and authorities repressed and killed Christians, purportedly because they despised the Christian faith. Because the martyrs were viewed as perfectly imitating Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, the martyred Christian became the model for the ideal Christian. While some Christians of the fourth century probably shared Eusebius' conviction that the triumph of Constantine signified the dawn of a new era characterized by Christianity inevitably supplanting paganism as the religion of the "world-wide" Roman Empire, many others identified new instances of martyrdom both inside and outside the Empire.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the ideal of martyrdom remained deeply embedded in the popular imagination throughout the period from the fourth century to the fifteenth century. The objective of this chapter is to examine the further evolution of the concept of martyrdom in the Church during this lengthy period by focusing on four major themes: what constituted martyrdom in the fourth and fifth centuries; the early development of the cult of martyrs and of their relics; the ways that the alleged martyrs were authenticated between the fourth century and the tenth century; and the authentication of popularly venerated martyrs by means of papal canonization between the tenth century and the fifteenth century.

#### A. New Martyrs of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries

Using the widely acknowledged martyrs of the pre-Constantinian Church as exemplary models, some Christian writers of the fourth and fifth centuries identified what they believed to be new occurrences of martyrdom both within and outside the Roman Empire. They identified pagans and heretics as the persecutors. During the same period, Christians sometimes bestowed the title of "martyr" on particularly impressive ascetics and virgins who, they thought, suffered daily on account of the faith. The objective of this section is to examine the two distinct routes to sanctity which existed at this time: a violent death and daily suffering throughout one's life.

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<sup>1</sup>See Chestnut's study of "Eusebius : Hellenistic Kingship and the Eschatological Constantine," in The First Christian Histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius, Glenn F. Chestnut, *Théologie Historique*, vol. 46 (Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1977), 133-166.

### 1. Martyrs of Pagan and Arian Persecutions:

Basil of Caesarea (c.330-379),<sup>2</sup> Sozomen (early fifth century),<sup>3</sup> Rufin (or Rufinus, c.345-410)<sup>4</sup> and Jerome (c.342-420)<sup>5</sup> blame Julian the Apostate (332-363), a pagan Roman emperor who ruled from 361 to 363, for new occurrences of Christian martyrdom. It seems, however, that Julian was directly responsible for the deaths of very few Christians. Two Christian standard bearers in the army, who preferred to die instead of sacrificing to pagan gods, represent a rare example.<sup>6</sup> More frequent, however, are the

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<sup>2</sup>Basil calls Euphychius "the blessed martyr". He was beheaded during the reign of Julian because he had participated in the levelling of a temple of Fortune in the city of Caesarea in Cappadocia. Basil does not refuse this as an instance of provoked martyrdom. Basil, Letters 142, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in The Letters, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1928; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 345; Hans Lietzmann, From Constantine to Julian, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf, vol. 3 of A History of the Early Church (London, England: Lutterworth Press, 1950; repr., London, England: Lutterworth Press, 1963), 279-280. Julian ordered the restoration of the temple of Apollo at Daphne, the temple of Ascius at Aegae, and three temples at Caesarea, all of which Christians had either damaged or destroyed. Wilmer Cave Wright, trans., footnotes in Julian, The Works of Emperor Julian, vol. 3 (London, England: William Heinemann, 1923), 98-99; 287.

<sup>3</sup>See the citation of Sozomen, Ecclesiastical History 5.3 and 5.11, when a priest named Basil was killed at Ancyra allegedly with Julian's approval, in Robert Louis Wilken, John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late 4th Century, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage, vol. 4 (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1983), 89.

<sup>4</sup>Labriolle examines the portrayal of Julian as a persecutor of Christians in the writings of the historians Rufin, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret. Pierre de Labriolle, La Réaction païenne: Étude sur la polémique antechrétienne du Ier au VIe siècle (Paris: L'Artisan du livre, 1948), 373-374. See also Glenn F. Chestnut, The First Histories, 226-227; and the citation of Rufin, Ecclesiastical History 10.37, where the author relates the nonfatal torture of the young Theodore of Antioch under Julian, in Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 9.

<sup>5</sup>Bowersock cites the example of the soldier, Aemilian, who was killed at Durostorum in Moesia, allegedly with the implicit approval of Julian. This citation is from Jerome, Chron. ann. Abr. 2379. G. W. Bowersock, Julian the Apostate (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), 83.

<sup>6</sup>G. W. Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 83. Though Julian enacted a series of laws which significantly weakened the position of Christians in Roman society (e.g., by reopening pagan temples and forbidding Christians to teach grammar, rhetoric and philosophy), he evidently made a point of not creating a new wave of Christian martyrs, contrary to the claims of the aforementioned Christian writers. Julian, Letters 36; The Shorter Fragments 14; Against the Galilaeans, in The Works of Emperor Julian, vol. 3, 117-123; 303; 319-427. G. W. Bowersock, Julian the Apostate, 79-81; J.R. Palanque, G. Bardy, et al., The Church and the Arian Crisis, trans. Ernest C. Messenger, vol. 1 of The Church in the Christian Roman Empire (London, England: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1949), 233-234. John Chrysostom (c.347-407), writing between 363 and 380 (after Julian's death), observed that Julian (unlike his predecessors Decius and Diocletian) was clever enough to forego a bloody attack on Christians: "he hesitated to declare war openly...so as not to provide us with any opportunity to weave a crown of martyrdom. For he considered it unbearable and the worst of all calamities for someone to be brought before the tribunal and endure torture unto death in behalf of the truth: he thus displayed his deep-seated hostility toward us." John Chrysostom, Discourse on Blessed Babylon and Against the Greeks 120, trans. Margaret A. Schatkin. The

examples of Christian writers who recount new examples of martyrdom in pagan lands. John Cassian (c.360-435) reports that crowds of Christians gathered to venerate some monks who had been massacred by nomadic Saracen brigands in Thecua, Palestine.<sup>7</sup> Paulinus of Milan mentions Sisinius and Alexander, who "gained the crown of martyrdom in the pagan persecutions of Anauni," sometime shortly after 397.<sup>8</sup> Isidore of Seville (c.560-636), writing about 624, reports that many Christian Visigoths died as martyrs in the mid-fourth century, especially throughout the reign (364-376) of their pagan ruler, Athanaric (d.381), because "they did not agree to sacrifice to the idols."<sup>9</sup>

While pagan persecutions of Christians sometimes occurred under Julian and in the lands where Christianity was not well established (usually nonfatal persecutions under Julian, but often fatal persecutions in lands outside the Roman Empire), some Christian writers were especially alarmed by the new persecutions directed against their fellow "true Christians" by those whom they viewed as heretical Christians. Basil of Caesarea, writing in 373,<sup>10</sup> deems Emperor Valens' Arian<sup>11</sup> persecution of Christians

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Fathers of the Church, vol. 73 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1983), 147.

<sup>7</sup>Jean Cassien, Conférences 6.1, trans. E. Pichery, vol. 1 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1955), 219; Hippolyte Delehaye, Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints dans l'antiquité (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1927), 113.

<sup>8</sup>Paulinus, The Life of St. Ambrose 10.52, trans. John A. Lacy, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1952), 64. See "SS. Sisinnius, Martyrius and Alexander, Martyrs (A.D. 397)," in Butler's Lives of Saints, eds. Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater, vol. 3 (n.p., Great Britain: Palm Publishers, 1956), 420.

<sup>9</sup>Isidore of Seville, History of the Goths 6, trans. Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford, in Isidore of Seville, History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi (n.p., 1966: 2d. rev. ed., Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1970), 5. Wolfram identifies the period between 369 and 372, during Athanaric's reign, as the second Visigothic persecution (the first was in 348), which was "directed indiscriminately" against both Arians and Catholics. Herwig Wolfram, History of the Goths, trans. Thomas J. Dunlap (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1988), 79. See also Peter Heather and John Matthews, The Goths in the Fourth Century, Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 11 (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 1991), 103-117.

<sup>10</sup>Paul J. Fedwick, "A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea," in Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium, ed. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, part 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 16.

<sup>11</sup>Arianism, named after Arius (c.250-c.336), "maintained that the Son of God was not eternal but created by the Father from nothing as an instrument for the creation of the world; and that therefore He was not God by nature, but a changeable creature, His dignity as Son of God having been bestowed on Him by the Father on account of His foreseen abiding righteousness." "Arianism," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, eds. F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1957; repr. of 2d ed., Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1989), 83.

as a particularly insidious strategy of the Devil because the laity are reluctant to call the victims martyrs.<sup>12</sup> Thus, in 376, Basil judges this to be "the most oppressive of persecutions."<sup>13</sup> Probably in the same year, Basil responds to a complaint made by some monks that the laity do not designate their deceased monastic brethren as martyrs because they were killed by Arian Christians. He tells them his conviction that "it is reasonable to assume that the recompense which is laid up in the next life for your labours in defence of the true religion is many times greater" than the reward for the widely acknowledged martyrs of the pre-Constantinian Church, killed during persecutions perpetrated by pagans.<sup>14</sup> Gregory of Nazianzus (329-389) calls Valens (emperor, 364-378), "an emperor, too fond of gold and most hostile to Christ...he was a persecutor following a persecutor, and following the Apostate."<sup>15</sup> He also reports that eighty priests perished in 370, when Valens ordered a boat carrying them near Bithynia to be set afire.<sup>16</sup> The Arian imperial persecution of Christians ended in 378 with an edict by the Catholic emperor Gratian (western emperor, 375-383).<sup>17</sup>

Many Visigothic Catholics were killed after the widespread conversion (probably between 382 and 395) of their countrymen to Arianism.<sup>18</sup> The Visigoths were Arians until 587, one year after the crowning of Reccared (d.601), their new Catholic king. He convoked the third Council of Toledo in 589 (a synod of bishops from Spain and Gaul, presided over by Isidore of Seville's brother, Leander), which condemned

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<sup>12</sup>The "devil, when he saw the Church multiplying and flourishing still more amid the persecutions of its enemies, changed his plan, and no longer fights openly, but places hidden snares for us, concealing his plot by means of the name which his followers bear, that we may suffer as our fathers did and yet not seem to suffer for Christ, because of the fact that our persecutors also bear the names of Christians." Basil, Letters 139, in Letters, vol. 2, 327.

<sup>13</sup>Basil, Letters 243, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in The Letters, vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1930; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 437.

<sup>14</sup>Basil, Letters 257, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in The Letters, vol. 4 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 31-33; Paul J. Fedwick, "A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea," in Basil of Caesarea, 17.

<sup>15</sup>Gregory Nazianzen, On St. Basil the Great 30, trans. Leo P. McCauley, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 22, 53.

<sup>16</sup>Gregory Nazianzen, On St. Basil 46, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 22, 66.

<sup>17</sup>Thomas Comerford Lawler, note in Jerome, The Letters of St. Jerome, trans. Charles Christopher Mierow, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 33 (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1963), 192.

<sup>18</sup>E.A. Thompson, The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1966), 91.

Arianism.<sup>19</sup> Augustine of Hippo (354-430), as well, explicitly refers to the current "brutal persecution visited upon Gothic Christians in their own land by their own king...the people were all Catholic, several of whom won the martyr's crown."<sup>20</sup> Isidore of Seville blames Huneric, the Vandal king (429-484), for introducing "the Arian pestilence through the whole of Africa, [he] drove priests from their churches, caused many to be martyrs."<sup>21</sup> For example, in 468, the Vandals under Huneric, killed Laetus, the Catholic bishop of Nepte in Africa.<sup>22</sup> Isidore reports that Laetus "suddenly gained heaven victoriously" because he had refused to become Arian.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. "Bloodless Martyrs": Ascetics and Virgins:

Christian writers did not restrict themselves to applying the term "martyr" to the victims of persecutions perpetrated by pagans and heretics. The increasingly common ascription, especially since the late fourth century, of "bloodless martyrdom" to ascetics and virgins suggests that avenues of sanctity were being explored other than the ultimate sacrifice of one's life. The latter, nevertheless, still remained the ideal

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<sup>19</sup>Jacques Fontaine, Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1959), 5; Isidore of Seville, History of the Goths 52-53, in History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi, 24-25; Ernest Brehaut, An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages: Isidore of Seville, Burt Franklin Research & Work Series, no. 107 (New York: Columbia University, H.E.P.L., 1912; repr., New York: Burt Franklin, 1964), 21; Marie Madden, Political Theory and Law in Medieval Spain (New York: Fordham University Press, 1930), 34.

<sup>20</sup>Augustine, The City of God 18.52, trans. Gerald G. Walsh and Daniel J. Honan, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 8 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954), 176.

<sup>21</sup>Isidore of Seville, History of the Vandals 74-75, trans. Guido Donini and Gordon B. Ford, in History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi, 34-35. In 484, Victor of Vita wrote extensively of the Arian persecution imposed on the Catholics of Africa by the Vandals. See Victor of Vita, History of the Vandal Persecution, trans. John Moorehead, Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 10 (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 1992).

<sup>22</sup>See "SS. Donatian, Laetus and Others, Bishops and Martyrs (c. A.D. 484)," in Butler's Lives of Saints, vol. 3, eds. Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater (n.p., Great Britain: Palm Publishers, 1956), 496-497.

<sup>23</sup>Isidore of Seville, History of the Vandals 79, in History of Goths, Vandals, and Suevi, 37. On the other hand, there is little or no convincing evidence that the Suevi in Galicia--Arians since perhaps only one year after the arrival in 465 of the Arian missionary, Ajax--persecuted Catholic subjects in the century before their conversion to Catholicism sometime in the three years prior to 561 (during the reign of their first Catholic king, Ariamir). E.A. Thompson, "The Conversion of the Spanish Suevi to Catholicism," in Visigothic Spain: New Approaches, ed. Edward James (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1980), 77, 87-88, 91. See also John Meyendorff, Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions, 143-144.

manner for expiating one's sins, and thereby securing a place in heaven.<sup>24</sup> Ascetics and virgins were called martyrs because they were seen as suffering martyrdom daily, rather than imitating the Passion of Jesus Christ only in the moments immediately preceding death. Whether the application of the term "martyr" to bloodless martyrs was intended to equate them literally or figuratively with the blood martyrs, it nevertheless gives evidence to the rising concern with proving that the martyrs had lived virtuous lives, which had prepared them to die for their faith. Prior to the fourth century, dying for one's faith was normally sufficient proof of one's sanctity for the members of the local communities. A formal process for scrutinizing the lives of the martyrs was probably not considered necessary because they were often already well known locally. Cyprian of Carthage<sup>25</sup> and Clement of Alexandria,<sup>26</sup> however, are two examples of writers during the third century who already believed that the martyr's perfection consisted less in the fact of being killed than in the disposition of the soul that accepted the sacrifice.<sup>27</sup>

The Life of St. Anthony, written by Athanasius (c.296-373), probably between 356 and 357, is an early example of conferring to an ascetic the sanctity previously reserved principally to martyrs.<sup>28</sup> Athanasius reports that Anthony of Egypt (c.251-356) yearned for martyrdom during Emperor Maximin Daia's persecution of Christians in the east (306-313).<sup>29</sup> He even prayed that he might die as a martyr, but he "did not give himself up" because he rejected voluntary martyrdom by means of provocation. Anthony recognized that God had selected him, instead, to minister to the other Christians whom God was summoning to martyrdom, and also to teach the ascetical practices for perfecting the virtues of "prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude, understanding, charity, love of the poor, faith in Christ, gentleness, [and] hospitality."<sup>30</sup> Athanasius notes that, even though Anthony believed these practices would prepare Christians for the future life in heaven, he still grieved because he had not been personally summoned to

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<sup>24</sup>For example, Jerome lauds those monks who, while praising Jesus Christ, manifest a chastity on earth that resembles the chastity of the martyrs in heaven. Jerome, Homilies 40, trans. Marie Liguori Ewald, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 48 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 299.

<sup>25</sup>Cyprian, Letters 12.1; 62.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 34-35, 199-200.

<sup>26</sup>Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata, 4.4, vol. 2 of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 411-412.

<sup>27</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 96.

<sup>28</sup>"Introduction," in Life of St. Anthony, Athanasius, trans. Mary Emily Keenan, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1952), 128-129.

<sup>29</sup>W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 377-381.

<sup>30</sup>Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony 17, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 151.

martyrdom.<sup>31</sup> Anthony apparently viewed the relinquishing of one's life for Jesus Christ as either superior to, or the desirable culmination of, a life of self-denial. His biographer, Athanasius, however, clearly values asceticism as highly as blood martyrdom: Anthony was "daily a martyr to conscience in the sufferings he endured for the faith...he fasted constantly and wore a garment made of skin, the inner lining of which was of hair."<sup>32</sup> As daily martyrs, ascetics were also assured their entrance into heaven and their participation at the side of Jesus Christ at the final judgment. The posthumous miracles that God supposedly effected through the ascetics, just as he had through the martyrs, were seen as divine approval of the ascetic's daily self-renunciation.<sup>33</sup> Athanasius, writing less than fifty years after the Diocletian persecution, thus provides evidence that many Christians already believed that the era of blood martyrdom was largely over. Asceticism was an alternative to blood martyrdom that gave contemporary Christians a new way for identifying themselves with Jesus Christ's life, Passion, and subsequent resurrection.

Jerome's application of the term "martyr" to whoever chooses to live in poverty for the sake of imitating Jesus Christ is particularly noteworthy because he excludes from this honour everyone who is poor by necessity, especially the "many beggars...who long to be rich men and, therefore, commit crime! Poverty of itself does not render one blessed, but poverty for the sake of Christ."<sup>34</sup> Jerome's concept of martyrdom is intriguing when it is recognized that Gustavo Gutiérrez and other liberation theologians claim that Christians are truly martyrs if they are killed for working alongside the poor, denouncing the injustices which they suffer, and announcing a Kingdom promised by a God who loves all people, but especially the poor. The conflict between their perspectives is examined in chapter eight.

Jerome, writing about 392, also relates an early example of identifying virginity with martyrdom in his Life of Malchus. Maintaining one's virginity thus became another substitute for martyrdom. According to Jerome, some time after the monk, Malchus, had been captured and made a slave, his master wished to reward him for his obedience by compelling him to marry a woman slave, who was still married. Malchus warned his new wife that he was prepared to commit suicide for the higher end of protecting his chastity because "chastity preserved is its own martyrdom....I shall be both my own persecutor and martyr."<sup>35</sup> The sin of adultery did not enter into the conversation. Therefore, Malchus believed that the

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<sup>31</sup>Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony 46, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 177.

<sup>32</sup>Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony 47, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 178.

<sup>33</sup>Athanasius cites miracles of healing and exorcism that God worked through Anthony. Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony 14, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 148-149.

<sup>34</sup>Jerome, Homilies 86, trans. Marie Liguori Ewald, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 57 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1966), 211.

<sup>35</sup>Jerome, Life of Malchus 6, trans. Marie Liguori Ewald, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 292.



preservation of his soul through suicide, at the expense of his body, was acceptable. It would be akin to the martyrdom suffered by the Early Christians before pagan judges, with the odd qualification that he would be his own persecutor. The question whether this was not similar to threatening voluntary martyrdom was notably absent. Malchus' threat resembles the examples of Dorothea and Sophronia, examined in chapter one. They were designated as martyrs after committing suicide in order to preserve their virginity.<sup>36</sup>

The biographers of the ascetics often state that their subjects deserve veneration because they would have been blood martyrs in another age. They merely lacked the opportunity, not the desire, to imitate Jesus Christ's Passion in this definitive manner. Sulpicius Severus,<sup>37</sup> in his letter to Aurelius (prior to 404),<sup>38</sup> asserts that Martin of Tours (316/335-397) wished to be a martyr, but "given the condition of the times, martyrdom was not possible for him."<sup>39</sup> Sulpicius claims that Martin is now sharing the martyrs' glorious place in heaven because he was a bloodless martyr who had regularly suffered physical hardships, persecutions, and the abuses of men and demons.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, Hilary of Arles (403-449), writing between 430 and 432, describes his archepiscopal predecessor, Honoratus (c.350-429), as a martyr of peace by means of his abstention from bodily pleasures. Hilary, addressing the deceased Honoratus, lauds him: "with the Lord...you went through the martyrdom which you always bore in your thoughts, as though persecution had been raised against your faith. And truly, I think, no one denies that you lacked the executioner, for martyrdom, not the desire."<sup>41</sup> For Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea is a supreme example of an "unbloody martyr...who had won his crown without blows" because he was even willing to rescue the persecutor, who was planning to make him a blood martyr, from the wrath of the people who had just arrived in time to protect him.<sup>42</sup> Isidore of Seville, too, explains that there are two types of martyrs: "one

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<sup>36</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 8.14, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 29, 196-198.

<sup>37</sup>Sulpicius was born somewhat after Paulinus of Nola (born about 335) and he probably died in the 420s. Clare Stancliffe, St. Martin and His Hagiographer: History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1983; repr., Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1987), 15-16.

<sup>38</sup>Clare Stancliffe, St. Martin and His Hagiographer, 6.

<sup>39</sup>Sulpicius Severus, The Letter to the Deacon Aurelius, trans. Bernard Peebles, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 7 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1949), 149.

<sup>40</sup>Sulpicius Severus, Letter to Aurelius, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 7, 150-151.

<sup>41</sup>Hilary of Arles, A Sermon on the Life of St. Honoratus 37-38, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 15, 392-394.

<sup>42</sup>Gregory Nazianzen, On St. Basil the Great 57, trans. Leo P. McCauley, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 22 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1953), 75.

in open suffering, the other in the hidden virtue of the spirit."<sup>43</sup>

As was seen in chapter one, the accounts of martyrdom from the pre-Constantinian Church focused notably on a definitive moment when all previous sins would be washed away by a baptism of blood. In the fourth and fifth centuries, blood martyrdom began to be viewed as the culmination of a virtuous life, especially a life characterized by daily bloodless martyrdom. Blood martyrdom continued to mean the certain forgiveness of sins, but this could also be achieved by means of daily self-renunciation. Thus the bloodless martyrs established both the possibility of sanctity for themselves and they influenced the development of what would become a new and higher standard--a virtuous life--for judging the authenticity of blood martyrs.

### B. Early Development of the Cult of Martyrs and of Their Relics

The dramatic flourishing of the cult of martyrs and of their relics subsequent to the time of Constantine (d.337), especially with the encouragement of Pope Damasus (c.304-384; pope 366-384), eventually led to what would become, with the establishment of the process of canonization, the second requirement for authenticating specific examples of martyrdom (along with ascertaining whether an alleged martyr had died on account of the faith, after having lived a virtuous life): that the martyr is responsible for posthumous miracles.<sup>44</sup> The veneration of bloodless martyrs, which is rooted in the veneration of blood martyrs, eventually led to the development of the cult of nonmartyr saints.

As was seen in chapter one, in the pre-Constantinian Church, local communities particularly valued their martyrs because they exemplified the best way for imitating the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The appearance of visions and miracles in the acts of the martyrs anticipate their integral roles later as characteristics of the cult of true martyrs. For example, the authors of the acts report that martyrs in heaven sometimes appeared in visions or in dreams to encourage those who were about to follow the same course. The authors claim, as well, that miracles sometimes occurred during tortures that would temporarily

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<sup>43</sup>Isidore elaborates that there are many Christians, "enduring the lyings-in-wait of the enemy and resisting all carnal desires, [who] have become martyrs even in time of peace, because they have sacrificed themselves in their heart to the omnipotent God, and if they had lived in time of persecution, they could have been martyrs in reality." Extract from Isidore of Seville, Etymologies 7.11.4, in Ernest Brehaut, An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages, 195.

<sup>44</sup>J.N.D. Kelly, Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 82. In 354, Pope Damasus published the Roman calendar (which had been assembled in 336), which included all the anniversary dates, as well as, the locations of the tombs of those martyrs recognized by the pope. This clearly encouraged the development of specific cults by attracting pilgrims from great distances. Charles Pietri, Roma Christiana: Recherches sur l'Église de Rome, son organisation, son idéologie de Miltiade à Sixte III (311-440), vol. 1 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1976), 126-129.

protect the future martyr's body from damage. The miracles were attributed to the presence of either the Holy Spirit or the resurrected Jesus Christ with the future martyr.

### 1. The Commemoration and Invocation of Martyrs:

The account of Polycarp's death, as was noted in chapter one, provides the earliest extant evidence of the cult of martyrs.<sup>45</sup> The members of the Church of Smyrna gathered their martyred bishop's bones, which "were dearer to [them] than precious stones and finer than gold, [they] buried them in a fitting spot." They congregated by his grave "to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom, both as a memorial for those who have already fought the contest and for the training and preparation of those who will do so one day."<sup>46</sup> Hippolyte Delehaye suggests that this practice probably began as a modification of the common Roman custom, whereby a family would gather annually at the grave of a deceased family member in order to commemorate his or her birthday. Now the family was the whole community and the date was the martyr's "birthday into heaven". Recording the date on a calendar of the local church, later called a martyrology, assured that the anniversary would continue to be observed thereafter.<sup>47</sup>

The martyrs were buried outside the city limits, as was the Roman custom, usually among other Christians.<sup>48</sup> On both the day of burial and the anniversary of the martyr's death, the members of the local church gathered around the martyr's grave (clandestinely and in small numbers before Constantine's time) and celebrated the eucharist, often with the local bishop presiding.<sup>49</sup> The martyr's name was cited with honour during the Eucharist.<sup>50</sup> The crowds that congregated grew during the fourth century as Christian pilgrims, in addition to visiting the various holy locations related to the life and death of Jesus Christ in Palestine and Jerusalem, began to arrive at the grave sites of martyrs in order to participate in the anniversary festivals. For example, pilgrims went to Antioch to visit the basilicas of the martyr Babylas and

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<sup>45</sup>Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints: Formation coutumière d'un droit, Société D'Histoire du Droit: Collection D'Histoire Institutionnelle et Sociale, vol. 6 (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1975), 23.

<sup>46</sup>Herbert Musurillo, The Martyrdom of Polycarp 18, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, 17.

<sup>47</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyres, 28-34.

<sup>48</sup>The exact reason or set of reasons why Christians, from the start, buried their dead instead of cremating them is unknown, but it was becoming an increasingly universal practice, as well, among Roman nonchristians. Beaudouin De Gaiffier, Études critiques d'hagiographie et d'iconographie (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1967), 14.

<sup>49</sup>Baudouin De Gaiffier, Études critiques, 18; John Meyendorff, Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions, 93.

<sup>50</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 30, 40-41.

of the Maccabean martyrs.<sup>51</sup> Prudentius (348-c.410), writing to Vasconians between 398 and 400, reports the arrival of pilgrims from all over to Calagurris (i.e., Calahorra, Spain), seeking the aid of the military martyrs, Emeterius and Chelidonius, who were reputed for refusing to serve in the army during an uncertain earlier persecution, rather than make sacrifices to the pagan gods. Prudentius says that these pilgrims were healed or they had demons exorcised by the intercession of these martyrs because "Christ in his goodness has never refused aught to his witnesses."<sup>52</sup> Bishop Paulinus of Nola (353/354-431), as well, reports the swelling of local crowds around the grave of St. Felix of Nola, with the arrival of pilgrims seeking his heavenly assistance.<sup>53</sup>

Before the time of Constantine, writers such as Hippolytus (c.170-c.236),<sup>54</sup> Origen (c.185-c.254),<sup>55</sup> and Cyprian (d.258)<sup>56</sup> express their belief that the martyrs in heaven are praying for the living Christians. At this time, Christians still prayed to God for the martyrs, just as they prayed for all other deceased Christians. In the second half of the fourth century (as was already seen with Prudentius), however, the practice developed of praying directly to the martyrs and of invoking them, usually in the presence of their graves, for the special favour that they might intercede, by prayer, on behalf of the living petitioner. Advocates of this practice believed that it was more likely that God would respond to the entreaties of the martyrs than those of the average, living Christian because the martyrs were already certainly in heaven in the presence of God, and they were especially esteemed by God.

In a lecture usually attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem (c.315-386) and dating to the second half of the fourth century, the author reports that it was a normal practice, at this time, to commemorate the martyrs

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<sup>51</sup>Jean Chélini and Henry Branthomme, Les Chemins de Dieu: Histoire des pèlerinages chrétiens des origines à nos jours (Paris: Éditions Hachette, 1982), 55-69.

<sup>52</sup>Prudentius, Crowns of Martyrdom 1, trans. H.J. Thomson (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), 99-107; Prudentius, The Martyrs' Crowns 1, trans. M. Clement Eagan, in The Poems of Prudentius, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 43, 95-105. Prudentius shared his contemporaries' belief that martyrs could intercede on behalf of their propitiators. See Macklin Smith, Prudentius' Psychomachia: A Reexamination (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 40.

<sup>53</sup>Paulinus of Nola, Poems 14; 26, trans. P.G. Walsh, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 40 (New York: Newman Press, 1975), 79-80; 267-268; Louis Duchesne, Early History of the Christian Church: From its Foundation to the End of the Fifth Century, trans. Claude Jenkins, vol. 3 (London, England: John Murray, 1924; repr., London, England: John Murray, 1960), 115.

<sup>54</sup>Hippolyte, Commentaire sur Daniel 2.30, trans. Maurice Lefèvre (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947), 122.

<sup>55</sup>Origen, Contra Celsum 8.64, trans. Henry Chadwick (London, England: Cambridge University Press, 1953; repr., London, England: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 448-449; Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 37, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 180-181.

<sup>56</sup>Cyprian, Letters 60.5, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 196.

(along with the patriarchs, prophets and apostles) after the consecration of the bread and the wine at the Eucharist, and to make a general request for their intercession on behalf of the people. It is noteworthy that the community did not pray for the martyrs, as they did for the benefit of "the holy Fathers and Bishops who have fallen asleep, and generally for all those who have gone before," because they believed that the martyrs' sins were already cleansed.<sup>57</sup> While specific supplications were usually made by the martyr's grave, which represented a physical limitation of the cult, they could be presented any day of the year, not just on the martyr's anniversary.<sup>58</sup> The petitioners asked the martyrs to pray for the forgiveness of their sins, miracles of healing, the exorcism of evil spirits, and various other, sometimes mundane, aid.

Ambrose (c.339-397), for example, writing just after 377, advises Christians not to be embarrassed or ashamed to ask the martyrs to intercede for the forgiveness of their sins because the martyrs "themselves knew the weaknesses of the body, even when they overcame."<sup>59</sup> For Ambrose, the living Christian is like a feeble patient who is incapable of visiting a physician without the assistance of others more able. In this case the able friends are the martyrs because they can recall the plights of living and, in fact, have triumphed over them. Sulpicius Severus sums up the need for the aid of martyrs--whether blood martyrs or, in this case of Martin of Tours, bloodless martyrs--in an impressive manner. Profoundly conscious of his own sinfulness, Sulpicius believes that he and all other regular Christians "will avoid "the dread abyss of Hell" only by means of the "one single, last hope: that what we cannot obtain of ourselves we may secure through the merits of Martin's prayers for us."<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Gregory of Nazianzus beseeches the deceased Basil, one whom he considers to be a bloodless martyr, to "look down upon us from on high, O divine and sacred soul, and restrain by your intercession the thorn of the flesh, given to us by God for our chastisement, or inspire us with courage to suffer it, and direct our whole life to our greatest profit."<sup>61</sup> The suffering that is characteristic of fleshly existence seems to be the stimulus of Gregory's request. Thus the cult of martyrs seems to have developed and thrived largely because Christians believed that their entreaties could possibly help reduce their sufferings.

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<sup>57</sup>Cyril of Jerusalem, The Mystagogical Lectures 5.9, trans. Anthony A. Stephenson, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 64 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1970), 197.

<sup>58</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 115.

<sup>59</sup>Ambrose, Concerning Widows 9.55, trans. H. De Romestin, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1955), 400.

<sup>60</sup>Sulpicius Severus, Letter to Aurelius, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 7, 152.

<sup>61</sup>Gregory Nazianzen, On St. Basil 82, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 22, 98-99.

Augustine explains that Christians do not, and should not, worship and offer sacrifices to the martyrs as if they were gods. Christians should instead recall the martyrs so as to imitate them.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, when Christians ask the martyrs to intercede, the resulting miracles of healing are solely the work of the same unique God who is shared by the martyrs and by the living Christians. Although Augustine admits that he does not know the means by which God effects these miracles, he is certain that the singular purpose for the miracles is for people to believe that Jesus Christ is God.<sup>63</sup>

Valerian, the bishop of Cimelium around 455, says that the veneration of a local unnamed martyr and of other saints should be encouraged because they are like influential friends at the court of the king. For Valerian, God is the lofty sovereign whose favour Christians need. Valerian extols bloodless martyrs along with blood martyrs for the many benefits their merits have brought to the community, most notably the exorcism of demons: "we often observe that in the exorcism of an unclean spirit human bodies are harassed, and, after the names of the saints have been invoked, the activities of these bodies give testimony about the author of their crimes."<sup>64</sup> Ambrose effectively sums up the feebleness of the Devil when confronted by the power of the martyrs: "our Adversary and his legions are daily hurled back by the virtue of the martyrs."<sup>65</sup> Ambrose provides an example from among the variety of other miracles attributed to the intercession of the martyrs. He ascribes the safe return of his shipwrecked brother, Satyrus (d.375/377), to the latter's vows to the martyr, St. Lawrence (d.258). Satyrus was thus able to arrive home so that he could die comfortably among his family.<sup>66</sup>

## 2. Martyrs' Relics: The Privileged Place Where Miracles are Manifested:

Although the bones or other relics of the martyrs were clearly valued at least as early as the account of Polycarp's martyrdom, not until the end of the fourth century was it believed that a special virtue or supernatural effect could be obtained by touching them.<sup>67</sup> Then the relics of the martyrs began to be

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<sup>62</sup>Augustine, The City of God 8.27, trans. Gerald G. Walsh and Grace Monahan, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 7 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1952), 74-76.

<sup>63</sup>Augustine, The City of God 22.10, trans. Gerald G. Walsh and Daniel J. Honan, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 24 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954), 452-453.

<sup>64</sup>Valerian, Homilies 15-16, trans. George E. Ganss, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 17 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1953), 401, 405.

<sup>65</sup>Ambrose, Funeral Oration on the Death of Emperor Theodosius 10, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 22, 311.

<sup>66</sup>Ambrose, On the Death of His Brother Satyrus I 17-18, trans. John J. Sullivan and Martin R.P. McGuire, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 22, 169.

<sup>67</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 116.

attributed many of the same powers that were derived from invoking the martyrs themselves, such as exorcising demons and miracles of healing.<sup>68</sup> According to John Chrysostom, they could even raise the dead.<sup>69</sup> The relics of martyrs were highly valued because they were doors to heaven that were situated at particular places and in specific material forms.<sup>70</sup>

The members of the churches which were not located on the sites of pre-Constantinian persecutions often wished to secure their own relics so that they, too, would have their advocates in heaven. In the eastern part of the Roman Empire, this led to the transportation or "translation" of martyrs' relics, their division, and the establishment of an active trade in them. The caesar, Gallus (351-354), was responsible for the first known translation of relics in 351. John Chrysostom reports that the newly installed relics of this martyr, St. Babylas (killed during the Decian persecution from 249 to 251), in Antioch silenced the oracle of Daphne.<sup>71</sup> Constantius II, the eastern emperor from 337 to 361, enthusiastically endorsed the practice of translations. To establish Constantinople as the religious centre of the empire, he ordered the translation of the remains of Timothy (in 356), Andrew, and Luke (in 357) from the western part of the Empire to the new capital.<sup>72</sup> Concerning the division of relics, Paulinus of Nola believes that the power channelled by God through the martyr's remains exists equally in each part.<sup>73</sup> For the same reason, Gregory of Nazianzus keenly endorses the rising practice of dividing relics. He believes that even some tiny drops of the martyr's blood have the same power as the whole body. Theodoret of Cyrrihus (c.393-c.458) concurs with this belief: "In the subdivided body, grace remains undivided and the fragments, as little as

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<sup>68</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 118-124.

<sup>69</sup>Robert L. Wilken, John Chrysostom and the Jews, 89.

<sup>70</sup>Peter Brown, The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 1-3.

<sup>71</sup>John Chrysostom, Discourse on Blessed Babylas 73-75, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 73, 117-119; Hippolyte Delehaye, The Legends of the Saints, trans. Donald Attwater (New York: Fordham University Press, 1962), 132; Patrick J. Geary, Furta Sacra: Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), 34; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 25.

<sup>72</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 55; Hans Lietzmann, From Constantine to Julian, vol. 3 of A History of the Early Church, 327; F. Homes Dudden, The Life and Times of St. Ambrose, vol. 1 (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1935), 314.

<sup>73</sup>The "influence of an interred saint is not confined to the area where his body lies. Wherever there is part of a saint's body, there too, his power emerges. God takes a hand in offering proof of his blessed merits; the great power evinced in even a particle of the saint's ashes proclaims the power of the bodies of apostles at the prompting of the Word." Paulinus of Nola, Poems 27.441-448, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 40, 286.

they may be, hold the same virtue as the entire body."<sup>74</sup>

In the western region of the Empire, especially in Rome, the custom was still maintained in the late sixth century of generally not disturbing the remains of the deceased.<sup>75</sup> Thus the bodies of martyrs were usually moved only when the local communities feared the invasion of people whom they considered to be barbarians.<sup>76</sup> Instead, various objects that supposedly had been in contact with the graves of martyrs were traded as relics. Pope Gregory I (c.540-604; pope 590-604), writing around 593 or 594, responds to a request by the empress, Constantina, the wife of Emperor Maurice (c.539-602; Byzantine emperor 582-602), for either St. Paul's head or some other part of his body. He tells her that this is not the custom of Romans and that a great deal of injury, including death, can be sustained by handling the bodies of the saints. Instead, Gregory offers her St. Peter's chains. Regarding "the custom of the Greeks, who say that they take up the bones of the saints...we can scarcely believe it."<sup>77</sup> They surely had to be false relics. Only at the beginning of the eighth century did the division and translation of relics become acceptable in the

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<sup>74</sup>Gregory of Nazianzus and Theodoret are cited in Jean Chélini and Henry Branthomme, Les Chemins de Dieu, 130.

<sup>75</sup>In 386, Emperor Theodosius I (347-395; emperor of the east 379-392; sole emperor 392-395) explicitly forbade the translation and sale of relics: "No person shall transfer a buried body to another place. No person shall sell the relics of a martyr; no person shall traffic in them. But if anyone of the saints has been buried in any place whatever, persons shall have it in their power to add whatever building they may wish in veneration of such a place, and such building must be called a martyr." The Theodosian Code 9.17.7, trans. Clyde Pharr, in The Theodosian Code and the Sirmundian Constitutions (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1952), 240. See also the following: Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 386; F. Homes Dudden, The Life and Times of St. Ambrose, vol. 1, 313; Charles Pietri, Roma Christiana, vol. 1, 495; 606; Robert Markus, The End of Ancient Christianity (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 149; Jean Chélini, Les Chemins de Dieu, 84-85; Jean Daniélou and Henri Marrou, The First Six Hundred Years, trans. Vincent Cronin, vol. 1 of The Christian Centuries (London, England: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964), 317.

<sup>76</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority in the Western Church (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1948; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1980), 26-27. It seems that no Roman relics were moved until the siege of Rome by Goths in 537, and then, only because of the fear that they would be profaned. John Meyendorff, Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions, 94. Chélini and Herrmann-Mascard summarize various translations of martyrs' relics during the eighth and ninth centuries that were precipitated by the fear that nonchristian invaders would desecrate the treasured remains. Jean Chélini, L'Aube du moyen âge: Naissance de la chrétienté occidentale: La vie religieuse des laïcs dans l'Europe carolingienne (750-900) (Paris: Picard, 1991), 330-331; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 53-57.

<sup>77</sup>Gregory the Great, Epistle 4.30, trans. James Barnby, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Second Series, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1964), 154-156; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 33-34.



western part of what had been the Roman Empire.<sup>78</sup>

The zeal for acquiring martyrs' relics led to claims that relics were discovered of previously unknown martyrs or of famous martyrs whose grave sites had been forgotten until that opportune time. In 386, for example, Ambrose of Milan's community requested that he adopt the progressively more common practice of dedicating his new basilica with the relics of martyrs. He said that he would do so if he had appropriate relics. The previously unknown martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, supposedly martyrs of the Neronian persecution, then appeared to Ambrose (according to Augustine, in a vision) and guided him to their unknown resting place where their remains were miraculously uncorrupted.<sup>79</sup> It is notable that Ambrose did not feel the need to determine whether these martyrs were authentic. Their appearance in a vision was sufficient proof for him. Similarly, neither Paulinus (Ambrose's biographer) nor Augustine questioned the veracity of this event.<sup>80</sup> Ambrose placed their remains under an altar. This later became a universal practice and an altar, by definition, began to require the inclusion of the relics of a saint.<sup>81</sup> Ambrose gave some of the relics to other communities in Gaul, thereby spreading the cult of Gervasius and Protasius. In 396, Ambrose sent the relics of thirteen other saints to Victricius (c.330-407), the bishop of Rouen. As Eric Kemp notes, Victricius' explanation of the cult of relics anticipates later theological explanations: martyrs, from very early in the Church were believed to be in heaven and thus intimately united with God; relics, as parts of the martyr's body or objects which have been in contact with it, became privileged material locations for God to channel his grace in order to effect miracles.<sup>82</sup>

In 404, Jerome says that he is responding to the "wickedness" of Vigilantius' criticism that the use of relics is derived from the heathen customs of praying to dead heroes because he "cannot constrain

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<sup>78</sup>Jean Chélini and Henry Branthomme, Les Chemins de Dieu, 121; John Meyendorff, Imperial Unity and Divisions, 94; Hippolyte Delehaye, Sanctus: Essai sur le culte des saints, 196-199. Chélini summarizes various examples of the new practice (in the west) of translating martyrs' relics for devotional reasons during the eighth and ninth centuries. These contrast with the aforementioned translations effected to safeguard the relics from the feared abuse of nonchristians. Jean Chélini, L'Aube du moyen âge, 331-332.

<sup>79</sup>Augustine, Confessions 9.7, trans. Vernon J. Bourke, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 21 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 242.

<sup>80</sup>Paulinus, Life of St. Ambrose 5.14, trans. John A. Lacy, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 41; F. Homes Dudden, The Life and Times of St. Ambrose, vol. 1, 298-301.

<sup>81</sup>F. Homes Dudden, The Life and Times of St. Ambrose, vol. 1, 302-303; Mary Melchior Beyenka, trans., introduction in Ambrose, Letters, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 26, x.

<sup>82</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 4-5. See also Clare Stancliffe, St. Martin and His Hagiographer, 274.

[himself] and turn a deaf ear to the wrongs inflicted on apostles and martyrs.<sup>83</sup> Jerome explains that Christians do not worship the martyrs as gods. Instead, they simply honour members of the Christian community in heaven who show their continuing concern for the members of the Christian community on earth by praying on their behalf. Christians should be grateful because the martyrs' prayers are particularly potent.<sup>84</sup> Jerome's defence of the honouring of martyrs is predicated on his belief that humans, as creatures who have received everything from God, truly have nothing to give back to God except their blood. Because Jesus Christ died for humanity, "the Lord reckons it [i.e., the martyr's suffering for the name of Jesus Christ] as equality because He knows that His servant has nothing else to give Him....[The martyr] is like that widow who put the two mites in the treasury."<sup>85</sup> For Jerome, even the bloodless martyr, who has diligently continued ascetical practices, effected miracles, and exorcised demons, cannot approach God confident of entering heaven: "his conscience trembles when he beholds the Lord."<sup>86</sup> Only martyrs can be certain of their admittance into heaven because their blood baptism has thoroughly cleansed their sins.

Peter Brown notes that, though the younger Augustine had been critical of Donatists for worshipping dust and relics from the Holy Land, the older Augustine was willing to examine miracles that allegedly had occurred either at the shrines of martyrs or by touching martyrs' relics.<sup>87</sup> He ordered that all the miracles which he had judged authentic be recorded and publicly announced.<sup>88</sup> Thus Augustine recounts the minute details of the role of martyrs and their relics in the exorcism of demons, the healing of blindness, the reviving of a dead priest, and even the locating of a gold ring in a fish so that an old man could purchase a new cloak. The protomartyr, Stephen, whose relics were discovered about 416, was particularly beneficent. He interceded on behalf of three victims of gout to effect their healing.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Jerome, Against Vigilantius 1, trans. W.H. Fremantle, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Second Series, vol. 6 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1957), 417.

<sup>84</sup>Jerome, Against Vigilantius 5-6, in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. Second Series, vol. 6, 418-419.

<sup>85</sup>Jerome, Homilies 40, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 48, 297.

<sup>86</sup>Jerome, Homilies 40, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 48, 298.

<sup>87</sup>Donatists were a "schismatic body in the African church [from the fourth to the eighth century]...[who were theologically] rigorists, holding that the Church of the saints must remain 'holy' ...and that sacraments conferred by 'traditores' were invalid....Converts to Donatism were rebaptized, a proceeding repeatedly condemned by orthodox synods." "Donatism," The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 419.

<sup>88</sup>Peter Brown, Augustine of Hippo (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1967), 414-418.

<sup>89</sup>Augustine, City of God 22.8, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 24, 440-444; Peter Brown, Augustine of Hippo, 413.

### C. The Authentication of Martyrs Between the Fourth and Tenth Centuries

Prior to the Constantinian era of the Church, the judgment about whether or not specific Christians should be designated as martyrs was largely a popular one, with the local bishop sanctioning the choice by assuring that the martyr's birthday into heaven was recorded, and then celebrated annually by the grave with a eucharistic service. Some examples exist of writers rejecting voluntary martyrs, but this is not unambiguously the norm. Other than the virtues displayed at the time of the trials, the faith of the martyrs throughout their lives apparently was not scrutinized. The only clear exception seems to be the rejection of the popular martyrs who were known to be from among the heretical groups. Because the martyrs were usually from the communities that venerated them, their lives were probably well known and therefore their virtues and their faith were obvious. Only when the martyrs were from heretical groups did the bishops feel compelled to reject them.

#### 1. False Martyrs and Questionable Martyrs:

Christian writers did not usually designate the heretics who died alongside Christians in persecutions as true martyrs. As Eric Kemp observes, Eusebius of Caesarea does not furnish any evidence that Metrodorus, a Marcionite presbyter,<sup>90</sup> was venerated as a martyr like Pionius (d.350), after dying with him.<sup>91</sup> Augustine dismisses all claims of martyrdom by the Donatists.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, Canon 34 of the Council of Laodicea, which met during the third quarter of the fourth century, ordered bishops not to permit the continued veneration of pseudomartyrs or heretical martyrs.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Marcionites were followers, during the second and third century, of Marcion's thesis that Jesus Christ had come to reveal the "Supreme God of Love... [whose] purpose [was] to overthrow the Demiurge," the "Creator God" of the Old Testament. "Marcion," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 870.

<sup>91</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 7-8. See Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 4.15, 46-47 and 5.16, 22; Herbert Musurillo, trans., The Martyrdom of Pionius the Presbyter and his Companions 21, in Acts of the Christian Martyrs, 165.

<sup>92</sup>Augustine, Letters 185.9-11, trans. Wilfrid Parsons, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 30 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1955), 149-152. For Augustine, someone is a martyr, not simply by suffering persecution, but if one "suffered [persecution] for justice' sake." Augustine, Letters 185.10, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 30, 151.

<sup>93</sup>"No Christians shall forsake the martyrs of Christ, and turn to false martyrs, i.e. those of the heretics, or to the heretics themselves before mentioned, for they are far from God. Whoever, therefore, goes over to them shall be held excommunicate." Canon 34 of the Synod of Laodicea, vol. 2 of Charles Joseph Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church From the Original Documents, ed. and trans. Henry Nutcombe Oxenham (Edinburgh, Great Britain: T. & T. Clark, 1896; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1972), 316. See also Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 16; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints (Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor, 1991), 74.

As in the pre-Constantinian Church, voluntary martyrdom continued to be questioned, yet not unambiguously rejected. For example, Anthony of Egypt (according to his biographer, Athanasius), and Peter Chrysologus (c.400-450) reject voluntary martyrdom, as long as the option of fleeing exists. Gregory of Nazianzus goes as far as to include in his "law of martyrdom" the clear statement that Christians are "not to advance to the contest deliberately out of regard for the persecutors and the weaker brethren."<sup>94</sup> The Council of Elvira, about 305 in Spain, is also notable because it directly counters any claims of martyrdom when it has been provoked, like, for example, when a Christian is killed for destroying idols.<sup>95</sup> In fact, the excessive zeal for martyrdom, even so far as to volunteer for it or to provoke it, is a frequent criticism employed by true Christians (i.e., Catholics) to undercut the claims of martyrdom made by the members of groups they deemed heretical. This criticism is particularly evident in Augustine's denigration of the Donatist assertion that theirs was a church of martyrs.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, the existence, among orthodox bishops, of views contrary to the aforesaid canon of the Council of Elvira is clearly exemplified by Basil's letters praising Euppsychius (a martyr who had provoked his own death by helping to raze the temple of Fortune during the reign of Emperor Julian), and through which he even invited honoured episcopal brethren as guests for the dedication of a church in Euppsychius' name.

The veneration of suicide victims in North Africa was apparently common enough to warrant the official chastisement by the Council of Carthage in 348 on the grounds that the dignity of real martyrs was being undermined.<sup>97</sup> In contrast, Jerome apparently would have continued calling Malchus a martyr--whether a blood martyr or a bloodless martyr is not clear--if he had carried out his threat of committing

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<sup>94</sup>Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony 46, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 177; Peter Chrysologus, Sermons 152 trans. George E. Ganss, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 17 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1953), 259; Gregory Nazianzen, On St. Basil 6, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 22, 31.

<sup>95</sup>Canon 60 of the Synod of Elvira, vol. 1 of Charles Joseph Hefele, A History of the Christian Councils From the Original Documents, ed. and trans. William R. Clark (Edinburgh, Great Britain: T. & T. Clark, 1894; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1972), 163. See also Robert Markus, The End of Ancient Christianity, 92; Ramsay MacMullen, Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100-400) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 90; Robert M. Grant, Augustus to Constantine: The Rise and Triumph of Christianity in the Roman World (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1970; pbk. ed., San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 228.

<sup>96</sup>Augustine, Letters 10-11, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 30, 150-152; Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 22.

<sup>97</sup>Bishops were to exercise disciplinary action against the parties guilty of venerating anyone who had killed themselves: laity were to practice penance and priests were to be demoted. Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 14; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 74-75; Paul Monceaux, Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne depuis les origines jusqu'à l'invasion arabe, vol. 3 (Paris: n.p.: 1905; repr., Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1966), 214; 223. For the wave of Circumcellian suicide martyrs, see: Paul Monceaux, Histoire littéraire de l'Afrique chrétienne, vol. 5 (Paris, n.p., 1920; repr., Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1966), 39-43.

suicide in order to preserve his virginity.

There exists some evidence from the late fourth century that the possibility of designating soldiers killed in battle as martyrs was considered, but rejected. In the set of criteria that Optatus of Milevis established in 370 for identifying true martyrs, he explicitly rejects heretics, and he states that martyrs must also display certain virtues during their lives: they must practise peace, thereby rejecting "warrior martyrs", and they must demonstrate charity.<sup>98</sup> Shortly after Optatus, Basil of Caesarea wrote a letter (in 374 or 375) in which he suggests that soldiers, though they are not guilty of homicide, should abstain from receiving communion for three years because their hands are unclean. This letter was later quoted by some bishops against the Emperor Phocas (emperor 602-610) to counter his stated desire that whoever was killed in battle be honoured as a martyr.<sup>99</sup>

## 2. Jews Venerated as Martyrs by Christians:

The "Holy Innocents" joined the Maccabean martyrs as the objects of veneration for being Jewish precursors to the Christian martyrs. Prudentius, writing between 398 and 400, describes the children, whom Herod was said to have slaughtered with the goal of murdering the baby, Jesus of Nazareth (Matthew 2:16-18), as the "sweet flowers of martyrdom...[who were the] first victims offered up to Christ...[who] before God's very altar throne, with martyrs' crowns and palms you play."<sup>100</sup> Peter Chrysologus, the archbishop of Ravenna, also praises the Holy Innocents. He calls them and their mothers fortunate because the children "were born for martyrdom, not for the world...by one gift, but in different ways, the mothers were baptized in their tears and the infants in their blood."<sup>101</sup> It is notable that, in Prudentius' poem and in Chrysologus' sermon, the fact that these children were Jewish is neither explicitly acknowledged nor denied, perhaps because it is obvious. The primary function of their existence, however, is to be "Christ's soldiers."

Christians usurped the Maccabean martyrs during the fourth century, when the Christians in Antioch assumed the ownership of the synagogue under which lay their relics. Although the exact date and

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<sup>98</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 13-14; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 75.

<sup>99</sup>Roy J. Deferrari, trans., footnote in Basil, Letters 188, The Letters, vol. 3, 44; Paul J. Fedwick, "A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea," in Basil of Caesarea, 16.

<sup>100</sup>Prudentius, Hymns for Every Day 12.125-132, trans. M. Clement Eagan, in The Poems of Prudentius, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 43 (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1962), 89. "Herod was furious on realising that he had been fooled by the wise men, and in Bethlehem and its surrounding district he had all the male children killed who were two years old or less, reckoning by the date he had been careful to ask the wise men. Then were fulfilled the words spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: *A voice is heard in Ramah, lamenting and weeping bitterly: it is Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted because they are no more.*" (Matthew 2:16-18).

<sup>101</sup>Peter Chrysologous, Sermons 152, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 17, 258.

circumstances are unknown, it is likely that the Jews did not willingly relinquish the property.<sup>102</sup> The martyrology of Asia Minor suggests that Christians were celebrating the anniversary of the Maccabees already during the second quarter of the fourth century.<sup>103</sup> Basil, Valerian, and Prudentius commend the Maccabean mother, who patiently supported her sons as they were being killed, as an especially praiseworthy example for grieving mothers to imitate.<sup>104</sup> Prudentius also assures his audience that the soul of a new martyr (St. Vincent) has joined the Maccabees in heaven.<sup>105</sup>

### 3. The Authentication of Martyrs and Relics by Bishops:

In the fourth and fifth centuries, bishops began to adopt a larger role in the authentication of the martyrs. As in the pre-Constantinian Church, the existence of a cult of martyrs continued to signal a popular judgment of authenticity among the members of the local community. The bishops usually did not generate new cults, but rather, they helped spread the existing cults of martyrs whom they believed to be exemplary examples of sanctity. While the cults that existed in rural areas and among the monasteries of ascetics remained largely outside of episcopal control, the bishops and presbyters, responding to popular appeals, often decided on which urban-based anniversaries would be recognized.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, the cults of certain martyrs were clearly strengthened by the bishop's participation in commemorations and by his communication of the date, by letter, to other bishops. The publication of the Roman Calendar in 354 (which had been assembled in 336) particularly influenced the flourishing of the cults of the martyrs included on the list because this signalled the approval of the see of Rome.<sup>107</sup> Bishops sometimes warned the local population that the veneration of certain alleged martyrs was questionable. Some bishops even occasionally ordered the obliteration of deviant cults. In fact, in 401, the Council of Carthage, called by Aurelius, who was the bishop of Carthage (d. about 430, bishop from c.391), and with Donatists and others deemed schismatics particularly in mind, decreed that it was the obligation of the African bishops to investigate all cultic manifestations within their dioceses. Thus, it became the responsibility of the local

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<sup>102</sup>Robert Louis Wilken, John Chrysostom and the Jews, 88.

<sup>103</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 95; 201-202.

<sup>104</sup>Basil, Letter 6, in The Letters, vol. 1, 41-43; Prudentius, Crowns of Martyrdom 10.751-790, in The Poems of Prudentius, 279-281; Prudentius, The Martyrs' Crowns 10.751-790, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 43, 222-224; Valerian, Homilies 18, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 17, 415-420.

<sup>105</sup>Prudentius, Crowns of Martyrdom 5.521-536, The Poems of Prudentius, 201; Prudentius, The Martyrs' Crowns 5.521-536, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 43, 166.

<sup>106</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 21.

<sup>107</sup>Charles Pietri, Roma Christiana, vol. 1, 617-624.

African bishop to judge the genuineness of all martyrs who were the objects of popular veneration.<sup>108</sup>

Episcopal approval is evident whenever bishops invited their fellow bishops to visit their communities to participate in the anniversary celebrations of the local martyrs. For example, several of Basil's letters are extant through which he formally invited the bishops of the Diocese of Pontus to attend the dedication of a church to the martyr, Euppsychius (in 372), and anniversary festivals commemorating the martyr's death (in 372, 374 and 376).<sup>109</sup>

It became increasingly important to authenticate the popularly venerated martyrs as the practice of invoking martyrs for their prayers of intercession flourished. Of course, it was believed that only authentic martyrs could intercede for the supplicants. Thus, a long tradition of legitimacy supported the claims of authenticity for any cults which could be dated to the martyr's interment.<sup>110</sup> More suspect, however, were the cults founded on newly discovered relics. Powerful visions of the martyrs, followed by the exhibition of impressive posthumous miracles, resulting from prayers of invocation, were nevertheless sufficient proof for authenticating both the martyrs who had been unknown prior to the unearthing of their relics (e.g., Ambrose's discovery of Gervasius and Protasius in 386), and the widely acknowledged martyrs (e.g., Stephen), whose cults did not predate the appearance of their relics. In both cases, it was often claimed that the veneration of these martyrs had lapsed during times of excessive persecution.<sup>111</sup> The proliferation of the trade in relics also placed the veracity of specific relics in doubt.

Sometimes, the authenticity of the posthumous miracles was scrutinized. Sulpicius Severus, writing between 397 and 401, reports that Martin of Tours decided to test a spirit that the local populace was venerating at an altar. Martin was concerned because the previous bishops had not left reports that the cult dated from the time of a known occurrence of martyrdom. Martin prayed to God to reveal the identity and the nature of the spirit. The spirit, which appeared only to Martin, confessed that he had been a criminal, that he did not now share the heavenly existence of true martyrs, and that the people were gravely mistaken

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<sup>108</sup>"No memoriae martyrum (martyr chapels) shall be tolerated that do not contain relics of the martyr in question, or do not bear some distinct relation to him, as being the place of his birth, death, etc." Canon 17 of the fifth Carthaginian Synod, vol. 2 of Charles Joseph Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, 426. See also: Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 75; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident aux derniers siècles du moyen âge: D'Après les procès de canonisation et les documents hagiographiques (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1981), 16-17.

<sup>109</sup>Basil, Letters 100 and 142, in The Letters, vol. 1, 185; 345; Basil, Letters 176, in The Letters, vol. 2, 459-461; Basil, Letters 252, in The Letters, vol. 4, 19.

<sup>110</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 70.

<sup>111</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les Origines du culte des martyrs, 71.

to venerate him, Martin immediately ordered the removal of the altar and the cessation of this false cult.<sup>112</sup>

Gregory of Tours (b. late 530s, d.594) recounts how his great-grandfather, Bishop Gregorius, contended that people were mistakenly praying to a buried pagan, until the spirit of the martyr appeared to him in a vision, and identified himself as Benigus of Dijon. Only then were his relics raised and a church constructed to commemorate him. The martyr, pleased with the decision, supposedly helped the monks miraculously lift his sarcophogous, which was so heavy that "three yoke of oxen were unable to budge it."<sup>113</sup> Gregory also recounts that one of Bishop Ebergisilus' deacons, received a vision of St. Mallosus, who guided him to the place where his relics were buried.<sup>114</sup> It should be noted, however, that Martin and Gregory represent rare examples of bishops directly confronting the people for venerating false martyrs during the period between the fourth and sixth centuries.<sup>115</sup>

By the eighth century, the translation and elevation of the martyr's relics to an exalted place, including in or under an altar, became the clearest demonstration that the given martyrs had been authenticated. The decision to translate relics was no longer a decision made simply by the members of the local community as they saw fit. Instead, the translation of a saint's body, whether a martyr or a nonmartyr, required the approval of the local bishop, the head of a monastery, and occasionally, an assembly of bishops at a synod.<sup>116</sup> Regulations instituted by Charlemagne (c.742-814; emperor since 800) forbade both the veneration of new relics without the bishop's approval, and their translation without the endorsement of the prince or an assembly of bishops. While the prince could order the elevation, he could not authorize a public cult. This would require the local bishop's approval.<sup>117</sup> Especially among the German bishops in the ninth

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<sup>112</sup>Sulpicius Severus, Life of St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor 11, trans. Bernard Peebles, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 7 (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1949), 118-119; Sulpicius Severus, Vie de Saint Martin, ed. and trans. Jacques Fontaine, vol. 2 (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1968), 690-712; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 81.

<sup>113</sup>Gregory of Tours, Glory of the Martyrs 50, trans. Raymond Van Dam, of Translated Texts for Historians: Latin Series, vol. 3 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1988), 70; 74-75.

<sup>114</sup>Gregory of Tours, Glory of the Martyrs 62, 86-87.

<sup>115</sup>Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 81.

<sup>116</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 29-35, 38-39; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 82-83.

<sup>117</sup>By means of an intermediary at the Council of Frankfurt in 794, Charlemagne forbade the public cult of martyrs or confessors whose sanctity had not yet been verified by an ecclesiastical authority. The said authority was designated unambiguously and officially (in accordance with the existing custom) to be the bishop. The legislation on new translations was established in 813 as canon 51 of the Council of Mayence. Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 84-85; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 22; Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 30; Jean Chélini, L'Aube du moyen âge, 319-320.



century, the practice began of consulting a diocesan or provincial synod, and even a national council of bishops before translating relics. This trend toward appealing to progressively superior authorities would eventually lead to seeking the approval of the pope in the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>118</sup>

Between the eighth and tenth centuries, visions and the occurrence of miracles and even of divine punishments sometimes impressed upon bishops the authenticity of the subject martyr. For example, early in the tenth century, a certain Bishop Stephen tried to stop the cult of St. Eugenius, a Spanish martyr purportedly from the Early Church, whose relics had been recently translated (about 918) from St. Denis, near Paris, to the monastery of Brogne, in the diocese of Liège.<sup>119</sup> Stephen ordered the people to stop venerating Eugenius because nothing was truly known about his life. He interpreted the dreadful illness, which he suddenly suffered, as a consequence of divine wrath and justice. He then retracted his order, and a true martyr was apparently vindicated. In a similarly impressive manner, St. Jeron, a priest who had been killed in Holland around 856, appeared in a dream about one hundred years later and ordered the translation of his body.<sup>120</sup>

#### D. Authentication By Means of Papal Canonization

The term "canonization" has been used since at least the early eleventh century in order to designate the papal judgment that popularly recognized martyrs and nonmartyr saints, in fact, are true saints of the Roman Catholic Church and, thereby, fit to be the objects of public veneration and invocation.<sup>121</sup> The objective of this section is to examine the origin of the papal prerogative for authenticating all the martyrs and nonmartyr saints of the Roman Catholic Church; the establishment of two requirements for canonization; the scrutiny of the alleged martyr's motive for dying; and the divergence between the popes' hesitation to canonize new martyrs and the Franciscans' desire for martyrdom between the thirteenth century and the fifteenth century.

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<sup>118</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 22-24.

<sup>119</sup>Baudouin De Gaiffier, Recherches d'hagiographie latine (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1971), 12; Jonathan Sumption, Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion (London, England: Faber & Faber, 1975), 148.

<sup>120</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 44-46.

<sup>121</sup>The earliest extant use of the term "canonizare" to describe the approval of a candidate for sainthood dates from between 1016 and 1024, during the papacy of Pope Benedict VIII (1012-1024). The subject canonized was St. Simeon of Padolirone. Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 58; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 25.

### 1. Early Examples of Popes Authenticating Martyrs:

Other than the authorization by Pope Gelasius I (pope 492-496) of the translation of the relics of St. Severinus (the "apostle to Austria"; died in 482) in the late fifth century, there is no definite evidence of either the papal authorization of the translation of relics or the papal approval (which would soon be known as canonization) of martyr or nonmartyr saints until 993, when Pope John XV (pope 985-996) officially declared the sanctity of the nonmartyr, Ulric of Augsburg (c.890-973). Pope John XV ratified the collective decision to recognize Ulric as a saint, which was made at a council in the Lateran. The papal bull also included signatures indicating the consent of various cardinals, bishops, and deacons.<sup>122</sup>

Before Pope Leo IX (pope 1049-1054), the official recognition of new saints was mainly an episcopal task. Bishops would authenticate saints by ordering the translation of their relics. Although bishops were not obliged to do so, they would sometimes ask for the pope's ratification of their local initiative because his authority would make the designation of sanctity more prestigious, and it could even attract attention for the cult beyond the usual limits of the local district. At least since 1042, when Simeon of Syracuse was canonized by Pope Benedict IX (pope 1033-1045), the objective of papal canonization has been to create universal public ecclesiastical cults for the saints approved by the popes.<sup>123</sup> Even when the episcopal power to order translations of the remains of the person was contemporaneous with papal canonization in the second half of the twelfth century, bishops often subsequently sought the pope's additional approval of the translations which had already been made.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 27; 56-57; Pierre Delooy, Sociologie et canonisations, 28; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 85; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi: Concetto teologico-giuridico, morte psicologica e martirio bianco. Procedura antica e moderna. Riforma Paolina. Fermenti per ulteriori aggiornamenti (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1979), 118; L. Herding, "Materiali per la storia del processo di canonizzazione," Gregorianum 16 (1935): 176; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 93; Jonathan Sumption, Pilgrimage, 148; Joseph H. Lynch, The Medieval Church: A Brief History (London, England: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1992), 174; Alexander Clarence Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church and Its Influence on the Civilisation of Western Europe from the First to the Thirteenth Century (New York: Burt Franklin, 1909), 379; Margaret R. Toyne, S. Louis of Toulouse and the Process of Canonisation in the Fourteenth Century (n.p.: Manchester University Press, 1929; repr., Farnborough, England: Gregg Press, 1966), 135-136; Horace K. Mann, The Lives of the Popes in the Early Middle Ages, vol. 4 (London, England: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1925), 385; 387.

<sup>123</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 60-61. See "St. Simeon of Syracuse (A.D. 1035)," in Butler's Lives of the Saints, eds. Herbert Thurston and Donald Attwater, vol. 2 (n.p., Great Britain: Palm Publishers, 1956), 441-442. On the other hand, Pope Alexander III's prescription of a local cult, restricted to a single diocese, for the confessor William of Malaville, a hermit (d. 1157), is the earliest certain example of what would become known as papal beatification; this contrasts with papal canonization—the proclamation of a universal cult. Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 91. See also Colin Morris, The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250 (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1989), 219.

<sup>124</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 28.

Seeking the pope's endorsement became an increasingly regular part of the canonization procedure during the pontificate of Pope Alexander III (pope 1159-1181) as the process of canonization became standardized with the elaboration of canon law. The advocates of the candidates for canonization (whether martyrs or nonmartyrs) delivered written biographies, emphasizing the candidates' virtues and the miracles, which had been attributed to them, especially posthumous ones. Sometimes the popes requested the examination of witnesses to determine the veracity of the aforementioned claims.<sup>125</sup> Although the popes occasionally made personal declarations on a candidate's sanctity, they normally sought the advice of a synod, with the canonization proclaimed at general councils.<sup>126</sup>

## 2. The Establishment of Two Requirements for Papal Canonization:

In 1199, Pope Innocent III (1160-1216; pope 1198-1216) established the two requirements for the canonization of saints, whether martyrs or nonmartyrs, which continue to be in effect in the pontificate of Pope John Paul II: "the virtue of morals" and the "virtue of signs". Henceforth, it was necessary to prove unambiguously that the candidates had lived piously and that posthumous miracles had certainly come about due to their prayers of intercession on behalf of the living member of the Church who had invoked them, seeking such aid.<sup>127</sup> Candidates could not be canonized if either requirement was lacking. The requirement to prove the presence of both elements is significant because it veered from the existing tendency to identify sanctity primarily, if not solely, with the occurrence of posthumous miracles attributed to the alleged saint. Pope Innocent III warned that the Devil, too, could be responsible for such impressive wonders. He held

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<sup>125</sup>Pope Urban II (c. 1042-1099; pope 1088-1099) was the first pope to order a diocesan inquiry--overseen by the local archbishop--into both the virtues displayed by the alleged saint during his life and the reliability of witnesses' claims that the candidate for papal canonization indeed had effected posthumous miracles. Nicholas of Trani, a non-martyr, was the object of this scrutiny in 1099. About 1120, Pope Callistus II (pope 1119-1124) was the first pope to order a critical written biography of a candidate for canonization. St. Arnulf (c. 580-before 685) was the object of this inquiry. Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 86.

<sup>126</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 62-65, 79-82; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 28; Joseph H. Lynch, The Medieval Church, 174.

<sup>127</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 104; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 43. On January 30, 1202, Innocent III wrote Hubert Walter, the archbishop of Canterbury (1193-1205), informing him that he had canonized the confessor, Gilbert of Sempringham (c. 1083-1189). Innocent III said that Gilbert had fulfilled the two rigorous conditions "to be accepted for a saint among men in the church militant": all saints need to display "holiness of life and mighty signs, that is, merits and miracles, so that each may reciprocally bear witness to the other." Pope Innocent III, Letters 10, in Select Letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England (1198-1216), trans. and eds. C.R. Cheney and W.H. Semple (London, England: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), 27. See also Raymonde Foreville, Le Pape Innocent III et la France (Stuttgart, Germany: Anton Hiersemann, 1992), 5; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 100-101; Jonathan Sumption, Pilgrimage, 64-65, 70-71.

the conviction that only God could accurately verify whether the supposed saint's interior life of thoughts and spiritual activities matched the exteriorly demonstrated virtues. Thus miracles were treated as a sign of divine consent of a popular reputation of martyrdom or sanctity.<sup>128</sup> Genuine martyrdom was the supreme sign of virtue, so martyrs did not have to display an unusual degree of self-abnegation by means of rigorous ascetical practices throughout their lives, nor did they have to be celebrated as mystics in order to fulfill the first requirement. Nonmartyr saints, on the other hand, had to demonstrate what were judged to be unusual signs of piety during their lives. Nowadays one shows the sign of sanctity insofar as one displays the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love and the moral or cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, justice, and prudence to a heroic level throughout a lifetime. Given the importance that Pope Innocent III attached to the satisfaction of both requirements for canonization, it is not surprising that the popes of the thirteenth century often ordered detailed examinations of the people who claimed that they had witnessed the candidates' martyrdom or unusually virtuous lives, and the results of their posthumous miracles.<sup>129</sup>

In addition to creating clear criteria for sanctity, Innocent III tried to regulate the cult of relics. At the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), which he called two years earlier, a decree was issued which prohibited displaying relics outside a special receptacle called a "reliquary", banned the sale of relics, and declared that no newly discovered relic could be venerated without securing its explicit authentication and approval by the pope. The objective of this decree was to respond to charges that the Roman Catholics often engaged in questionable activities with relics. The Council observed that "the christian religion is frequently disparaged because certain people put saints' relic up for sale and display them indiscriminately."<sup>130</sup>

In 1234, Pope Gregory IX (c.1148-1241; pope 1227-1241) published his *Decretals*, which led to the inscription in Church legislation of the pope's reserved right to determine ultimately who could be venerated as a martyr or a nonmartyr saint.<sup>131</sup> The commentary made by Pope Innocent IV (pope 1243-1254) on Gregory's *Decretals* asserts that a pope alone has this right because saints should be venerated

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<sup>128</sup>Pope Innocent III, Letter 10, in Select Letters of Pope Innocent III, 27-28.

<sup>129</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 87-88.

<sup>130</sup>Decree 62, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 1 (London, England: Sheed & Ward, 1990), 263; Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 30; L. Hertling, "Materiali per la storia del processo di canonizzazione," Gregorianum 16 (1935): 184; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 101, 111.

<sup>131</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 120; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 35; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 101-102; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 86. Deloos notes that Kemp is unique among scholars when he disputes the date of 1234 for the papal reserve of canonizations. Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 30.

universally and only the pope is responsible for the whole Church.<sup>132</sup> Pope Innocent IV also reaffirmed the twofold requisites of a virtuous life and genuine, posthumous miracles.<sup>133</sup> Of course, over the centuries the significance of living piously and the evidence that has been considered unimpeachable for verifying miracles have varied.

The institutionalization of the practice of examining both the posthumous miracles and the lives of candidates for sanctity translated into two questions for authenticating the causes of possible martyrs: first, whether a living cult already existed, that is, whether the alleged martyr enjoyed a popular reputation of martyrdom evidenced by people commonly seeking and receiving miracles due to the deceased person's intercession (this cult was supposed to be spontaneous and private; a publicly organized cult was to be implemented only subsequent to canonization); if this was the case, then second, whether the popularly proclaimed martyr had been an exemplary Christian who died for religious reasons. The first question was crucial. If members of their communities did not view these people as martyrs, then they were also unlikely to claim miracles attributable to their intercession and a cause would probably not be initiated to seek the pope's approval for a public ecclesiastical cult. A popular judgment of martyrdom was therefore a normal prerequisite to endeavoring to secure papal approval. Pope Innocent III, for example, did not canonize Peter of Castelneau, the Cistercian legate who was probably killed by supporters of Count Raymond VI of Toulouse in 1208, because members of the community did not attribute any miracles to him.<sup>134</sup> A significant variation to the normal prerequisite of a popular proclamation of martyrdom existed, however, in the flourishing mendicant orders. Candidates from these orders were at least as likely to be venerated within the strict confines of the order as among the people of nearby communities. Regarding the second question, persons were canonized as true martyrs of the Church if the pope judged that they had been exemplary Christians killed by persecutors who hated the Christian faith.<sup>135</sup> Defining exactly what

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<sup>132</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 120. It is interesting to note that, while henceforth the causes for canonization were submitted to the pope for approval, some bishops continued to respond to local requests by ordering translations. This is significant because translations, the physical transfer of the bodies, were clearly impressive and could be perceived by some observers as signalling a judgment of authentic sanctity. André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 36.

<sup>133</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 107-108; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 86; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 36.

<sup>134</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 44; Pierre Deloiz, Sociologie et canonisations, 297, 452. It is not known for certain who murdered Peter of Catelneau, but Peter had excommunicated Count Raymond in 1207 for not supporting his crusade aimed at eradicating heretics in France. Colin Morris, The Papal Monarchy, 445-446.

<sup>135</sup>Although martyrs need to demonstrate the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, and the cardinal virtues of justice, prudence, temperance and fortitude during their lives, unlike the confessors they do not need to exemplify these virtues to a heroic level in order to be canonized. Instead, the more crucial

constituted dying for one's faith, however, varied somewhat over the years. Thus, while the category of provoked martyrdom was generally, but not unanimously, rejected, the definition of exactly what provocation meant continued to vary. A considerable amount of ambiguity also existed regarding whether or not a person, instead, had died for non-religious reasons, usually political ones.

Popular martyrs were spontaneously invoked for their intercessions in order to effect miracles because their deaths had caught the popular imagination. They were viewed as having suffered an unjustly dealt violent death. Their innocent deaths were emphasized, rather than their conduct during their lives. Some popularly venerated martyrs were subsequently canonized because it was verified that indeed they had died for their faith, but many were not. These popular martyrs included men and women who were killed in domestic and work disputes, men killed in political conflicts and while on pilgrimage, and children who, it was believed, had suffered death at the hands of Jews.<sup>136</sup> Most of these popularly proclaimed martyrs

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question is whether they were killed because their persecutors hated the Christian faith.

<sup>136</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 173-177. For example, The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle reports the following account: The "Jews of Norwich bought a Christian child before Easter and tortured him with all the torture that our good Lord was tortured with; and on Good Friday hanged him on a cross on account of our Lord, and then buried him. They expected it concealed, but our Lord made it plain that he was a holy martyr, and the monks took him and buried him with ceremony in the monastery, and through our Lord he works wonderful and varied miracles, and he is called St. William." Dorothy Whitelock, et al., trans. and ed., The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1961), 200. This popularly proclaimed--but never papally canonized--child martyr, William of Norwich (d. 1144), was merely the most famous of those children whom local Christians believed to be victims of Jewish ritual murder. This libel charge would be used frequently to justify violent Christian antisemitic acts during the following centuries, even up to the twentieth century. In fact, already in the thirteenth century, the charge was common--and disconcerting--enough that Pope Innocent IV issued a bull in 1247 condemning it, Pope Gregory X (1210-1276; pope 1271-1276) reissued this bull in 1272, and Pope Martin IV (c. 1210-1285; pope 1281-1285) sent a letter in 1281 addressed to all Christians with the objective of undermining false Christian witnesses to Jewish ritual murder. Solomon Grayzel, The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century: A Study of Their Relations During the Years 1198-1254, Based on the Papal Letters and the Conciliar Decrees of the Period, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College, 1933; rev. ed., New York: Hermon Press, 1966), 79-80, 263-267, 271-275; Solomon Grayzel, The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century, vol. 2 (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1989), 43-44, 116-124. See the following works: Benedicta Ward, Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event 1000-1215 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982; rev. ed., Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 68-76; Joshua Trachtenberg, The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conceptions of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Antisemitism (n.p.: Yale University Press, 1943; 2d. pbk. ed., Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983), 124-155; Zefira Entin Rokéah, "The State, the Church, and the Jews in Medieval England," in Antisemitism Through the Ages, ed. Samuel Almog, trans. Nathan H. Reisner (Oxford, England: Pergamon Press, 1988), 102-116; Léon Poliakov, The History of Anti-Semitism, vol. 1, trans. Richard Howard (London, England: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 56-64; Cecil Roth, A History of the Jews in England (n.p.: 1941; 3d. ed., Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1964), 9; 13; Jeremy Cohen, The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982), 42-52.

were known strictly within very limited geographical areas.<sup>137</sup> The pope's approval of these cults was often not sought because the official process of canonization required financial and political resources unavailable to many local communities.

From the time of Pope Innocent III, causes of canonization that were submitted to the pope, after completing an investigation, required the support of the local bishop and of other recognized lay and ecclesiastical authorities. After 1260, the monarch always participated with the bishop in making the request.<sup>138</sup> A "Vita" or "Life" was composed which enumerated and described virtues of the candidate in life, the manner of death, and the posthumous miracles. It also included the names of witnesses who supported the cause. The causes of canonization that were accepted for inquiry were then subjected to a lengthy and detailed investigation. Nevertheless, it was relatively common for causes of canonization to be interrupted or even postponed indefinitely with the death of the pope who had accepted the cause for inquiry. Petitioners frequently needed to sustain their cause over the course of decades, sometimes even resubmitting failed ones two or three times.<sup>139</sup> The process was costly because the petitioners of the cause underwrote all expenses.<sup>140</sup> The fact that many causes continued to be submitted to the pope gives evidence to the enormous value placed by some parties on papally recognized sanctity.

### 3. Scrutiny of the Alleged Martyr's Reason for Dying:

Between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, there are many examples of popularly proclaimed martyrs whose authenticity was questioned by authorities, despite the many claims that miracles had been derived from their intercessions. The appropriate authorities judged that they had been killed for reasons somewhat, or even blatantly, nonreligious. For example, Anselm of Canterbury (c.1033-1109) exhorted some nuns to stop venerating a dead man, probably Earl Waltheof, as a martyr. He probably warned them that Waltheof had died for political reasons, rather than religious ones. Waltheof had been executed for treason in 1076, under the orders of William the Conqueror (c. 1028-1087), and was now raised up as a national

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<sup>137</sup>Thus, Pierre Delooz advocates further research of local public cults. He recognizes the public cults of one thousand forty-five popularly proclaimed saints (i.e., those who were neither episcopally nor papally canonized) who died between 1000 and 1499. One hundred thirty-one of these were popularly venerated as martyrs because they died what were considered to be unjustly violent deaths within a religious context. They include three Dominican and two Franciscan inquisitors who were killed in 1242, Franciscan missionaries killed in Muslim territories, and priests murdered by groups declared heretical, such as the Albigenes. Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 296-297.

<sup>138</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 47-49.

<sup>139</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 50-75.

<sup>140</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 76-78.

hero.<sup>141</sup> Nevertheless, in 1078 or 1079, Anselm, while still a monk, persuaded Archbishop Lanfranc (c.1010-1089), the archbishop of Canterbury, to authorize the cult of a previous archbishop, named Alphege or Elphege (954-1012; archbishop of Canterbury, 1006-1012). Lanfranc was reluctant to endorse this cult because the exact circumstances of and motives for his death were uncertain. Anselm, however, believed that Alphege's sanctity could be established. Inebriated Danes had killed Alphege while he was their captive because he had rejected their unjust financial terms for release. Anselm contended that Alphege, by not permitting injustice to triumph, had acted in the cause of truth, and he was therefore a martyr.<sup>142</sup> It is important to note that this was clearly a case of episcopal "canonization," with a bishop authenticating the alleged martyr.<sup>143</sup> On July 6, 1170 Pope Alexander III wrote a letter to the Swedish king, Canute I, whereby he forbade the odd practice that existed of venerating a certain man as a martyr (perhaps the earlier king, St. Eric), who had been killed while drunk.<sup>144</sup> Simon de Montfort (c. 1208-1265), the earl of Leicester who was the major opponent of King Henry III of England, was popularly considered a martyr after dying in 1265 at the battle of Evesham.<sup>145</sup> The miracles attributed to his intercession were collected

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<sup>141</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 53. Waltheof is the "only known Englishman of high rank whom King William executed." The reasons for Waltheof's rebellion are unknown, but the common opinion that his execution was an unduly harsh punishment caused many people to view him as a martyr. F.M. Stenton, ed., Anglo-Saxon England (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1971), 611-612. See also Ronald C. Finucane, Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England (London, England: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1977), 33; Antonia Gransden, Historical Writing in England c. 550 to c. 1307 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 147.

<sup>142</sup>Kenneth L. Woodward, Making Saints, 66; Jonathan Sumption, Pilgrimage, 147; Margaret R. Toynebee, S. Louis of Toulouse, 141-142. According to Southern, Anselm's presupposition was that "God is just" and "Truth is Justice-in-words", so "God is Truth"; Alphege was a martyr for Anselm because he had died for justice and truth by not allowing his tenants to pay the unjust ransom for his release, and thus, he had died for God as well. R.W. Southern, Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 42; 316; 330. See also the following: Margaret Gibson, Lanfranc of Bec (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1978), 170-171; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 89; Christopher Brooke, Medieval Church and Society: Collected Essays (London, England: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1971), 173; Ronald C. Finucane, Miracles and Pilgrims, 33; Antonia Gransden, Historical Writing in England, 105; Dorothy Whitelock, trans. and ed., The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 91.

<sup>143</sup>Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 447.

<sup>144</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 119; Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 99-100; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 31; André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 29; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les Reliques des saints, 97-98.

<sup>145</sup>Gransden suggests that "Simon's reputation was augmented by the circumstances of his death. His posthumous fame seems to have owed more to the violence of his slaughter at Evesham (he died unshriven and his body was dismembered) than to his actual political objectives and views." Antonia Gransden, Historical Writing in England, 407. In fact, in the early sixteenth century there still were frequent pilgrimages to Simon de Montfort's foot at Alnwick Abbey. Geoffrey Baskerville, English Monks and the suppression of the Monasteries (London, England; Jonathan Cape, 1940), 23. Thus the popular belief that



in a book, and a liturgical office was prepared to honour him, but there existed a vigorous opposition movement to prevent his designation as a saint.<sup>146</sup> His cult dissipated before an official process to examine his candidacy for canonization began.<sup>147</sup> Three times between 1327 and 1331, King Edward III of England entreated the pope to begin the canonization process for Thomas of Lancaster, who had been executed for treason at Pontefract, Yorkshire in 1322 after leading the opposition against King Edward II of England.<sup>148</sup> The genuineness of his martyrdom was always rejected.<sup>149</sup>

In fact, it is not at all clear whether the aforementioned causes of canonization failed specifically or solely on the grounds of being political. Given that it was often difficult to separate political and religious reasons for a person's death when that person was involved in both types of activities, the causes of certain candidates probably failed because the alleged martyr held political views diverging from those of Church officials who influenced the decision by the pope (or bishop, before the requirement of papal canonization was legislated) whether to canonize. Moreover, during the same period as the aforementioned failed cases, there exist instances when other candidates were canonized who could be construed as dying for political instead of religious reasons, or at least in addition to them. For example, in 1101, Pope Pascal (pope 1099-1118) endorsed the request, made by King Olaf of Denmark, for the papal approval of the translation of the remains of his predecessor, King Canute IV, who had been murdered in 1086 by some subjects who were revolting against their sovereign. Canute was supposedly responsible for posthumous miracles effected

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someone had suffered an unjustly violent death—rather than evidence of a virtuous life—often made that person a popular martyr, and therefore a recipient of prayers from people seeking the purported martyr's powers of intercession to help effect miracles.

<sup>146</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 175-176; Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 116; Ronald C. Finucane, Miracles and Pilgrims, 33. For details of the battle during which Simon died, see Margaret Wade Labarge, Simon de Montfort (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1962), 254-257; Charles Bémont, Simon de Montfort: Earl of Leicester, 1208-1265, trans. E.F. Jacob (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1930), 241-244. For a discussion of Simon de Montfort's popular cult and Henry III's attempt to quash it, see Antonia Gransden, Historical Writing in England, 407-408, 416, 421-422. Ecclesiastical powers also opposed his early cult: Pope Clement IV described the deceased Simon as a "wicked" man and the papal legate Ottobuono excommunicated the one month old corpse after the living person had already once been excommunicated. Ronald C. Finucane, Miracles and Pilgrims, 133.

<sup>147</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 122.

<sup>148</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 176; J.R. Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322: A Study in the Reign of Edward II (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1970), 311-312; Thomas F. Tout, The Place of the Reign of Edward II in English History (Manchester, England: Manchester at the University Press, 1914), 148-149.

<sup>149</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 123; Margaret R. Toynbee, S. Louis of Toulouse, 144; Ronald C. Finucane, Miracles and Pilgrims, 33.

in the presence of his tomb.<sup>150</sup> The canonization of Thomas Becket (1118-1170) in 1173, as well, offers an impressive case of a successful candidate who could be presented as a political martyr rather than a religious martyr by his enemies. Becket was murdered by four of King Henry II's knights who believed that Becket was a traitor to the king and his kingdom.<sup>151</sup> It is worth noting that Becket's life was not scrutinized for evidence of exemplary virtues. Instead, his canonization as a martyr followed largely from the common belief that Becket was a casualty of a persecuted Church in England, and even more importantly, from the numerous claims of posthumous miraculous cures effected by means of his intercession.<sup>152</sup> The canonization of Archbishop Stanislaw of Cracow (1030-1079) in 1253 by Pope Innocent IV, nearly two hundred years after he was executed for conspiracy against the Polish king, Boleslaw II the Bold,<sup>153</sup> also exemplifies that, even though one always had to die for the faith to be designated a martyr, the specific conditions which were deemed necessary so as to fulfill this requirement varied somewhat over time.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>150</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 69-70; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 295.

<sup>151</sup>Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 116; Frank Barlow, Thomas Becket (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1986), 247-250; Richard Winston, Thomas Becket (London, England: Constable, 1967), 346-358; Raymonde Foreville, L'Église et la royauté en Angleterre sous Henri II Plantagenet (1134-1189) (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1942), 318-326; David C. Douglas and George W. Greenway, eds., English Historical Documents, vol. 2 (London, England: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1953), 760-776.

<sup>152</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 86-89; Raymonde Foreville, L'Église et la royauté, 363-364; Colin Morris, The Papal Monarchy, 235-236; Alan McLay, "St. Thomas of Canterbury and His Biographies," in Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Symposium of the Ottawa-Carleton Medieval-Renaissance Club: Saints' Lives in Medieval and Renaissance Art, Literature, and Thought, ed. Raymond St-Jacques (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1976), 25-26; Frank Barlow, Thomas Becket, 268; Beryl Smalley, The Becket Conflict and the Schools: A Study of Intellectuals in Politics (Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell, 1973), 190; Horace K. Mann, The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages, vol. 10 (London, England: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1925), 208; David C. Douglas and George W. Greenway, eds., English Historical Documents, vol. 2, 774-775. For a survey of the miracles attributed to the intercession of the deceased Thomas Becket, see Benedicta Ward, Miracles and the Medieval Mind, 89-109.

<sup>153</sup>Aleksander Gieysztor, et al., History of Poland, trans. K. Cękańska (Warszawa, Poland: PWN--Polish Scientific Publishers, 1968), 77-78; 119-120; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 294.

<sup>154</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 297. "Much later [i.e., after Stanislaw's execution in 1079] the canons of Kraków surrounded the episode with a halo of sanctity, but the earliest evidence suggests that Stanislaw was neither a patriot nor a martyr, but a political bishop who fell foul of the ruler's tight control over the church." As well, miracles of exorcism and healing were reported at his shrine. Colin Morris, The Papal Monarchy, 272, 502.

#### 4. The Popes' Hesitation to Canonize New Martyrs Contrasted with the Franciscans' Desire for Martyrdom:

During the three centuries subsequent to Becket's canonization, the fear of sanctioning certain political views and the increased estimation of the nonmartyr saints who had been virgins, mystics, intellectuals and, especially, monks who had exhibited stringently ascetical practices, probably contributed to the proliferation of canonized nonmartyr saints and a correspondingly dramatic decrease in the number of newly canonized martyrs. In fact, there were no new officially declared martyrs of the Church after the canonization of Archbishop Stanislaw of Cracow in 1253 until 1481.<sup>155</sup> Even the causes of several new cases of assassinated bishops did not lead to canonization.<sup>156</sup> By the end of the Middle Ages, new examples of popularly declared martyrdom were highly suspected and martyrdom ceased to be an effective route for receiving the official papal recognition of sanctity.<sup>157</sup> Pierre Delooz, however, has gathered data, which he admits to be incomplete though it is voluminous, suggesting that the objects of unauthorized public cults--those which were not approved by means of papal canonization--were often popularly acclaimed martyrs. Fifty-four of the four hundred forty-four newly proclaimed popular saints who died between 1250 and 1499 were martyrs; of those who died between 1300 and 1449, thirty-one out of two hundred twenty-one were considered to be martyrs. It is evident that the martyr as a type of saint still captured the popular imagination among the members of the communities surveyed by Delooz.<sup>158</sup>

An especially noteworthy contrast existed between the zeal of Franciscan missionaries for martyrdom and the reticence of the popes to recognize officially any new martyrs during the aforementioned period extending from the thirteenth century to the fifteenth century. Starting with the founder of the order, Francis of Assisi (1181/1182-1226), the goal of many Franciscan missionaries in Muslim Spain, North Africa, and the Middle East, along with converting Muslims, was to imitate Jesus Christ most perfectly by

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<sup>155</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 297.

<sup>156</sup>For example, the processes for investigating the causes of two assassinated bishops -- Jean Sordi Cacciafronte, the bishop of Vincence (d.1179), and Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne (d.1225) -- were begun but did not lead to the canonization of the candidates. The cause of another murdered bishop did not even receive this amount of official attention. After Archbishop Burchard III of Magdebourg was killed by members of the bourgeoisie class in 1325, his successor, bishop Otto, requested the initiation of his cause for canonization. Pope John XXII (pope 1316-1334) responded that the crime was indeed abhorrent, but he did not begin a process for investigating the cause for Burchard's canonization as a martyr. André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 481, 340; Margaret R. Toynbee, S. Louis of Toulouse, 242.

<sup>157</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 481-482.

<sup>158</sup>Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 296.

securing blood martyrdom.<sup>159</sup> Since Francis was not able to die for the faith during his visits to Syria and Morocco, the Franciscans believed that God instead rewarded Francis with the stigmata.<sup>160</sup> Bonaventure (c.1217-1274) viewed the desire for martyrdom as an essential step in the individual Franciscan's advancement on the mystical path. In addition to effecting the expiation of one's sins, the actualization of martyrdom would be the ultimate way of showing one's love for both God and fellow human beings.<sup>161</sup> In 1220, five Franciscans fulfilled this explicit objective in Morocco.<sup>162</sup> This sufficiently impressed Anthony of Padua (1195-1231) that he decided to join the order. Similarly, in 1227, seven Franciscans went to Ceuta, Morocco seeking martyrdom, and thereafter John of Perugia and Peter of Sassoferrato, two Italian Franciscans, went to Valencia for the same reason, in either 1228 or 1231.<sup>163</sup> These nine Franciscans achieved their objective after publicly proclaiming the Christian faith and reviling Mohammed. They were imprisoned and offered their freedom in exchange for publicly denouncing Jesus Christ, but they spurned the opportunity.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>159</sup>Francis' first biographer, Brother Thomas of Celano (1185-1260), presents him as zealously seeking martyrdom. "In the sixth year of [Francis'] conversion [i.e., 1212], burning intensely with the desire for holy martyrdom, he wanted to take ship for the regions of Syria to preach the christian faith and penance to the Saracens and infidels." Thomas of Celano, The First Life of St. Francis Part 1, 20.55, trans. Placid Hermann, in St. Francis: Writings and Early Biographies: English Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis, ed., Marion A. Habig (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), 179-182, 274-275, 573. Bonaventure also portrays Francis as desiring to imitate the Passion of Jesus Christ and the deaths of the early martyrs. St. Bonaventure, Major Life of St. Francis 9, trans. Benen Fahy and Paul Oligny, in St. Francis: Writings and Early Biographies, 698-705.

<sup>160</sup>E. Randolph Daniel, The Franciscan Concept of Missions in the High Middle Ages (Lexington: The University of Kentucky, 1975), 46. Francis even tried, without success, to convert Sultan al-Kamil of Egypt. Benjamin Z. Kedar, Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 119.

<sup>161</sup>E. Randolph Daniel, The Franciscan Concept, 50-51. See E. Randolph Daniel, "The Desire for Martyrdom," Franciscan Studies 32 (1972): 74-87.

<sup>162</sup>John Moorman, A History of the Franciscan Order: From its Origins to the Year 1517 (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1968), 229; H. Daniel-Rops, Cathedral and Crusade: Studies of the Medieval Church 1050-1350, trans. John Warrington (London, England, 1957), 510-511.

<sup>163</sup>Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 296-297; Robert Ignatius Burns, The Crusader Kingdom of Valencia: Reconstruction of a Thirteenth-Century Frontier, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 198-199; Robert Ignatius Burns, The Crusader Kingdom of Valencia: Reconstruction of a Thirteenth-Century Frontier, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 309, 467.

<sup>164</sup>E. Randolph Daniel, The Franciscan Concept, 42-45. These examples of seeking martyrdom by attacking the faith of the Muslims parallels the famous Cordoban martyrs of 851 to 856. Some Spanish Christians questioned the authenticity of their martyrdom because they provoked it; it was commonly acknowledged that Muslim authorities were compelled to sentence to death all those who publicly reviled Mohammed. Thus, these zealous Christians had been their own executioners. However, they were generally

The members of the Franciscan order clearly believed that these deaths, however provoked, were genuine examples of martyrdom. The causes for the canonization of their martyrs were initiated by the kings of Aragon (e.g., King James II of Aragon initiated the cause of the Franciscan martyrs killed in Morocco in 1220), but official investigations did not begin. Nevertheless, the Franciscans' desire for martyrdom did not seem to be diminished by the absence of the papal canonization of their colleagues: in 1391, four Franciscan friars, seeking their martyrdom, were killed after publicly denouncing Islam in front of the *cadi* of Jerusalem.<sup>165</sup>

The more than two hundred years without newly recognized martyrs ended in 1481. That year, Pope Sixtus IV (pope 1471-1484) permitted the public veneration of the Franciscan missionary martyrs of 1220, but this was limited to the members of the Franciscan Order.<sup>166</sup> The papal recognition of the martyrdom of these Franciscan missionaries is intriguing because it signifies the papal endorsement of their unusual tactics for converting non-Christians. In effect, the pope approved an example of provoked martyrdom because these missionaries were killed only after they had denounced the religious practices of their target converts publicly and abrasively.

#### Summary:

Therefore, a number of observations may be made about the development of the concept of martyrdom during the long period between the fourth century and the fifteenth century. During the fourth and fifth centuries, many Christian writers claimed that new martyrs were being killed in persecutions perpetrated by pagans and heretics against true Christians, both inside and outside the Roman Empire. As the cult of martyrs and of their relics flourished, new martyrs were important to their local communities as much for acting as heavenly patrons as for exemplifying perfectly how to imitate Jesus Christ. Ascetical practices and the safeguarding of one's virginity became more widely acknowledged as new paths to sanctity. A virtuous life was increasingly expected of true martyrs, as well as of nonmartyr saints. It

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recognized as martyrs (for example, by the Franks after 858). See the following: Roger Collins, Early Medieval Spain: Unity in Diversity, 400-1000 (London, England: The Macmillan Press, 1983), 213-220; Kenneth B. Wolf, Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Donald Attwater, Martyrs From St. Stephen to John Tung (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1957), 86-88; Patrick J. Geary, Furta Sacra, 49.

<sup>165</sup>Benjamin Z. Kedar, Crusade and Mission, 125.

<sup>166</sup>André Vauchez, La Sainteté en occident, 483, 82-83; Pierre Deloiz, Sociologie et canonisations, 445. Although Pope Alexander III quite clearly distinguished between those deceased Christians who were to be venerated locally or universally, it is only around the end of the sixteenth century that the term "beatus" began to be applied solely to the former, and "sanctus" to the latter. Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 97-98, 136.

prepared them to remain steadfast up to the point of death. Posthumous miracles were viewed as clear signs by which God affirmed popular proclamations of martyrdom.

While the cults of new martyrs usually arose spontaneously in local communities, they flourished and spread to other communities when local bishops approved of them and encouraged them. Although specific councils established canons forbidding false cults, bishops such as Martin of Tours (fourth century) and Gregory of Tours (sixth century) were among the exceptional examples of bishops who intervened when they witnessed disconcerting local practices. Regulations established by Charlemagne late in the eighth century strengthened, through legislation, the local bishops' control over new cults. The translation of relics publicly signalled the authentication of specific, popularly venerated martyrs and nonmartyr saints. Popular cults that were never episcopally authenticated continued to exist. Claims of sanctity were especially persuasive when popes endorsed existing cults. Therefore, between the tenth century and the twelfth century papal canonization became an increasingly common conclusion to the process of authenticating new cults. Since the thirteenth century, the authentication of new martyrs and nonmartyr saints has been an exclusively papal right. Chapter three focuses on the evolution of the process of canonization between the sixteenth century and the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF TRUE MARTYRDOM AND THE CHANGES IN THE PROCESS OF CANONIZATION CONCERNING THE AUTHENTICATION OF MARTYRS FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO THE PONTIFICATE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

The purpose of this chapter is to examine changes in the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church between the sixteenth century and the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. During this period, there are two requirements for a person to be recognized as a martyr of the Roman Catholic Church: first, that person's death must be judged, by means of the institutional process of papal canonization, as truly possessing all the characteristics of martyrdom; second, after such a martyrdom is pronounced genuine, the person must be papally beatified and then papally canonized. This means that a person would not be a martyr of the Roman Catholic Church if he or she simply possessed a popular reputation of having died on account of the Christian faith, as it is espoused by the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, a person would not be a martyr of the Roman Catholic Church simply because he or she is generally recognized as a martyr by significant theologians or even by popes. Instead, the martyrdom is only authenticated by means of the definitive judgment of canonization. Thus the concept of the authenticated martyr of the Roman Catholic Church is examined from three vantage points over the following two chapters. First, chapter three examines the basic elements that must be present in every example of true martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church. Pope Benedict XIV established the normative set of four elements that are necessary for every true martyrdom by utilizing a specific understanding of how Jesus Christ had faced his own crucifixion (Jesus Christ was the model whom martyrs had supposedly imitated), and by drawing upon the characteristics of the people who had been designated as martyrs in the centuries prior to his pontificate in the mid-eighteenth century, especially those who had been papally canonized as martyrs. Those who had been legitimately judged to be martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church clearly were designated as martyrs because their deaths had possessed certain characteristics that suggested that, in fact, they had died in imitation of Jesus Christ. These four basic elements of every true occurrence of martyrdom have continued to be the ones required for the authentication of all martyrs up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

Second, chapter three also examines how the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church has been affected by changes in the institutional process for authenticating martyrs and nonmartyr saints during the period from the sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. This issue is studied only in a general sense, and not by reviewing the "causes" of individual martyrs who have

been authenticated by means of papal canonization. The term "cause" is a technical term referring, first, to the individual case that is being scrutinized in order to determine whether the given individual who is under consideration ought to be beatified and thereafter canonized. Second, the term "cause" is used in the expression "cause of canonization" to refer to the process of canonization. This was recognized in the 1983 legislation for the authentication of alleged saints, when the name of the procedure for canonizing alleged saints was officially changed from the "process of beatification and canonization" to the "cause of canonization". The term "cause" and the expression "cause of canonization" are used (without employing synonyms) in all literature where the subject matter is the papal canonization of martyrs and nonmartyr saints, and therefore they are used with these same meanings throughout the present study. Thus chapter three explains some of the major concepts and terms related to the canonization of martyrs. The chapter emphasizes, however, the process of canonization included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law and in the new legislation of 1983, first, because most papal canonizations of martyrs have occurred during the twentieth century (the same is true of nonmartyrs; however, in both cases, many of these saints had already been beatified in the second half of the nineteenth century),<sup>1</sup> second, because the concept of authenticated martyrdom evident among the martyrs canonized during this century is especially relevant to the challenges to the concept of martyrdom presented by the Latin American liberation theologians, and, third, because Gustavo Gutiérrez, whose understanding of persecution and martyrdom is the subject matter of the second part of the present study (chapters five to eight), began to speak of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America during the period when the 1917 Code of Canon Law was in effect, and he has continued to reflect on what he believes are examples of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America during the period subsequent to the promulgation of new legislation for the canonization of saints in 1983.

Finally, chapter four considers another important issue: has the concept of authenticated martyrdom continued to be relevant and important to the Roman Catholic Church during the period from sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II? Of course, the challenge that the Latin American liberation theologians present to the existing concept of authenticated martyrdom is especially significant if martyrdom itself is still a key theme in the Roman Catholic Church. This will complete the study of whether changes in the institutional process of canonization have affected the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church.

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<sup>1</sup>Pierre Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations* (The Hague, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), 447-492; Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte: Depuis la création de la Congrégation de Rites (1588) jusqu'au 31 décembre 1985," *Notitiae* 22 (1986): 44-47.



### A. Changes in the Process of Canonization Before Pope Benedict XIV

After Pope Gregory IX published his Decretals in 1234, thereby reserving to the pope the power to canonize (that is, the power to authenticate alleged martyrs and nonmartyr saints, and to order their universal public veneration), relatively few of the many Christians who were viewed popularly or by the members of religious orders as martyrs were, in fact, ever canonized.<sup>2</sup> This observation is also true for popular nonmartyr saints. Pierre Delooz's conservative count of popular saints during the period from 1234 to 1499 suggests that a large number of persons who had aroused a spontaneous reputation of sanctity were never papally canonized.<sup>3</sup> As was seen in chapter two, most of these cults had not attracted a patron (the petitioner of a cause, called the "actor" of the cause in the 1917 Code of Canon Law), nor a representative of the petitioner, who possessed the skills, patience, financial resources, and determination to fulfill the demands of an increasingly exacting, lengthy, and costly institutional process. Even the causes that had attracted a petitioner did not necessarily attain the desired goal of the declaration of a new saint for various reasons. Sometimes there was not sufficient proof that the candidate for canonization (hereafter called the "Servant of God") had demonstrated the requisite virtue of morals and virtue of signs. Other times, political obstacles to the process had developed in the meantime. Some causes of canonization halted when the pope who had been reviewing it died and his successor did not reinstate it.

Between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, the institutional process of examining causes for papal canonization was subject to a variety of adjustments (especially ones related to the establishment of the Sacred Congregation of Rites and to the issuing of important decrees by Pope Urban VIII) until it was

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<sup>2</sup>As was already noted, papal canonization means that the pope has judged that the given deceased member of the Roman Catholic Church is either a martyr or a nonmartyr saint, and thus, is already in heaven. His or her name would be inscribed in the Catalogue of Saints, and he or she would be the object of a public ecclesiastical cult recognized throughout the Roman Catholic Church. A cult is public when it is officially given in the name of the Roman Catholic Church, and when it is conducted by legitimately charged clergy who perform specifically prescribed acts and sacred functions. This means that the saint could be publicly venerated and invoked for intercession on behalf of the living members of the Church. Some of the characteristics of a public ecclesiastical cult include the rights to expose the saint's images and relics in public churches, to place aureolas over the saint's head in images, to erect altars in honour of the saint, and to celebrate mass and recite the divine office in his or her honour. Tomás García Barbarena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4 (Madrid, Spain: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1964), 4. See also Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, ed. Raoul Naz (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1942), cols. 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>Thirty-five saints were canonized by popes between 1234 and 1499; the only martyr papally canonized during this time was Stanislaus of Cracow in 1253. The aforementioned five Franciscan missionary martyrs who died in Morocco in 1220 were granted a limited public ecclesiastical cult in 1481. The papal concession of a public ecclesiastical cult which was limited either geographically or to the members of a specific religious order would later be called "beatification". Delooz lists only those unauthorized public cults of which he is certain; these are clearly less than the total number which existed. His data includes the names of five hundred forty-four popular saints who died between 1250 and 1499; these include fifty-four popularly acclaimed martyrs. Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 294-296, 440-459.

standardized during the pontificate of Pope Benedict XIV (1675-1758; pope 1740-1758). Innovations made by Pope Urban VIII and Pope Benedict XIV concerning the canonization of saints constituted the basis for a rigorously judicial process that was operative until Pope John Paul II (1920-present; pope 1978-present) promulgated new norms in 1983, which simplified and expedited the process for authenticating new and official martyrs and nonmartyr saints of the Roman Catholic Church by allowing the appropriate local bishop to oversee most of the administrative task of investigating a new cause. Since 1983, the formality of a judicial process, rather than a true judicial process, has been maintained before the Congregation for the Causes of Saints (the successor to the Congregation of Rites) in order to ensure that Servants of God not be beatified or canonized who could be embarrassing, detrimental, or even scandalous to the interests of the Roman Catholic Church and its members. As a consequence of both the newly established norms and the will of Pope John Paul II, newly beatified and canonized martyrs and nonmartyrs have proliferated since 1983.

Of course, the establishment of an exacting judicial process for examining causes for papal canonization depended on both a clear standard against which causes were to be compared and a judge. As was seen in chapter two, the first prerequisite, a clear standard, was satisfied starting in 1199 by Pope Innocent III's insistence on the candidate's fulfillment of both the virtue of morals and the virtue of signs. Martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church evidence the former when they steadfastly allow themselves to die at the hands of a persecutor who hates the Christian faith. Nonmartyrs achieve the same end when they have consistently displayed the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love and the cardinal or moral virtues of temperance, fortitude, justice, and prudence during their lives. In the seventeenth century, the term "heroic virtue" began to be used to describe the extraordinary degree to which these virtues had to be demonstrated throughout the lives of nonmartyr candidates for canonization.<sup>4</sup> (Numerous books and articles have been written on the authentication of nonmartyr saints; the present chapter, however, is primarily concerned with

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<sup>4</sup>The concept of the heroicity of virtues was introduced in 1602 in the cause for the canonization of Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582) during the pontificate of Pope Clement VIII (c.1536-1605). This term was used much more commonly after the publication of Brancati di Lauria's book, *De virtute heroica*, in 1668. Brancati di Lauria was born April 10, 1612 and died November 30, 1693. Pietro Palazzini, "La perfettibilità della prassi processuale di Benedetto XIV del giudizio di Pio XII," in *Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario della Congregazione per le cause dei Santi (1588-1988)*, Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi (Vatican City: Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi, 1988), 78; Stephen Donovan, "Brancati di Lauria," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, eds. Charles G. Herbermann, et al. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 738; J. Heerinckx, "Brancati de Lauria," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. 1, ed. Marcel Viller (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne et Ses Fils, 1937), col. 1921-1923; Raoul Naz, "Brancati (François-Marie)," in *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, vol. 2, ed. Raoul Naz (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1937), col. 980; Ernesto Piacentini, *Il martirio nelle cause dei santi: Concetto teologico-giuridico, morte psicologica e martirio bianco, procedura antica e moderna, riforma paolina, fermenti per ulteriori aggiornamenti* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1979), 130.

martyrs and the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church.)<sup>5</sup> The virtue of signs are the posthumous miracles that supposedly only a true citizen of heaven can effect by interceding on behalf of living Christians to God, who alone is believed to be the source of the miracles. The second prerequisite of a judicial process, a judge, was satisfied when Pope Gregory IX established the papal reserve of canonization in 1234.<sup>6</sup>

At least since the fourteenth century, there has existed a judicial process and instruments which henceforth were to characterize the trial of all causes of canonization.<sup>7</sup> For example, in the fourteenth century, a biography of the Servant of God was necessary to give an account of his or her life and death; the preliminary procedure had already begun of investigating whether the Servant of God had a reputation of martyrdom or sanctity and whether he or she had interceded for posthumous miracles by praying to God on behalf of certain living members of the Church;<sup>8</sup> the petitioner of the cause for canonization, who underwrote all the expenses related to it, selected a papally approved "postulator" of the cause (also called the "procurator" or the "proctor" of the cause) who was responsible for promoting the cause by gathering the people who claimed to be witnesses of the Servant of God's alleged martyrdom (or display of

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<sup>5</sup>See the following: Vincenzo Lelièvre, "La canonizzabilità dei ragazzi confessori," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 265-297; Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV con particolare riferimento all'età giovanile (Rome: Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe, 1979); Pietro Francesco Nicolisi, L'eroicità delle virtù nelle cause di beatificazione (Rome: Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe, 1980); Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione (Dottrina e giurisprudenza intorno all'introduzione delle cause dei servi di Dio) (Rome: Officium Libri Catholici, 1944); Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione (Rome: Scientia Catholica, 1945).

<sup>6</sup>See E.W. Kemp, "Pope Alexander III and the Canonization of Saints," in Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Series 4 27 (1945), 13-28; S. Kuttner, "La réserve papale du droit de canonisations," Revue historique de Droit français et étranger 17 (1938): 172-228; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 117-120. The papal reserve of canonization was reaffirmed by Pope Innocent IV (d. 1254; pope 1243-1254) in his work, In Quinque libros Decretalium commentaria, first published at Strasburg in 1477; by the redactor of his work, Cardinal Hostiensis (i.e., Henry of Segusio; d. 1271), who inserted what would become the formula of papal canonization; and by Pope Urban V (1309-1370; pope 1362-1370), who intervened twice in 1368 by ordering the local bishops to suppress unauthorized cults. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione: Storia, problemi, prospettive (Rome: S. Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi, 1983), 11-16; Michael Ott, "Innocent IV," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 8, eds. Charles G. Herbermann, et al. (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 17-18; A. Van Hove, "Henry of Segusio," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 7, eds. Charles G. Herbermann, et al. (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 238.

<sup>7</sup>Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization: A Historical Synopsis and a Commentary (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1949), 12-30. In fact, Romoualdo Rodrigo judges that the formality of a judicial process for the causes of saints already existed in the thirteenth century. Romoualdo Rodrigo, "La figura del postulatore nelle cause dei santi secondo la nuova legislazione: Diritti e doceri," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 91 (1986): 212.

<sup>8</sup>Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Código, vol. 4, 76.

extraordinary virtues) and posthumous miracles;<sup>9</sup> these witnesses were examined individually and secretly; anyone who had evidence contrary to the cause would be heard.<sup>10</sup> In Rome, a team of commissioners was assembled who examined the witnesses and gathered evidence to ensure that the Servant of God in fact satisfied the two requirements of true martyrdom (or of displaying virtues) and of genuine miracles. The pope would decide on canonization based upon both the recommendation of cardinals, who reviewed the results of the judicial process, and the alleged guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup> As was seen in chapter two, canonization during the fourteenth century meant that the pope permitted the liturgical celebration of the saint's "birthday into heaven", pilgrimages to the saint's tomb, and the erection of altars in honour of the saint.<sup>12</sup> Thereafter, these privileges of a universal public ecclesiastical cult continued to be conferred with papal canonization.

### 1. The Establishment of the Sacred Congregation of Rites:

On January 22, 1588, Pope Sixtus V (1521-1590; pope 1585-1590) established the Sacred Congregation of Rites by means of the papal bull, Immensa aeterna Dei.<sup>13</sup> The Congregation of Rites had two principal responsibilities: first, assembling cases for both papal canonization and the authorization of relics; second, examining issues related to rites, the liturgy, and ceremonies (as well as the reception of

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<sup>9</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 88; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 27-28. Eyewitnesses of miracles, before the Servant of God could be papal canonized, were required as early as the pontificate of Pope Urban II (pope 1088-1099), and this became normative during the twelfth century. *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>10</sup>Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 19, 41.

<sup>11</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 88.

<sup>12</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 16.

<sup>13</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 123-124; Rolando Zera, La fama di santità (fondamento morale e rilevanza giuridica) (Rome: Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma in Urbe, 1980), 164; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 29-30; Kenneth L. Woodward, Making Saints, 75; F.L. Cross, ed., The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1263; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 37; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi: Commento alla legislazione e guida pratica (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992), 11-12; Ralph Francis Kerr, ed., The History of the Popes From the Close of the Middle Ages, vol. 21 (n.p., England, 1932; repr. London, England: Routledge and Kegan, 1952), 254-257; Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte: Depuis la création de la Congrégation des Rites (1588) jusqu'au 31 décembre 1985," Notitiae 22 (January 1986): 41; Raoul Naz, "Congrégations romaines," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 4, ed. Raoul Naz (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1949), 207. For a detailed study of the early years of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, see Giovanni Papa, "La Sacra Congregazione dei Riti nel primo periodo di attività (1588-1634)," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 13-52.

sovereigns, ambassadors, and dignitaries).<sup>14</sup> Henceforth, the commissioners and a promoter general of the faith were to be selected from clergy who were members of the Congregation of Rites. The promoter general of the faith was charged with ensuring that no one would be canonized (that is, granted a universal public ecclesiastical cult) who would be scandalous to the faith, and he was also to make sure that all ecclesiastical laws were followed in the causes of saints.<sup>15</sup>

The local bishop had a very limited role in causes of saints until March 12, 1631, when the Congregation of Rites clearly established, by means of an encyclical letter, the requirement of a local, informative process, conducted by the local Ordinary (usually the local bishop). Henceforth, the Ordinary Process was to be the first of two steps in the canonization process.<sup>16</sup> The Ordinary Process was also confirmed by Pope Urban VIII (1568-1644; pope 1623-1644) in his brief, Caelestis Hierusalem cives, which was published in 1634.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Giovanni Papa, "La Sacra Congregazione dei Riti nel primo periodo di attività (1588-1634)", in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 17. Note, however, that the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences and Relics became the authority for examining cases related to the authentication of relics when it was established in 1669. Jaroslav Nemeč, "L'Archivio della Congregazione per le cause dei Santi (ex-S. Congregazione dei Riti)," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 339-340.

<sup>15</sup>According to Pope Benedict XIV (1675-1758; pope 1740-1758), the first mention of the promoter of the faith was during the pontificate of Leo X (1475-1521; pope 1513-1521), in the cause of St. Lawrence Justinian (1381-1455). Giovanni Papa, "La Sacra Congregazione dei Riti nel primo periodo di attività (1588-1634), in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 40; L. Hertling, "Materiali per la storia di canonizzazione," Gregorianum 16 (1935): 194; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 24, 29; Raoul Naz, "Promoteur de la foi," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 7, ed. Raoul Naz (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1965), col. 355. For a complete list of the thirty promoter generals of the faith of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (1588 to 1969) and the three promoter generals of the faith of the successor congregation, the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints (1969 to data of 1988; with the overlap of Raffaele Pérez, promoter general of the faith from June 18, 1966 until March 31, 1975), see Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 426-427. Before 1631, however, the promoter of the faith was often called a "procurator" in documents. *Ibid.*, 39-41. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 75. See also Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti nei processi di beatificazione e canonizzazione (studio storico-canonico) (Rome: Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1989), 36. For studies of the earliest causes for canonization examined by the Congregation of Rites and the process by which they were judged, see Giovanni Papa, "La Sacra Congregazione dei Riti nel primo periodo di attività," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 24-52; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 19-20.

<sup>16</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 19-21, 71-72; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 7; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 38.

<sup>17</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 21, 71-72; Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 72, 116.

The Ordinary Process would begin only after the pope's approval had been secured. Then the local bishop would oversee, first, the gathering of the Servant of God's writings;<sup>18</sup> second, the preliminary examination of testimonies made by those persons who claimed to be any of the following: eyewitnesses of the alleged martyrdom or display of virtues (supplemented by those second-hand testimonies of persons who had heard from eyewitnesses of them), or eyewitnesses of miracles attributed to the posthumous intercession of the specific Servant of God being considered in the cause; and, third, the process of ascertaining whether the Servant of God was the object of an illegitimate public ecclesiastical cult.<sup>19</sup> The Apostolic Process was the process before the Congregation of Rites. The assembled evidence would be scrutinized in Rome by assigned members of the Congregation of Rites after the cause had been "introduced", that is, after the cause had been formally accepted for consideration by the pope. The use of two processes in causes of canonization would be the rule until the promulgation of the new norms in 1983.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. The Development of Papal Beatification:

The origin of papal beatification as the step immediately preceding papal canonization has been clarified considerably by the work of Fabijan Veraja. Therefore, his book, La beatificazione: Storia, problemi, prospettive, published in 1983, is the major source for the following study of the development of papal beatification as the necessary step prior to papal canonization.

"Beatification" means the papal concession of a public ecclesiastical cult limited either to a circumscribed geographical region or to a specific religious order. Only in the sixteenth century, however, did the term, "beatus" (or "blessed"), begin to be placed before the name of a Servant of God whose limited cult had been granted by papal decision. Thus "beatus" was used as an expression before a name; however,

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<sup>18</sup>Leone, Indelicato, and Baberena note two early examples of collecting the writings of Servants of God before their canonization: those of St. Brigitte (1303-1373) in 1435, and those of St. Raymond of Peñafort (1175-1275), also in the fifteenth century. Nonetheless, the examination of the Servant of God's writings, so as to judge their doctrinal purity, only became a necessary part of the judicial process of beatification and canonization in 1642 under Pope Urban VIII. Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 33-42, 49-50; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 31-32; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 52.

<sup>19</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 21, 28-30; Damian Blaher, Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 38-40, 44-52. In the seventeenth century, only eyewitness testimonies of miracles were accepted. This has continued to be the requirement for the proof of miracles. R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of the Saints: The Inquiry with Experts," Apollinaris 61 (1988): 178.

<sup>20</sup>Thus Indelicato notes that Pope Urban VIII was the founder of the two step process that was current with the 1917 Code of Canon Law. Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 21.

it was not used to declare that a Servant of God had been formally beatified until the early seventeenth century. At the same time, the term "beatus" was already used in a nontechnical sense in the fifteenth century to refer to someone whom people popularly believed to be in heaven and who, therefore, was the object of private veneration.<sup>21</sup> Veraja cites two examples of popes granting limited public ecclesiastical cults before Pope Gregory IX (c. 1148-1241; pope 1227-1241); neither Servant of God had died as a martyr.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, Pope Gregory IX's Decretals of 1234, which had prohibited episcopal canonization, did not include any references to a papal power to concede limited public ecclesiastical cults.<sup>23</sup> There is more evidence of these papal concessions starting in the middle of the fifteenth century in response to requests made by various ecclesial communities. The papal authorization of public cults limited to specific geographical areas or religious orders became more frequent during the sixteenth century. In fact, Veraja cites twenty-nine examples from the middle of the fifteenth century up to the institution of the Congregation of Rites in 1588.<sup>24</sup> For example, in chapter two, it was seen that on August 7, 1481 Pope Sixtus IV (1414-1484; pope 1471-1484) issued a bull that permitted the members of the Franciscan Order to venerate their five missionary martyrs, who had died in Morocco on January 16, 1220, by means of a mass and office in their honour. These were the only martyrs granted a limited cult among the aforementioned twenty-nine examples. Similarly, in 1512 Pope Julius II (1443-1513; pope 1503-1513) responded to a request made by the bishop of Constanza, by conceding a limited public ecclesiastical cult, with a mass and office, for a popularly venerated saint, Notker (d. 912).<sup>25</sup> Most of these cults, in fact, had already begun immediately and spontaneously after the death of the object of veneration; in some cases, a cause for canonization had

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<sup>21</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 10, 16-19, 101.

<sup>22</sup>Pope Alexander III (d. 1181; pope 1159-1181) granted a limited public cult for William of Malaville (d. 1157); Pope Innocent III (1160-1216; pope 1198-1216) confirmed this decision in 1202. Ten years later, in 1212, Pope Honorius III (d. 1227; pope 1216-1227), not wishing to canonize Robert of Molesme (c. 1027-1111), allowed the monks of Molesme to venerate him as if he were a saint but only in the church of the monastery. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 20. See also Camillus Beccari, "Beatification and Canonization," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 2, eds. Charles G. Herbermann, et al. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), 366.

<sup>23</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 110; Paolo Molinari and Peter Gumpel, "L'istituto della beatificazione: A proposito d'uno studio recente," Gregorianum 69 (1988): 135.

<sup>24</sup>For comprehensive studies concerned with the papal conferral of limited public cults up to the sixteenth century, see the following: Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 20-44, 110; Gaetano Stano, "Il rito della beatificazione da Alessandro VII ai Nostri Giorni," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 370-375; Paolo Molinari and Peter Gumpel, "L'istituto dell beatificazione," Gregorianum 69 (1988): 135. See also Pierre Deloöz, Sociologie et canonisations, 38-39; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 92-93.

<sup>25</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 26-30; Pierre Deloöz, Sociologie et canonisations, 39; L. Hertling, "Materiali per la storia di canonizzazione," Gregorianum 16 (1935): 186.

been initiated shortly after the death of the alleged saint, but the cause ceased with the death of the concerned pope who had been reviewing the cause, or when political obstacles arose.<sup>26</sup> As was seen in chapter two, during the period prior to the establishment of the Congregation of Rites in 1588, a great deal of determination was often required of the petitioner of a cause before papal canonization was secured. In the meantime, an annual feast, though not papally authorized, sometimes was celebrated. Therefore, the papal concession of limited public ecclesiastical cults sometimes signified the papal authorization of existing cults.<sup>27</sup> It is important to recognize, however, that such a conferral of cult did not signal the pope's definitive judgment that the object of veneration was certainly in heaven, as was the case with canonization.

The papal concession of limited cults became more common with the establishment of the Congregation of Rites in 1588. Veraja cites twenty-two examples from 1588 to the publication of Pope Urban VIII's aforementioned decrees in 1634. The only example of martyrs among the twenty-two cited examples was that of the twenty-three Franciscan martyrs and the three Jesuit martyrs who had died in Japan in 1597. Pope Urban VIII granted a mass and office for the Franciscans to the diocese of Manila on September 14, 1627. The following day, he conceded a mass and office to all the priests who celebrated mass in Jesuit churches.<sup>28</sup> Thus martyrs, unlike nonmartyrs, were often beatified as a group rather than as individuals. This practice has continued up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

It was in the first half of the seventeenth century that "beatification" was clearly established as the term referring to the papal decision to grant a limited public ecclesiastical cult. (As was already noted, the Servant of God who was the object of such a cult was already called a "beatus"--or "blessed"--in the sixteenth century.) At this time, beatification became the usual step before canonization. It was declared only after the cause of canonization had been instructed and discussed in the Apostolic Process.<sup>29</sup> Beatification

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<sup>26</sup>For example, the cause for the canonization of Nicholas of Tolentino (c. 1245-1305) stopped with the death of Pope John XXII (1249-1334; pope 1316-1334) in 1334, and due to political problems. The cause for Ambrogio Sansedoni (d. March 20, 1287) ceased with the death of Pope Honorius IV (pope 1285-1287) on April 3, 1287. Similarly, the cause for Giovanni Bono ended with the death of Pope Innocent IV (pope 1243-1254) in 1254. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 21-22, 24, 27-28.

<sup>27</sup>For example, in 1306, the year when Albert of Trapani, a Sicilian Carmelite, died, his body was elevated and translated and a chapel was built in his honour. He became the object of a public cult celebrated by his whole religious order. This public cult was only authorized in 1457, by Pope Calistus III (1378-1458; pope 1455-1458). Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 25.

<sup>28</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 45-69. See also Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte: Depuis la création de la Congrégation de Rites (1588) jusqu'au 31 décembre 1985," Notitiae 22 (1986): 45-46.

<sup>29</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 104-105, 110-111. Thus, distinctions between canonization and beatification are made by Luca Castellini, in his book, Elucidarium theologicum de certitudine gloriae sanctorum canonizatorum, published in 1628, and Felice Contelori, in his book, Tractatus et praxis De Canonizatione Sanctorum, published in 1634. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 91-93. See also Fabijan



occurred with the issuing of a papal brief of beatification.

On September 27, 1659, a decree approved by Pope Alexander VII (pope 1655-1667) was issued by the Congregation of Rites to ensure that the the limited public ecclesiastical cults of blessed would remain distinct from the universal public ecclesiastical cults of saints. It must be remembered that only canonization signifies the pope's definitive pronouncement that the Servant of God is in heaven, and therefore is suitable as an object of universal public veneration.<sup>30</sup> A declaration, dated April 17, 1660, clarified this decree.<sup>31</sup>

The first "solemn" papal beatification (that is, the first papal beatification celebrated according to certain rites), in Rome at St. Peter's Basilica, took place on January 8, 1662 when Pope Alexander VII (1599-1667; pope 1655-1667) celebrated the beatification of Francis of Sales (1567-1622), after the brief for his beatification had already been issued on December 28, 1661. It should be noted, however, that the nature of beatification, in itself, did not change because it was solemnly celebrated.<sup>32</sup>

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Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 90.

<sup>30</sup>The limitations of a blessed's cult were as follows: (1) images of the blessed were not to be exposed in churches or oratories, especially where masses were celebrated and offices recited, without the approval by the pope; (2) with the required papal approval by indult, the images could be exposed on the inner walls, but not on the altar; (3) an indult for the erection of an altar did not mean that a mass could be celebrated and an office recited for the blessed; this required a specific papal concession; (4) the cult which had been granted for a place was not to exceed the geographical limitations without papal approval; (5) if it had been granted that a blessed could be venerated everywhere, this was only to be on a private basis, not by the public recitation of office; only those who had been granted the indult could recite the office; (6) given that the mass in honour of a blessed had been conceded to certain priests (e.g., those of a specific place, monastery, or church), it was not to be celebrated by others; (7) the feast (i.e., the *dies festus*) was not to be celebrated unless it had been specifically granted in the indult; (8) the names of the blessed were only to be inscribed in the liturgical calendars of those places or of those people who had been authorized to venerate the blessed with a mass and office; (9) particular prayers should not be added to those which had been specified ecclesiastically, and recited in honour of the blessed, whether in private or in public; (10) the blessed were not to be invoked in public prayers except those which had been granted and approved by the pope; (11) the relics of the blessed were not to be carried in processions. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 94-95. See also Amato Pietro Frutaz, "Auctoritate...Beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli: Saggio sulle formule di canonizzazione," in Antonianum 42 (1967): 482; Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte," in Notitiae 22 (1986): 42.

<sup>31</sup>The declaration stated the following: (1) the image of a blessed could be exposed on the altar where the blessed's mass was able to be celebrated; (2) the aforementioned feast did not include fasts of devotion; (3) the decree had not revoked previous indults to recite the office or to celebrate mass; (4) the blessed's relics were to be venerated only in those churches where the office could be recited or the mass celebrated; (5) the bishop did not have the authority to recite the blessed's office and to celebrate his or her mass in the cathedral, or to erect an altar for the blessed. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 96.

<sup>32</sup>Stano describes the solemn rites used at the beatification of Francis of Sales, as well as the innovations made in the rites for the beatification of blessed up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. Gaetano Stano, "Il rito della beatificazione," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 375-422. See also Fabijan

In 1668, Pope Clement IX (pope 1667-1669) established what continues to be the sole requirement (other than the crucial final approval by the pope) for canonizing a blessed: proving new posthumous miracles that have occurred subsequent to the beatification of the new blessed.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the investigation and verification of genuine martyrdom (or heroic virtues for nonmartyrs) had to be completed before beatification. The blessed, however, still were not saints, and thus, as was aforementioned, they could not receive the privileges given to those persons whom popes had judged to be qualified for a universal public ecclesiastical cult.<sup>34</sup> The prohibition forbidding the veneration of blessed as if they were saints continues today.

### 3. The Publication of Pope Urban VIII's Brief, *Caelestis Hierusalem cives*, and the Development of Equipollent Beatification and Equipollent Canonization:

On July 5, 1634, Pope Urban VIII (1568-1644; pope 1623-1644) published two decrees (from March 13 and October 2, 1625) in the brief *Caelestis Hierusalem cives*, whereby he prohibited the public veneration of any deceased person who had neither been previously papally canonized, nor granted a limited public ecclesiastical cult, except those widely recognized ancient saints who were the objects of immemorial public ecclesiastical cults.<sup>35</sup>

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Veraja, *La beatificazione*, 97-98; Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: II. La canonizzazione senza miracoli erroneamente detta 'equipollente'," in *Apollinaris* 58 (1975): 476-477; Pierre Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations*, 39; Michael Freze, *The Making of Saints*, 92; Paolo Molinari and Peter Gumpel, "L'istituto della beatificazione," *Gregorianum* 69 (1988), 135; L. Hertling, "Materiali per la storia di canonizzazione," *Gregorianum* 16 (1935), 186; Amato Pietro Frutaz, "Auctoritate...Beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli: Saggio sulle formule di canonizzazione," in *Antonianum* 42 (1967): 482-483. Pope Alexander VII (c. 1599-1667; pope 1655-1667) canonized Francis of Sales by the bull, *Ecclesia Catholica*, on April 19, 1666. Brunero Gherardini, "La santità della Chiesa nella teologia dell'epoca post-tridentina," in *Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario*, 108.

<sup>33</sup>Pierre Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations*, 39; Eric Waldram Kemp, *Canonization and Authority*, 163; L. Hertling, "Materiali per la storia di canonizzazione," *Gregorianum* 16 (1935): 194.

<sup>34</sup>See Michael Freze, *The Making of Saints*, 94.

<sup>35</sup>Pope Urban VIII, *Coelestis Hierusalem*, in Petri Gasparri, *Codicis iuris canonici fontes*, vol. 1 (Rome: Typis polyglottis vaticanis, 1926), 402-406; Fabijan Veraja, *La beatificazione*, 115-117; Fabijan Veraja, *Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi*, 108-110; Francesco Leone, *La prova documentale degli scritti*, 31-33; Salvatore Indelicato, *Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione*, 21-22; Salvatore Indelicato, *Il processo apostolico di beatificazione*, 13-14; 387-389; Raoul Naz, *Traité de droit canonique*, vol. 4 (2d ed., Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1954), 466; Tomás García Barberena, *Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico*, vol. 4, 6; Ernesto Piacentini, *Il martirio nelle cause dei santi*, 125-127; Damian Blaher, *The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization*, 31-37; A. Boudinhon, *Les procès de béatification et de canonisations* (Paris: Librairie Bloud, 1908), 23-25; Allen Dudley Severance, "Beatification and Canonization With Special Reference to Historic Proof and the Proof of Miracles," in *Papers of the American Society of Church History, Second Series* 3 (1912/1913), 48; Camillus Beccari, "Beatification and

Thus the process of beatification could proceed by one of two ways, with the ultimate objective of the papal canonization of the Servant of God in both cases: by way of non-cult or by way of cult, in the case of the ancient saints who had already enjoyed a limited public ecclesiastical cult. In those causes which proceeded by way of non-cult, evidence had to be gathered during the Ordinary Process showing that the Servant of God was not the object of an unauthorized public cult.<sup>36</sup> These causes also required eyewitness testimonies of the alleged martyrdom or heroic virtues; these testimonies could be supplemented by documentary evidence and by second-hand testimonies provided by people who had heard the testimonies of eyewitnesses.<sup>37</sup> In those causes which proceeded by way of cult (subsequently called the "*casus excepti*" according to Pope Urban VIII's decrees), the Servant of God had to be a person who was the object of a limited public ecclesiastical cult, including a mass and office celebrated in the Servant of God's honour, dating from at least one hundred years before the promulgation of his brief (i.e., before 1534).<sup>38</sup> These causes also required eyewitness testimonies that the Servant of God had a reputation of martyrdom or sanctity; reliable historical documents could simply provide subsidiary proof. Only eyewitness testimonies of posthumous miracles attributed to the intercession of the Servant of God were accepted for both ways of proceeding with the causes of canonization.<sup>39</sup>

Subsequent to the issuing of the brief, Caelestis Hierusalem cives, the Congregation of Rites would issue declarations on *casus exceptus* (later called "equipollent beatification") for those causes that had

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Canonization," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 2, 366; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, cols. 12-13.

<sup>36</sup>For unauthorized cults (authorized ecclesiastical cults were those cults which had been papally granted on a universal basis or on a limited basis, or which had existed before 1534), Pope Urban VIII prohibited the following (all of which were characteristics of public cults): (1) exposing images of these persons in oratories, churches, public places, or even private places with signs of sanctity, such as aureolas, halos, or rays of light; (2) publishing their *Vite*, in which miracles, revelations or graces are attributed to their intercession, unless this is permitted by the local Ordinary (usually the bishop), after securing papal approval; (3) hanging *ex-voto* or lighting candles at their tombs without the permission of the Ordinary, who again must first receive papal authorization. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 71-72. The 1638 cause of Francesco Gonzaga (d. 1620), the bishop of Mantova, was the first example of a process where the absence of an unauthorized public ecclesiastical cult was proved according to the prescription of Pope Urban VIII. *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>37</sup>R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of the Saints: The Inquiry with Experts," Apollinaris 61 (1988): 178.

<sup>38</sup>Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 482. The cause of Bernardo Tolomei (1272-1348) in 1644 was the first one to proceed by the exceptional way of immemorial cult, according to the prescription of Pope Urban VIII. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 116.

<sup>39</sup>R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of the Saints: The Inquiry with Experts," Apollinaris 61 (1988): 178-179.

proceeded by the exceptional way of cult, thereby confirming the Servant of God's legitimate, limited public ecclesiastical cult and his or her reputation of martyrdom (or sanctity). Therefore it is notable that an ancient Servant of God's genuine martyrdom (or heroic virtues) and posthumous miracles did not have to be proved until he or she was being considered for canonization. On the other hand, if the cause was proceeding by way of non-cult, the Servant of God's genuine martyrdom (or heroic virtues) and posthumous miracles, as well as his or her reputation of martyrdom (or sanctity) and the non-existence of an unauthorized cult had to be proved before his or her beatification. Nonetheless, both those causes proceeding by way of cult and those causes proceeding by way of non-cult were supposed to be eligible eventually for papal canonization.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, the objective of all causes was the eventual papal canonization of the Servants of God.

During the century after the issuing of the brief, Caelestis Hierusalem cives, there was a great deal of inconsistency regarding the manner of proceeding with an ancient cause after the Congregation of Rites had issued a declaration on *casus exceptus*. It is clear, however, that the concept did not yet exist that such a declaration on *casus exceptus* connoted an "equipollent beatification"--that is, a beatification that was equivalent to the usual, "formal beatification" pronounced for those Servants of God whose causes had proceeded by way of non-cult. In fact, there are some examples from the seventeenth century of ancient Servants of God who were formally beatified sometime after the issuing of the declaration on *casus exceptus*, thereby, clearly, suggesting that in these instances this declaration was not viewed as being equivalent to formal beatification.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, it was a more common practice that, following the completion of the Ordinary Process, the ancient Servant of God would be examined during the Apostolic Process for his or her canonization, thereby circumventing his or her formal beatification. Those causes proceeding by way of non-cult, however, would always lead to and require the Servant of God's

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<sup>40</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nell cause dei santi, 125-126; Rolando Zera, La fama di santità, 165-167; Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 86-89; Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 145; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 89; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 38; Pietro Palazzini, "Prefazione," in Miscellanae in occasione del IV centenario, 8; Paolo Molinari, "Alcune riflessioni teologiche sullo funzione dei santi nella Chiesa," Gregorianum 42 (1961): 88; Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte," Notitiae 22 (January 1986): 42.

<sup>41</sup>For example, a decree on *casus exceptus* was issued for the cause of the nineteen Martyrs of Gorkum (d. 1572) on July 13, 1649, and then their solemn beatification was celebrated by Pope Clement X (pope 1670-1676) on November 24, 1675. Similarly a decree on *casus exceptus* was issued for the martyr Peter Arbués on March 22, 1652, and his beatification was celebrated on April 20, 1664. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 118; Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: II. La canonizzazione senza miracoli, erroneamente detta 'equipollente'," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 478. See also Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte," Notitiae 22 (1986): 45-46.

beatification prior to his or her canonization.<sup>42</sup>

It is uncertain who introduced the term "equipollent beatification" (i.e., equivalent beatification), but the first examples of its use are in the work of Cardinal Prospero Lambertini (the future Pope Benedict XIV), entitled De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione. This work was published between 1734 and 1738.<sup>43</sup> For Lambertini, however, the term did not have a single and consistent meaning.<sup>44</sup> On September 12, 1761, the Congregation of Rites discussed a position, commissioned by Pope Clement XIII (1693-1769; pope 1758-1769), on causes proceeding by the exceptional way of cult. In it, the declaration on *casus exceptus* (used for the papal confirmation of those ancient public ecclesiastical cults predating 1534) was called equipollent beatification. After the declaration on *casus exceptus*, the martyrdom (or display of heroic virtues), posthumous miracles, as well as any other peremptory obstacles to the cause, would be examined before a Servant of God could be canonized.<sup>45</sup> Because it was very difficult to prove the martyrdom or heroic virtues of the ancient blessed (i.e., the ancient Servants of God who had been equipollently beatified), most of these causes halted without reaching the goal of papal canonization.<sup>46</sup> Only with the decrees of Pope Pius X (1835-1914; pope 1903-1914) in 1912 and 1913 did the ancient Servant of God's martyrdom (or heroic virtues) and posthumous miracles have to be approved before he or she was equipollently beatified; no longer was the confirmation of an immemorial cult and the recognition of a reputation of martyrdom (or sanctity) sufficient for equipollent beatification. Only then would a cause be eligible for canonization.<sup>47</sup> This requirement was included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, and it continues to be operative with the approval of the new norms for the causes of saints by Pope John Paul II in 1983. The term "equipollent beatification" was also included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law to

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<sup>42</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 120-121.

<sup>43</sup>Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 39; Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 148; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 94; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 76; Paolo Molinari, "Alcune riflessioni teologiche sullo funzione dei santi nell Chiesa," Gregorianum 42 (1961): 88.

<sup>44</sup>Thus Lambertini used the term in several ways: to refer to the papal confirmation of the sentence on "*casus exceptus*"; the papal concession of a mass and office without a previous formal confirmation of cult; the papal confirmation of a cult that had been previously papally granted, without following a usual solemn procedure prior to beatification. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 122-125.

<sup>45</sup>Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 129-131. For a study of equipollent beatification from the late eighteenth century to the publication of the 1917 Code of Canon Law, see *Ibid.*, 132-174.

<sup>46</sup>Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 243.

<sup>47</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 4 (1912): 705-707; Acta Apostolicae Sedis 5 (1913): 41-42; Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 136-150.

designate the equivalent beatification of those ancient Servants of God whose causes had proceeded by the exceptional way of cult. The term, however, is not included in the 1983 legislation. Therefore, the Servants of God possessing immemorial public cults, as defined by Pope Urban VIII, may simply be beatified, just like all the other Servants of God who do not possess such cults. Servants of God are no longer said to be "equipollently" or "formally" beatified.

Unlike the concept of equipollent beatification, the concept of "equipollent canonization" is not central to the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, it will only be reviewed briefly in this study. The term itself has been used infrequently (especially in the case of martyrs) and inconsistently.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, it is not included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, and there is no reference to it in the new norms for the causes of saints approved by Pope John Paul II in 1983.<sup>49</sup> Some martyrs, however, have been equipollently canonized.<sup>50</sup> "Formal canonization" refers to papal canonization subsequent to the usual procedure of investigating and scrutinizing the cause; it occurs when the pope declares the usual formula of canonization. Equipollent canonization, on the other hand, means the

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<sup>48</sup>Among the eleven examples of equipollent canonizations between 1595 and 1738 cited by Veraja, only one was a martyr. Pope Benedict XIII equipollently canonized St. Wenceslaus of Bohemia (d. 929 or 939) on March 14, 1729. Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," *Apollinaris* 58 (1975): 228. For Veraja's study of the inconsistent and improper use of the term equipollent canonization, see *Ibid.*, 235-236, 242-243; Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: II. La canonizzazione senza miracoli, erroneamente detta 'equipollente'," *Apollinaris* 58 (1975): 475-500. Veraja also examines some examples of causes from the twentieth century where the Servant of God or blessed was said to be equipollently canonized, or the cause had been prepared for equipollent canonization, before a decision was made to canonize formally: Albert the Great (canonized in 1931), the martyrs John Fisher and Thomas More (1935), Magaret of Hungary (1943), Gregorio Barbarigo (1960), John of Ávila (1970), and Nicolò Tavelić and his three fellow martyrs (1970). The concern of the present study is the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church, so it is significant that Veraja believes that Fisher and More were not truly equipollently beatified on May 19, 1935, but were instead formally canonized with a papal dispensation from the usual requirement of a posthumous miracle occurring subsequent to their equipollent beatification. Similarly, Tavelić and his three fellow martyrs were formally canonized on June 21, 1970, though their cause was mistakenly prepared with the intention that they be equipollently canonized. The confusion in both cases was due to the erroneous belief that those blessed who were canonized without posthumous miracles were equipollently canonized, when, in fact, they were formally canonized. *Ibid.*, 481-483, 492-495.

<sup>49</sup>Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," *Apollinaris* 58 (1975): 224.

<sup>50</sup>For more detailed studies of equipollent canonization, see the following: Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," *Apollinaris* 58 (1975): 222-245; Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: II. La canonizzazione senza miracoli, erroneamente detta 'equipollente'," *Apollinaris* 58 (1975): 475-500; Joseph Brosch, "Die aequipollente Kanonisation," *Theologie und Glaube* 51 (1961): 47-60.

papal conferral of a universal public ecclesiastical cult (including a mass and office) for a Servant of God, first, without utilizing the usual procedure for investigating the cause and, second, without the pope making the usual, solemn sentence (i.e., declaring the usual formula of canonization) that he does in the case of formal canonization.<sup>51</sup> The first example of equipollent canonization was in the cause of St. Romualdo (d. 1027), the founder of the Camaldolese Order, and whose cult began immediately after his death. On July 9, 1595, Pope Clement VIII (pope 1592-1605) approved the erection of an altar above Romualdo's grave, and then he ordered that Romualdo be the object of a public ecclesiastical cult throughout the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>52</sup> The universal nature of the cult distinguishes it from those other papally conferred limited cults that were already mentioned in the study of the developmental of beatification.<sup>53</sup>

Pope Benedict XIV was the first to formulate a doctrine on equipollent canonization.<sup>54</sup> According

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<sup>51</sup>Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 234-235. Veraja notes the distinction between the formulas of canonization used for formal canonization and equipollent canonization. In the case of formal canonization, the blessed's name is inscribed in the Catalogue of Saints with the solemn declaration of the formula of canonization, regardless of whether it is also included in the Universal Calendar of the Church. Consequently, the saint now has a universal public ecclesiastical cult. In the case of equipollent canonization, the Servant of God's feast is inserted in the Universal Calendar of the Church by papal decree, and consequently, the name is inscribed in the Catalogue of Saints. Nevertheless, in the latter case, the insertion in the Universal Calendar in itself does not constitute the equipollent canonization; the insertion is a result of the papal decision to canonize. *Ibid.*, 237; 239. See also Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: II. La canonizzazione senza miracoli, erroneamente detta 'equipollente'," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 479; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 93-94.

<sup>52</sup>Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 226; Joseph Brosch, "Die equipollente Kononisation," Theologie und Glaube 51 (1961): 50.

<sup>53</sup>Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 225.

<sup>54</sup>Pope Benedict XIV set three conditions for equipollent canonization: (1) the Servant of God must already possess a legitimate ancient cult (according to Pope Urban VIII's definition) that originated at least one hundred years before Pope Urban VIII's decrees came into effect in 1634; (2) the Servant of God's martyrdom or heroic virtues must be historically well documented; (3) miracles attributed to the Servant of God's intercession must be historically documented, and his or her reputation for interceding for miracles must have been constant. Veraja adds a fourth condition implicit to Pope Benedict XIV's work: the candidate of equipollent canonization must be relevant to the whole Roman Catholic Church in order for the pope to order a universal cult. Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di canonizzazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 224; 239-245. See also Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 146; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 79; Kenneth L. Woodward, Making Saints, 75; Bede Camm, The English Martyrs: Papers from the Summer School of Catholic Studies held at Cambridge, July 28-Aug. 6, 1928 (Cambridge, England: W. Heffer & Sons, 1929), 45; Jean Evenou, "Canonisations, béatifications et confirmations de culte," Notitiae 22 (January 1986): 42. See also Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol.

to Pope Benedict XIV, equipollent canonization, like formal canonization, is a true canonization. It, too, is a definitive pronouncement by the pope that the Servant of God is a saint, who is now in heaven, and thus worthy of a universal public cult, but the pronouncement is not made according to the usual formula of canonization. Thus the value of the pope's pronouncement does not depend upon the manner by which the investigations for a cause proceed. In fact, a pope may at any time disregard the advice of bishops and cardinals of the competent congregation that conducts the causes of saints (until 1969, the Congregation of Rites). In any case, since 1234, canonization has been papally reserved. The pope's final judgment in these matters is believed to depend ultimately on the guidance of the Holy Spirit for its legitimacy. This is why Roman Catholics traditionally believe that the pope's judgment is infallible in the cases of both equipollent and formal canonization.<sup>55</sup>

#### B. The Elements of True Martyrdom According to Pope Benedict XIV

The judicial process of beatifying blessed and canonizing saints was further clarified and standardized with the publication of Cardinal Prospero Lorenzo Lambertini's seminal work, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, between 1734 and 1738.<sup>56</sup> This book was the product of Lambertini's many years of experience as the promoter general of the faith (from 1708 to 1728) before rising to the position of pope, as Pope Benedict XIV, in 1740.<sup>57</sup>

In the book, Lambertini establishes what would henceforth be the norms for judging the aforementioned requirements of papal canonization: genuine martyrdom or the consistent exhibition of virtues to a heroic degree (in the case of nonmartyrs), and authentic posthumous miracles. Lambertini's examination of virtues for the causes of nonmartyrs is not especially pertinent for the present study so they

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<sup>55</sup>Fabijan Veraja, "La canonizzazione equipollente e la questione dei miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione: I. La canonizzazione equipollente secondo Benedetto XIV," Apollinaris 58 (1975): 225-235.

<sup>56</sup>Pope Benedict XIV was born in 1675 and died in 1758. His pontificate was from 1740 to 1758. See the following studies of Pope Benedict XIV as the promoter general of the faith and as the pope: Pietro Palazzini, "La perfettibilità della prassi processuale di Benedetto XIV nel giudizio di Pio XII," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 61-87; Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 9-32; Carlo Forni, Benedetto XIV (Prospero Lambertini) (Bologna, Italy: Atti della Accademia delle Scienze dell'Istituto di Bologna Memorie, Serie 1, no. 6, 1959); Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi; Cavaliere Luigi Cibrario, Lettere inedite di santi, papi, principi, illustri guerrieri e letterati (Turin, Italy: Tipografia eredi Botta, 1861); Tarcisio Bertone, Il governo della Chiesa nel pensiero di Benedetto XIV (1740-1758) (Rome: Libreria Ateneo Salesiano, 1977).

<sup>57</sup>Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 9; Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 148.



will not be reviewed.<sup>58</sup> While the verification of posthumous miracles continues to be a prerequisite for the canonization of martyrs, as well as for the beatification and canonization of nonmartyrs, the process of scrutinizing miracles will simply be briefly summarized in the present study.<sup>59</sup> Of course, the apparent existence or absence of posthumous miracles does not alter whether an individual has fulfilled all the requirements for an affirmative judgment that he or she has truly died as a martyr. It is important, however, to remember the normative belief that only one who underwent martyrdom (or who lived an exceptionally virtuous life) has the ability to intercede on behalf of a propitiator. Therefore, miracles should be seen as God's confirmation that an alleged martyr truly did die in the manner that all external signs suggest. Thus, for the present study the crucial question is what characterizes true martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church. Lambertini's treatment of this question is examined closely because he established the standard for judging the genuineness of alleged martyrdom which has been operative ever since then. In fact, this standard was included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, and it continues to function in the present cause of canonization according to the new norms approved by Pope John Paul II in 1983.

Lambertini, in his work De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, notes that every true martyrdom consists of four basic elements: the tyrant or persecutor; the death; the cause of or reason for the martyrdom; the martyr.<sup>60</sup> (These are the conditions for what is known as "formal martyrdom": it is a death that possesses all the conditions of true martyrdom, but the candidate being examined has not yet been beatified.) The first condition of every true martyrdom is that the alleged martyr's death was caused by someone who is judged to be a true persecutor of Christians precisely because they are Christians. The persecutor is a physical person or a collective group of people (e.g., a government; Lambertini designates such a collective group as a "moral person"), who, acting freely and deliberately, causes the death directly or indirectly. This persecutor must be a different person than the martyr. Thus,

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<sup>58</sup>See the following studies of Pope Benedict XIV's concept of heroic virtues: Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 49-93; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione. See also Pope Benedict XIV, Heroic Virtue: A Treatise of Benedict XIV on the Beatification and Canonization of the Servants of God, vol. 1-3 (London, England: Thomas Richardson and Son, 1850-1852).

<sup>59</sup>See the following studies of the characteristics of authentic miracles and their role in causes of canonization according to Pope Benedict XIV: Pope Benedict XIV, Heroic Virtue, vol. 3, 345-366; Paolo Molinari, "I miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione e canonizzazione," La Civiltà Cattolica 129 (1978): 31-33.

<sup>60</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 41-100; Pietro Palazzini, "La perfettibilità della prassi processuale di Benedetto XIV nel giudizio di Pio XII," in Miscellanea in occasione del XIV centenario, 79; Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teológico-canónico del martirio (Extract of the dissertation; Rome: Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1993), xii-xiii, 39; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 115-117; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 109-111, 119-120; Brunero Gherardini, "Il martirio nella moderna prospettiva teologica," Divinitas 36 (1982): 25-26.

while writers often call those ascetics who practice mortification bloodless martyrs, they are not true martyrs precisely because a persecutor does not exist. Moreover, the martyr cannot die by means of suicide because a persecutor must cause the death. The person who inflicts the death because he or she hates the Christian faith may be a pagan, a heretic, or a Roman Catholic.<sup>61</sup> It seems clear, however, that Lambertini's list of possible persecutors should also include schismatic Christians (unless Lambertini classified them as heretics, but under what category, for example, do Christians who are not Roman Catholics fit?), non-Christian practitioners of religion (for example, it is unlikely that Lambertini believed that Jews were pagans or heretics, but what about Muslims?), and atheists or agnostics (for example, were avowedly anti-Christian libertarians simply pagans if they had never been baptized and heretics if they had publicly renounced their baptism?).

According to Lambertini, martyrdom is genuine if death is truly suffered. The willingness to die, in the case of the confessors (as was seen in chapter one), is not sufficient. This is the second condition of true martyrdom. Those who die in jail, in exile, or after receiving tortures are martyrs only if these had directly caused their deaths. As was aforementioned, the martyr cannot be the direct author of his or her own death by means of suicide or even by purposely neglecting to seek easily obtainable medical attention for injuries received from the persecutor--this is another form of suicide. The death caused by the persecutor in hatred of the Christian faith may be inflicted in any one of three ways: (1) directly and immediately; (2) indirectly and through other people than the persecutor himself or herself; or (3) both directly and immediately, and indirectly and through other people. In the first case, the death is inflicted by means of an object, a weapon, or poison, and the victim dies either immediately or within one or two days as a direct result of the lethal action. In the second case, for example, the persecutor orders the physical torture of the victim; this eventually causes his or her death. In the third case, the persecutor orders the torture of the person; if the torture were to continue it would cause the death. Instead the torture is interrupted, and the victim dies from a blow which would not have been fatal without the previous tortures.<sup>62</sup>

Lambertini examines the necessary roles of both the persecutor and the martyr in the cause of true martyrdom. This is the third condition of every genuine martyrdom. The persecutor must be motivated by either the hatred of the faith or the hatred of the virtues and good works prescribed by the Christian faith. For example, a government is a persecutor if it attacks Christians for crimes that it has falsely and calumniously attributed to them. The persecutor's hatred of the faith can be proved in the following

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<sup>61</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 41-48, 149-150; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 109. See also Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teologico-canónico del martirio, xii-xiii; 3-4.

<sup>62</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 49-56; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 110. See also Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teologico-canónico del martirio, 8-13.

circumstances: if the hatred of the faith is expressly and publicly stated; if the persecutor's hatred of the faith becomes obvious in the dialogue between the persecutor and the future martyr; if the persecutor tries to get the victim to reject the faith; if the judge (who is either the persecutor or a delegated official of the persecutor) offers safety to the victim provided that he or she renounce the faith; if the victim is killed because he or she is a Christian or because he or she will not act in a manner contrary to Christian morals. Of course, persecutors are rarely motivated by solely anti-religious reasons, but, according to Lambertini, this must be their primary objective. Thus political goals achieved by means of the execution must be secondary. Martyrs, as well, must willingly die on account of their love of the faith. Thus they cannot be fanatics, heroic stoics, formal schismatics, seekers of human acclaim either for themselves or their families, or even those who die in the name of human dignity.<sup>63</sup>

According to Lambertini, the person who dies must possess certain characteristics in order to be a true martyr. This is the fourth condition of genuine martyrdom. The crucial prerequisite is that the person is a Christian who possesses the true faith according to the Roman Catholic Church; thus heretics and schismatics are excluded. Catechumens who possess the appropriate faith but who have not yet been baptized sometimes are judged to be true martyrs. Unlike nonmartyrs, martyrs do not need to display virtues consistently to a heroic degree during their lives in order to be eligible for canonization. Moreover, there must be evidence that the victim in fact consciously accepted his or her imminent death before dying, or at least, it must be clear that the martyr habitually prepared himself or herself for such a martyr's death. This upcoming death must be freely and willingly accepted.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 59-68; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 110-111. See also Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teológico-canonico del martirio, 14-20.

<sup>64</sup>There has been considerable debate about whether child martyrs should be authenticated; given that a child has been killed by a persecutor who hates the Christian faith, the issue is whether, and at what age, the child possesses the rational ability to accept his or her death. Pope Benedict XIV believed that children are true martyrs who are killed by persecutors in hatred of the faith (just like the Holy Innocents, killed by Herod, whose cult had existed at least since the fourth century, as seen in chapter one), even if they are killed when in their mother's uterus, and even if their mother survives the persecution. However, Pope Benedict XIV did not think that these martyrs should be canonized as martyrs of the Church. Only those with an ability to reason—and thus, with an ability to freely accept their death—ought to be considered for canonization. Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 111, 119. Nevertheless, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many children under the age of twenty-one, especially child martyrs, in fact, have been beatified or canonized. Antonius and Lelièvre use this considerable data—as well as the universal call to holiness, regardless of age, which was declared in the fifth chapter of Lumen Gentium, the dogmatic constitution on the Church (Vatican II)—to strengthen their arguments that child nonmartyrs should be eligible for canonization. See Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 110-163; Vincenzo Lelièvre, "La canonizzabilità dei ragazzi confessori," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 291-292.

Lambertini identifies various ambiguous scenarios which have arisen since the first martyrs of the Early Church. He judges that those who flee, but are killed subsequent to capture, may be martyrs if their fleeing was not contrary to their consciences or to the orders of Church authorities, and if it was not an expression of weakness. He rejects the practice of spontaneously offering oneself to the persecutor, unless the person is inspired by the Holy Spirit. Finally, Lambertini also forbids the provocation of the persecutor, unless the person is inspired by the Holy Spirit and strengthens the wavering faiths of other Christians by means of his or her unusual actions. (Lambertini does not explain how such an inspiration by the Holy Spirit can be detected and measured.) In both these latter cases, proving the role of divine inspiration would be very difficult, if not impossible, during the judicial process of beatification and canonization.<sup>65</sup>

The true martyr, according to Lambertini, must accept his or her end patiently, courageously, and steadfastly up to the moment of death, even if tortured. Thus the martyr cannot die while using arms. (Christian soldiers who die in combat, such as those who are killed during Crusades, can not be true martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church.) The greatest difficulty is to determine whether the alleged martyr upheld these characteristics up to the instant of death if he or she died alone, away from all potential witnesses. This problem is resolved by examining the moral virtues consistently displayed by the victim up to the time of separation from all witnesses. Finally, the martyr must not only persevere up to death, but, at the same time, he or she must not hate the persecutor.<sup>66</sup>

Like in the Early Church and during the Middle Ages, when Lambertini wrote his work, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, during the mid-eighteenth century, people gained reputations of martyrdom if their deaths were popularly identified with the death of Jesus Christ.<sup>67</sup> They were seen as dying in imitation of Jesus Christ's crucifixion. It also was believed that their reward was immediate resurrection; in heaven they could be effective intercessors. Of course, today it continues to be true that people have reputations as martyrs if their deaths are popularly identified with that of Jesus Christ.

The intervention of authorities (as seen in chapters one to three), first bishops and then popes, so as to verify or reject popular judgments of sanctity, however, is significant. It suggests, first, that bishops and, later, popes believed that the populace did not always properly comprehend the model against which alleged imitators should be judged. The model was clearly the operative and official interpretation of the

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<sup>65</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 75-86, 150-151; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 112-119. See also Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teológico-canonico del martirio, 20-36.

<sup>66</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 86-100; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 111. See also Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teológico-canonico del martirio, xii-xiii.

<sup>67</sup>Similarly, nonmartyrs who suffered daily were perceived as participating in Jesus Christ's crucifixion. Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 41-43.

manner in which Jesus Christ had faced his crucifixion. Second, the intervention of authorities suggests that bishops and popes believed that even if the populace comprehended Jesus Christ's death, it did not always correctly judge whether a given alleged martyr in fact had died in imitation of Jesus Christ's crucifixion. The second observation refers to the populace's ability to apply the model correctly. This is largely the concern of the investigations in the cause for canonization; thus, the issue is whether the populace has appropriately applied the given model of how a true martyr should die in imitation of Jesus Christ. It is even more important, however, to inquire about the operative model itself--the interpretation of the manner in which Jesus Christ faced his death--because this becomes normative for judging genuine martyrdom, regardless of the institutional procedure used by the Congregation of Rites for recommending the beatification and canonization of an alleged martyr.

Given Lambertini's guidelines for judging true martyrdom, it is clear that the future pope wished to implement a specific and official interpretation of the manner in which Jesus Christ had confronted his death. His guidelines suggest that, according to Lambertini, Jesus Christ truly did die freely and willingly at the hands of a persecutor. This persecutor ordered the death of Jesus Christ because he hated what Jesus had taught and done. Thus Jesus Christ did not direct or provoke his own death. Moreover, Jesus Christ accepted his end patiently, courageously, and steadfastly up to the moment of death, even though he had been tortured. He even forgave his persecutors, instead of hating them.

It is notable that, after the publication of the future Pope Benedict XIV's book, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, between 1734 and 1738, those martyrdoms were authenticated that possessed the aforementioned four requisite basic elements of genuine martyrdom: the tyrant or persecutor; the death; the cause of or reason for the martyrdom; the martyr. This continued to be true after the publication of the 1917 Code of Canon Law, and it remains true after the publication of a new Code of Canon Law in 1983 and the approval of new norms for the causes of saints by Pope John Paul II the same year.

When Lambertini became pope in 1740 (Pope Benedict XIV), he reaffirmed the judicial process that put the evidence favouring a given cause for canonization on trial. However, he did not treat all evidence equally. For example, he largely dismissed corroboration of sanctity by means of written evidence in the form of historical documents or papers for the causes of persons relatively recently deceased (which are considered to be "recent causes"). As long as there were living witnesses, Pope Benedict XIV first valued eyewitness testimonies, followed by second-hand and by third-hand accounts. In the causes for canonization proceeding by the extraordinary way of immemorial cult, he regarded oral tradition and hearsay more highly than written documents.<sup>68</sup> This tendency not to value historical documents greatly would continue to be the norm in the causes of saints, and it was even included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law.

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<sup>68</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 90.

This was especially significant in the case of martyrs because particularly effective persecutions could mean an insuperable absence of proper contemporary depositions of eyewitness testimonies, even if the alleged martyrdom were a relatively recent event. The alleged persecutors, themselves, were unlikely to participate in a judicial process of canonization. It was only in 1930 that documents began to be permitted as the probative, rather than supplementary, evidence for causes lacking eyewitness testimonies. Historical documents have been used as principal sources of proof for all causes only since the approval of new norms for the causes of saints by Pope John Paul II in 1983. These are studied subsequently in more detail.

It is also significant that Pope Benedict XIV believed that papal beatification was fallible even after an extensive investigation because harmful new evidence could always be unearthed. He considered papal canonization, alone, to be infallible because he believed it was guided by the Holy Spirit. Lambertini's belief concerning the fallibility of papal beatification clearly deviated from the normative practice introduced by Pope Clement IX in 1668, according to which, the canonization of blesseds simply required the verification of miracles occurring subsequent to the beatification. In fact, ever since Pope Clement IX, those previous investigations that constituted the requirements for papal beatification have not been subject to confirmation prior to canonizing the given blessed. While papal canonization has signified the definitive pronouncement that the blessed is in heaven, papal practice demonstrates that papal beatification is not retracted or overturned; if any hesitation has developed after the beatification of a given Servant of God, the blessed simply has remained a blessed, without being canonized.<sup>69</sup>

### C. The Judicial Process of Beatification and Canonization From the Publication of the 1917 Code of Canon Law up to 1983

To a great extent, the judicial process for causes of canonization that was included in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, promulgated by Pope Benedict XV, was the same institutional process for authenticating causes of martyrs and nonmartyr saints that Pope Benedict XIV had inherited (especially from Pope Urban VIII), reaffirmed, and clarified.<sup>70</sup> Although the 1917 Code has been largely replaced by the 1983 Code of Canon Law and new norms for the causes of saints were also papally approved in 1983, the

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<sup>69</sup>Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 239; Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 162-168; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 94-95; Gabriel de St. Marie-Madeleine, "La béatification et la canonisation des martyrs," in Limites de l'humain (Etudes Carmélitaines), Charles Baudouin, Bruno de Jésus-Marie, et al. (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1953), 226.

<sup>70</sup>Tarcisio Bertone, Il governo della Chiesa nel pensiero di Benedetto XIV (1740-1758), 191; Rolando Zera, La fama di santità, 170-172; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 68; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 39; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 95; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 189. For a presentation of the process of beatification and canonization a few years before the promulgation of the 1917 Code of Canon Law, see Camillus Beccari, "Beatification and Canonization," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 2, 367-369.

old process will be summarized, especially as it concerns the causes of martyrs, because this was largely the process in place from Pope Benedict XIV until relatively recently. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that the causes of many new blessed and saints declared after 1983 began on the local level before 1983.<sup>71</sup> It is worthwhile stressing, as well, that the 1917 Code of Canon Law was still in effect when Gustavo Gutiérrez and other liberation theologians began to speak of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America. Moreover, the changes implemented with the new norms can be easily studied using the old process as a reference point. Knowledge of these recent changes allows one to evaluate whether Gustavo Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom is suggestive of possible future changes in the process for authenticating alleged martyrs, especially whether the presence of the four basic elements of every true martyrdom could be or even ought to be interpreted and evaluated differently according to each new situation, in this case, the circumstances of contemporary Latin America. It should be noted, as well, that the changes in the institutional process by which martyrs (and nonmartyr saints) have been authenticated have not, in themselves, altered the conceptual foundation of the concept of true martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church, as it was explained by Pope Benedict XIV. In fact, it will become clear that those four basic elements that should constitute every true martyrdom have continued to characterize the martyrs who have been beatified and canonized since the mid-eighteenth century. Nevertheless, changes in the institutional process of authenticating martyrs are significant because they have affected who has a prominent role in the process, the number of martyrs who are authenticated, and the speed at which this authentication proceeds. The following overview, however, does not explain every aspect of the process of beatification and canonization that was operative from 1917 to 1983 in a detailed manner. Several books and articles are available that provide lengthy studies.<sup>72</sup>

The process for examining the authenticity of alleged martyrs and nonmartyr saints was officially named the "process of beatification and canonization" with the promulgation of the 1917 Code of Canon Law.<sup>73</sup> It consisted of two processes: the Ordinary Process, which was conducted on the local diocesan level, and the Apostolic Process before the Congregation of Rites. Thereafter, there were some changes in

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<sup>71</sup>Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi. Alcuni commenti e osservazioni personali di un relatore," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 307.

<sup>72</sup>For example, see the following: Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 3-109; Damian Blaher, Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, cols. 10-37; Ludwig Hertling, "Canonisation," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: Doctrine et histoire, vol. 2, eds. Charles M. Baumgartner, et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1953), cols. 77-85; Willy Rordorf and Aimé Solignac, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique: Doctrine et histoire, vol. 10, eds. A. Rayez, et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1980), cols. 718-737.

<sup>73</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 95.

the process of beatification and canonization. On February 6, 1930, Pope Pius XI (1857-1939; pope 1922-1939) established a Historical Section in the Congregation of Rites by means of the *Motu proprio*, Già da qualche tempo.<sup>74</sup> The Historical Section, consisting of expert historians and archivists, and directed by a "Relator General", was charged with the tasks of studying the historical documents on which certain "historical causes" depended for support, and of advising the Congregation of Rites whether these documents were reliable.<sup>75</sup> The term "historical causes" referred to causes, proceeding either by the ordinary way of non-cult or the extraordinary way of cult (as understood by Pope Urban VIII), that lacked testimonies by eyewitnesses of the martyrdom (or heroic display of virtues) or that lacked the properly registered depositions of testimonies made by the contemporary eyewitnesses.<sup>76</sup> The Historical Section would participate in the Apostolic Process of the cause. On January 4, 1939, Pope Pius XI approved the norms, Normae servandae in construendis processibus ordinariis super Causis historicis, guiding the manner by which historical causes were to proceed during the Ordinary Process. Henceforth, all historical documents related to the Servant of God's life and martyrdom (or virtues) were to be gathered; they would be examined by the experts employed by the Congregation of Rites' Historical Section during the Apostolic Process.<sup>77</sup> In 1948, the Congregation of Rites began to employ a college of medical experts for verifying

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<sup>74</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 22 (1930): 87-88. See Amato Pietro Frutaz, La Sezione Storica della Sacra Congregazione dei Riti: Origini e metodo di lavoro (2d ed., Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1964), 42-54; Enrico Rosa, "La nuova 'Sezione Storica' della S. Congregazione dei Riti," in La civiltà cattolica 81 (1930) 3-11; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 139-141; Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 153; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 60; 228; Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 486; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 6; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 13-14; Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 303; R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of Saints: The Inquiry with Experts," Apollinaris 61 (1988): 189; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 361-362.

<sup>75</sup>For studies of the tasks of the Historical Section, see Amato Pietro Frutaz, La Sezione Storica della Sacra Congregazione dei Riti, 16-19; Enrico Rosa, "La nuova 'Sezione Storica' della S. Congregazione dei Riti," in La civiltà cattolica 81 (1930), 3-11; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 139-145, 263-275; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 120-122; R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of Saints: The Inquiry with Experts," 189-192; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 39; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 90; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 83; 97.

<sup>76</sup>Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 486; Amato Pietro Frutaz, La Sezione Storica della Sacra Congregazione dei Riti, 14; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 140-141; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 228-229; Raoul Naz, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 6, col. 840.

<sup>77</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 31 (1939), 174-175; Norms to be Observed in Drawing Up the Ordinary Process in Historical Causes, in The Canon Law Digest, vol. 2, T. Lincoln Bouscaren (Milwaukee, Wisc.: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1956), 557-559; Amato Pietro Frutaz, La Sezione Storica della Sacra



miracles. Since then, verified miracles have usually been those unexplainably sudden and durable cures attributed to the intercession of a candidate for beatification or canonization.<sup>78</sup> The Congregation of Rites was replaced by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints and the Congregation for Divine Worship by means of the Apostolic Constitution, Sacra Rituum Congregatio, dated May 8, 1969. Since that time all causes for beatification and canonization have been examined by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.<sup>79</sup> The reforms in the process of beatification and canonization related to Sacra Rituum Congregatio and the preceding Apostolic Letter, Sanctitas clarior, dated March 19, 1969, are discussed in the next section of this chapter because they anticipate the subsequent papal approval of new legislation for the causes of saints in 1983.

Before the implementation of the new norms for the causes of saints in 1983, either the Ordinary (excluding the vicar-general) of the diocese—who was usually a bishop—where the alleged martyr or nonmartyr died, or the Ordinary where the Servant of God's posthumous miracles supposedly occurred, would initiate a cause or a petitioner, called an "actor", would initiate the cause by sending a letter of petition to the aforementioned Ordinary requesting that a cause for beatification begin.<sup>80</sup> As a member of the faithful—that is, a member of the Roman Catholic clergy, religious, or laity—the actor would represent the spontaneous popular acclamation of an alleged martyr's reputation of martyrdom or a nonmartyr's reputation of sanctity. If the bishop accepted the cause, the actor would select a "postulator", who would oversee the cause and present evidence concerning the cause to a tribunal during the Ordinary Process; the postulator could appoint vice-postulators who would assist him. Some religious orders would have their

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Congregazione dei Riti, 19-28; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 147-154; Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 153; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 121-122; Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 486; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 230; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 13; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servant of God," The Jurist 43 (1988): 362.

<sup>78</sup>Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 39; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 207-208; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 6; Paolo Molinari, "Alcune riflessioni sulla funzione dei santi nella Chiesa," Gregorianum 42 (1961), 90; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 6. See also Giuseppe Giunchi, "L'esame del miracolo sotto il profilo medico-scientifico: Esperienze di un perito della consulta medica per le cause dei santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 211-220.

<sup>79</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 61 (1969), 297-305; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti nei processi, 167-170; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 209.

<sup>80</sup>(Canons 2003; 2039) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 472; 491; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 3; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 81; Damian Blaher, Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 71-75, 112; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, col. 13.

own "postulator general", who would conduct all the causes initiated by the order.<sup>81</sup> The postulator's mandate first had to be accepted by the Congregation of Rites, and recorded in its registers.<sup>82</sup> The actor would pay for all expenses until the cause was stopped, suspended, or successfully completed.<sup>83</sup> As was already seen, the cause could proceed in either one of two ways: the ordinary way of non-cult or, as was permitted by Pope Urban VIII, the extraordinary way of cult.<sup>84</sup> This summary will focus on the more common, ordinary way of non-cult.<sup>85</sup> As well, these causes could be of two kinds: they could be founded on the testimonies of eyewitnesses of the martyrdom or heroic display of virtues (supplemented by the second-hand testimonies of other people who had heard the testimonies of eyewitnesses) or the properly recorded depositions of testimonies of eyewitnesses; or they could be historical causes, founded on historical

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<sup>81</sup>(Canons 2004-2008). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 472-474; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 12-13; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 82; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 75-78; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, cols. 14-15. The actor had several options when selecting a postulator: there could be one postulator who conducted the cause from the beginning to its end; there could be two postulators—one for the Ordinary Process and a different one for the Apostolic Process; finally, there could be a postulator in Rome who delegated the Apostolic Process to a vice-postulator. Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 9-10, 14. For detailed studies of the postulator's tasks, see *Ibid.*, 14-15; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 75-109.

<sup>82</sup>(Canon 2006). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 473-474; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 3, 9; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 76; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 4, col. 15.

<sup>83</sup>Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 74; Pierre Delooy, Sociologie et canonisations, 46-47; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 135; Casieri Antonio, Il miracolo nelle cause di beatificazione e di canonizzazione e possibilità di aggiornamento (Rome: Pontificiam Universitatem S. Thomae de Urbe, 1971), 64-65; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 79-81

<sup>84</sup>(Canon 2000) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 468; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 3.

<sup>85</sup>In the 1917 Code of Canon Law the lower limit for causes proceeding by way of cult was set at 1181, the year when Pope Alexander III died. Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 66, 237; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 99. For studies of the process of beatification by the exceptional way of non-cult (called equipollent beatification) according to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, see the following: (Canons 2125-2135). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 525-528; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 97-103; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 118-120; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 391-393; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 237-239; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 131-133; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 141-143; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, col. 22; Raoul Naz, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 6, cols. 840-841.

documents. Some difficulties that could arise in the verification of martyrdom in historical causes will also be briefly examined. It is notable, as well, that the 1917 Code of Canon Law allowed all martyrs who had died together or in the same persecution to be part of the same cause of canonization, while each nonmartyr was treated in an individual cause.<sup>86</sup>

According to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the local bishop had four tasks during the Ordinary Process: first, to gather the Servant of God's writings; second, to instruct the informative process: the gathering of eyewitness and second-hand testimonies on the Servant of God's reputation of dying as a martyr (or, in the case of nonmartyrs, his or her reputation of sanctity—that is, of living a heroically virtuous life), and, if necessary, eyewitness testimonies of miracles attributed to the posthumous intercession by the Servant of God; third, to ascertain whether any potential obstructions to the cause were present; fourth, to instruct the process in order to determine whether an unauthorized public cult existed.<sup>87</sup> Sometimes, the bishop's tasks were more limited in the case of martyrs than in that of nonmartyrs; this will be explained subsequently.

The local bishop would form a tribunal and name a notary. The tribunal either consisted of the bishop himself as its president, or more commonly, it consisted of a delegated president and two other judges.<sup>88</sup> Some of the notary's tasks were to be present at every act of the tribunal, to transcribe the course of the cause during the Ordinary Process, and to ensure that records were maintained according to prescribed norms.<sup>89</sup> Often the bishop would also name the "promoter of the faith" for the diocesan inquiry; however, if the promoter for the informative process was appointed by the promoter general of the faith of the Congregation of Rites, he was called a "sub-promoter of the faith". The promoter of the faith's task was to ensure that the Servant of God truly had a reputation of martyrdom or sanctity. He would do this by

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<sup>86</sup>(Canon 2001) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 468-469; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 3, 8. See also Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 120.

<sup>87</sup>(Canon 2038). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 491; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 33-34; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 27-31; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 102-103.

<sup>88</sup>(Canon 2040). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 492; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 34, 54; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 81; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 117-125.

<sup>89</sup>(Canons 2013-2017). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 477-478; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 11, 16-17; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 81, 96. For a detailed examination of the notary's duties, see Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 117, 126-138.

putting forward questions, called "interrogatories", about historical facts for the witnesses who appeared before the tribunal so as to ascertain whether the Servant of God, in fact, enjoyed a reputation of martyrdom or sanctity among the local people. In this way, the promoter of the faith acted as the antagonist of the postulator in order to safeguard the interests of the Roman Catholic Church and its members from the scandal of canonizing an unworthy (i.e., unsaintly) Servant of God.<sup>90</sup>

The bishop would publish an edict in the parishes ordering that the Servant of God's published and unpublished writings be delivered to the tribunal. He would ask other bishops to publish similar edicts if some writings were located in other dioceses. The postulator would add any other writings that he encountered. In the case of martyrs, this gathering of writings could be, but need not be, delayed until after the Apostolic Process had begun because the key issue was the fact of their martyrdom. Moreover, the collection of the writings sometimes was postponed in order to begin the informative process as soon as possible so that the eyewitness testimonies of the martyrdom could be obtained while they were still available (i.e., before the witnesses themselves died).<sup>91</sup>

Next, in the case of an alleged martyr, the postulator would provide a list of witnesses of the Servant of God's death for the inquiry before the tribunal. They would be asked whether they believed that he or she had suffered genuine martyrdom, and had thereafter interceded for posthumous miracles. Although the 1917 Code of Canon Law required miracles for the satisfaction of all causes prior to beatification, it was common for popes to dispense this requirement for the causes of martyrs.<sup>92</sup> Thus the postulator would try

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<sup>90</sup>(Canons 2010-2012). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 475-476; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 10-11, 15-16; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 83-84, 98-99; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 117; Raoul Naz, "Causes de béatification et de canonisation," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 3, cols. 13-14; Raoul Naz, "Promoteur de la foi," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 7, cols. 356-357. For explanations of the promoter of the faith's tasks during the Ordinary Process, see Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, 16; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 138-148.

<sup>91</sup>(Canons 2042-2048). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 493-496; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 35-36, 55-58; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 119-127; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 35-37, 115; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and canonization, 102, 236. See also Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 51-55; Casieri Antonio, Il miracolo nelle cause di beatificazione e di canonizzazione, 65; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 136. For a history of the requirement of collecting the Servant of God's writings during the Ordinary Process, see Francisco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 51-55.

<sup>92</sup>(Canons 2116-2123). Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 48-50, 92-95; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 48, 115; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 235. See also Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 86-90; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 138, 151; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 84-85.

to establish whether a reputation of martyrdom truly was present. (For nonmartyrs, the postulator's goal was to establish a reputation of sanctity, as well as the existence of eyewitnesses of purported miracles.)<sup>93</sup> The witnesses did not have to be Roman Catholics; they could even be heretics and others hostile to the Roman Catholic Church. In the case of martyrs, it was especially true that the witnesses of an alleged persecution were not necessarily Roman Catholics because sometimes people who had participated in or sympathized with the persecution some years earlier would now agree to stand as witnesses of the alleged martyrdom.<sup>94</sup> The president of the tribunal would then cross-examine the witnesses with questions given to him by the promoter of the faith on points of fact. Then the promoter of the faith could supply some witnesses. Both the postulator and the promoter of the faith would be able to present some observations of the testimonies. The notary would keep a record of the proceedings before the tribunal, and seal the record at the end of each session.<sup>95</sup>

Then, the promoter of the faith would present potentially preemptory obstacles to the cause.<sup>96</sup> Some of the obstacles which could delay a martyr's cause will be examined shortly, when the requirements before a cause could be introduced to the Congregation of Rites are discussed.

Finally, the tribunal would make a judgment concerning the non-existence of unauthorized public cults to the Servant of God by visiting his or her tomb, the room where he or she died, and other places

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<sup>93</sup>(Canon 2020; 2050). Therefore, there must be sufficient evidence that the Servant of God's reputation of martyrdom originated spontaneously, and that it had been continuous and growing, and extensive both geographically and across time. On the other hand, it must be emphasized that the true sanctity of the martyr or nonmartyr (i.e., his or her entry into heaven which, of course, is the decision of God, not the pope) would not depend upon whether he or she enjoyed a reputation of martyrdom or sanctity, nor on the definitive recognition of papal canonization. The reputation, however, remained an important sign that suggests sanctity, the reality of which still had to be verified. Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 479-481, 496-497; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 19, 36, 52; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 37-60; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 119; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 156-186, 208-218, 234-236; Rolando Zera, La fama di santità, 70-90; Michele D'Alfonso, "La prova in genere e la fama di santità in specie nei processi dei santi prima e dopo il M.P. 'Sanctitas Clarior'," Apollinaris 59 (1976): 508-509; Raoul Naz, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 6, ed. Raoul Naz (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1957), 839.

<sup>94</sup>(Canon 2027). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 483; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 21, 29; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 105-106.

<sup>95</sup>(Canons 2050-2056) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 496-498; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 36-37, 58-62. See also Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 55-61; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 136-137.

<sup>96</sup>For detailed studies of these obstacles, see Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 61-70; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 80-83.

where a cult could develop. The bishop's judgment on the absence of a public cult, which was made during the Ordinary Process, would be subject to confirmation during the Apostolic Process. In the case of martyrs, however, the bishop was not supposed to verify the absence of a public cult. Instead, the evidence about the non-existence of the cult would not be examined until after the cause had been introduced before the Congregation of Rites during the Apostolic Process. Thus, in the cause of a martyr, the inquiry on the absence of an unauthorized public ecclesiastical cult would be fulfilled simultaneously with the verification of the martyrdom during the Apostolic Process.<sup>97</sup> Copies of all the Servant of God's writings (if this collection had not been postponed), copies of the testimonies favouring as well as contrary to the existence of a reputation of martyrdom (or reputation of sanctity), and copies of eyewitness testimonies concerning the existence of posthumous miracles attributed to the Servant of God's intercession (if the requirement had not been dispensed) would be delivered by the postulator to the Congregation of Rites and the local process would be over.<sup>98</sup> As was already mentioned, copies of evidence of the non-existence of a cult would only be delivered for the causes of nonmartyrs. This would end the Ordinary Process.

Then a preliminary phase of the Apostolic Process would begin. Henceforth, the promoter general of the faith would be assisted by two sub-promoters, and a "lawyer" and a "procurator" would work for the postulator of the cause.<sup>99</sup> At this time, the first two findings of the Ordinary Process (the study of the Servant of God's writings and the informative process on the reputation of martyrdom or sanctity, and on miracles) would be revised, and all potentially preemptory obstacles to the cause would be examined before the cause could be introduced to the Congregation of Rites. For nonmartyrs the examination of the writings had to take place before the introduction of the cause; for martyrs, this same examination was still a necessary part of the process of beatification, but it could be delayed until after the introduction of the cause. The subsequent procedure was followed, however, whether it occurred before or after the introduction, so it will be reviewed at this time.

The "Cardinal Ponent" (already named by the pope to study the individual cause from its beginning and to present information about the cause during the plenary sessions of the Congregation of Rites) would

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<sup>97</sup>(Canons 2058-2059). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 499; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 38, 63-66; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 15; Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 61-64; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 219-227, 236. The existence of unauthorized public cults within Roman Catholic churches could suspend the beatification (and later the canonization process) indefinitely. Thus any unauthorized cults had to be suppressed before the process would begin again.

<sup>98</sup>(Canons 2061-2064) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 499-500; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 38, 66-68.

<sup>99</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 25.

select at least two revisors of the Servant of God's writings.<sup>100</sup> Each would independently examine the writings for evidence concerning their theological orthodoxy, and in order to ascertain the psychological profile of the Servant of God, that is, the virtues and the sins noticeable in his or her writings.<sup>101</sup> This was especially important in nonmartyr causes because their virtues were, in fact, often evident in their writings. The revisors would send their reports to the Cardinal Ponent. Informed by the revisors' report and by his own reading of the Servant of God's writings, the promoter general of the faith would send his objections concerning the writings to the cardinals of the Congregation of Rites. The cardinals would advise the pope in regard to whether any writings were objectionable, but, in the end, the pope alone would decide whether the writings impeded the introduction of the cause.<sup>102</sup> This approval had a negative character: it did not mean that the pope officially approved the contents of the writings; it signified that nothing in the writings barred the cause from proceeding.<sup>103</sup>

Similarly, the informative process on the reputation of martyrdom or sanctity, and on miracles would be discussed after it had been translated to a language accepted by the Congregation of Rites;<sup>104</sup> the promoter general of the faith would present the problems with the informative process of the cause; the lawyer of the cause would respond; and the pope would make the final decision about whether to proceed

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<sup>100</sup>(Canon 2066). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 501; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 39, 68; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 111; Damian Blaher, Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 201.

<sup>101</sup>(Canons 2067-2069). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 501-502; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 39, 68-69; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 127-129; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 36, 75-80; Beatification and Canonization: Method to be Followed in the Examination of Writings, in The Canon Law Digest, vol. 4, T. Lincoln Bouscaren and James I. O'Connor (Milwaukee, Wis.: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1958), 419-429. Pope Benedict IV believed that this measure was necessary because the faithful (clergy, religious, and laity) might believe that a canonized Servant of God's writings were implicitly approved by the pope. Thus, doctrinal errors could prove to be scandalous. Similarly, doctrinal innovations could mislead the faithful. Therefore, doctrinal errors and innovations could halt the cause of a Servant of God unless he or she clearly had retracted them in subsequent writings. Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 32-33; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 128.

<sup>102</sup>(Canons 2009; 2070-2072) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 474, 502; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 10, 39-40, 69-70; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 75-80.

<sup>103</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 36.

<sup>104</sup>(Canons 2074) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 503; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 40, 70-71; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi del processo di beatificazione, 111.

with the cause.<sup>105</sup> As well, all potentially peremptory obstacles would be discussed.<sup>106</sup> For example, the cause of a martyr could be delayed for a long time if the promoter of the faith presented the tribunal with evidence that certain political, cultural, or social conditions existed which would make the introduction of the cause at that time inadvisable, and possibly even dangerous to the Roman Catholic Church and its members.<sup>107</sup> Of course, this could clearly be the case if the persecutor of the martyr still was in a position of power, or if the introduction could be perceived as a provocation by a potential persecutor.

Then the cardinals of the Congregation of Rites would meet at an Ordinary Congregation, and they would provide a consultative vote on whether the pope ought to introduce the cause. Only the pope would make this decision. If favorable to the cause, the pope would issue a decree of introduction for the cause. Thereafter, the local diocesan bishop who initiated the cause would no longer be able to intervene in the cause.<sup>108</sup> For nonmartyrs, the earlier process on the absence of cult would then be revised, but for martyrs, this would be delayed until the Apostolic Process.<sup>109</sup>

Then the Apostolic Process would begin. A tribunal would be established, composed of at least five judges, chosen by the Congregation of Rites. If one of the judges were the Ordinary of the local diocese where the cause began, then he would be its president, provided that he had not been the president of the tribunal during the Ordinary Process. Otherwise the Congregation of Rites would select somebody else to be the president of the tribunal during the Apostolic Process.<sup>110</sup> The promoter general of the faith would prepare the questions that the sub-promoters would ask witnesses who had already been cited during the

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<sup>105</sup>(Canons 2073-2082) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 502-505; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 40-41, 70-73; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 85-114; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 22.

<sup>106</sup>(Canon 2082). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 504-505; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 41; Causes of Servants of God and for Confirmation of Cultus: Procedure in Examining Informative Processes for the Appointment of the Commission, in The Canon Law Digest, vol. 2, 561-563.

<sup>107</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 68-70.

<sup>108</sup>(Canon 2084). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 506; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 41-42, 73-74; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 113-114.

<sup>109</sup>(Canon 2086). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 507; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 42, 74-75. See also Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 64-71; Casieri Antonio, Il miracolo nelle cause di beatificazione e di canonizzazione, 66-67; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 79-81.

<sup>110</sup>(Canon 2088) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 509; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 43, 77-79; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 33.



informative process.<sup>111</sup> Then the witnesses of the martyrdom or virtues (in the case of nonmartyrs), and posthumous miracles would be examined before the tribunal.<sup>112</sup> Only the judgment of the alleged martyrdom will be examined in a detailed manner in the present study because martyrs would not be judged specifically on their display of virtues during their lives.<sup>113</sup> The authentication of miracles will be examined simply in a brief manner in this study concerning the canonization of those blessed who were martyrs. The 1917 Code of Canon Law required miracles for the satisfaction of all causes of beatification, but popes generally dispensed martyrs from this requirement.<sup>114</sup> Thus, prior to beatification, only nonmartyrs would normally require the pope's decree proclaiming the authenticity of miracles.<sup>115</sup> Both martyrs and nonmartyrs, however, had to be responsible for posthumous miracles occurring after their beatification before they would be canonized.

As was already noted, martyrdoms were authenticated, after the publication of the 1917 Code of Canon Law, if they possessed the four basic elements of true martyrdom established by the future Pope Benedict XIV in his book, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione. The four requisite elements of every true martyrdom were the tyrant or persecutor; the death; the cause of or reason for the martyrdom; the martyr.<sup>116</sup> The following brief review of those elements will facilitate a study of the problems that could arise during the examination of testimonies concerning an alleged martyrdom in the Apostolic Process. For an alleged martyrdom to be judged true, a persecutor (either a person or a collective

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<sup>111</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 25, 29.

<sup>112</sup>Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 79-80; Raoul Naz, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 6, cols. 839-840.

<sup>113</sup>For the judgment on the heroicity of the nonmartyr's virtues, see the following: (Canons 2101-2104) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 513-514; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 45-46, 81-82, 84-86; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 23, 40-101, 195-302.

<sup>114</sup>(Canon 2116). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 517-518, 87-89; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 48.

<sup>115</sup>For the examination of alleged miracles during the beatification process, see (Canons 2116-2123). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 517-521; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 48-50, 92-95; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 48, 115; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 332-380. See also Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et canonisations, 86-90; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 138, 151; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 84-85.

<sup>116</sup>Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 86-87; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 115-117; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 101-120, 302-332; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 234-237; Brunero Gherardini, "Il martirio nella moderna prospettiva teologica," Divinitas 36 (1982): 25-26.

of people, called a "moral person" by Lambertini) must have freely decided to kill or to order the death of the Servant of God because he or she hated the Christian faith as proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church. Second, the Servant of God must really have died as a direct result of the punishment that the persecutor had inflicted directly and immediately; indirectly and through others than the persecutor himself or herself; or both directly and immediately, and indirectly and through others. Third, the persecutor must have been primarily motivated by either the hatred of the faith or hatred of the virtues and good works prescribed by the Christian faith. Any other motives had to be secondary. The martyr must have been principally motivated by a willingness to die for the love of the faith. Fourth, the martyr must have been a Christian or a catechumen who possessed the true Christian faith according to the Roman Catholic Church. As well, the martyr must have accepted his or her upcoming death freely, willingly, and consciously, or at least have demonstrated a habitual readiness for such a martyr's death. Moreover, the martyr must have accepted his or her end patiently, courageously, and steadfastly up to the moment of death, and at the same time, the martyr must have forgiven the persecutor instead of hating him or her.<sup>117</sup>

During the Apostolic Process, the promoter general of the faith would present interrogatories on points of fact in order to determine whether all four elements were truly present in the cause of martyrdom that was being examined. Salvatore Indelicato presents some difficulties and objections that could, and often did, arise under four headings: the insufficiency of the proofs; the verification of the death; the anti-religious character of the persecution or death; the martyr's ultimate motives.<sup>118</sup> As was already mentioned, the following study will treat the issues in a general sense--that is, on the abstract or theoretical level of possible difficulties that may arise in causes of martyrdom.

Indelicato suggests that certain problems could especially arise regarding the sufficiency of proofs for historical causes of martyrdom. (As was already noted, the causes of all other martyrs depended on persuasive eyewitness testimonies, supplemented by second-hand testimonies and historical documents.) These were martyrdoms that were not founded on eyewitness testimonies or on the properly recorded contemporary depositions of eyewitness testimonies, but instead depended on the overall agreement among oral testimonies, historical documents, and tradition. Doubts could arise, first, if there was disagreement among the sources about the name of the martyr or the place and circumstances in which the death

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<sup>117</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 41-86, 149-151. See also Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teologico-canónico del martirio, xi-xii, 3-4, 8-36; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 86-87; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 235.

<sup>118</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 302-330. See also Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 147-153; Brunero Gherardini, "Il martirio nella moderna prospettiva teologica," in Divinitas 36 (1982): 26; Raoul Naz, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 6, col. 840.

occurred. Indeed, as with the examination of the reputation of martyrdom or sanctity, it was necessary to determine when and where the popular tradition concerning a martyrdom had originated, whether this tradition was constant, and what was the content of the tradition (e.g., according to popular tradition, was the principal motive of the martyr religious or political?). Thus, for example, it would be significant that this tradition had survived and, perhaps, flourished primarily because it was part of a civil patriotic festival. After its establishment in 1930, the Historical Section of the Congregation of Rites would determine the relative historical value of each document supporting the cause. The same facts had to be established for causes that were not historical causes, but the probative evidence was derived from eyewitness testimonies, supplemented by secondary testimonies and documents. The documents could not function as the primary sources of proof.<sup>119</sup>

Second, especially in a cause that included the names of many martyrs of one persecution, difficulties could arise regarding how to verify that all the alleged deaths, in fact, had occurred and that these had been according to the purported circumstances. It is important to emphasize that each cause of martyrdom was not restricted to one Servant of God; this was contrary to the causes of nonmartyrs. In fact, causes of martyrdom often would include several dozen names, thereby furnishing the possibility of many ambiguities. For example, various documents may supply contradictory lists of those Servants of God who died. This was especially problematic for historical causes. How could one be certain that some of the Servants of God who were said to be killed in some lists, but not in others, in fact, had not survived? Of course, it would be scandalous to canonize persons who had not died along with others who had truly died in a situation judged to be a martyrdom. Who was to say that these others ought to be venerated as saints if they were not being canonized as nonmartyr saints, but as martyrs? As well, some contradictions among documents may be attributable to the fleeing by some Servants of God from the persecution. Moreover, there may be confusion in regard to the true and complete names of each Servant of God included in the lists. More than one person could have the same or similar names. Would this be one or more persons?<sup>120</sup> People were only included on the final list of a cause if the circumstances of their deaths were certainly known and if their deaths were believed to include all the aforementioned elements of genuine martyrdom.

Third, sometimes it was very difficult to prove the anti-religious character of the violence or persecution because often the persecutor would have more than one motive. It was necessary to prove, however, that the primary motive was, in fact, the hatred of the Christian faith, as espoused by the Roman

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<sup>119</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 303-305, 314-316. See also Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 86; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 148-152.

<sup>120</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 305-307, 317-318. See also Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 148-149, 152.

Catholic Church. Political situations generally complicated the task of ascertaining the persecutor's motive. For example, the alleged persecutor could claim that he or she killed or ordered the deaths for non-religious reasons. The alleged persecutor could contend that the religious hierarchy supported and assisted a political structure that he or she was attempting to overturn. Proving the persecutor's hatred of the faith would be especially difficult if the persecutor claimed that he or she was the protector of the faith, and instead, was acting so as to ward off the challenge that these alleged martyrs were posing to the existing way that people practised their religious faith. The existence of a legal structure for the alleged persecutor to carry out sentences of death would clearly make proving an anti-religious motive even more difficult. It would have to be proved, then, that the martyr was not simply the victim of an unjust system, but was killed because the persecutor hated the faith. Thus, proving that the persecutor had a hidden motive would be central to many causes of martyrdom. This would be done by looking at precedents that had been evident in his or her earlier statements and behaviour. Sometimes, it would even be more difficult to prove that a persecutor had killed the alleged martyr, not specifically in hatred of the faith, but because he or she hated the virtues espoused by the faith.<sup>121</sup>

Fourth, the victim must have a supernatural purpose: there must be persuasive evidence that the alleged martyr demonstrated a fidelity to Jesus Christ by his or her constant steadfastness up to the moment of death. This means that the alleged martyr must have died in imitation of a certain interpretation of how Jesus Christ confronted his own death by crucifixion. The true martyr would permit his or her death in defense of the Christian faith as proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church, or so as to avoid betraying or renouncing it. Certain difficulties could arise when trying to prove the martyr's motive. For example, it would not be enough if the motive were the protection of private opinions on the faith even if the individual believed that they were corollaries of the doctrines. Similarly, the victim's motive could not include dying vaingloriously (e.g., a criminal who wished to die in the name of the faith so as to cover over the bad reputation of his or her scandalous crimes in the past), dying with a sectarian spirit, dying for patriotic ends (e.g., a missionary who died because he or she was accused of spying for the home country), dying for personal satisfaction, or dying in order to advance the interests of one's family.

Nevertheless, some extraordinary activities by martyrs could be judged acceptable if their primary motive was the defense of the faith and specific circumstances warranted the activities. For example, spontaneously offering one's life to the persecutor is often questioned, but if a missionary had done this in order to discourage the deaths of other missionaries, thereby securing the survival of a mission, then the motive could be judged supernatural; the missionary's motive was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>121</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 307-309, 319-323. See also Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 86-87; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 149-150, 152-153.

Other difficulties that could arise are related to the martyr's attitude toward the persecutor up to the moment of death. For example, the martyrdom would be suspect if the victim, instead of loving and forgiving his or her victim, had expounded a fiery tirade of cruel and scornful, though purportedly divinely inspired denunciations of the persecutor. As well, in the case of catechumens, it would be more appropriate that they had sought baptism before dying. Similarly, baptized Roman Catholics should request the opportunity to receive the sacraments of penance and of the eucharist before dying. Furthermore, it would be more difficult to prove that victims had been patiently and constantly willing to die up to the moment of death if they were killed suddenly without warning, while asleep, or while separated from potential witnesses from their community, especially if the death occurred after many days of isolation so that the manner in which they confronted their imminent deaths was unknown. Eyewitnesses of such deaths would be sought so as to furnish evidence whether certain divine signs were present or miracles had occurred while the future martyrs suffered before dying. This is the reason why non-Roman Catholics, including colleagues of the persecutor, if not the persecutor himself or herself, can be important eyewitnesses in the causes of martyrdom.<sup>122</sup>

After the process on the martyrdom and the reasons that lie behind the occurrence of the death (or the process on heroic virtues for nonmartyrs) had ended, the lawyer of the cause would prepare a position report, which contained the promoter general of the faith's objections to the cause and the lawyer's responses to these objections.<sup>123</sup> Then there would be a special session or "congregation" at which the cardinals of the Congregation of Rites would vote on whether the testimonies that were part of the Apostolic Process were, in fact, legitimate evidence for the process, and whether all the rules of procedure had been followed. This would be an advisory vote for the pope. If the pope judged favorably, he would issue the decree on the validity of the Apostolic Process.<sup>124</sup> Discussion of the martyrdom, its cause, and any signs or miracles that occurred in relation to the martyrdom would then take place during three congregations (i.e., sessions): antepreparatory, preparatory, and general congregations.<sup>125</sup> The pope would preside at the

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<sup>122</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 309-314, 323-330. See also Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 86-87; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 150, 153.

<sup>123</sup>(Canons 2099). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 512-513; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 45, 81-82, 90.

<sup>124</sup>(Canon 2100). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 512-513; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 82; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 23, 174, 188-194.

<sup>125</sup>(Canon 2102-2114) Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 514-517; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 45-48, 89-91; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 175-184; Raoul Naz, "Martyre," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, vol. 6, col.

general congregation. The consultors, prelates, and cardinals who attended would simply provide the pope with an advisory or consultative vote. The pope would make the final decision. If he judged the Servant of God's cause of canonization favorably, a decree approving the martyrdom (or a decree approving the heroicity of virtues) would be issued.<sup>126</sup> Henceforth, the Servant of God would be called by the title, "Venerable".<sup>127</sup>

After the issuing of the decree approving the martyrdom (or in the case of nonmartyrs subsequent to the decree approving the heroicity of virtues and the decree approving the miracles), the cardinals would gather at a last session, called "*de tuto*", presided over by the pope. There would be a consultative vote on whether the specific Servant of God ought to be beatified. The pope alone would make the final decision. If he favoured beatification, he would read a brief of beatification at a solemn mass of beatification. The papal beatification would grant a limited public ecclesiastical cult for the newly declared blessed. This was not considered a definitive judgment by the pope that the blessed was indeed in heaven.<sup>128</sup>

Sometime later, the postulator would ask the Congregation of Rites for a decree for the resumption of the cause if he possessed evidence of new posthumous miracles.<sup>129</sup> This decree would not be issued unless there was documentary evidence that the Servant of God already had been formally beatified (by way of non-cult) or equipollently beatified (by extraordinary way of immemorial cult). As was already noted,

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<sup>126</sup>(Canon 2115). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 517; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, 48, 91-92. See also Pierre Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 72-85; Casieri Antonio, Il miracolo nelle cause di beatificazione e di canonizzazione, 67-69; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 81-84.

<sup>127</sup>Originally, the title "Venerable" was popularly bestowed to candidates for beatification when their cause was introduced before the Congregation of Rites. On August 26, 1913, Pope Pius X (1835-1914; pope 1903-1914) made this an official title which was to be given to a candidate when an official decree was made stating that the candidate had suffered martyrdom or displayed all the virtues to a heroic degree. L. Hertling, "Materiali per la storia di canonizzazione," Gregorianum 16 (1935): 195; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 132, 137; F.L. Cross, ed. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1411; Salvatore Indelicato, Le basi giuridiche del processo di beatificazione, 24; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 74; Damian Blaher, The Ordinary Processes in Causes of Beatification and Canonization, 223. Confer with Allen Dudley Severance, "Beatification and Canonization With Special Reference to Historic Proof and the Proof of Miracles," in Papers of the American Society of Church History, Second Series 3 (1912/1913), 51.

<sup>128</sup>(Canon 2124). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 521-523; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 50, 95-96; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 174-175, 186, 381-386.

<sup>129</sup>(Canon 2139). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 530; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 104, 106-107.

before the canonization of all martyrs and nonmartyrs, the Congregation of Rites and then the pope would have to verify the authenticity of new miracles occurring subsequent to beatification.<sup>130</sup> As with the judgment of martyrdom or heroic virtues, and the judgment of miracles during the beatification process for nonmartyrs, the new miracles for the canonization of martyrs and nonmartyrs would be examined before a tribunal and then they would be discussed at antepreparatory, preparatory, and general sessions; sometimes the pope would issue a new "*de iure*" decree.<sup>131</sup> Then there would be three gatherings or "consistories" of cardinals to advise the pope whether to canonize the blessed (secret, public, and semi-public consistories), but the final decision was always solely that of the pope. It would be a definitive judgment, traditionally believed by Roman Catholics to be guided by the Holy Spirit and thereby infallible, that the saint was in fact in heaven, and thus worthy of a universal public ecclesiastical cult. The pope would publish a bull of canonization, with the date of the canonization. The blessed would be canonized when the pope read a special formula at a solemn mass characterized by special rites. This usually occurred at St. Peter's Basilica.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>130</sup>(Canons 2136-2137). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 529-530; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 104-106.

<sup>131</sup>As was already noted, nowadays virtually all miracles that are investigated are miraculous cures. A miracle must possess six requirements before being verified in causes of canonization: (1) witnesses and documents must exist to give evidence of the cure; (2) the disease or illness was diagnosed correctly; (3) the prognosis was accurate; (4) there must be documentation that the cure was instantaneous and complete; (5) the cure could not have developed according to natural law (e.g., it was not effected by means of pharmaceutical products); (6) it must be proved that the cure occurred after the alleged martyr or nonmartyr saint, who is the candidate for beatification or canonization, had been specifically invoked. A team of qualified physicians clearly provide a crucial role in recommending whether features (1) to (5) have been objectively satisfied. Casieri Antonio, Il miracolo nelle cause di beatificazione e di canonizzazione, 75-86; Giuseppe Giunchi, "L'esame del miracolo sotto il profilo medico-scientifico," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 213-219. For other studies of the verification of miracles in causes of canonization, see the following: Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 121-168; François Leuret and Henri Bon, Les guérisons miraculeuses modernes avec radiographies, plans et graphiques (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950); Paolo Molinari, "I miracoli nelle cause di beatificazione e canonizzazione," La Civiltà Cattolica 129 (1978): 21-33; Giovanni Bianino, "Miracolo e leggi natura," La Civiltà Cattolica 133 (1982): 224-238; P.A. Liégé, "Le miracle dans la théologie catholique," Lumière et Vie 33 (July 1957): 63-86. See also P. Béhague, "Miracles et constats médico-physiologiques," Lumière et Vie (July 1957): 25-32; Anne Morelli, "Apparitions et miracles des années quatre-vingt," in Apparitions et miracles, ed. Alain Dierkens (Brussels, Belgium: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1991), 123-137.

<sup>132</sup>(Canon 2141). Raoul Naz, Traité de droit canonique, vol. 4, 532-534; Tomás García Barberena, Comentarios al Código de Derecho Canónico, vol. 4, 105, 107-109. See also Pierre Delooy, Sociologie et canonisations, 91-97; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 138-146; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 85-86. For a history of the formula of canonization, see Amato Pietro Frutaz, "Auctoritate...Beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli: Saggio sulle formule dicanonizzazione," Antonianum 42 (1967): 435-501.

D. Changes in the Process of Canonization Concerning the Authentication of Martyrdom with the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the New Norms for the Causes of Saints

Three new documents were issued in 1983 which concern the causes of saints, both martyrs and nonmartyrs. As was already noted, the process by which alleged martyrs and nonmartyrs are authenticated is designated as the "cause of canonization" in the new legislation. The term "cause", however, is retained to refer to the individual cases that are under consideration.<sup>133</sup> Pope John Paul II issued the Apostolic Constitution, entitled Divinus perfectionis Magister ("Divine Teacher of Perfection"), on January 25, 1983.<sup>134</sup> It abolished and replaced all previous legislation on the process used for canonizing, including the one hundred forty-three canons (Canons 1999-2141) concerning the process of beatification and canonization in book four of the 1917 Code of Canon Law.<sup>135</sup> The Congregation for the Causes of Saints

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<sup>133</sup>In this new legislation for the causes of saints, what was called the "process of beatification and canonization" in the 1917 Code of Canon Law is now designated as a "cause of canonization". This change was made in order to emphasize, first of all, that the objective of every cause is the canonization of the Servant of God, not his or her beatification and then, if possible, his or her canonization, and secondly, that the manner in which the causes of saints are examined is not, in fact, a true judicial process with a living person who defends himself or herself before a tribunal. True judicial processes are concerned with contentious or penal matters. Deceased persons, however, do not have any rights before a tribunal. They cannot be punished, nor can they benefit from winning a case. It is clear, then, that the formality of a tribunal is used in the causes of saints in order to safeguard the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, not the candidate for canonization, against potentially scandalous canonizations. With this in mind, the new legislation of 1983 has adjusted the previous model of a judicial process (including a tribunal, judges, and a rigorous trial), which had existed for centuries, so that the present model emphasizes both the administrative and judicial natures of the causes of saints. The process is administrative insofar as there is an informative process on the diocesan level for gathering evidence, but this evidence is then subjected to the formality of a judicial process in order to ascertain the truth. Finally, papal beatification and canonization are administrative, rather than judicial, acts, with the pope's decision whether to canonize traditionally believed to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Romualdo Rodrigo, "La figura del postulatore nelle cause dei santi secondo la nuova legislazione," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 91 (1986): 210-215; Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione della IV centenario, 299. See also Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 374-375; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 193; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation for the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 375-380.

<sup>134</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 75 (1983): 349-355. For an Italian translation, see Pope John Paul II, Divinus perfectionis magister, in Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, Fabijan Veraja, 151-163. See also Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione della IV centenario, 299; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 191; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 364.

<sup>135</sup>Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione della IV centenario, 299; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 209-210; Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 369; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 361.



published two other documents (both approved by Pope John Paul II on February 7, 1983) that explain the manner in which new legislation appearing in Divinus perfectionis Magister was to function: Normae servandae in inquisitionibus ab Episcopis faciendis in causis sanctorum ("Norms to be Observed in the Investigations by Bishops in the Causes of Saints")<sup>136</sup> and Decretum Generale de Servorum Dei Causis, quarum iudicium in praesens apud Sacram Congregationem pendet ("General Decree on the Causes of the Servants of God Whose Decision at Present Are Pending with the Sacred Congregation").<sup>137</sup> As well, the Congregation published a document (approved by Pope John Paul II on March 21, 1983) which was to be used internally by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints for the following three years, entitled Regolamento della Sacra Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi ("Working Rules of the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints").<sup>138</sup> The same day (January 25, 1983) when Pope John Paul II issued Divinus perfectionis Magister (which abolished the legislation related to the causes of saints in the 1917 Code of Canon Law), he also approved a new Code of Canon Law, which became effective on November 27, 1983. Unlike the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the 1983 Code of Canon Law did not include specific legislation on the cause of canonization.<sup>139</sup> Thus the aforementioned three documents function as the new legislation for the causes of saints, whether martyrs or nonmartyrs. They operate, however, as a particular set of laws that ought to be interpreted in the context of a larger body of legislation--the current 1983 Code of Canon Law--not isolated from them, nor even simply parallel to them.<sup>140</sup> Thus the general norms from the 1983 Code

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<sup>136</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 75 (1983), 396-403. For an Italian translation, see Sacra Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi, Norme da osservarsi nelle inchieste diocesane delle cause dei santi, in Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, Fabijan Veraja, 164-177. See also Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 210-212; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 364.

<sup>137</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 75 (1983), 403-404. For an Italian translation, see Decreto Generale sulle cause di canonizzazione pendenti presso la Sacra Congregazione, in Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, Fabijan Veraja, 179-181. See also Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 212-214; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 364, 373-374.

<sup>138</sup>Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno all'Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 299-300; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 214; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 100-102; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation about the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 364; Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus Perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 369; Romualdo Rodrigo, "La figura del postulatore nelle cause dei santi secondo la nuova legislazione: Diritti e doveri," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 91 (1986): 207.

<sup>139</sup>Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 364.

<sup>140</sup>Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 375.

of Canon Law are to be used wherever the new documents do not cover specific norms and procedures.<sup>141</sup> These points of nuance, however, are the subject of other studies.<sup>142</sup> They are not a principal concern of this overview of the new norms for the causes of saints as they relate to the authentication of martyrs.

The new legislation on the causes of the saints was founded, first, on two significant themes of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)--the themes of sanctity<sup>143</sup> and of the collegiality of the bishops--and, second, on Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Letter, Sanctitas clarior, dated March 19, 1969, and his Apostolic Constitution, Sacra Rituum Congregatio, of May 8, 1969.<sup>144</sup> Sanctity is a principal theme of the dogmatic constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, which was promulgated on November 21, 1964 at the fifth session of Vatican II. In the dogmatic constitution, all Christians are called to perfection and holiness;<sup>145</sup> the traditional practice of commemorating and venerating saints (both martyrs and nonmartyrs) is reaffirmed because the saints are models of holiness worthy of imitation and they are believed to be already in heaven where they may intercede on behalf of the living members of the Church;<sup>146</sup> and finally, the dogma of

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<sup>141</sup>Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 369; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 100.

<sup>142</sup>For example, see Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazioni e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 365-400; Romualdo Rodrigo, "La figura del postulatore nelle cause dei santi secondo la nuova legislazione," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 91 (1986): 207-224.

<sup>143</sup>Paolo Molinari, "La storia del capitolo VII della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium': Indole escatologica della Chiesa pellegrinante e sua unione con la Chiesa celeste," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 158.

<sup>144</sup>Acta Apostolicae Sedis 61 (1969): 149-153; Acta Apostolicae Sedis 61 (1969): 297-305.

<sup>145</sup>Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 5, The Universal Call to Holiness 39-42, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 880-884. See also Pietro Palazzini, "La santità coronamento della dignità dell'uomo," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV occasione, 229, 234-235; Luigi Bogliolo, "L'influsso della glorificazione dei servi di Dio nella spiritualità," in Ibid., 241-243; Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV, 43, 101-109.

<sup>146</sup>Second Vatican Council, Session 3, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 104, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 838; Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 104, in The Documents of Vatican II: All Sixteen Official Texts Promulgated by the Ecumenical Council, ed. William M. Abbott, trans. Joseph Gallagher, et al. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 168; Josef Andreas Jungmann, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 104, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (London, England: Burns and Oates, 1967), 72. See also Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 191-192; Casieri Antonius, La perfezione in Benedetto XIV, 160-161; Luigi Bogliolo, "L'influsso della glorificazione dei servi di Dio nella spiritualità," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 257.

the mystical body of Christ is confirmed.<sup>147</sup> The theme of sanctity at the Second Vatican Council is examined in chapter four.

Collegiality among the bishops is another major theme of Lumen Gentium. This means that individual bishops have power over specific churches, but that they also must collaborate with the other bishops and the pope in order to unify the whole Roman Catholic Church.<sup>148</sup> The theme is significant for the causes of saints because it suggests that the bishop ought to have a major role in conducting the cause of a Servant of God who died in his local diocese, and who has subsequently enjoyed a widespread, spontaneously originated reputation of martyrdom or sanctity there. The new norms make the local bishop responsible for overseeing the investigation of the local cause so that, ultimately, the whole Roman Catholic Church might benefit from the declaration of a new universal public ecclesiastical cult, which is granted with a papal canonization.

The new legislation on the causes of saints, which came into effect in 1983, was also anticipated in two documents approved by Pope Paul VI in 1969: Sanctitas clarior and Sacra rituum congregatio. Thus, starting in 1969, in accordance with Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Letter, Sanctitas clarior, the local bishop could introduce the cause for canonization, but only after receiving the pope's permission. As well, henceforth all causes were to employ historical criticism for examining the Servant of God's life, writings,

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<sup>147</sup>This is the idea that a relationship exists among the living members of the "Pilgrim Church", the deceased members of the "Church Triumphant" who are already in heaven (it supposedly includes, among others, the saints who have been papally canonized), and finally, those deceased members of the Church who are in purgatory. Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union With the Heavenly Church 50-51, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 889-891; Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church 50-51, in The Documents of Vatican II, 81-85. See also Otto Semmelroth, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, 280-284; Paolo Molinari, "La storia del capitolo VII della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium'," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV Centenario, 113, 118, 121-127, 142-143.

<sup>148</sup>"The individual bishops...are the visible principle and foundation of unity in their own particular churches, formed in the likeness of the universal church; in and from these particular churches there exist the one unique catholic church. For this reason individual bishops represent their own church, while all of them together with the pope represent the whole church in the bond of peace, love and unity...as members of the episcopal college and legitimate successors of the apostles, the individual bishops, through the institution and command of Christ, are bound to be concerned about the whole church....All the bishops, in fact, have a duty to promote and defend the unity of faith and discipline common to the whole church, to instruct the faithful in the love of the whole mystical body of Christ--especially those members who are poor and suffering and those who are undergoing persecution for righteousness' sake (see Mt 5, 10)--and finally, to promote every activity that which is aimed at the spread of the faith and the rise of the light of full truth over all people." Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 3, The Hierarchical Constitution of the Church and in Particular the Episcopate 23, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 867.

reputation of martyrdom (or sanctity), and actual martyrdom (or virtues).<sup>149</sup> As was already noted, the Apostolic Constitution, Sacra rituum congregatio, established the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints as the competent congregation to conduct the causes of martyrs and nonmartyr saints, thereby replacing the Sacred Congregation of Rites, which had been founded in 1588.<sup>150</sup>

The purpose of establishing the new legislation on the causes of saints in 1983 was not to alter nor to broaden the basic concept of martyrdom (that is, the four elements that constitute every true example of martyrdom) or of heroic virtues, but instead, to change the institutional manner by which the causes of saints would be authenticated. Thus there were changes concerning where, when, and how the causes of saints proceed, and who is involved in them. The three documents, Divinus perfectionis Magister, Normae servandae in inquisitionibus ab Episcopis faciendis in causis sanctorum, and Decretum Generale de Servorum Dei Causis, quarum iudicium in praesens apud Sacram Congregationem pendet, were issued in 1983 specifically in order to replace the existing lengthy, complicated, expensive, and rigorously judicial, Vatican-based process of beatification and canonization with a new process for authenticating alleged saints, called the "cause of canonization", which would utilize available modern scientific methods, respond to the requests made by bishops that the procedure be hastened, and be decentralized so as to correspond to the theme, "the collegiality of the bishops", which had been present at the Second Vatican Council.<sup>151</sup>

A brief overview of the cause of canonization follows in order to illustrate the manner by which the authentication of martyrs and nonmartyr saints has changed with the 1983 legislation. As was already noted, what was previously called the "process of beatification and canonization" is now called the "cause of canonization". Whereas the cause previously consisted of two distinct processes (the Ordinary Process and the Apostolic Process), it now includes two phases of a single cause of canonization: the "diocesan phase" and the "apostolic phase". Evidence is gathered by means of an administrative inquiry during the diocesan phase; the formality of an exacting judicial process still exists during the apostolic phase in order to advise the pope whether to beatify or to canonize a given candidate. As in the 1917 Code of Canon Law,

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<sup>149</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 14-15; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 101, 112-113; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 362-363. See also Michele D'Alfonso, "La prova in genere e la fama di santità in specie nei processi dei santi prima e dopo il M.P. 'Sanctitas clarior'," Apollinaris 59 (1976): 491-520; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 158-167.

<sup>150</sup>Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 373; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 167-169; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 363.

<sup>151</sup>Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno all'Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 300; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 155-157.

the cause may be initiated by either the bishop of the diocese where the alleged martyr or nonmartyr saint died or a petitioner (called "the actor") who requests that the same bishop initiate the cause.<sup>152</sup> The actor may be a man or a woman. Only men could previously be direct petitioners of a cause, whereas women (for example, female religious orders) had to act through a man who represented their cause, though they still paid for all the expenses of the process. Like before, the person who requests that a cause of canonization be initiated represents, first, the popular local belief that the Servant of God had died as a martyr in imitation of Jesus Christ's crucifixion (or had lived an extraordinarily virtuous life in the case of nonmartyrs), and, second, the belief that the Servant of God (now believed to be a citizen of heaven) is thereby worthy of the papal concession of a universal public ecclesiastical cult in his or her honour.<sup>153</sup> The actor, who underwrites all expenses of the cause, chooses a postulator (who, in turn, with the approval of the actor, selects a vice-postulator to aid him or her) to gather evidence during the diocesan phase. The postulator can be a priest, a member of a religious institute, or a lay person, whereas the 1917 Code of Canon Law permitted only priests to be postulators of causes. The postulator must be qualified in theology and canon law, know the procedures of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and be approved by the diocesan bishop.<sup>154</sup> The postulator's "prime duty...is to conduct thoroughly the investigations into the life of the Servant of God in question in order to establish his reputation of sanctity (*fama sanctitas*) and the importance of the Cause for the Church, and to report his findings to the Bishop."<sup>155</sup> For causes of martyrdom, the postulator must establish that the Servant of God has a local reputation of martyrdom.

A cause may be designated either "recent" or "ancient": it is recent if there exist eyewitnesses of the alleged martyrdom (or virtues in the case of nonmartyrs); it is ancient if historical documents and oral

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<sup>152</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 33; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 365-366. The petitioner of the cause may be "anyone of the People of God or groups of the faithful who are recognized by ecclesiastical authority." Norms to be Observed in Inquiries Made by Bishops in the Causes of Saints 1, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 104. On the competent bishop, see Norms to be Observed 5., in *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>153</sup>Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 372.

<sup>154</sup>Norms to be Observed 2-3a; 4, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 104; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 33-34; Romualdo Rodrigo, "La figura del postulatore nelle cause dei santi secondo la nuova legislazione," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 91 (1986): 209; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 198; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation about the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 366.

<sup>155</sup>Norms to be Observed 3b, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 104. See also Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 199; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 366.

tradition are the only existing evidence. Therefore causes are not ancient because of their age, but because of the lack of eyewitnesses and of second-hand testimonies based on the testimonies of eyewitnesses. These are akin to the historical causes that existed subsequent to the establishment of the Historical Section in 1930. They are no longer called historical causes because all causes, both recent and ancient ones, are to be examined using historical criticism. This means that recent causes are not to depend solely on eyewitness testimonies. Historical documents are used in order to understand better the historical context in which the Servant of God lived and died. As well, the absence of an unauthorized public ecclesiastical cult remains part of the necessary proof for all recent causes. Moreover, ancient causes (i.e., causes, from whichever era, without eyewitness testimonies) may require either the proof of non-cult or the proof of immemorial cult. Nevertheless, unlike in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, causes are not categorized as those proceeding by the ordinary way of non-cult or those others proceeding by the extraordinary way of cult. Now the emphasis is placed on the testimonial proof that is available.<sup>156</sup>

For recent causes, the petition may not be presented within five years of the Servant of God's death. If it is presented more than thirty years after the death, there must be proof that the cause was not intentionally delayed because of deceitful motives.<sup>157</sup> Along with the petition sent to the bishop, the postulator must include all significant historical biographies of the Servant of God or, if these do not exist, a chronological relation of his or her life, works, reputation of martyrdom or sanctity, actual martyrdom or displays of heroic virtues, and miracles; a copy of all of his or her published writings; and for recent causes, a list of people who can confirm or dispute the Servant of God's reputation of martyrdom (or sanctity) and the genuineness of the alleged martyrdom (or life of heroic virtues and posthumous intercession for a miracle in the case of nonmartyrs), either as eyewitnesses or as second-hand witnesses of eyewitness testimonies.<sup>158</sup> It is notable that it is no longer necessary to request a papal dispensation from the requirement of a proven miracle prior to the beatification of a martyr. As was already noted, this was a common practise while the 1917 Code of Canon Law was operative. Now posthumous miracles are not required for the beatification of martyrs, but nonmartyrs still need to have interceded for one miracle.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup>Norms to be Observed 7, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 36-38; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 199-200.

<sup>157</sup>Norms to be Observed 9, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 200.

<sup>158</sup>Norms to be Observed 10, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 195; 200; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 366.

<sup>159</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 121;

After the bishop accepts the petition, he consults with the local Conference of Bishops about whether it would be appropriate at the time to introduce the cause; the objective is to emphasize collegiality among bishops because a canonized saint will have a universal public ecclesiastical cult.<sup>160</sup> The bishop usually formally introduces the cause sometime after this consultative meeting with the other bishops from the same region.<sup>161</sup> This is a significant innovation because the local bishop did not have an important role in the cause once it had been papally introduced according to the previous legislation. Thus, it is especially notable that causes of canonization are now episcopally introduced by the local bishop on his own authority subsequent to a consultative meeting with the other bishops of his region, rather than being papally introduced (as in the 1917 Code of Canon Law) or episcopally introduced after receiving the pope's permission (as in *Sanctitas clarior*). The local bishop now simply informs the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and thereby, the pope, that he has already introduced the cause.<sup>162</sup>

According to the new legislation, the bishop appoints a priest to the position of "promoter of justice" (previously, called the promoter of the faith during the Ordinary Process, as well as the Apostolic Process), who is an expert in theology and canon law, and also in history for ancient causes, so as to ensure that this candidate is appropriate for the Roman Catholic Church, thereby avoiding a scandalous beatification or canonization.<sup>163</sup>

As in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the bishop may either instruct (i.e., oversee) the cause himself or he may select a delegate, who must be a priest who is an expert in theology and canon law, and, additionally, in history for ancient causes.<sup>164</sup> The following discussion will assume that the bishop is instructing the cause; all comments would refer to the delegate if this were the case. Then the bishop publicizes the petition in his diocese (and sometimes in other dioceses, with the permission of the relevant Ordinary) by means of an edict, and he requests the presentation of testimonial evidence for and against the cause, and the delivery of the Servant of God's published writings (and later, his or her unpublished

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<sup>160</sup>Norms to be Observed 11a, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105, 112-113; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 40; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti nei processi di beatificazione e canonizzazione, 201; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 366-367.

<sup>161</sup>Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 301-302; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 103, 117.

<sup>162</sup>Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 301-302; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 101.

<sup>163</sup>Norms to be Observed 6b, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105. See also Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 35.

<sup>164</sup>Norms to be Observed 6a, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105.

writings) and any other historical documents pertinent to the cause. It is notable that historical documents are gathered for both recent and ancient causes for the task of "situating the Servant of God in the religious, social and cultural ambient in which he was martyred or lived heroically the Christian virtues."<sup>165</sup> If the bishop plans to introduce the cause, he then selects two "censors-theologians" to examine, first, the Servant of God's published works, and then later, the unpublished writings. The censors-theologians deliver a report to the bishop on whether the writings contain doctrinal errors, questionable opinions, or anything else contrary to the faith or to morals. In addition, historians and archivists are employed to judge the authenticity and historical value of all documents, especially those used as proof for ancient causes.<sup>166</sup> Then all collected materials are given to the promoter of justice, who prepares interrogatories in order to establish the truth about the Servant of God's reputation of martyrdom (or of sanctity), about his or her life, and finally, about the martyrdom (or life of heroic virtues). Only the recent reputation of martyrdom (or sanctity) is considered in ancient causes. The bishop sends a summary of the Servant of God's life and the pertinence of the cause for the Roman Catholic Church to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints so as to determine whether there exist reasons registered in Vatican records for suspending the cause. In all causes, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith must be consulted. Only after the pope informs the bishop that no objections exist may the cause proceed to the gathering and examination of the witnesses' testimonial evidence.<sup>167</sup>

Next during the diocesan phase, the postulator gathers the evidence in order to try to prove the Servant of God's reputation of martyrdom (or of sanctity), his or her authentic martyrdom (or life of heroic virtue and a posthumous miracle for nonmartyrs), by providing a list of eyewitnesses and documentary evidence, supplemented, if necessary, by second-hand witnesses. (On the other hand, ancient causes are founded on documentary proof and oral tradition.) The bishop examines the witnesses provided by the postulator, including the Servant of God's relatives and friends, as well as experts, such as the doctors who

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<sup>165</sup>R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of Saints," Apollinaris 61 (1988): 201. See Norms to be Observed 11b-12, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 201, 218-221.

<sup>166</sup>Norms to be Observed 13-14, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 106; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 195, 201, 217-235; R.J. Sarno, "The Integration of Historical Research in the Methodology Used in the Causes of Saints," Apollinaris 61 (1988): 198-202; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 367. For a detailed comparison between the role that the Servant of God's writings has as proof in the causes of saints according to the new norms and the role that they had in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, see Francesco Leone, La prova documentali degli scritti, 239-259.

<sup>167</sup>Norms to be Observed 15a-c, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 105-106; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 43-47; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 201; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation for the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 367.



treated the patient in the case of a purported miraculous cure, and other "ex officio" witnesses provided by the bishop, according to the interrogatories furnished by the promoter of justice and other questions presented by the bishop himself.<sup>168</sup> The witnesses' testimonies and the historical documents are examined, both those that support the alleged martyrdom and others that call it into question. The promoter of justice supplies interrogatories, while the postulator attempts to develop the case supporting the cause by providing new witnesses and persuasive documents. The tomb of the candidate and the room where he or she lived is then investigated to prove the non-existence of an unauthorized public ecclesiastical cult; as with the previous legislation, proof to the contrary can halt a cause until the unauthorized cult has been suppressed. Thereafter, the bishop makes the definitive sentence on the absence of an unauthorized public ecclesiastical cult.<sup>169</sup> (In the case of nonmartyrs, testimonies and documents concerning the Servants of God's virtues are examined. Miracles are investigated separately; the investigating physician and the recipient of a miraculous cure are also questioned.)<sup>170</sup> The diocesan phase ends when a copy of the "Acts of the Cause" are sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints (while the original remains in the diocese); these are a transcript of the inquiry, including, if necessary, copies of a translation into a language accepted by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. The Servant of God's writings are also sent.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>168</sup>Norms to be Observed 16-25, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 106-108, 115, 118-122; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 47-50; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 195, 201-203; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 368. For a list of those persons who are not able to be witnesses, see Norms to be Observed 20, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 107, 116; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 203. Certain information must be gathered in order to establish whether an alleged martyrdom is true: 1) the time and place of the alleged martyrdom; 2) the general attitude of the persecutor toward the Christian faith as it is expressed by the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the persecutor's motive in the case of the specific martyr whose cause is being examined; 3) the habitual interior disposition of the Servant of God, his or her behaviour when confronted by imminent death, as well as the manner of death; 4) the opinion of the martyr's contemporaries in regard to the death, and the opinion of witnesses concerning the origin and endurance of the Servant of God's reputation of martyrdom. Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 125.

<sup>169</sup>Norms to be Observed 26-28, 37, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 108-109, 115; Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 51; Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 303; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 202, 207; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About The Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 369.

<sup>170</sup>Norms to be Observed 21, 32-34, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 107, 109, 123-127; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 195, 206.

<sup>171</sup>Norms to be Observed 29-31, Robert J. Sarno, trans., in The Making of Saints, Michael Freze, 108, 117; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti nei porcessi, 196, 202; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 369.

It is notable, then, that much more of the investigation and examination of the cause is completed in the diocese where the cause is initiated than the 1917 Code of Canon Law permitted. As well, the inquiries conducted previously by the local bishop according to the 1917 Code of Canon Law functioned principally as a preliminary process to the legitimate examinations carried out during the Apostolic Process. Once the cause had been papally introduced, the local bishop did not have a significant role.

The new legislation has introduced new titles and new positions for officials and new tasks for old positions to the apostolic phase of the cause of canonization. Thus it is important, first of all, to identify the persons and councils that have roles in the causes of saints during the apostolic phase. As was previously noted, since 1969, the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints has been the congregation that conducts the causes of saints during the apostolic phase at the Vatican; it also prepares cases for the authentication of relics. The "Cardinal Prefect" presides over the Congregation for the Causes of Saints; he is assisted by a secretary, who, in turn, is aided by a subsecretary and other officials. The causes that are sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints are studied by the "College of Relators", who are directed by the "Relator General". As well, the Relator General is in charge of the "consultors-historians". The "promoter of the faith" (also known as the "Prelate Theologian") is the Congregation's theological expert; he is the head of the "congress of consultors-theologians". The "College of Doctors or Experts" is charged with the examination of purported miracles.<sup>172</sup>

As with the preceding summary of the diocesan phase, the following treatment of the apostolic phase is a relatively brief overview that focuses on the canonization of martyrs, and that emphasizes the differences between the new norms for the causes of saints and the previous judicial process of beatification and canonization.

When the Acts of the Cause arrive from the diocesan phase, the subsecretary of the College of Relators ensures that everything had been done according to the regulations. Then he delivers the materials to the ordinary congress, where a relator is charged with the task of preparing a historically critical "*Positio*" (or "Position") on the martyrdom (or virtues for nonmartyrs) with the aid of the postulator and external collaborators, for the specific cause that is being studied.<sup>173</sup> At sessions of the consultors-theologians,

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<sup>172</sup>Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 196-197; Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 309; Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 381-382; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation on the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 369-371.

<sup>173</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 61-69; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 197; Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 303, 308-309, 312-332; Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 382-394; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the

presided over by the promoter of the faith (who also votes at the sessions), the consultors-theologians examine the "Position on the Martyrdom" of a recent cause, and they present any obstacles to beatification. Fabijan Veraja observes that, though the twentieth century has been characterized by many incidents of true martyrdom, these are often very difficult to prove because of the circumstances in which they have occurred. For example, modern persecutors are frequently wary of "creating martyrs" so they try to hide the fact that their real motive is a hatred of the Christian faith as it is espoused by the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, alleged martyrs often die in a situation lacking witnesses who can vouch for their resoluteness up to the point of death. Such witnesses are necessary for beatification and canonization.<sup>174</sup> According to the new legislation, in the case of an ancient cause, consultors-historians, as well as consultors-theologians, examine the Position on Martyrdom. The three congregations (ante-preparatory, preparatory, and general congregations) that were prescribed in the 1917 Code of Canon for the discussion of the martyrdom no longer exist. (As was already noted, for the causes of nonmartyrs, there were three congregations for the heroic virtues and, then, three congregations for the miracles.) Instead, the martyrdom is discussed at a "Special Congress of Theologians"; the consultors-theologians, and also the consultors-historians for ancient causes, vote on whether to recommend the beatification of the Servant of God. Then the Position on the Martyrdom is delivered to a Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops for further study.<sup>175</sup> Only after all objections are satisfied, and when the cardinals and bishops of the latter congregation vote favourably, will the pope issue the Decree on Martyrdom (or Decree on the Heroicity of the Virtues; both are prepared by the secretary of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints), thereby declaring genuine martyrdom (or heroic virtues).<sup>176</sup> In the case of nonmartyrs, a "Position on Miracles" is then similarly prepared. This is examined by experts, whose report is then likewise discussed at a Special Congress of Theologians and a Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops. Thereafter, if the pope judges the

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Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 371-372.

<sup>174</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 68.

<sup>175</sup>Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 197, 208; Peter Gumpel, "Il Collegio dei Relatori in seno alla Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 303, 334-336; Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 394-397; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation on the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 372-373.

<sup>176</sup>Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni", Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 396; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (1983): 373.

miracle to be authentic, he issues a "Decree on the Miracle".<sup>177</sup> As was aforementioned, a posthumous miracle is not required for the beatification of martyrs, whereas it is still necessary to prove that a nonmartyr has interceded for one miracle. It is notable that the expression "equipollent beatification" is not included in the new legislation, so all candidates are simply "beatified" at this stage, not "formally beatified" or "equipollently beatified".<sup>178</sup> The authentication of one more miracle occurring subsequent to the beatification is still required before the canonization of both martyrs and nonmartyrs.<sup>179</sup> The decision to canonize the blessed is exclusively made by the pope; like before, it is believed that his decision is inspired by the Holy Spirit. The canonization occurs at a solemn ceremony, usually at St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City.<sup>180</sup>

Therefore, the most notable innovations of the new legislation are, first, the requirement that historical criticism be employed for all causes of canonization (this had already begun in 1969, but now it is an integral part of the legislation on the causes of the saints); second, the decentralization of the process so that the local bishop has a more prominent role and much of the examination of testimonies is completed at the diocesan level before the cause reaches the Vatican; and, third, the movement away from a rigorously judicial model of ascertaining truth to a model that emphasizes both natures of the causes of the saints: the administrative process of investigating evidence, conducted during the diocesan phase by the local bishop, and the formality of a judicial process during the apostolic phase. It is notable that the 1983 legislation emphasizes the collaborative rather than antagonistic roles by the relator of the cause, the promoter of the faith, the consultors-theologians, and the consultors-historians in the apostolic phase so as to secure truth on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church. The success of an individual cause relies less on the long-term and sometimes faulty memories of eyewitnesses, and the causes, supported by historical documents but lacking witnesses who are willing to make the commitment of their time to participate in the institutional process, are not doomed to perpetual postponement or even failure. This is especially significant for the causes of martyrs in which the only living witnesses, if in fact there are any, are the persecutors themselves, who clearly are not always willing participants in the cause of canonization. Because the local bishop now introduces causes without first obtaining papal permission, he may respond more quickly to an individual

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<sup>177</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 77-79; Francesco Leone, La prova documentale degli scritti, 198; Luigi Porsi, "Cause di canonizzazione e procedura nella Cost. Apost. 'Divinus perfectionis Magister': Considerazioni e valutazioni," Monitor Ecclesiasticus 90 (1985): 394-395.

<sup>178</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 92-93.

<sup>179</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 130-133.

<sup>180</sup>Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 134-138; Kenneth Woodward, Making Saints, 84-107; Theodor J. Zubek, "New Legislation About the Canonization of the Servants of God," The Jurist 43 (no. 2, 1983): 369-373.

case of a Servant of God who is the object of a widespread, enduring, and growing local reputation of martyrdom or sanctity. Given the decentralization of the task of introducing causes, it seems that more causes are able to be introduced in the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. As well, the institutional process itself is also quicker and less expensive because a great deal of the work is already finished when the cause is sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. This means that much of the work previously handled by a limited team of specialists in the Congregation is now done in the dioceses. Finally, the purpose of substituting a judicial model with a more collaborative model that emphasizes both natures of the authentication process is to protect the interests of the whole Roman Catholic Church so that only Servants of God who are deserving are granted a universal public ecclesiastical cult. The older judicial model of the process could undervalue significant historical documentary evidence, thereby impeding the canonization of certain Servants of God who could act as valuable models of sanctity or as intercessors for the members of the Church. On the other hand, perhaps the contentious nature of trials conducted according to the previous judicial model could supply the temptation to ignore significant information that would be contrary to a cause, thereby, potentially advising what may be a scandalous beatification or canonization. This is significant given that the theme of sanctity was underscored at the Second Vatican Council, thereby calling all Christians to perfection and holiness, identifying martyrs and nonmartyrs as models of holiness and as heavenly intercessors on behalf of the living members of the Church (and thus worthy of the traditional practice of commemoration and veneration), and, finally, confirming the dogma of the mystical body of Christ.

Summary:

It is clear, then, that the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church was influenced by various innovations during the period from the sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. First, Pope Benedict XIV established the four basic elements that constitute true martyrdom in his book, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione. All four elements--the tyrant or persecutor, the death, the cause of or reason for the martyrdom, the martyr--must be present for a purported martyrdom to be judged genuine in the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, a real persecutor must truly be responsible for the death of the alleged martyr because he or she is motivated primarily by a hatred of the Christian faith (or Christian virtues) as it is espoused by the Roman Catholic Church. As well, true martyrdom requires a martyr whose principal motive is a willingness to die because he or she loves the Christian faith, as it is expressed by the Roman Catholic Church. The Servant of God must demonstrate that he or she has decided freely and consciously to die, and thereafter must accept the imminent death patiently, courageously, and steadfastly, and by forgiving the persecutor rather than hating him or her. These four requisite elements of genuine martyrdom are clearly based upon a specific view of the manner by which

Jesus Christ confronted his own upcoming crucifixion. As well, they are based on the characteristics possessed by the martyrs from the centuries prior to Pope Benedict XIV. As seen in chapters one and two, all of these earlier martyrs were considered martyrs because they were believed to have died in imitation of Jesus Christ. Thus they were judged to be imitators of the model for Christian martyrs, Jesus Christ. Since the publication of Pope Benedict XIV's work, all true martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church have had to possess these four basic elements of martyrdom.

A second type of innovation that is related to the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church has been the subject of this chapter. This is the changes in the institutional process for canonizing martyrs--that is, innovations in the process for authenticating Servants of God who are popularly believed to be martyrs. Of course, changes in the institutional process reflect changes in the view of which types of evidence and institutional structures are believed to be most effective for judging whether the alleged martyr truly did die as a martyr, and whether this death is indeed significant for the whole Roman Catholic Church. Thus a special Vatican congregation--first the Congregation of Rites, and then the Congregation for the Causes of Saints--was established to conduct the causes of potential saints. As well, various popes judged it wise to confer a limited public ecclesiastical cult, including a mass and office, for some local martyrs and nonmartyrs who enjoyed a reputation of martyrdom and sanctity. Thus papal beatification began. Pope Urban VIII judged it necessary to distinguish between those ancient martyrs and nonmartyrs who possessed an immemorial local cult (these Servants of God would be equipollently beatified) and those others (by far, the majority of causes) who were not supposed to be the object of an illegitimate public cult (the Servants of God would be formally beatified). Thus began the concept of two distinct paths leading to beatification: the extraordinary way of cult and the ordinary way of non-cult. A less significant innovation was equipollent canonization as an alternative to formal canonization. It has been used rarely and inconsistently, and it has not been directly recognized either in the 1917 Code of Canon Law or the new norms of 1983. Moreover, an exacting judicial model for conducting the causes of saints was in place as least since the fourteenth century. There were various innovations related to this judicial process in terms of the officials who were involved and their various tasks. These innovations were made with the intention of protecting the interests of the Roman Catholic Church against possible scandal, and in order to ascertain more effectively the truth about whether the given Servant of God was indeed worthy of a universal public ecclesiastical cult. The recent changes in the legislation for the causes of saints reflect a revision in the institutional model used for examining causes. Thus both natures of the authentication process are recognized: the administrative nature of the local diocesan inquiry and the formality of a judicial process before the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. The new legislation also reflects the theme of the collegiality of the bishops, as it was confirmed at the Second Vatican Council. Thus the legislation reflects the view that the local bishop ought to have a more prominent role in the institutional process used for judging whether the Servant of God, who enjoys a local reputation of martyrdom or sanctity, ought to be

the object of a universal public ecclesiastical cult. It is clear, then, that both the establishment of certain requisite elements of true martyrdom and changes in the institutional process of canonization have affected the concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church during the period from the sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

In chapters five to eight, Gustavo Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom will be examined, especially his theological reflections on alleged martyrs in contemporary Latin America. On the one hand, his points of continuity with the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church will be underscored. On the other hand, the important issue will be studied concerning how his understanding of persecution and martyrdom, derived from his own experiences of witnessing the repression and murder of many Christians who sided with the poor masses, contributes to a reinterpretation of the traditional concept of persecution and martyrdom in the Church. It will also be necessary, first, to analyze Gutiérrez's reflections on the ultimate reasons that lie behind the occurrences of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America and, second, his assertions concerning the ramifications of these deaths on the poor masses themselves and, in fact, how they may even imply the need to reconsider what it means to be Christian and Church in Peru, Gutiérrez's native country, in the continent of Latin America, and throughout the world today.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF THE CULT OF MARTYRS AND NONMARTYR SAINTS IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO THE PONTIFICATE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

In the period from the sixteenth century to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II (1978-present), martyrs have continued to be used in the Roman Catholic Church as role models of how one should behave when confronted by a perceived persecutor. Nonmartyr saints (the complement of martyrs) have provided a standard for imitation throughout one's life. Both martyrs and nonmartyr saints have been venerated as heavenly members of the Church who continue to be concerned about the lives and ultimately the salvation of the living members of the Church. While many Roman Catholic writers have censured certain, excessive ways that the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and the veneration of their relics have been manifested, often drawing attention to a tendency for people to lapse into superstitious practices, the Reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin are particularly notable for expressing substantially more caustic criticisms. They advised that, in the interests of securing one's salvation, the wisest and safest course of action would be for Christians to avoid entirely the traditional activities related to the cult of saints and their relics. The Council of Trent met in order to respond to various criticisms made by the Reformers against traditional Roman Catholic beliefs and practices, among them, their condemnation of the cult of saints. The Tridentine documents, however, did not answer the Reformers' specific charges concerning the cult. Instead, the documents simply reaffirmed the traditional practices of invoking saints and venerating relics, and they provided a general warning against unduly superstitious abuses. Since then, the ruling of the Council of Trent has often been reconfirmed, and it remains normative during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. Indeed, the traditional place of saints and their relics in the Roman Catholic Church appears to be secure. As was seen in chapter three, local bishops, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and the pope continue to respond to many new instances of spontaneously generated popular reputations of martyrdom and sanctity by considering the causes of alleged martyrs and nonmartyr saints for canonization. Furthermore, subsequent to the Council of Trent, various papal encyclicals, Vatican I, Vatican II, changes in the Mass, and two universal catechisms have consistently reconfirmed the traditional roles played by martyrs and nonmartyr saints as models worthy of imitation and as influential heavenly intermediaries who attentively respond to prayers invoking their intercession. Indeed, it will be seen in chapters five to eight that Christians who have been killed on account of their faith (in this case, due to their faith in a God who favours the poor) continue to be valued highly in contemporary Latin America as martyrs suitable for



imitation.

#### A. Criticisms of the Cult of Martyrs and Nonmartyr Saints and Their Relics up to the Reformation

A major point of division between many Roman Catholics and the Reformers of the sixteenth century was the central place of the cult of saints (both martyrs and nonmartyrs) and their relics in the Roman Catholic Church. Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-1564) were two Reformers who absolutely condemned both the invocation of saints for their intercession and the veneration of saints' relics. The grave tone in which these traditional practices were reaffirmed at the Council of Trent reveals that there did not exist room for disagreement on the appropriate functions of the saints within the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, the seriousness with which the Roman Catholic Church undertook the task of authenticating new saints is underscored by the progressively more rigorous, judicial, and centralized character of the process of canonization after the Congregation of Rites was established in 1588.

There were, however, important precursors to the Reformers among both well recognized members of the Roman Catholic Church and some people who were formally denounced as heretics by the Church. While Roman Catholics commonly participated zealously in the public cult of saints and relics up to the time of the Reformation, there were, in fact, some significant critics who completely condemned the cult as being inherently dangerous, often because they were seen as presenting occasions for committing idolatry. For example, as was seen in chapter two, Vigilantius was severely chastised by Jerome for his criticism that the use of relics and the prayers to the martyrs are wicked derivations from pagan customs. More frequently, however, writers warned of the tendency of some people to commit abuses when they focused inordinately and superstitiously on the benefits, often material in nature, which they believed could be derived from invocations. These critics called for a properly subordinate role for the cult of saints and their relics.

#### 1. Criticisms Up to the Thirteenth Century:

It is notable that, after Vigilantius, there is no evidence of further criticisms of the cult of saints and their relics in the western part of the Church until the ninth century. Meanwhile, in the eastern part of the Church, a fierce controversy erupted concerning the use of holy images during the eighth century, especially after the publication of Emperor Leo III's policy ordering iconoclasm in 726.<sup>1</sup> Both Leo III

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Grigg, "Christian Iconoclasm," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), 400; Edward James Martin, A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy (London, England: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1978), 26; Cyril Mango, "Historical Introduction," in Iconoclasm: Papers Given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, March 1975, eds. Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, England: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1977), 1-3; Robert Grigg, "Iconoclasm, Christian," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, ed. Joseph R. Strayer, 400, 402;

(c.680-741; emperor 717-741) and his son, Emperor Constantine V (718-775; emperor 741-775), however, extended their criticisms from images to the cult of saints and their relics. According to the historian, Theophanes, Leo III dismissed the effectiveness of prayers directed toward saints, and he hated relics.<sup>2</sup> In 766, Constantine V forbade written and oral invocations of the saints "on the grounds that [the intercession of saints] gave no aid and was unscriptural." It is questionable, however, whether he was able to enforce this prohibition.<sup>3</sup> Again, according to Theophanes, Constantine V even ordered that the body of St. Euphemia (d. c.303), venerated at Chalcedon, be cast into the sea in 766.<sup>4</sup> Empress Irene (c.752-803; regent from 780 to 790; sole ruler 797-802) convoked the ecumenical Second Council of Nicaea in 787, which condemned the previously official policy of iconoclasm. At the same time, activities aimed at obstructing the use of relics were also forbidden.<sup>5</sup>

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N. Bonwetsch, "Images and Image-Worship," in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 5, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1909), 454.

<sup>2</sup>Theophanes, The Chronicle of Theophanes, trans. Harry Turtledove (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 93-98; Stephen Gero, Byzantine Iconoclasm During the Reign of Constantine V With Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources (Louvain, Belgium: Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1977), 147-165; Edward James Martin, A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy, 35.

<sup>3</sup>Theophanes, The Chronicle, 127; Stephen Gero, Byzantine Iconoclasm During the Reign of Constantine V, 147-151; Edward James Martin, A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy, 49-50; 61-62; Émile Amann, Histoire de l'Église: Depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours. Publiée sous la direction de Augustin Fliche et Victor Martin, vol. 6 (n.p.: Bloud and Gay, 1947), 108-111.

<sup>4</sup>Theophanes, The Chronicle, 127-128; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 404-405; Stephen Gero, Byzantine Iconoclasm During the Reign of Constantine V, 155-157; Judith Herrin, "Emperor Leo III," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 7, ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1986), 544; Judith Herrin, "Constantine V," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 3, ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983), 546.

<sup>5</sup>Alice-Mary M. Talbot, "Empress Irene," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, ed. Joseph R. Strayer, 520. The Second Council of Nicaea in 787 declared anathema against iconoclasts. Second Council of Nicaea, Anathemas Concerning Holy Objects 1-3, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 137. At the same time, canon seven states that a church may be consecrated only with the installation of martyrs' relics. "Just as those heretics removed the sight of venerable icons from the church, they also abandoned other customs, which should now be renewed and which should be in vigour in virtue of both written and unwritten legislation. Therefore we decree that in venerable churches consecrated without relics of the holy martyrs, the installation of relics should take place along with the usual prayers. And if in future any bishop is found out consecrating a church without relics, let him be deposed as someone who has flouted the ecclesiastical traditions." Second Council of Nicaea, Canon 7, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 144-145. See also C.J.B. Gaskoin, Alcuin: His Life and His Work (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), 71-93; Émile Amann, Histoire de l'Église, vol. 6, 118-121; Pierre Miquel, "Images (Culte des)," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire, vol. 7, part 2, eds. M. Viller, F. Cavallera, et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1971), col. 1510-1511; John Meyendorff, "Icon, Theology of," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, 397; Robert Grigg, "Iconoclasm, Christian," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, 401; N. Bonwetsch, "Images and Image-Worship," in The New Schaff-Herzog

In the western part of the Church, it was only in the ninth century that some writers began to criticize openly the cult of saints and relics or the abuses commonly occurring in association with it. For example, Bishop Claudius of Turin (d.827) vehemently denied the ability of saints to intercede. He also completely rejected both holy images and the cult of relics. In fact, he ordered the destruction of the images and crosses in his cathedral. Thereafter, he was sternly criticized by Bishop Jonas of Orléans (born before 780; died 842/843), by the monk Dungal of Saint-Denys, and by Theodomir, the abbot of Psalmodie.<sup>6</sup>

Between the ninth century and the thirteenth century, a number of writers warned against the perennial danger of superstitious abuses, even though they were not explicitly opposed to the cult of saints and relics itself. For example, even though Alcuin of York (c.732-804) was the author of saints' lives (for example, On the Saints of the Church of York and his Life of St. Willibrord), and he also generally approved of the practices of invoking saints (he included a mass for the intercession of the saints in his missal) and of venerating relics, he nevertheless felt compelled to express publicly his anxiety arising from the tendency of many Christians to venerate false relics superstitiously.<sup>7</sup> In 786, Alcuin wrote a letter to Archbishop Ethelhard, wherein he cautioned the recipient about the idolatrous uses of relics that he had witnessed.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, Agobard (769-840), the archbishop of Lyons (816-835; 838-840), was often critical of superstitious practices, especially the tendency of people to elevate their favourite saints to such a degree that they would threaten to supplant Jesus Christ from his rightful position as the supreme intercessor

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Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 5, 454.

<sup>6</sup>Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 405; Mark A. Zier, "Claudius of Turin," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 3, 436; Thomas Renna, "Jonas of Orléans," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 7, 146.

<sup>7</sup>Alcuin of York, On the Saints of the Church of York, in Alcuin of York--His Life and Letters, Stephen Allot (York, England: William Sessions, 1974), 157-167. See also Gerald Ellard, Master Alcuin, Liturgist: A Partner of Our Piety (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1956), 144-148; Dorothy Whitelock, ed., English Historical Documents, vol. 1 (London, England: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), 713-715; E. Manguet, "Alcuin," in Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, vol. 1, part 1, eds. A. Vacant, E. Manguet, et al. (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1930), col. 600-601; Fernand Cabrol, "Missel," in Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, vol. 11, part 2, eds. Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1934), col. 1441; Fernand Cabrol, "Alcuin," in Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, vol. 1, part 1, ed. Fernand Cabrol (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907), col. 1072-1081; M. Mähler, "Alcuin," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire, vol. 1, eds. Marcel Viller, F. Cavallera, et al. (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne et Ses Fils, 1937), col. 297-299.

<sup>8</sup>"I saw many improper customs practised, which it is your duty to stop. For they [some people] are carrying amulets, thinking them sacred. It is better to copy the examples of the saints in the heart than to carry bones in bags, to have gospel teachings written in one's mind than to carry them around one's neck written on scraps of parchment. This is the superstition of the Pharisees, whom Christ himself reproached for their phylacteries." Alcuin of York, Letters 54, in Alcuin of York, 69. See also Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 406; L.K. Shook, "Alcuin of York," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 1, ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1982), 143.

between believers and God.<sup>9</sup> They would often do this by venerating the saints' images excessively.

Guibert of Nogent (c.1064-c.1125) did not reject honouring relics in principle, but in his work, The Relics of the Saints, he did disparage, first, venerating false relics, the traffick of which, according to Guibert, bishops permitted because they were greedy for profitable new pilgrimages; second, raising saints' relics from their place of rest; and, third, transporting relics during processions.<sup>10</sup> Benton suggests that Guibert especially abhorred the dismemberment of the remains of human bodies.<sup>11</sup> Guibert also criticized prayers that were addressed to the many legendary saints who often accompanied false relics. Guibert nevertheless believed that God did respond to a naive person's genuine, though misdirected, faith.<sup>12</sup>

Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) cautioned that Christians in general, and particularly the monks of Clairvaux, should be careful lest they "spend the whole day gazing fascinated" at grotesque objects, such as gold-cased relics and unnecessarily beautiful, if not arousing, pictures of saints, instead of "meditating on the law of God."<sup>13</sup> In his Apology to Abbot William, Bernard cites the example of venerating such lavishly encased relics as a way that some monks imitate gentiles, and thus "do service to their idols."<sup>14</sup> At the same time, Bernard did defend the common practice of invoking saints to intercede on their behalf

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<sup>9</sup>Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 406; J.-B. Martin, "Agobard," in Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, vol. 1, part 1, col. 614; Allen Cabaniss, "Agobard," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 1, 75-76; M. Besson, "Agobard," in Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques, vol. 1, eds. Alfred Baudrillart, Albert Vogt, et al. (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1912), col. 1000; P. Bellet, "Agobard of Lyons," in New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 1, ed. William J. McDonald (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 210; A. Hauck, "Agobard," in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 1, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1908), 89. See also E. Debroise, "Agobard," in Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, vol. 1, part 1, ed. Fernand Cabrol (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1907), col. 971-979.

<sup>10</sup>Introduction to Guibert of Nogent, Self and Society in Medieval France: The Memoirs of Abbot Guibert of Nogent (1064?-c.1125), ed. John F. Benton (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), 21; Colin Morris, "A Critique of Popular Religion: Guibert of Nogent on The Relics of the Saints," in Popular Belief and Practice: Papers Read at the Ninth Summer Meeting and the Tenth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society, eds. G.J. Cuming and Derek Baker (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 56-57; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 406; Chrysogonus Waddell, "Guibert of Nogent," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, 10.

<sup>11</sup>Introduction to Guibert of Nogent, Self and Society in Medieval France, 29.

<sup>12</sup>Colin Morris, "A Critique of Popular Religion: Guibert of Nogent on The Relics of the Saints," in Popular Belief and Practice, 57-58.

<sup>13</sup>Bernard of Clairvaux, An Apology to Abbot William 12, in The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux, vol. 1, ed. M. Basil Pennington (Spencer, Mass.: Cistercian Publications, 1970), 65-66; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 407.

<sup>14</sup>Bernard of Clairvaux, An Apology to Abbot William 12, in The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux, vol. 1, 64.

by means of heavenly prayers. He designated as heretics whoever jested against this activity.<sup>15</sup> Bernard praised Christians whom he considered to be true martyrs because they had been willing to die on account of their faith.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, he also admonished of the dangers of venerating some popularly recognized martyrs who in fact had died as heretics. Their stubbornness when confronted by true beliefs demonstrated that they were false martyrs who had clearly been in the service of the Devil. Their refusal to recant their errors revealed that they were not at all pious and patient like true martyrs, who had obviously died in imitation of Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup>

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), in his Summa Theologica, emphasizes that superstitious behaviour is always idolatrous. According to Aquinas, "it belongs to superstition to exceed the due mode of divine worship, and this is done chiefly when divine worship is given to whom it should not be given. Now it should be given to the most high uncreated God alone....Therefore it is superstition to give divine worship to any creature whatsoever."<sup>18</sup> Thus, Aquinas distinguishes between the honour which should be given to God alone (i.e., *latría*), and that lesser degree of honour (i.e., *dulia*), which is appropriate for the saints, who are God's especially pious creatures, as well as their relics. It is idolatrous conduct, then, whenever, Christians naively or foolishly worship saints as if they were God. Nevertheless, Aquinas asserts that "it is manifest that we should show honour to the saints of God, as being members of Christ, the children and

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<sup>15</sup>Heretics "ridicule us for baptising infants, praying for the dead, and asking the prayers of the saints. They lose no time in cutting Christ off from all kinds of people to both sexes, young and old, living and dead.... They deprive the dead of the help of the living, and rob the living of the prayers of the saints because they have died. God forbid!" Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 66.9, in On the Song of Songs, vol. 3, trans. Kilian Walsh and Irene M. Edmonds (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1979), 199-200.

<sup>16</sup>"Surely the fruit of the vine is the martyr's blood.... Why should I not speak of the blood of the innocent, the blood of the righteous, as the purest blood of the grape? Is it not new red must, tested and precious, from the vineyard of Sorek, trodden out in the wine-press of suffering? For 'precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints'. This is how I interpret the words: 'the vines in flower yield their sweet perfume.'" Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 60.7, in On the Song of Songs, vol. 3, 136.

<sup>17</sup>"It is surprising to some people that they meet their death not only with patience, but also, apparently, joyfully. But they do not take into consideration the mighty power of the devil not only over men's bodies, but also over their hearts. Once he is admitted, he will take possession.... The obstinacy of these men has nothing in common with the constancy of the martyrs; for they were endowed with a contempt for death, whereas these others are prompted by a hardness of heart." Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 66.13, in On the Song of Songs, vol. 3, 204-205. See also Charles Journet, "L'Argument du martyre," Nova et Vetera: Revue catholique pour la Suisse romande 6 (1931): 286.

<sup>18</sup>Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica: First Complete American Edition in Three Volumes, ii. q.94 a.1, vol. 2, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1947), 1595.

friends of God, and our intercessors."<sup>19</sup> In fact, Aquinas especially praises the occurrence of martyrdom as the most perfect of human acts because its motive is charity.<sup>20</sup> He also insists that the special role played by Jesus Christ (who is both God and man) as the mediator between God and human beings does not impede the saints' ability to pray to God on behalf of Christians invoking their aid.<sup>21</sup> In regard to the saints' relics, Aquinas recommends that Christians honour them "in a fitting manner: principally their bodies, which were temples, and organs of the Holy Ghost dwelling and operating in them, and are destined to be likened to the body of Christ by the glory of the Resurrection. Hence God Himself fittingly honors such relics by working miracles at their presence."<sup>22</sup> Thus all praise directed towards the saints and their relics ought to aim especially at honouring God, the creator for whom the saints, in the first place, had decided to live piously or to die in imitation of Jesus Christ's crucifixion.

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<sup>19</sup>Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica: First Complete American Edition in Three Volumes, iii. q.25 a.5, vol. 2, 2158; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 407. On the appropriate distinction one ought to make, according to Aquinas, between the honour rendered to God and that given to some of his virtuous creatures, the saints, with the latter reverence redounding to the creator of the creatures, see Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, ii. q.94 a.1, vol. 2, 1596; *Ibid.*, ii. q.103 a.3-4, 1639-1640.

<sup>20</sup>"Now, of all virtuous acts martyrdom is the greatest proof of the perfection of charity: since a man's love for a thing is proved to be so much the greater, according as that which he despises for its sake is more dear to him, or that which he chooses to suffer for its sake is odious. But it is evident that of all the goods of the present life man loves life itself most, and on the other hand he hates death more than anything, especially when it is accompanied by the pains of bodily torment....And from this point of view it is clear that martyrdom is the most perfect of human acts in respect of its genus, as being the sign of the greatest charity." Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, ii. q.124 a.3, vol. 2, 1717. See also *Ibid.*, q.184, a.5, 1955; Walter Farrell, A Companion to the Summa, vol. 3 (London, England: Sheed and Ward, 1940), 369-371; Yves Congar, Thomas d'Aquin: sa vision de théologie et de l'Église (London, England: Variorum Reprints, 1984), 338; 343.

<sup>21</sup>Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica iii. q.26 a.1-2, vol. 2, 2158-2160; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 407. According to Aquinas, the saints' ability to intercede, given to them by God, does not signify an inherent defectiveness in God, but rather the "more manifold outpouring of His goodness on things, through His bestowing on them not only the goodness which is proper to them, but also the faculty of causing goodness in others." It is also notable that Aquinas acknowledged and approved of the special powers that specific saints allegedly possessed (e.g., St. Anthony's prayers protected one against the fire of hell). Moreover, the saints do not enlighten God about something he did not previously know, or of which he would otherwise remain ignorant; instead, the saints "ask God to grant those prayers a gracious hearing... [and that it] be done according to His providence." See Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica: First Complete American Edition Suppl. Q. 72 a.1-3, vol. 3, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1948), 2858-2862.

<sup>22</sup>Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica: First Complete American Edition in Three Volumes, iii. q.25 a.5, vol. 2, 2158; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 407.

## 2. Criticisms Made by John Wyclif, John Hus, and Desiderius Erasmus:

The criticisms made by John Wyclif, John Hus, and Desiderius Erasmus against the cult of saints and relics anticipated the later criticisms made by the Reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin. John Wyclif (c.1329-1384) contended that all cults in honour of saints should be abolished, except the cult of the Virgin Mary, because he doubted the popes' declared abilities to discern sanctity accurately. He even questioned their motives in canonizing some modern saints. Indeed, according to Wyclif, only the apostles and the martyrs (apparently those from the Early Church) were unambiguously saints. Wyclif nevertheless did not object to the traditional belief that true saints prayed on behalf of the living, but he insisted that they were in heaven due to God's judgment that they had imitated Jesus Christ, not because they had been papally canonized.<sup>23</sup> He was not impressed by the unscriptural papal powers of issuing bulls of canonization and of authenticating relics. He believed that these powers were based solely in the pope's self-proclaimed authority, and thus lacked any real divine foundation.<sup>24</sup> Wyclif also recommended that the practice of venerating relics should cease because he considered it to be an evil and idolatrous form of worship. He thought that the exorbitant sums of money lavished on shrines would be better spent if they were "distributed to the poor to the honour of the saints."<sup>25</sup>

Three hundred five propositions of Wyclif were condemned at the eighth session of the Council of Constance (1414-1418) on May 4, 1415, an ecumenical council summoned by the anti-pope John XXIII

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<sup>23</sup>Herbert B. Workman, John Wyclif: A Study of the English Medieval Church, vol. 2 (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1926), 16; John Stacey, John Wyclif and Reform (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), 49; Robert Vaughan, The Life and Opinions of John De Wycliffe, D.D., vol. 2 (London, England: Holdsworth and Bell, 1831; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1973), 294; David Christie-Murray, A History of Heresy (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1989), 114; J. Loserth, "Wyclif, John," in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 12, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1912), 464.

<sup>24</sup>Gordon Leff, Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c.1250-c.1450, vol. 2 (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1967), 511-513, 531, 539; Malcolm Lambert, Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements From the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation, 2d ed. (Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 232-233; L. Cristiani, "Wyclif," in Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, vol. 15, part 2, eds. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, et al. (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1950), col. 3593-3594; Michael Wilks, "Wyclif (Jean)," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire, vol. 16, eds. M. Viller, F. Cavallera, et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1994), col. 1510-1511; Anne Hudson, "Wyclif, John," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 12, ed. Joseph R. Strayer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989), 708.

<sup>25</sup>Herbert B. Workman, John Wyclif: A Study of the English Medieval Church, vol. 2 (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1926), 17; Margaret Atson, Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion (London, England: The Hambledon Press, 1984), 140; J. Loserth, "Wyclif, John," in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Knowledge, vol. 12, 464.

(d.1419), who was subsequently deposed at the same council.<sup>26</sup> While Wyclif's criticisms of the cult of saints and relics were not explicitly included among the forty-five errors enumerated in the council documents, nor among the fifty-eight others specified from the two hundred sixty other errors, three of the noted errors accused him of condemning the monastic life, which had commonly been a path leading to the subsequent papal canonization of nonmartyrs.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Wyclif's charge that "nobody should be considered as pope after Urban VI" (1318-1389; pope 1378-1389), together with his vigorous accusations against papal pretensions in general, meant that he would have considered all future papal canonizations to be certainly meaningless, if not all past ones as well.<sup>28</sup> The Council also ordered that Wyclif's body be taken out of consecrated ground, and that his books be burned.<sup>29</sup> Wyclif's bones were not exhumed and his books burned until the spring of 1428, in response to an order made the previous December by Pope Martin V (1368-1431; pope 1417-1431), who had been elected at the Council of Constance.<sup>30</sup>

John Hus (c.1369-1415) advised his followers to venerate the saints as supreme examples of how to live piously. They were permitted to pray to the saints, thereby petitioning their aid in heaven. Hus nevertheless admonished his followers of the inclination people have to worship the saints in place of God.

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<sup>26</sup>John XXIII was the anti-pope (1410-1415), firstly, to Benedict XIII (c. 1328-d. 1423), who was himself the anti-pope at Avignon (from 1394 to 1417/23) and, secondly, to Pope Gregory XII (c. 3125-1417; pope 1406-1415). Council of Constance, Session 12 (May 29, 1415), Sentence Deposing Pope John XXIII, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 417-418. See also Charles-Joseph Hefele, Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux, trans. Dom H. Leclercq, vol. 7, part 1 (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1916), 243-251.

<sup>27</sup>According to the Council documents, Wyclif had erroneously stated the following: "21. Whoever enters any religious order whatsoever, whether it be of the possessioners or the mendicants, makes himself less apt and suitable for the observance of God's commands. 22. Saints who have founded religious orders have sinned in so doing. 23. Members of religious orders are not members of the christian religion." Council of Constance, Session 8, Sentence Condemning Various Articles of John Wyclif, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, ed. Norman P. Tanner, 412.

<sup>28</sup>Council of Constance, Session 8, Sentence Condemning Various Articles of John Wyclif; Session 15 (July 6, 1415), Articles of John Wyclif Selected From the 260, in Decree of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 412, 423-424.

<sup>29</sup>Council of Constance, Session 8, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 411-416; H.J. Schroeder, ed. and trans., Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils (St. Louis, Mo.; B. Herder Book, 1937), 449; Charles-Joseph Hefele, Histoire des Conciles, trans. Dom H. Leclercq, vol. 7, part 1, 226; "John Wycliffe," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1480-1481.

<sup>30</sup>Joseph H. Dahmus, The Prosecution of John Wyclif (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1952), 153-154; Anne Hudson, "Wyclif, John," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 12, 707.



So as to avoid committing idolatry, he forbade invocations that requested earthly benefits.<sup>31</sup> He also condemned papal canonization as being an impertinent judgment because only God could possibly know who was truly in heaven. Furthermore, Hus decried the traffick in saints' relics because this money ought to be spent on the poor.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, in his last letter, Hus accused Roman Catholic priests of supporting the veneration of relics, which he considered to be a heinous activity.<sup>33</sup> On July 6, 1415, at the fifteenth session of the same Council of Constance where Wyclif and his works had already been condemned posthumously, Hus was declared a heretic. Among his errors listed at the Council were his criticisms, first, of the veneration of relics and, second, of the proper place of the pope as supreme head of the Church, which the Council had reaffirmed. Hus's latter criticism effectively undercut the claim that all papal decisions were inspired by the Holy Spirit, including the authentication of new saints by means of the process of canonization.<sup>34</sup> The Council ordered that Hus's books were to be set afire, and then he was delivered over to a secular official, who ordered that he be burned at the stake.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Matthew Spinka, John Hus' Concept of the Church (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966), 325; Matthew Spinka, John Hus at the Council of Constance (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 60. While not the specific concern of the present study, a related issue was Hus's criticism of the self-designated power of the anti-pope, John XXIII, to grant indulgences in 1411 from the treasury of the saints' merits (which they supposedly had earned by means of exemplary lives or martyrdom) to whoever would participate in a crusade against another anti-pope, Gregory XII. See the following: David Christie-Murray, A History of Heresy, 118; Jean Chélini, Histoire religieuse de l'occident médiéval (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1968), 483; Joseph Gill, Constance et Bale-Florence (Paris: Éditions de L'Orange, 1965), 71-72; Howard Kaminsky, "Hus, John (Jan)," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, 368; P. Moncelle, "Hus, Jean," in Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, vol. 7, part 1, eds. A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, et al. (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1927), col. 340; P. De Vooght, "Hus, John," in New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 7, ed. William J. McDonald (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 271-272; Paul De Vooght, "Huss (Jean)," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire, vol. 7, part 1, eds. M. Viller, F. Cavallera, et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1969), col. 1196.

<sup>32</sup>Matthew Spinka, John Hus' Concept of the Church, 325; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 413.

<sup>33</sup>Matthew Spinka, John Hus at the Council of Constance, 261.

<sup>34</sup>Council of Constance, Session 15, Condemned Articles of J. Hus, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 429-431. See also Gordon Leff, Heresy in the Later Middle Ages, vol. 2, 666-685; Joseph Gill, Constance et Bale-Florence, 85-87; Malcolm Lambert, Medieval Heresy, 308; Howard Kaminsky, "Hus, John (Jan)," in Dictionary of the Middle Ages, vol. 6, 369.

<sup>35</sup>Council of Constance, Session 15, Sentence Against John Hus and Sentence Condemning J. Hus to the Stake, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 427-429; H.J. Schroeder, ed. and trans., Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils, 449; J. Loserth, "Huss, John, Hussites," in The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, vol. 5, 417-418; Walter Nigg, The Heretics, trans. and eds. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 272-273; Malcolm Lambert, Medieval Heresy, 316.

On many occasions, Desiderius Erasmus (c.1466-1536) expressed his adherence to the traditional Roman Catholic belief that Christians could and, in fact, ought to invoke the saints for their intercession. For example, in his colloquy, The Whole Duty of Youth (1522), Erasmus lauds the youth, Gaspar, who dutifully and diligently prays to his patron saints, including the martyr Cyprian, requesting that they "commend [him] to Christ in their prayers and...bring it about that by his gift [he] may sometimes be admitted into their company."<sup>36</sup> In a letter to Herman, the archbishop of Cologne (and a future Lutheran), written in 1528, Erasmus opines that while "saint-worship has been carried so far that Christ has been forgotten," the charge that any respect directed towards saints leads inevitably to idolatry would be groundless.<sup>37</sup>

At the same time, Erasmus often mercilessly satirized whoever superstitiously appealed to saints for aid in trivial matters, or when they should instead be appealing directly to Jesus Christ. His wrath was even harsher for people who sought to manipulate the saints for their own benefit.<sup>38</sup> In the colloquy, The Shipwreck (1523), Erasmus relates the manner in which many people, facing an imminent shipwreck, tried to make bargains with various saints instead of directly entrusting their security to God.<sup>39</sup> In The Well-to-do Beggars (1524), the Franciscan, Conrad, wonders whether St. Anthony is not furious for the heathen way that the local people worship him. For example, they commonly express their fear that their swineherd would suffer if they neglected to worship him.<sup>40</sup> Erasmus also satirizes the superstitious reverence that

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<sup>36</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, The Whole Duty of Youth, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, trans. Craig R. Thompson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 34-35. It is notable that Erasmus felt compelled to write The Usefulness of the Colloquies in 1526 in order to exonerate his work from the censures of the Sorbonne faculty. Thus, Erasmus referred explicitly to this colloquy to illustrate the proper behaviour believers ought to have before God and the saints. Desiderius Erasmus, The Usefulness of the Colloquies, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 635. See also Albert Hyma, The Life of Desiderius Erasmus (Assen, the Netherlands: Van Goram, 1972), 105-108; Louis Bouyer, Erasmus and His Time (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1959), 177-179.

<sup>37</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, Epistle 945, in Life and Letters of Erasmus: Lectures Delivered at Oxford 1893-4, James Anthony Froude (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1916, 358.

<sup>38</sup>In regard to the veneration of saints, Erasmus said that "I do not condemn those who do these things out of a naive superstition so much as I do those who pursue them for their own gain." Desiderius Erasmus, The Handbook of the Christian Soldier, trans. Charles Fantazzi, in Collected Works of Erasmus, vol. 66, ed. John W. O'Malley (University of Toronto Press, 1988), 64. See also Stéphane Boiron, La controverse née de la querelle des reliques à l'époque du Concile du Trente (1500-1640) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989), 17.

<sup>39</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, The Shipwreck, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 138-146. See also Léon-E. Halkin, Erasmus: A Critical Biography, trans. John Tonkin (Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 190; A.E. Douglas, "Erasmus as a Satirist," in Erasmus, ed. T. A. Dorey (London, England: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 39-40; Léon-E. Halkin, "La piété d'Érasme," Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 79 (1984): 692.

<sup>40</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, The Well-to-do Beggars, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 209.

pilgrims frequently address towards saints' relics, most of which are dubious and grotesque, in the colloquy, A Pilgrimage For Religion's Sake (1526).<sup>41</sup> In The Usefulness of the Colloquies, Erasmus, however, dismisses the accusation that he has ridiculed the intercession of the Virgin Mary and the saints in his colloquies: "But I do mock those who seek from the saints what they would not dare to ask a respectable man, or seek from certain saints in the belief that this or that one would grant something or other more readily, or be able to perform it more readily, than would Christ himself."<sup>42</sup> In spite of Erasmus's defense of himself in the face of these criticisms, shortly after his death, his works were officially condemned by Pope Paul IV and by Pope Sixtus V.<sup>43</sup> It is notable that, of the two traditional functions of the saints

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<sup>41</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, A Pilgrimage For Religion's Sake, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 285-312. See also Desiderius Erasmus, The Usefulness of the Colloquies, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 631; Preserved Smith, A Key to the Colloquies (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927; repr., New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969), 40; Franz Bierlaire, Érasme et ses Colloques: Le livre d'une vie (Geneva, Switzerland: Librairie Droz, 1977), 88-89; James Anthony Froude, Life and Letters of Erasmus, 129-130; John Huizinga, Erasmus and the Age of Reformation With a Selection From the Letters of Erasmus (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 101; E.E. Reynolds, Thomas More and Erasmus (London, England: Burns & Oates, 1965), 91-93; M. Geraldine Thompson, "As Bones to the Body: The Scope of *Inventio* in the *Colloquies* of Erasmus," in Essays on the Works of Erasmus, ed. Richard L. DeMolen (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1978), 168. While Erasmus criticized superstitious practices, he did in fact make earnest pilgrimages to the shrines of Our Lady of Walsingham Way (in 1512) and Thomas Becket (sometime between 1512 and 1514). Léon-E. Halkin, Erasmus: A Critical Biography, 38-39; 203; Léon-E. Halkin, "La piété d'Érasme," Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 79 (1984): 686-687; Richard G. Villoslada, "Érasme (Didier)," in Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique. Doctrine et histoire, vol. 4, part 1, eds. M. Viller, F. Cavallera, et al. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1960), col. 934.

<sup>42</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, The Usefulness of the Colloquies, in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 635. Thus, Erasmus condemns the tendency to invoke the saints as if they were the authors of miracles, rather than simply the intercessors. Desiderius Erasmus, Epistle 2443, quoted in Léon-E. Halkin, Erasmus: A Critical Biography, 229. See also Erasmus Desiderius, The Praise of Folly, trans. Hoyt Hopewell Hudson (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1947), 56-59. It is important to note that the miracles which could be obtained by invoking saints had become specialized by the end of the Middle Ages: a specific saint was responsible for interceding with God for a given aid or for protecting a certain activity, social group, and city. Raoul Manselli, La religion populaire au moyen âge: Problèmes de méthode et d'histoire (Montreal: Institut d'Études Médiévales, 1975), 66; John Philips, The Reformation of Images: Destruction of Art in England, 1535-1660 (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1973), 23; Carlos N. Eire, War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship From Erasmus to Calvin (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 37-38.

<sup>43</sup>In 1559, all of Erasmus's works were placed in the first class of heretical writings in the Index of Pope Paul IV (1476-1559; pope 1555-1559). For authors named in the first class, "the whole of their works, even when they contain nothing about the faith, are absolutely forbidden." In the Index revised by Pope Pius IV (1499-1565; pope 1559-1565) in 1564, Erasmus's Colloquies and some other works were completely forbidden. Bruce Mansfield, Phoenix of His Age: Interpretations of Erasmus c. 1550-1750 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 26-27; Roland H. Bainton, Erasmus of Christendom (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969), 277-278; Ralph Francis Kerr, ed., The History of the Popes From the Close of the Middle Ages, vol. 14, trans. Ludwig, Freiherr von Pastor, (London, England: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1924), 277, 279; Léon-E. Halkin, "Érasme et la troisième voie," Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 87 (April-

affirmed in the process of canonization (their value as models and as intercessors for living believers), Erasmus emphasized the first one without denying the second. For him, the best way to honour the saints was to imitate the impressive deeds that they had manifested during their lives because it was these which made them pleasing to Jesus Christ in the first place. Thus, Erasmus did not advocate the abolition of the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints, or of their relics. He simply called for their reform.<sup>44</sup>

### 3. Criticisms Made by the Reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin:

Martin Luther (1483-1546) emphatically and unambiguously condemned the invocation of saints and the veneration of their relics as devil-inspired practices that carry misguided Christians away from God and doom them to hell. Like earlier writers such as Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine (as seen in chapter two), Luther recognized that the cult of saints and relics constituted an unbiblical innovation. For Luther, however, this meant that one could never be certain whether God approved of these practices.<sup>45</sup>

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June 1992): 414. In 1590, Sixtus V (1521-1590; pope 1585-1590) again forbade Erasmus's books. "Desiderius Erasmus," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 460. Faludy suggests that some people objected especially to Erasmus's Colloquies because Erasmus gave the characters who committed the abuses transparent pseudonyms. George Faludy, Erasmus (New York: Stein and Day, 1970), 211.

<sup>44</sup>Desiderius Erasmus, A Fish Diet (1526), in The Colloquies of Erasmus, 355. "You venerate the saints, and you take pleasure in touching their relics. But you disregard their greatest legacy, the example of a blameless life.... No devotion is more acceptable and proper to the saints than striving to imitate their virtues." Desiderius Erasmus, The Handbook of the Christian Soldier, trans. Charles Fantazzi, in Collected Works of Erasmus, vol. 66, 71. See also Léon-E. Halkin, "La piété d'Érasme," Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 79 (1984), 699; Léon-E. Halkin, "Érasme et la troisième voie," Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique 87 (April-June 1992): 413-414.

<sup>45</sup>Wherever "Holy Scripture is altogether silent, it is not our business to make any assertions or denials. What Holy Scripture teaches, denies, or affirms, that we can safely imitate and teach." Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 24:1-4 (1540), trans. Goerge V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 4, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 230. See also Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis (1545), trans. Paul D. Pahl, in Luther's Works, vol. 8, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1966), 144; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 2.22 (sometime between 1537 and 1539), trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1957), 256; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 14:1 (1551), trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 24, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), 22; Martin Luther, On Translating: An Open Letter (1530), trans. Charles M. Jacobs and E. Theodore Bachman, in Luther's Works, vol. 35, ed. E. Theodore Bachman (Philadelphia, Penn.: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), 198-199; Martin Luther, Confession Concerning Christ's Supper (1528), trans. Robert H. Fischer, in Luther's Works, vol. 37, ed. Robert H. Fischer (Philadelphia, Penn.: Muhlenberg Press, 1961), 370; Martin Luther, The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests (1533), trans. Martin E. Lehmann, in Luther's Works, vol. 38, ed. Martin E. Lehmann (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1971), 159; Martin Luther, Against Hanswurst (1541), trans. Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, ed. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1966), 215; Martin Luther, Dr. Martin Luther's Warning to His Dear German People (1531), trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 47, ed. Franklin Sherman (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1971), 46; Martin Luther, Table Talk Recorded by Anthony

Nevertheless, Luther had grounds for not being simply indifferent to these novel activities, but for condemning them wholeheartedly. He contended that they were invented by popes and by the Devil so as to deceive naive Christians and lead them astray.<sup>46</sup> The popes' objective was to secure and maintain their sovereignty by demanding the obedience and submission of their subjects.<sup>47</sup> The Devil achieved his goal of turning believers away from God's will by effecting false signs or miracles that were mistakenly attributed to the intercession of specific saints in heaven. Clearly, a most impressive trick of the devil would be "to let himself be expelled even by an evil fellow, if he chooses, and yet to remain unexpelled. By this abominable deception he possesses and traps the people even more completely."<sup>48</sup> Luther thought that many people were quick to adopt these unbiblical innovations because they suffered from "shameful curiosity and boredom."<sup>49</sup> Indeed, these people "thirst for strange doctrine" and, they were "inclined to listen to lies."<sup>50</sup> This meant that the impressive flourishing of the cult of the saints up to the time of Luther gives testimony to the countless souls who have been damned to hell for naively trusting in anti-Christian practices, which they had believed would send them straight to heaven.<sup>51</sup>

For Luther, the principal error of invoking the saints, however, was the displacement of Jesus

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Lauterbach (1538-39), in Luther's Works, vol. 54, ed. and trans. Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1967), 260. See also Carl C. Rasmussen, "Saint and Saints," in The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church, vol. 3, ed. Julius Bondensieck (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965), 2094.

<sup>46</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 12:4 (1536), trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 2, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), 273-274; Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 17:3-6 (probably 1538), trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 3, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), 109; Martin Luther, Lectures on Galatians 2:16 (1531), trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in Luther's Works, vol. 26, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 135; Martin Luther, Against Hanswurst, trans. Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 204.

<sup>47</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 13:14-15, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 2, 354.

<sup>48</sup>Martin Luther, The Sermon on the Mount 7:22 (sometime between late 1530 and early 1532), trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in Luther's Works, vol. 21, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), 272.

<sup>49</sup>Martin Luther, The Sermon on the Mount 7:25, trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in Luther's Works, vol. 21, 280.

<sup>50</sup>Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 3:33, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 385.

<sup>51</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 12:4, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 2, 273.

Christ's scripturally supported role as the unique mediator between God and human beings.<sup>52</sup> From this error alone arose a plethora of other ones. It is worthwhile recognizing, nevertheless, that Luther did not always clearly distinguish between popular and official errors of which Roman Catholics were guilty. Thus, he equally criticized papally encouraged popular beliefs and erroneous, but official, Church teaching. For example, Luther frequently condemned the commonly held terrifying image of Jesus Christ as a tyrannical judge and jailer who needed to be appeased and placated by means of the intercessions of saints due to the multitude of sins committed by believers.<sup>53</sup> This was not an official view of how Jesus Christ would approach the final judgment at the end of history. Luther observed that saints were attractive because many people were more willing to direct their intimate petitions towards the compassionate ears of their deceased fellow citizens, who, of course, could easily understand the anxieties that believers felt knowing the transparency of their guilt. Similarly, Luther rejected the common tendency to treat saints as a legion of approachable demigods, who differed little from the pantheon of pagan gods. Each of them supposedly oversaw a specific, geographically limited region and possessed specialized wondrous abilities.<sup>54</sup> While Luther dismissed the official toleration—and at times, endorsement—of legendary saints (such as St. Christopher) and false relics, he most vehemently attacked the freedom with which Franciscans elevated St. Francis of Assisi so that he would often be revered as if he were the equal of Jesus Christ.<sup>55</sup> Luther

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<sup>52</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Isaiah 53:5 (1527-1530), trans. Herbert J.A. Bouman, in Luther's Works, vol. 17, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 224; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 1.8, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 118; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 14:17, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 24, 121.

<sup>53</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Isaiah 59:9, trans. Herbert J.A. Bouman, in Luther's Works, vol. 17, 300; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 6:37; 8:14 (1530-1532), trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 23, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), 58-59, 336; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 16:8-11, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 24, 348; Martin Luther, Against Hanswurst, trans. Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 204; Martin Luther, Dr. Martin Luther's Warning to His Dear German People, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 47, 45; Martin Luther, Letters 241 (1531), in Luther's Works, vol. 50, 20.

<sup>54</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 17:3-6 (probably 1538), trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 3, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), 109; Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 49:1-2, trans. Paul D. Pahl, in Luther's Works, vol. 8, 203; Martin Luther, On Translating: An Open Letter 198, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and E. Theodore Bachmann, in Luther's Works, vol. 35, 198; Martin Luther, Against Hanswurst, Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 204; Martin Luther, Dr. Martin Luther's Warning to His Dear German People, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 47, 45.

<sup>55</sup>See Luther's criticisms of venerating legendary saints and false relics in the following writings: Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 13:14-15, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 2, 354; Martin Luther, The Sermon on the Mount, 7:24-27, trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in Luther's Works, vol. 21, 280; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 3.33, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 385; Martin Luther, Exhortation to All Clergy Assembled at Augsburg (1530), trans. Lewis W. Spitz, in Luther's

believed that they "foisted [St. Francis] on Christendom in Christ's place."<sup>56</sup>

For Luther, the process of canonization used by popes to authenticate new martyrs and nonmartyr saints was the source of many official errors. Luther thought that it was audacious and impertinent for popes to claim that, guided by the Holy Spirit, they knew in fact who was in heaven and therefore eligible for a universal public ecclesiastical cult.<sup>57</sup> Even if one were to assume the honesty of the process itself, the fact must still be soberly confronted that the people who tend to be canonized are the same ones who have enjoyed a posthumous reputation of martyrdom or sanctity derived largely from widespread claims that they had performed extraordinarily wondrous works during their lives. This was particularly true in the case of the nonmartyr saints who had rigorously maintained unusually severe ascetical practices throughout their lives as members of monastic orders.<sup>58</sup> For Luther, however, all saints, even those who died as martyrs, suffered no more doing works than should be expected of them. In fact, they did "what is required and scarcely that. Therefore they have done much less than they should in other works."<sup>59</sup>

The focus on external works in the process of canonization thus mirrored what Luther believed to be the foundation of errors in the Roman Catholic Church: trust in justification by works instead of justification by faith in Jesus Christ. The evidence Luther provided is impressive. He noted, first, the tendency for popes to canonize monks; second, the spiritual rewards promised for arduous and expensive pilgrimages to the shrines of especially powerful saints; and, third, the anxious prayers believers directed

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Works, vol. 34, ed. Lewis W. Spitz (Philadelphia, Penn.: Muhlenberg Press, 1960), 54; Martin Luther, Against Hanswurst, trans. Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 205; Martin Luther, Dr. Martin Luther's Warning to His Dear German People, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 47, 50.

<sup>56</sup>Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 1.4, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 65.

<sup>57</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Genesis 17:2-6, trans. George V. Schick, in Luther's Works, vol. 3, 109; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 1.4, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 65; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 16:13, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 24, 356; Martin Luther, On the Councils and the Churches (1539), trans. Charles M. Jacobs and Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, ed. Eric W. Gritsch (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1966), 71; Martin Luther, Against Hanswurst, trans. Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 204; Martin Luther, To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate (1520), trans. Charles M. Jacobs and James Atkinson, in Luther's Works, vol. 44, ed. James Atkinson (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1966), 186-187.

<sup>58</sup>Martin Luther, On the Councils and the Churches, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 128.

<sup>59</sup>Martin Luther, Explanations of the Ninety-five Theses 58 (1518), trans. Carl W. Folkemer, in Luther's Works, ed. Harold J. Grimm, vol. 31 (Philadelphia, Penn.: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), 213.

towards the saints seeking their intercession on the judgment day.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, as was already seen in chapter two, a grossly disproportionate number of the saints canonized by the popes during the Middle Ages were from monastic orders governed by rules extolling the practice of extreme asceticism. As well, some bishops clearly supported efforts to secure the papal canonization of widely reputed local saints because an influx of new pilgrims would be profitable.<sup>61</sup> Justification by faith, however, meant that whoever trusted in Jesus Christ as their mediator need not fear the judgment day.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, as human beings, the papally canonized saints were not sinless either. According to Luther, "they are pious people...but they [may] desert Him [Jesus Christ]...since they are only human."<sup>63</sup> They, too, would be damned to hell if they had depended on works instead of their faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>64</sup> The supreme irony for Luther, however, was that the self-proclaimed heir of St. Peter canonized saints largely on the basis of works--works which included the worship of saints--yet Peter himself had emphasized justification by faith.<sup>65</sup> The people who truly are saints, then, have not necessarily been papally canonized, but God is aware that in fact they are saints. Human beings can nevertheless sometimes recognize them because they "proclaim [John the

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<sup>60</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Isaiah 40:21, trans. Herbert A. Bouman, in Luther's Works, vol. 17, 23; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 2.20, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 256; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 6:37, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 23, 58; Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 16:8-11, in Luther's Works, vol. 24, 348-349; Martin Luther, Lectures on Titus 1:7 (1527), trans. Jaroslav Pelikan, in Luther's Works, vol. 29, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 28; Martin Luther, On the Councils and the Church, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 128, 213; Martin Luther, To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and James Atkinson, in Luther's Works, vol. 44, 186-187; Martin Luther, The Gospel for the Festival of the Epiphany, Matthew 2 (1522), trans. S.P. Hebart, in Luther's Works, vol. 52, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1974), 175.

<sup>61</sup>Martin Luther, To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and James Atkinson, in Luther's Works, vol. 44, 186.

<sup>62</sup>Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 3.32, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 380.

<sup>63</sup>Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 2.20, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 254. "It is safer to regard anything the saints did without warrant of Scripture as a sin, rather than hold it up as a good example. Neither will you offend any of the saints by considering as sins those works which they did without assurance and foundation in the Scriptures; for they know that they are sinners." Martin Luther, The Misuse of the Mass (1521), trans. Frederick C. Ahrens, in Luther's Works, vol. 36, ed. Abdel Ross Wentz (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1959), 186

<sup>64</sup>Martin Luther, On the Councils and the Church, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 71. See also Carl C. Bondensieck, "Saint and Saints," in The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church, vol. 3, ed. Julius Bondensieck, 2093.

<sup>65</sup>Martin Luther, On the Councils and the Church, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and Eric W. Gritsch, in Luther's Works, vol. 41, 71, 140.



Baptist's] message of repentance and of forgiveness in the name of Christ...[and] they preach the Word of God in its truth and purity." For this they may be revered, but not invoked or worshipped.<sup>66</sup> Thus, according to Luther, it is wise to imitate the true saints' faith, but not their works--unless these concur with demands made in the Bible.<sup>67</sup> One should therefore not appeal to the writings of generally acknowledged saints, such as Augustine, so as to substantiate claims that the saints intercede on behalf of the living members of the Church. Only their writings which agree with the Bible should be trusted.<sup>68</sup>

It is notable, however, that Luther confessed that he had found it very difficult to abandon what he judged to be the idolatrous worship of saints.<sup>69</sup> Believing himself to be freed from his previously habitual errors, he endeavoured to warn other believers of the dangers of such commonly accepted idolatrous practices. Luther thus condemned the construction of temples and altars for the saints,<sup>70</sup> and the dedication of churches and altars in the names of saints.<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, he omitted the invocations of saints and intercessions for the pope and for the deceased from the German Litany.<sup>72</sup> While Luther's criticisms of the cult of saints and their relics were well-organized and relentless, they did not occasion the bull of excommunication, "Decret Romantum Pontificem", issued against Luther on January 3, 1521.<sup>73</sup> Likewise, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) did not respond to specific criticisms made by Luther against the cult of saints and relics. Instead, these traditional practices were simply reaffirmed, and caution was advised in regard to superstitious tendencies.

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<sup>66</sup>Martin Luther, Sermons on the Gospel of St. John 1.4, trans. Martin H. Bertram, in Luther's Works, vol. 22, 65; Martin Luther, To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and James Atkinson, in Luther's Works, vol. 44, 186-188.

<sup>67</sup>Martin Luther, The Misuse of the Mass, trans. Frederick C. Ahrens, in Luther's Works, vol. 36, 188.

<sup>68</sup>Martin Luther, Table Talk Recorded by Anthony Lauterbach, in Luther's Works, vol. 54, 260.

<sup>69</sup>"It was exceedingly bitter for me to tear myself away from [the worship of] the saints, for I was steeped and fairly drowned in it. But the light of the gospel is now shining so clearly that henceforth no one has any excuse to remain in darkness. We all know very well what we ought to do." Martin Luther, On Translating: An Open Letter, trans. Charles M. Jacobs and E. Theodore Bachmann, in Luther's Works, vol. 35, 199.

<sup>70</sup>Martin Luther, Lectures on Amos 5.5 (1524-1525), trans. Richard J. Dinda, in Luther's Works, vol. 18, ed. Hilton C. Oswald (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1975), 158.

<sup>71</sup>Martin Luther, Exhortation to All Clergy Assembled at Augsburg, trans. Lewis W. Spitz, in Luther's Works, vol. 34, 54.

<sup>72</sup>Martin Luther, The German Litany and The Latin Litany Corrected (1529), trans. Paul Zeller Strodach and Ulrich S. Leupold, in Luther's Works, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold, vol. 53 (Philadelphia, Penn.: Fortress Press, 1965), 153-154.

<sup>73</sup>"Martin Luther," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 831-833.

John Calvin (1509-1564) rejected both the invocation of saints for intercession and the veneration of the saints' relics on three grounds that echoed Luther's aforementioned concerns: first, such practices are unbiblical; second, they attribute god-like powers to the saints and to their relics; third, they supplant Jesus Christ as the unique mediator between God and human beings. As was previously noted, early Christian authors, such as Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine were well aware that the cult of martyrs (which was the earliest form of the cult of saints) arose after the New Testament had been written. In fact, the episcopally controlled (and later the papally controlled) process that developed for authenticating new saints, both martyrs and nonmartyrs, was predicated on consciously reacting to the clamour of popular reputations of martyrdom or sanctity which developed, for the most part, in postbiblical times. For Calvin, however, such unbiblical practices were dangerous. He saw them as a foolhardy risk because one could never be certain whether God approved of them.<sup>74</sup>

Calvin, like Erasmus and Luther, recognized the tendency of people to attribute to each of the saints a specific god-like power or a jurisdiction over certain cures, trades, or geographical regions. The saints became accessible minor deities or demigods, even though many of them were legendary.<sup>75</sup> Calvin

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<sup>74</sup>In a letter to the Roman Catholic Monsieur le Curé de Cerneux, written in 1543, Calvin calls the invocation of saints a blasphemy: "Never does there occur a single word about the invocation of the saints" in the Scripture. John Calvin, Letters 100, in Letters of John Calvin Compiled from the Original Manuscripts and Edited With Historical Notes, vol. 1, trans. Jules Bonnet (n.p., 1858; repr., New York: Lenox Hill, 1973), 372. Thus the invocation of saints is based solely on the judgment of the Church. For Calvin, this is not as reliable as the Bible. Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 1, Chapter 12.2, vol. 1, ed. Jean-Daniel Benoit (Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1957), 142; John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 1, Chapter 12.2, vol. 1, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 118-119; Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 3, Chapter 20.21, vol. 3, ed. Jean-Daniel Benoit (Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1960), 358; John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 3, Chapter 20.21, vol. 2, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 878-879; Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 4, Chapter 9.14, vol. 4, ed. Jean-Daniel Benoit (Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1961), 183-184; John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 4, Chapter 9.14, vol. 2, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 1163-1164; Jean Calvin, La vraie façon de réformer l'Église chrétienne et d'apaiser les différends qui sont en elle, ed. Eric Fuchs (Geneva, Switzerland: Labor et Fides, 1957), 75.

<sup>75</sup>"But stupidity has progressed to the point that we have here a manifest disposition to superstition, which, once it has cast off the bridle, never ceases to play the wanton. For after men began to concern themselves with the intercession of saints, gradually they attributed to each a particular function, so that for a diversity of business sometimes one intercessor would be called upon, sometimes another. Then each man adopted a particular saint as a tutelary deity, in whose keeping he put his trust. Not only were gods set up according to the number of cities, something for which the prophet so long upbraided Israel [Jer. 2:28; 11:13], but even according to the population." John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 3, Chapter 20.22, vol. 2, 880; Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 3, Chapter 20.22, vol. 3, 359. See also John Calvin, Commentary upon the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 3.12, vol. 1, ed. Henry Beveridge, trans. Christopher Fetherstone (Edinburgh, Scotland: Calvin Translations Society, 1844), 143-144; Jean Calvin, La vraie façon de réformer l'Église chrétienne, 76-77.

also questioned the distinction, made earlier (for example, by Thomas Aquinas) between *latría*--the worship of God--and *dulia*--the veneration of saints. Calvin observed that this distinction is unbiblical. He also believed that the distinction made intellectually between two forms of worship, in fact, is not real because the honours which Roman Catholics render to saints and to God show themselves to be identical.<sup>76</sup> In regard to the cult of saints' relics, Calvin judged that, worse than being unbiblical, the veneration of relics always leads to superstition and idolatry. This means that the practice inevitably leads to conferring on underserving material an honour which is proper solely to God.<sup>77</sup> Calvin recognized a genuine need in the Early Church for occasionally transferring martyrs' bodies in order to protect them from scavengers, but the proper objective always was to preserve them in the earth while they awaited the day of resurrection. In fact, according to Calvin, idolatry earnestly began in the Early Church when spiritual value started to be ascribed to the material remains of the martyrs and apostles.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, given the obvious success of the trade in relics, Calvin believed that the Devil himself must be assisting in the flourishing of this Church-sanctioned idolatry.<sup>79</sup> In order to strengthen his argument that this practice was crude and would lead to one's damnation, Calvin underscored the dubious origin of many relics. He observed that the bones of brigands, thieves, asses, dogs, and horses were commonly venerated as if they were those of some great saints.<sup>80</sup>

Calvin was especially critical of people relying on the saints instead of Jesus Christ, whom Calvin believed to be the unique mediator between God and human beings. According to Calvin, "God calls us to

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<sup>76</sup>Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 1, Chapter 12.2, vol. 1, 142; Carlos Eire, War Against the Idols, 217-219; John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 1, Chapter 12.2, vol. 1, 118-119.

<sup>77</sup>Jean Calvin, Traité des reliques, in Traité des reliques suivi de L'excuse a messieurs les Nicodémites, ed. Albert Autin (Paris: Éditions Bossard, 1921), 88-90, 191-192; Carlos M. Eire, War Against the Idols, 215. See also John Calvin, Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses Arranged in the Form of a Harmony, Exodus 13.19, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Charles William Bingham (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Compnay, 1852), 235.

<sup>78</sup>Jean Calvin, Traité des reliques, in Traité des reliques suivi de L'excuse a messieurs les Nicodémites, 194; Carlos N. Eire, War Against Idols, 211-212.

<sup>79</sup>Jean Calvin, Traité des reliques, in Traité des reliques suivi de L'excuse a messieurs les Nicodémites, 193.

<sup>80</sup>Jean Calvin, Traité des reliques, in Traité des reliques suivi de L'excuse a messieurs les Nicodémites, 91-92, 196. See also the following: Stéphane Boiron, La controverse née de la querelle des reliques, 41-43; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 413; Carlos M.N. Eire, War Against the Idols, 228-231; Georgia Harkness, John Calvin: The Man and His Ethics (New York: Abingdon Press, 1958), 97-99; Luchsius Smits, Saint Augustin dans l'oeuvre de Jean Calvin, vol. 1 (Assen: the Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1957), 73, 75, 81.

himself alone, forbidding us to have recourse elsewhere...and with good right, for his chief glory lies in that we should call upon him alone in the name of Jesus Christ."<sup>81</sup> Moreover, when one invokes God through the saints, one not only circumvents Jesus Christ, but also dishonours both him and the special and non-transferable prerogative given to him by God the Father. At the same time, one rejects the whole Scripture which attests to the unique salvific role of Jesus Christ in the history of humanity. Thus, according to Calvin, any miracles attributed to the invocation of saints and their relics lead Christians away from the true worship of God.<sup>82</sup> The worst sacrilege, however, is the practice of "calling upon the saints now not as helpers but as determiners of [one's] salvation. Here is where wretched men fall, when they stray from their lawful position, that is the Word of God."<sup>83</sup> Through these idolatrous prayers, Jesus Christ is replaced with false saviours.

## B. The Reaffirmation of the Cult of Martyrs and Nonmartyr Saints and Their Relics Starting With the Council of Trent

While most Roman Catholic writers up to the sixteenth century had simply called for the exclusion of certain superstitious practices from the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and their relics, the Reformers had demanded the complete abolition of this cult. Responding to the criticisms made by both of these groups, the Council of Trent reaffirmed the traditional belief that martyrs and nonmartyr saints are valuable for the living members of the Church as both exemplary models and heavenly intercessors. Ever since the Council of Trent, these two functions have been consistently restated in papal encyclicals, in the documents of Vatican I and Vatican II, in the Order of the Mass, and in universal catechisms of the Church.

### 1. The Council of Trent, the Tridentine Catechism, and the Tridentine Missal:

At the Council of Trent (1545-1563), summoned by Pope Paul III (1468-1549; pope 1534-1549), the specific criticisms made by Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin in regard to the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr

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<sup>81</sup>John Calvin, Letters 100, in Letters of John Calvin, vol. 1, 371-372. See also Jules Boisset, Sagesse et sainteté dans la pensée de Jean Calvin: Essai sur l'Humanisme du Réformateur français (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959), 141-147.

<sup>82</sup>Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 3, Chapter 20.21, vol. 3, 358; John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 3, Chapter 20.21, vol. 2, 879-880; Jean Calvin, La vraie façon de réformer l'Église chrétienne, 72-77. See also Carlos M. Eire, War Against Idols, 223; Dennis E. Tamburello, Union with Christ: John Calvin and the Mysticism of St. Bernard (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 57.

<sup>83</sup>John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book 3, Chapter 20.22, vol. 2, 880; Jean Calvin, Institutions de la religion chrétienne, Book 3, Chapter 20.22, vol. 3, 359.

saints and their relics were not directly answered. Instead, the traditional practices of invoking the martyrs and nonmartyr saints and of venerating their relics were emphatically reaffirmed in general. The aforementioned criticisms were answered as if they constituted a homogeneous group. At the twenty-second session, on September 17, 1562, the Council approved what was designated as the custom of celebrating masses in honour and in memory of the saints. The documents emphasize, however, that the eucharistic sacrifice always was to be offered to God alone, not to the saints.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, there was a very clear declaration that whoever "says that it is an imposture for masses to be celebrated in honour of the saints and to secure their intercession with God, as is the mind of the church...[would] be anathema."<sup>85</sup> At the twenty-fifth session (the last session of the Council of Trent), held on December 3 and 4, 1563, the Council ordered bishops to teach the laity correctly about the traditional understanding and practice of invoking the saints for intercession, and about honouring the relics and sacred images. Without naming the Reformers or countering their specific criticisms, the Council of Trent rejected, in general, what were believed to be the Reformers' principal criticisms related to the saints: that invoking saints is worthless or even idolatrous, and that it degrades Jesus Christ from his position as the one mediator between humanity and God. In addition to praising the intercessory power of saints, the Council emphasized that the saints provide a model for imitation. At the same time, however, the Council ordered that any mistaken notions and superstitions which may have gradually infected the correct practice of invoking saints and venerating their relics ought to be eliminated. Moreover, the Council declared that all new miracles and relics were first to be examined by the local bishop or by a regional group of bishops in synod, but the pope alone would be responsible for their authentication.<sup>86</sup>

Detailed responses to specific criticisms made by the Reformers (without naming the presenters of these objections) about the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and their relics waited until the publication of the Catechism of the Council of Trent in October, 1566. It was issued by Pope Pius V (1504-1572; pope 1566-1572). The plan to write this catechism arose during the fourth session of the Council of Trent, in April, 1546. The members of the Commission on Abuses discussed the need for a universally applicable catechism to help counter religious ignorance among Roman Catholics. A commission was established on November 18, 1547, to draft the catechism, but the task was not completed when the Council

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<sup>84</sup>Council of Trent, Session 22, Teaching and Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Chapter 3, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 734.

<sup>85</sup>Council of Trent, Session 22, Canons on the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Canon 5, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 736.

<sup>86</sup>Council of Trent, Session 25, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 774-776. See also Paolo Sarpi, Istoria del Concilio Tridentino seguito dalla "Vita del padre Paolo" di Fulgenzio Micanzio, vol. 2 (n.p.: Giulio Einaudi, 1974), 1242.

ended on December 4, 1563.<sup>87</sup> In January, 1564, Pope Pius IV (1499-1565; pope 1559-1565) gave a new commission the mandate of composing the catechism, which quickly finished its task.<sup>88</sup> It was in this catechism that the Reformers' above mentioned specific objections to the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints were rejected and the traditional beliefs were presented as the truth.<sup>89</sup>

While the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and their relics was reaffirmed in the documents of the Council of Trent and in the Tridentine catechism, it is important to recognize that Roman Catholics most commonly encountered the saints and their relics in the Mass and in the preparation of the church building for the celebration of the Mass.<sup>90</sup> A major concern at the Council of Trent was the need for the Eucharist to be purified of some errors and heresies which had arisen from human negligence, depravity, greed, irreverence, or superstition. One reason why these problems arose was that a universal missal did not

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<sup>87</sup>Council of Trent, Session 25, Index of Books, the Catechism, Breviary and Missal, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 797. See also A. Molien, "Catéchisme," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, ed. R. Naz, vol. 2 (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1937), col. 1413-1414.

<sup>88</sup>Robert I. Bradley and Eugene Kevanem eds., The Roman Catechism. Translated and Annotated in Accord With Vatican II and Post-Conciliar Documents and the New Code of Canon Law (Boston, Mass.: St. Paul Editions, 1984), i-vi; Catechism of the Council of Trent For Parish Priests, trans. John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan, (South Bend, Ind.: Marian Publications, 1972), xxiii-xxv; A. Molien, "Catéchisme," in Dictionnaire de droit catholique, vol. 2, ed. R. Naz (Paris: Latouzey at Ané, 1937), col. 1413-1414; Paolo Sarpi, Istoria del Concilio Tridentino, vol. 2, 1236-1237; 1252; "Il 'Catechismo della Chiesa Cattolica'," in La Civiltà Cattolica 144 (1993), 5.

<sup>89</sup>Catechism of the Council of Trent For Parish Priests, trans. John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan. The Creed, The Resurrection of the Body, The Qualities of a Glorified Body, 128-129; The Eucharist, The Mass Is a True Sacrifice, 256-257; First Commandment, It Is Lawful to Honor and Invoke the Saints, 371; Objections Answered, 371-372; The Honor and Invocation of Saints Is Approved By Miracles, 372-373; Prayer in General, Our Thanksgiving Should Especially be Offered: For the Saints, 491; To Whom We Should Pray, 493; The Lord's Prayer, The Third Petition, We Ask That We May Fulfill What God Desires of Us, 534; The Sixth Petition, The Rewards of Victories Over Temptation, 576; Robert I. Bradley and Eugene Kevane, eds., The Roman Catechism, The Catholic Faith Professed By the Apostles' Creed, Article 11.10, The Resurrection of the Holy Martyrs, 128; Article 11.13, The Special Qualities of the Risen Bodies of the Blessed, 130-131; The Holy Eucharist 73, The Mass: A Sacrifice to God Alone, 251; The First Commandment 11, Invocation of the Saints and the Veneration of Their Relics, 361; 12, A Further Explanation of This Invocation of the Saints, 361; 13, A Further Defense of This Practice, 361-362; 14, The Intercession of the Saints: Compatible With the Unique Mediatorship of Christ, 362; 15, The Meaning and Efficacy of the Veneration of Relics, 362-363; On Prayer and the Our Father, The Third Petition, Persons For Whom to Pray 6, Persons For Whom Prayer of Thanks Is Made, 479; Persons to Whom We Are to Pray 2, We Are Also to Pray to the Saints, 481; God and the Saints Are Addressed Differently, 481; The Saints Also Have Mercy on Us, 481; The Third Petition 13, The Example of the Saints, 523; The Sixth Petition 20, The Rewards of Victory in the Spiritual Combat, 564.

<sup>90</sup>The word "Mass" "in modern times...has come to be associated with the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice." "Mass," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 871.

yet exist.<sup>91</sup> In fact, each religious order had its own Order of the Mass.<sup>92</sup> Thus at the twenty-second session, on September 17, 1562, a "decree on things to be observed and avoided in celebrating mass" and a "decree on reform" were issued.<sup>93</sup> On the last day of the Council, December 4, 1563, at the twenty-fifth session, a decree was issued declaring that the reform of the missal and the breviary<sup>94</sup> was to be left to the pope.<sup>95</sup> In 1562, Pope Pius IV established a commission in order to examine the abuses which sometimes occurred in the Mass and to recommend reforms. On July 14, 1570, Pope Pius V promulgated a bull, Quo primum, which instituted a new Roman Missal, thereby establishing the Order of the Mass for nearly all of the Latin Rite. It was the first missal to be applied almost universally. Henceforth, the only other missals which could continue to be used locally were those that had already been in use for at least two hundred years.<sup>96</sup> In the new Missal, one hundred and fifty days were free of feasts. The objectives

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<sup>91</sup>The "Missal" is the "book containing all that is necessary to be sung or said at, with ceremonial directions for, the celebration of the Mass throughout the year. As a liturgical book, the Missal began to make its appearance with the 10th cent. as a combination of the Antiphony, the Gradual, the Epistolary and Evangeliary, and the Ordo with the Sacramentary." "Missal," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Faith, 906. For the history of the development of the missal, see Fernand Cabrol, "Missel," in Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, eds. Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, vol. 11, part 2 (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1934), col. 1431-1468.

<sup>92</sup>Joseph A. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia), trans. Francis A. Brunner and Charles K. Riepe (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1961), 75-79.

<sup>93</sup>Council of Trent, Session 22, Decree on Things to Be Observed and Avoided in Celebrating Mass; Decree on Reform, in Decrees on the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 736-741. See also Joseph A. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, 101.

<sup>94</sup>The "breviary" is the liturgical book containing the Psalms, hymns, lessons, etc., to be recited in the Divine Office...of the [Roman Catholic] Church." "Breviary," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 196. The Tridentine Breviary came into effect with the bull, Quod a nobis, dated July 9, 1568. Pierre Batiffol, History of the Roman Breviary, trans. Atwell M.Y. Baylay (London, England: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912), 203; Theodor Klauser, A Short History of the Western Liturgy: An Account and Some Reflections, trans. John Halliburton, 2d ed. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1981), 127.

<sup>95</sup>Council of Trent, Session 25, Index of Books, the Catechism, Breviary and Missal, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 797. See also Joseph A. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, 101.

<sup>96</sup>Joseph A. Jungmann, The Mass of the Roman Rite, 102; A.G. Martimort, "Liturgical Law," in The Church at Prayer: Introduction to the Liturgy, ed. A.G. Martimort (New York: Desclée Company, 1968), 71; Clifford Howell, "From Trent to Vatican II," in The Story of Liturgy, eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainswright, et al., rev. ed. (London, England: SPCK, 1992), 285-286; Bard Thompson, Liturgies of the Western Church (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1961), 47; Pope Paul VI, "Préambule à la présentation générale du Missel Romain," La Documentation Catholique 67 (21 June 1970): 566; J. Deshusses, "Missel Romain," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, ed. R. Naz, vol. 6 (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1957), col. 884; Fernand Cabrol, "Missel Romain," in Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, vol. 11, part 2, col. 1486-1488.

were, first, to free the liturgical year of the Church from the previously excessive burden of celebrating saints' feasts almost daily, and, second, to ensure that the focus of the year be on the feasts celebrating the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Altogether, just over one hundred days of the year were designated as feast days of saints.<sup>97</sup> The Mass instituted by this bull was in effect until the promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution, *Missale Romanum*, by Pope Paul VI on April 3, 1969.

The memory of specific martyrs and nonmartyr saints was celebrated at their individual annual feasts, as designated in the Roman Calendar. Perhaps more importantly, the martyrs and nonmartyr saints in general were remembered in two important sections of the Roman Canon, that is, the eucharistic prayer of the Sunday Mass: in the *Communicantes*<sup>98</sup> and in the *Nobis quoque*.<sup>99</sup> Thus, in the *Communicantes*, the idea was evident that some members of the Church were already in heaven where they would pray to God for the protection of the living members of the Church. These were the martyrs and nonmartyr saints. At the same time, the saints were commemorated.<sup>100</sup> In the *Nobis quoque*, the living members of the Church would state their humble acknowledgement of their sinfulness, and then they would petition God that he may grant the forgiveness of their sins so that they may be admitted into the company of the heavenly members of the Church, that is, the saints.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 102-103; Pierre Batiffol, *History of the Roman Breviary*, 204, 215-218; Pelagio Visentin, "Formazione e sviluppo del Santorale nell'anno liturgico," in *Rivista Liturgica* 65 (1978), 314.

<sup>98</sup>"And now they offer this sacrifice due unto Thee, eternal God living and true, in holy fellowship and venerable memory first of the glorious and ever virgin Mary, Mother of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and also of Thy blessed apostles and martyrs Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon, and Thaddeus, Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian, and of all Thy saints; and do Thou grant that through their prayers and merits we may in all things dwell secure under Thy protection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen." Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 402. See also Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica Historica: Papers on the Liturgy and Religious Life of the Western Church* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1918; repr., London, England: Oxford University Press, 1962), 83.

<sup>99</sup>"And also to us Thy sinful servants, trusting in Thy boundless mercy, graciously grant unto us some part and fellowship with Thy holy Apostles and Martyrs: with John, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicity, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Caecilia, Anastasia, and with all Thy saints: we beseech Thee to admit us into their company, not weighing our merits, but freely granting us forgiveness. Through Christ Our Lord." Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 446.

<sup>100</sup>Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 402-408; Nicholas Gehr, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: Dogmatically, Liturgically, and Ascetically Explained*, (St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Book, 1960), 650-655.

<sup>101</sup>Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, 446-453; Nicholas Gehr, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, 712-716.



In regard to the preparation of the church building for the celebration of the Mass, from the Council of Trent up to the pontificate of the Pope John Paul II, the traditional practice has persisted of giving a church a title, often the name of a martyr or nonmartyr saint, when it is dedicated. This is also evident in the new Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II (1920-present; pope 1978-present) on January 25, 1983.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, the tradition of enclosing relics, especially martyrs' relics, in the altar has continued throughout the period.<sup>103</sup>

The serious view taken by the Council of Trent in regard to the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and of their relics was thus reinforced, first, by the publication of the new catechism in 1566, second, by the promulgation of the almost universally applied Roman Missal (in the Latin Rite), and third, as was seen in chapter three, by the increasingly judicial nature of the process of canonization after the establishment of the Congregation of Rites in 1588 (and even more so, starting with the pontificate of Pope Benedict XIV). As was already discussed, the "making" of new saints was treated as an important matter that required a lengthy trial so as to ensure the veracity of alleged martyrdoms (or displays of heroic virtues) and miracles.

## 2. The Papal Encyclicals, Vatican I, and Vatican II:

Following the end of the Council of Trent in 1563, there was no new ecumenical council until Vatican I (1869-1870). Some papal encyclicals both before and after Vatican I, however, also emphasized the traditionally recognized reasons for declaring new saints and for maintaining the universal public ecclesiastical cults of recognized saints: the saints--both martyrs and nonmartyr saints--were to act as models for imitation by the members of the Roman Catholic Church, and they were to be viewed as powerful intercessors on behalf of the invokers.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green, et al., eds., The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary, Canon 1218 (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 848-849. Canon 1205 states that "sacred places are those which have been designated for divine worship or for the burial of the faithful through a dedication or blessing which the liturgical books prescribe for this purpose." Ibid., Canon 1205, 846.

<sup>103</sup>Fixed altars are to be dedicated; movable altars, however, are to be dedicated or blessed according to the rites prescribed in the liturgical books. The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary, Canon 1237.1, 849. "The ancient tradition of keeping the relics of martyrs under a fixed altar is to be preserved according to the norms given in the liturgical books." Ibid., Canon 1237.2, 851. For the custom of enclosing relics in altars, according to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, see P. Bayart, "Autel," in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, ed. R. Naz, vol. 1 (Paris: Libraire Letouzey et Ané, 1935), 1461-1462.

<sup>104</sup>Papal encyclicals are of two types: encyclical letters and encyclical epistles. The first "is used almost exclusively to indicate a circular letter addressed to all the bishops on matters affecting the Church at large, while the encyclical epistle is reserved for letters in the nature of exhortations concerning a particular need or for those addressed primarily to the bishops of a particular country or to a specific group of the hierarchy." The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 1, ed. Claudia Carlen (Wilmington, N.C.: McGrath Publishing

As was seen in chapter three, the process of canonization developed greatly during the period from the Council of Trent up to the mid-nineteenth century: the Congregation of Rites (later the Congregation for the Causes of Saints) was established in 1588; the first solemn papal beatification took place in Rome at St. Peter's Basilica in 1662; Cardinal Lambertini published his seminal work, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione between 1734 and 1738; and the judicial process of canonization evolved and was thereafter inscribed in the 1917 Code of Canon Law.

On September 18, 1840, Pope Gregory XVI (1765-1846; pope 1831-1846) issued an encyclical, Probe Nostis, praising the martyrs of Tonkin and Cochin, China, for imitating the Christian martyrs from the Early Church.<sup>105</sup> In the encyclical, Gregory XVI calls the deaths suffered by the new martyrs a "major victory for the Church and for religion" because it "casts the persecutors into confusion when they see that even today the divine promises and help are really fulfilled."<sup>106</sup> Although these new martyrs were not yet authenticated by the process of canonization, Pope Gregory XVI did not hesitate to identify them publicly with the indisputable martyrs of the Early Church. His encyclical seems to suggest his judgment that they were already certainly in heaven. This would also mean that he believed they were powerful intercessors. (Of course they could not yet be publicly venerated in an ecclesiastical cult.) Gregory XVI's successor, Pope Pius IX (1792-1878; pope 1846-1878) issued an encyclical, Quanto Conficiamur Moerore, on August 10, 1863, in which he likewise praises the aforementioned martyrs of Tonkin and Cochin for "[pouring] out their lives for Christ," but he describes them as "emulating the martyrs with their unconquerable spirit and heroic virtue."<sup>107</sup> Whether Pius IX chose this phrasing carefully so as to emphasize that they were not yet officially declared as genuine martyrs is unclear. He may very well have simply echoed his predecessor's belief that these new martyrs obviously imitated the early Christian martyrs.

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Company, 1981), xviii. In regard to the importance of papal encyclicals, Schmaus, for example, notes that "very few papal statements make a claim to infallibility; indeed the greatest part of the pope's utterances make no such claim. According to the prevailing opinion of theologians, papal encyclicals...addresses, letters on matters of faith, belong to this class of statements which are not presented as infallible. To such papal statements the Catholic will not be indifferent; but if he should reach the final, undoubting conviction that a papal pronouncement is not in accord with divine revelation, he will face the difficult question of conscience of how his conviction of truth, on the one hand, is to be reconciled with his regard for the faith community of the Church, on the other." Michael Schmaus, The Church: Its Origin and Structure, vol. 4 of Dogma (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1972), 209. See also Joaquín Salaverry, "Encyclicals," Sacramenti Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology, ed. Adolf Darlap (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 228-230.

<sup>105</sup>Pierre Delooy, Sociologie et canonisations, 473-474.

<sup>106</sup>Pope Gregory XVI, Probe Nostis: Encyclical on the Propagation of the Faith 7, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 1, 260.

<sup>107</sup>Pope Pius IX, Quanto Conficiamur Moerore: Encyclical on Promotion of False Doctrine 5, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 1, 370.

At the second session of Vatican I, held on January 6, 1870, Pope Pius IX expressed his "profession of faith". This included the statement that he "[confessed] that...the saints reigning with Christ are to be honoured and prayed to, and that they offer prayers to God on our behalf, and that their relics should be venerated."<sup>108</sup> Pius IX emphasized that anything contrary to the ecumenical councils, especially the Council of Trent, was to be anathematized. This clearly included all statements contrary to Pius IX's aforementioned profession of faith in regard to the cult of the saints and their relics.

In the encyclical, Annum Sacrum, issued by Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903; pope 1878-1903) on May 25, 1899, the pope asks the bishops, "all with one mind to implore the assistance of heaven that Jesus Christ...may also one day render...submissive" people who were the recipients of missionary activities around the world.<sup>109</sup> In this case, the "assistance of heaven" clearly refers to the intercession of the saints. On the other hand, Pope Pius X (1835-1914; pope 1903-1914) exhorts the bishops to imitate the works of the saints in his encyclical, Editae Saepe, of May 26, 1910.<sup>110</sup>

Pope Pius XI (1857-1939; pope 1922-1939), in the encyclical, Quas Primas, dated December 11, 1925, states that the legitimate and public honour offered to the Virgin Mary and the saints during their feasts provides the Roman Catholic Church with the "perfect and perpetual immunity...from error and heresy." A major objective of celebrating the feasts of the martyrs and nonmartyr saints, according to Pius XI, is to exhort Roman Catholics to imitate, first, the martyr's steadfastness in case they are ever confronted by a persecutor and, second, the nonmartyr's virtues throughout their daily lives.<sup>111</sup> In the encyclical, Acerba Animi, of September 29, 1932, Pius XI designates the violent deaths of Mexican priests and laity during an anti-clerical persecution in the 1920s as clear examples of martyrdom, but he does not provide the names of any new martyrs. Moreover, it appears that Pius XI does not simply interpret the widespread reputations of martyrdom enjoyed by these newly alleged martyrs as signs of the general fact that the Church in Mexico was suffering a period of persecution and martyrdom. Indeed, it seems that he has already judged that many of them, if not all of the them, are in fact genuine martyrs of the Church, even though

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<sup>108</sup> First Vatican Council, Session 2, Profession of Faith, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 803.

<sup>109</sup> Pope Leo XIII, Annum Sacrum: Encyclical on Consecration to the Sacred Heart 9, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 2, ed. Claudia Carlen (Wilmington, N.C.: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981), 453.

<sup>110</sup> Pope Pius X, Editae Saepe: Encyclical on St. Charles Borromeo 2, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 3, ed. Claudia Carlen (Wilmington, N.C.: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981), 115-116; Vincent A. Yzermans, ed., The Popes and the Saints (Saint Cloud, Minn.: The Saint Cloud Bookshop, 1956), 209.

<sup>111</sup> Pope Pius XI, Quas Primas: Encyclical on the Feast of Christ the King 22, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 3, 275. See also The Benedictine Monks of Solemes, Papal Teachings: The Liturgy, trans. the Daughters of St. Paul (Boston, Mass.: Daughters of St. Paul, 1962), 239.

the thorough investigation that is part of the process of canonization has not yet been conducted. Just as in the case of the new martyrs of Tonkin and Cochinchina, the contemporary pope of course does not circumvent the process of canonization even though the general event of martyrdom is obvious to him.<sup>112</sup> This would have only been possible by means of the unusual procedure and judgment of equipollent canonization.

Pope Pius XII (1876-1958; pope 1939-1958) explains to the bishops, who are the recipients of the encyclical, Mediator Dei, dated November 20, 1947, that the feasts of the saints should be celebrated so as to honour all the models of martyrdom and virtues who are fit to be imitated by every Roman Catholic. Moreover, he tells them that the saints ought to be honoured because they are the heavenly intercessors of the living members of the Church.<sup>113</sup> In the encyclical, Evangelii Praecones, of June 2, 1951, Pius XII calls Jesus Christ the first martyr. He requests new missionaries to send to distant lands, where they must be prepared to suffer persecution and even martyrdom like the early Christians and the more recent missionaries to Korea and China.<sup>114</sup> Many missionaries responded to this call by going to Latin America, where they often worked with the poor. In fact, Pius XII includes a "special prayer for Latin American missionaries...[because] we are aware of the dangerous pitfalls to which they are exposed from the open and covert attacks of heretical teaching."<sup>115</sup> He does not elaborate this point with explicit examples. As a substitute for the blood martyrdom that missionaries must anticipate, Pius XII praises the difficult maintenance of one's virginity in the encyclical, Sacra Virginitas, issued on March 25, 1954.<sup>116</sup> While commemorating the three hundredth anniversary of the martyrdom of the Polish Jesuit, Andrew Bobola (1591-1657; canonized in 1938),<sup>117</sup> in the encyclical, Invicti Athletae, dated May 16, 1957, Pius XII

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<sup>112</sup>Pope Pius XI, Acerba Animi: Encyclical on Persecution of the Church in Mexico 4, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 3, 485-486; Philip Hughes, Pope Pius the Eleventh (London, England: Sheed and Ward, 1937), 295.

<sup>113</sup>Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei: Encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy 166-168, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, ed. Claudia Carlen, (Wilmington, N.C.: McGrath Publishing Company, 1981), 145-146. Pius XII also considered the cult of the saints to be a strong apologetic argument favouring the holiness of the Roman Catholic Church. See Michele D'Alfonso, "La prova genere e la fama di santità en specie nei processi dei santi prima e dopo il M.P. 'Sanctitas Clarior'," Apollonaris 59 (1976): 500.

<sup>114</sup>Pope Pius XII, Evangelii Praecones: Encyclical on Promotion of Catholic Missions 11-14, 27, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, 191-192, 194.

<sup>115</sup>Pope Pius XII, Evangelii Praecones 18, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, 192.

<sup>116</sup>Pope Pius XII, Sacra Virginitas: Encyclical on Consecrated Virginity 49, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, 247.

<sup>117</sup>"Bobola, St. Andrew," in John J. Delaney and James Edward Tobin, Dictionary of Catholic Biography (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, 1961), 149-150; F.M. Rudge, "Andrew Bobola," in The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church, eds. Charles G. Herbermann, Edward A. Pace, et al. (New York: The

exhorts his audience to imitate Bobola's martyrdom by defending the truth of Christianity wherever it is denounced: "There is always a bit of martyrdom in such virtue if we really want to strive day by day for a greater perfection of Christian life."<sup>118</sup> Pius XII is clearly referring to bloodless, as well as, blood martyrdom.<sup>119</sup>

The theme of sanctity is important in the documents of the most recent ecumenical council, Vatican II (1962-1965), called by Pope John XXIII (1881-1963; pope 1958-1963) and closed by Pope Paul VI (1897-1978; pope 1963-1978). In fact, all Christians are called to perfection and holiness in the fifth chapter of Lumen Gentium, the dogmatic constitution on the Church, which was promulgated on November 21, 1964 at the fifth session of Vatican II.<sup>120</sup> Thus the practice of commemorating martyrs and nonmartyr saints is reaffirmed because these saints are important to the recipients of the universal call to holiness, first, as "models who attract all women and men to the Father," and, second, as intercessors who "already possess eternal salvation."<sup>121</sup>

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Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1913), 472.

<sup>118</sup>Pope Pius XII, Invicti Athletae: Encyclical on St. Andrew Bobola 30, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, 336.

<sup>119</sup>Pope Pius XII, Invicti Athletae 1, 16-21, 30-32, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, 333, 335-337.

<sup>120</sup>Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 5, The Universal Call to Holiness 39-42, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 880-884. "It is therefore evident to everyone that all the faithful, whatever their condition or rank, are called to the fullness of the christian life and the perfection of charity. And this sanctity is conducive to a more human way of living even in society here on earth. To attain this perfection the faithful should exert their strength in the measure in which they received this as Christ's gift, so that following in his footsteps and forming themselves in his likeness, obedient in all things to the Father's will, they may be wholeheartedly devoted to the glory of God and the service of their neighbour. In this way the holiness of the people of God will produce fruit in abundance, as is clearly shown in the history of the church by the lives of so many saints." *Ibid.*, 40, 881. See also Pietro Palazzini, "La santità coronamento della dignità dell'uomo," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV occasione, 229, 234-235; Luigi Bogliolo, "L'influsso della glorificazione dei servi di Dio nella spiritualità," in *Ibid.*, 241-243; Casieri Antonius, La perfezione cristiana in Benedetto XIV con particolare riferimento all'età giovanile, 43, 101-109; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 155.

<sup>121</sup>Second Vatican Council, Session 3, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 104, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 838; Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 104, in The Documents of Vatican II: All Sixteen Official Texts Promulgated by the Ecumenical Council, ed. William M. Abbott, trans. Joseph Gallagher, et al. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 168; Josef Andreas Jungmann, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 104, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (London, England: Burns and Oates, 1967), 72. See also Casieri Antonius, La perfezione in Benedetto XIV con particolare riferimento all'età giovanile, 160-161. Bogliolo believes that the saints who have been recognized by the church act as stimuli away from mediocrity and lukewarmness, which are the worst enemies of Christian perfection. Luigi Bogliolo, "L'influsso della glorificazione dei servi di Dio nella spiritualità," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 257.

Vatican II, in fact, was the first ecumenical council to be concerned dogmatically with the subjects of the saints and the union between the "heavenly Church" and the "pilgrim Church".<sup>122</sup> Thus, at Vatican II, an eschatological theme was underscored in chapter seven of the dogmatic constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, in regard to the cult of saints: the living members of the Church celebrate the feasts of the deceased members who are already in heaven, while the invoked saints intercede because they care about the living members, and desire to act as standards for imitation in order to encourage a heavenly end for all members of the Church.<sup>123</sup> This relationship between the living and the dead was explained by using the model of the Church as the "mystical body of Jesus Christ". Briefly stated, this means that "all who are in Christ, possessing his Spirit, are joined together into one church and united with each other in him."<sup>124</sup> Therefore, it is believed that there is a union of all Christians who are living, with all deceased Christians who are in purgatory,<sup>125</sup> and finally with all Christians who are already in heaven, namely the martyrs and nonmartyr saints (both ones who have already been canonized and others who have not been

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<sup>122</sup>Paolo Molinari, "La storia del capitolo VII della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium': Indole escatologica della Chiesa pellegrinante e sua unione con la Chiesa celeste," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 113. It was Pope John XXIII who requested the theological work which led to the composition of the dogmatic constitution, Lumen Gentium. *Ibid.*, 117-120. Chapter seven of Lumen Gentium became the doctrinal foundation for the reforms in the causes of the saints which Pope John Paul II was to effect in 1983. *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>123</sup>Paolo Molinari, "La storia del capitolo VII della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium'," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV Centenario, 118, 142-143; Otto Semmelroth, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7. The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, 280-284.

<sup>124</sup> Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union With the Heavenly Church 50, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 889; Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church 50, in The Documents of Vatican II, 81-82. See also Paolo Molinari, "La storia del capitolo VII della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium'," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 121-127, 142-143; Luigi Bogliolo, "L'influsso della glorificazione dei servi di Dio nella spiritualità," in *Ibid.*, 244-245. On the mystical body of Christ, see Henri du Lubac, Corpus Mysticum: L'eucharistie et l'Église au Moyen Âge, 2d ed. (Paris: Aubier Éditions Montaigne, 1949); Brunero Gherardini, La Chiesa arca dell'Alleanza: La sua genesi, il suo paradosso, i suoi poteri, il suo servizio (Rome: Pontificia Università Lateranense Città Nuova Editrice, 1978), 163-180, 190-197.

<sup>125</sup>It was declared at the sixth session of the ecumenical Council of Florence, held on July 6, 1439, that "if truly penitent people die in the love of God before they have made satisfaction for acts and omissions by worthy fruits of repentance, their souls are cleansed after death by cleansing pains; and the suffrages of the living faithful avail them in giving relief from such pains, that is, sacrifices of masses, prayers, almsgiving and other acts of devotion which have been customarily performed by some of the faithful for others of the faithful in accordance with the church's ordinances." Council of Florence, Session 6, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 1, 527.

recognized by popes), who intercede on behalf of the living members of the Church.<sup>126</sup> Thus, Paolo Molinari emphasizes that chapter seven of the dogmatic constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, not only functions pastorally by defending and reaffirming the proper cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints, but it contributes to the concept of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, in which the saints act both as models for imitation and as concerned intercessors.<sup>127</sup>

It is notable that martyrdom is singled out, in the dogmatic constitution on the Church, as "the highest gift and the supreme proof of love," without denigrating the display of virtues done to a heroic degree by nonmartyr saints throughout their lives. The document emphasizes that, while few Christians in fact ever have their faith tested like martyrs, all must be prepared and willing to imitate the genuine martyrs when they find themselves facing a persecutor. Thus, the martyr remains a model for all Christians, according to Vatican II.<sup>128</sup>

The Vatican documents also warn against any "abuses, excesses or deficiencies that may have crept in here and there."<sup>129</sup> Given that the invocation of saints is a difficult issue for ecumenical dialogue,

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<sup>126</sup> Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union With the Heavenly Church 50-51, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 889-891; Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church 50-51, in The Documents of Vatican II, 81-85. See also Pope Pius XII, Mystici Corporis Christi: Encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ, June 29, 1943, in The Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, 37-63; Pietro Palazzini, "Prefazione," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 10. Molinari notes that this dogmatic constitution recognizes the "Church Triumphant"—that is, the members of the Church who are in heaven—as being constituted by the many deceased Christians whose saintliness has not been formally acknowledged, as well as the deceased who have been formally authenticated as martyrs and nonmartyr saints by the Roman Catholic Church. Paolo Molinari, "La storia della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen gentium'," in Ibid., 134, 143.

<sup>127</sup> Paolo Molinari, "La storia della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium'," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 158.

<sup>128</sup> Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 5, The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church 42, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 883; Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 5, The Call of the Whole Church to Holiness 42, in The Documents of Vatican II, 71; Friedrich Wulf, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 5, The Call of the Whole Church to Holiness 42, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, 271. See also Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 2, The People of God 15 and Chapter 7, The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union with the Heavenly Church 50, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 861, 889-891; Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 34-35; Mercedes C. Pérez Tejera, Elementos constitutivos del concepto teológico-canónico del martirio, 16-17; Brunero Gherardini, "Il martirio nella moderna prospettiva teologica," Divinitas 36 (1982): 28-30.

<sup>129</sup> Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union With the Heavenly Church 50-51, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 891; Lumen Gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter

Semmelroth believes it is noteworthy that the documents warn equally against zealously exaggerated practices and shameful neglect in regard to the cult of saints. Instead of calling on the saints as an alternative to praying to God, the Vatican documents emphasize that the living believers, together in the company of the saints whom they invoke (as seen in the model of the Mystical Body), should worship God alone.<sup>130</sup>

While Vatican II reinforces the long acknowledged roles of both martyrs and nonmartyr saints, a further warning is added that the commemoration of the saints, by means of celebrating their feast days, should not overshadow the feast days which are essential to the celebration of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Most saints' feasts therefore should be celebrated solely by a local church, an individual church, or a religious order. Only saints who are important to the whole Roman Catholic Church should be celebrated universally.<sup>131</sup> While the concern with an inordinate focus on saints is clearly at issue in the chapter, The Liturgical Year, of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, until Pope Paul VI issued the document, *Mysterii paschalis*, on February 14, 1969, thereby approving the general norms for the liturgical year and the new General Roman Calendar, it was unclear whether this chapter referred equally to "popular", "episcopal", and papal canonizations.<sup>132</sup> This document, together with the new Roman Missal of 1969, however, clearly demonstrate that many of the martyrs and nonmartyr saints who have been papally canonized, and thus who have had a universal public ecclesiastical cult ordered, are not part of the new

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7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church 51, in The Documents of Vatican II, 84-85.

<sup>130</sup> Second Vatican Council, Session 5, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union With the Heavenly Church 51, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 891; Lumen gentium: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union With the Heavenly Church 51, in The Documents of Vatican II, 84; Otto Semmelroth, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 7, The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and her Union With the Heavenly Church 50-51, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, 284.

<sup>131</sup> Second Vatican Council, Session 3, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 111, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 839; Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 111, in The Documents of Vatican II, 170.

<sup>132</sup>For example, Jungmann, writing before the publication of the Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II in 1967, suggested that this article of The Liturgical Year specifically aims to limit appropriately the cults predating papal canonization, and thereby, also predating the popes' orders for universal public ecclesiastical cults. Josef Andreas Jungmann, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Chapter 5, The Liturgical Year 111, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 1, 74-75.



General Roman Calendar (1969). Their feasts are only to be celebrated locally.<sup>133</sup> At the same time, the new General Roman Calendar recognizes the universal significance of some of the most celebrated saints (e.g., the apostles and the earliest martyrs), who were only popularly "canonized", though their sanctity has been subsequently confirmed by popes numerous times. Of course, new saints continue to be canonized, but the new Calendar aims to thwart the long acknowledged danger that too many saints' feasts may crowd out the feasts related to the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the liturgical year.<sup>134</sup> The chapter, The Liturgical Year and the new General Roman Calendar (together with the new Roman Missal), however, do present some new ambiguities in regard to the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints. For example, it is not clear how a cult that is geographically limited in practice (because the saint is not important to the whole Church) differs from the papally ordered limited cult of a blessed. This may suggest that some papally canonized saints ought only to have been beatified. Another possibility is that beatification itself could one day be judged obsolete.<sup>135</sup>

As was aforementioned, the cult of saints was also an issue in Vatican documents concerned with ecumenical dialogue. Thus, the veneration of saints was emphasized as shared doctrine between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Churches.<sup>136</sup> One commentator, Johannes Feiner, upon reflecting on a statement in the Decree of Ecumenism that the Roman Catholic Church possesses a "hierarchy" of truths,<sup>137</sup> includes

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<sup>133</sup>Pope Paul VI, Motu Proprio *Mysterii paschalis*, in International Commission on English in the Liturgy, Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts, trans. Thomas C. O'Brien. (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1982), 1152-1154.

<sup>134</sup>Pelagio Visentin, "Formazione e sviluppo del Santorale nell'anno liturgico," in Rivista Liturgica 65 (1978): 315-316.

<sup>135</sup>Veraja makes the point that, with the promulgation of the Calendar of the Universal Church in 1969, canonization does not provide privileges that notably exceed those derived from beatification because few new saints will be venerated throughout the Roman Catholic Church. Thus he doubts the continued existence of the institution of beatification. Fabijan Veraja, La beatificazione, 111.

<sup>136</sup>In regard to the special bond between the Eastern Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican documents note the "many...saints whose praise they [the Eastern Churches] sing, among them the fathers of the universal church." Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, Chapter 3, Churches and Ecclesial Communities Separated From the Roman Apostolic See, The Special Position of the Eastern Churches 15, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 917; Decree on Ecumenism, Chapter 3, Churches and Ecclesial Communities Separated From the Roman Apostolic See, The Special Position of the Eastern Churches 15, in The Documents of Vatican II, 358-359; Johannes Feiner, "Decree on Ecumenism: Commentary on the Decree," in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 2 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 133. See also Paolo Molinari, "La storia della costituzione dogmatica 'Lumen Gentium'," in Miscellanea in occasione del IV centenario, 131.

<sup>137</sup>"In ecumenical dialogue, when catholic theologians join with other Christians in common study of the divine mysteries, while standing by the teaching of the church, they should pursue the work with love for the truth, with charity, and with humility. When comparing doctrines with one another, they should

the veneration of saints among the secondary or tertiary truths that should not unnecessarily obstruct ecumenical dialogue.<sup>138</sup> It should be noted, however, that secondary or tertiary truths are not disposable. Although they are not primary truths, they are not intended to be denigrated.

### 3. The New Roman Missal (1969), The New Universal Catechism (1992), and the Papal Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* (1993):

On April 3, 1969, Pope Paul VI approved the new Roman Missal. This revision was ordered in the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy, at the third session of Vatican II, on December 4, 1963. This new Missal is the successor to the Roman Missal of the Council of Trent, promulgated in 1570.<sup>139</sup> The new Missal established the new Order of the Mass.<sup>140</sup> With the promulgation, the single eucharistic prayer of the Tridentine Missal, the Roman Canon, was renamed Eucharistic Prayer I, and three other eucharistic prayers were added to the Mass. Thus what has already been said about the *Communicantes* and the *Nobis quoque* holds true for Eucharistic Prayer I in the new Mass in regard to the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr

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remember that in catholic doctrine there exists an order or 'hierarchy' of truths, since they vary in their connection with the foundation of the christian faith. Thus the way will be opened for this kind of friendly emulation to incite all to a deeper awareness and a clearer manifestation of the unfathomable riches of Christ." Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, Chapter 2, The Practice of Ecumenism 11, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 914-915; Decree on Ecumenism Chapter 2, The Practice of Ecumenism 11, in The Documents of Vatican II, 354.

<sup>138</sup>Johannes Feiner, Decree on Ecumenism, Chapter 2, The Practice of Ecumenism 11, in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. 2, 118. According to Feiner, the hierarchy is determined by "closeness to the mystery of Christ, which of course includes the mystery of the Trinity. The statements of faith which are direct utterances upon the foundation...of the Christian faith, always possess the first rank in the 'hierarchy' of truths." *Ibid.*, 119. Thus the cult of saints and relics ought not to be included among the primary truths of the Christian faith.

<sup>139</sup>"There is to be a revision of the way the mass is structured, so that the specific ideas behind the individual parts and their connection with one another can be more clearly apparent, and so that it becomes easier for people to take a proper and active part.

Therefore the rites, in a way that carefully preserves what really matters, should become simpler. Duplications which have come in over the course of time should be discontinued, as should the less useful accretions. Some elements which have degenerated or disappeared through the ill effects of the passage of time are to be restored to the ancient pattern of the fathers, insofar as seems appropriate or necessary." Second Vatican Council, Session 3, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy 50, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 830-831.

<sup>140</sup>Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum*, in Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979, 458-461; Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution: Promulgation of the Roman Missal Revised By Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, in The Sacramentary, ed. National Liturgical Office (Ottawa, Canada: Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974), 7-9. See also J.B. O'Connell, "The General Instruction of the Roman Missal," The Clergy Review, new series, 54 (October 1969): 817-821; J.B. O'Connell, "The Normative Mass," The Clergy Review, new series, 54 (November 1969): 884-894.

saints: there is the notion that some members of the Church (Mary, the apostles, the martyrs, and the nonmartyr saints) are already in heaven, where they pray to God for the protection of the living members of the Church. At the same time, the saints are commemorated. Moreover, the living members of the Church express their humble acknowledgement of their sinfulness, and they petition God that he may grant the forgiveness of their sins so that they may be admitted into the company of the heavenly members of the Church.<sup>141</sup> Eucharistic Prayer II emphasizes, too, the notion that the living and the dead together constitute one Church community that praises God. As well, the heavenly place of Mary, the apostles, and the martyrs is again confirmed.<sup>142</sup> Like the Roman Canon, Eucharistic Prayer III praises the constant intercession of the apostles, martyrs, and saints.<sup>143</sup> Finally, in Eucharistic Prayer IV, like in Eucharistic Prayer II and Eucharistic Prayer I, the shared community between the living and the dead, and the heavenly location of Mary, the apostles and the saints, are once more affirmed.<sup>144</sup> Common to all four eucharistic prayers is the belief that people need to receive the unmerited and merciful grace of God in order to enter into heaven.

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<sup>141</sup>"In Union with the whole Church we honor Mary, the ever-virgin mother of Jesus Christ our Lord and God. We honor Joseph, her husband, the apostles and martyrs Peter and Paul, Andrew, (James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude; we honor Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian) and all the saints. May their merits and prayers gain us your constant help and protection. (Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)" Eucharistic Prayer I, in The Sacramentary, 589. "For ourselves, too, we ask some share in the fellowship of your apostles and martyrs, with John the Baptist, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, (Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicity, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia) and all the saints. Though we are sinners, we trust in your mercy and love. Do not consider what we truly deserve, but grant us your forgiveness." *Ibid.*, 594. See also Joseph Lecuyer, "Documentation: The New Ordo Missae," The American Ecclesiastical Review 161 (1969), 53.

<sup>142</sup>"Remember our brothers and sisters who have gone to their rest in the hope of rising again; bring them and all the departed into the light of your presence. Have mercy on us all; make us worthy to share eternal life with Mary, the virgin mother of God, with the apostles, and with the saints who have done your will throughout the ages. May we praise you in union with them, and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ." Eucharistic Prayer II, in The Sacramentary, 601.

<sup>143</sup>"May he make us an everlasting gift to you and enable us to share in the inheritance of your saints, with Mary, the virgin Mother of God; with the apostles, the martyrs, (Saint N.--the saint of the day or the patron saint) and all your saints, on whose constant intercession we rely for help." Eucharistic Prayer III, in The Sacramentary, 607.

<sup>144</sup>"Father, in your mercy grant also to us, your children, to enter into our heavenly inheritance in the company of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, and your apostles and saints. Then, in your kingdom, freed from the corruption of sin and death, we shall sing your glory with every creature through Christ our Lord, through whom you give us everything that is good." Eucharistic Prayer IV, in The Sacramentary, 615. See also Frederick R. McManus, "The New Order of the Mass: Part IV," The American Ecclesiastical Review 162 (1970): 189-190.

On October 11, 1992, Pope John Paul II declared that the Catechism of the Catholic Church is to be the "sure norm for the faith and thus a valid and legitimate instrument for ecclesial communion."<sup>145</sup> It is to be used by the whole Roman Catholic Church as the source for the "essential elements that [are] to be considered as conditions for admission to baptism and the communal life of Christians," and thus it is the successor to the Catechism of the Council of Trent (1566).<sup>146</sup> This new catechism reaffirms martyrdom as the "supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness even unto death."<sup>147</sup> Examples of authentic martyrdom are cited from Ignatius of Antioch's Letter to the Romans and the account of Polycarp's martyrdom.<sup>148</sup> (Both were already studied in chapter one.) It is notable, however, that the continuing occurrence of martyrdom during various time periods and in many lands is not emphasized. Examples are thus not drawn from the histories of the more recently papally beatified and canonized martyrs from Japan, Mexico, and Nazi Germany.

The new catechism also treats the saints as a general topic. Martyrs and nonmartyr saints are therefore considered at the same time as a single group. The lives of the saints are underscored as evident occasions for witnessing the actions of the Holy Spirit: "we know the Holy Spirit...in the witness of saints through whom he manifests his holiness and continues the work of salvation."<sup>149</sup> Moreover, the two roles

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<sup>145</sup>Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution "Fidei depositum" on the Publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church Prepared Following the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, in Catechism of the Catholic Church (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992; English translation, Ottawa, Canada: Publications Service, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1994), 8. Pope John Paul II approved of the catechism on June 25, 1992. Pope John Paul II, "Universal Catechism Approved: Address of Pope John Paul II on His Official Approval of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (June 25, 1992)," The Pope Speaks 37 (November-December 1992): 321-322. For the making of the new catechism, see Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the Optimism of the Redeemed," trans. Cyprian Blamires, Communio 20 (Fall 1993): 469-484; Archbishop William Levada, "Catechism for the Universal Church," Origins 19 (8 March 1990): 648-651.

<sup>146</sup>Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the Optimism of the Redeemed," trans. Cyprian Blamires, Communio 20 (Fall 1993), 479. It is notable that, according to Ratzinger, "it was not the job of the catechism to become involved in theological debate. It had to presuppose the great fundamental decisions of the faith." *Ibid.*, 483. See also "Universal Catechism Published in French," The Tablet 246 (21 November 1992), 1480; Bishop Edward Hughes, "Report on the Universal Catechism," Origins 22 (26 November 1992), 408-409; "Il 'Catechismo della Chiesa Cattolica'," in La Civiltà Cattolica 144 (1993), 3-13.

<sup>147</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 2473, 500. "The martyr bears witness to Christ who died and rose, to whom he is united by charity. He bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine. He endures death through the act of fortitude." *Ibid.* 2473, 500.

<sup>148</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 2474, 500.

<sup>149</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 688, 152-153.

of the saints as models and as intercessors are reaffirmed.<sup>150</sup> The catechism also reaffirms the three "states" of the Church: the members of the Church who are presently living on earth, the deceased members who are being purified in Purgatory, and finally the deceased members, such as martyrs and nonmartyr saints, who are already in heaven.<sup>151</sup> Thus the catechism teaches that the saints' "most exalted service to God's plan" is to intercede continually with God for the living members of the Church.<sup>152</sup> In fact, the living members are exhorted in the catechism to invoke the saints for their intercession on behalf of both the individual petitioner and the whole world.<sup>153</sup>

Martyrdom is a principal theme in the papal encyclical, Veritatis Splendor, signed August 6, 1993, but released October 5, 1993. In this encyclical, Pope John Paul II addresses issues related to the foundations of moral theology. The encyclical emphasizes that certain acts are always and in every case forbidden because they contravene moral norms based in natural law.<sup>154</sup> These are inviolable norms which human reason can discern. Thus they should be used when making moral judgments.<sup>155</sup> Examples of

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<sup>150</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 828, 282; 957, 306; 1717, 368; 2030, 419; 2156, 444; 2683-2684, 544.

<sup>151</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 954, 205; 1030-1032, 221.

<sup>152</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 956, 206; 2683, 544.

<sup>153</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church 2683, 544.

<sup>154</sup>Natural law signifies "nothing other than the light of understanding infused in us by God, whereby we understand what must be done and what must be avoided. God gave this light and this law to man at creation." Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 12, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor Addressed by the Supreme Pontiff Pope John Paul II to All the Bishops of the Catholic Church Regarding Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Moral Teaching (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993; English translation, Ottawa, Canada: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1993), 20; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 12, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 302. See also Peter Hebblethwaite, "Encyclical Nails Objective Right and Wrong: Roles of Theologians, Conscience Shrivels," National Catholic Reporter 29 (1 October 1993): 9; Germain Grisez, "Revelation Versus Dissent," The Tablet 247 (16 October 1993): 3; Nicholas Lash, "Teaching in Crisis," The Tablet 247 (13 November 1993): 1480; Maciej Zieba, "Truth and Freedom in the Thought of Pope John Paul," The Tablet 247 (20 November 1993): 1511; Mary Tuck, "A Message in Season," The Tablet 247 (4 December 1993): 1583; Sergio Bastianel, "L'enciclica sulla morale: 'Veritatis Splendor'," in La Civiltà Cattolica 144 (1993): 213-214.

<sup>155</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 78, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 120; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 78, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 321. Thus, John Paul II rejects "both ethical relativism and agnosticism about the moral good." Pope John Paul II, "Ad Limina Address: Reflections on the New Encyclical" 6, Origins 23 (28 October 1993): 361. See also Peter Hebblethwaite, "Encyclical Nails Objective Right and Wrong," National Catholic Reporter 29 (1 October 1993): 8; Archbishop John Quinn, "Perspectives on 'Veritatis Splendor'," Origins 23 (11 November 1993): 398; "Veritatis Splendor," Commonweal 120 (22 October 1993): 3; Richard A. McCormick, "Veritatis Splendor and Moral Theology," America 169 (30 October 1993): 8-11; Gerard J. Hughes, "Veritatis Splendor: The Issues," The Month, second series, 26 (November 1993): 434.

prohibited acts, taken from Gaudium et spes 27 (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today), of the Vatican II documents, include homicide, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, voluntary suicide, mutilations, physical and mental torture, attempts to coerce the spirit, subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, trafficking in women and children, and degrading conditions of work.<sup>156</sup> The encyclical emphasizes that no one is obliged to do any of these prohibited actions, "especially if he is prepared to obey God rather than do evil."<sup>157</sup> Thus Christians ought to be prepared to "obey God rather than man...and accept even martyrdom as a consequence...rather than perform this or that particular act contrary to faith or virtue."<sup>158</sup>

According to the encyclical, Veritatis Splendor, it is by putting their faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that Christians are freed from adhering to worldly prescriptions to commit morally evil acts. In this way they may have the "strength to endure martyrdom" and thereby imitate Jesus

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<sup>156</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 80, 123, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 123; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 321. See Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today, Part 1, Chapter 1, The Dignity of the Human Person 27, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, 1085-1086. See also Archbishop John Quinn, "Perspectives on 'Veritatis Splendor'," Origins 23 (11 November 1993): 398-399. Some authors challenge this list of absolutely evil acts on the grounds that all of these acts have not been consistently prohibited. For example, sometimes wars have been considered just, and slavery was at least tolerated until two hundred years ago. See the following: Richard A. McCormick, "Document Begs Many Legitimate Moral Questions," National Catholic Reporter 29 (15 October 1993): 17; Bernhard Häring, "A Distrust that Wounds," The Tablet 247 (23 October 1993): 1378; Nicholas Lash, "Teaching in Crisis," The Tablet 247 (13 November 1993): 1480-1481; Mary Tuck, "A Message in Season," The Tablet 247 (4 December 1993): 1584. See also Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Accent on the Masculine," The Tablet 247 (11 December 1993): 1618-1619.

<sup>157</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 52, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 83; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 52, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 314.

<sup>158</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 76, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 118; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 76, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 320. John Paul II emphasizes the continuing occurrence of martyrdom throughout time and even in the present church. Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 90, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 137; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 90, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 324. "The church proposes the example of numerous saints who bore witness to and defended moral truth even to the point of enduring martyrdom or who preferred death to a single mortal sin." Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 91; 94, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 139; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 91, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 324. John Paul II cites examples of non-Christians, such as Juvenal and the Stoics, for further evidence that certain morally evil acts are universally recognized and thus, must be consistently and steadfastly opposed to the point of death: "The voice of conscience has always clearly recalled that there are truths and moral values for which one must be prepared to give up one's life." Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 94, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 142; Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 94, Origins 23 (14 October 1993): 325. See also Anthony Meredith "Reflections on Veritatis Splendor," The Month, second series, 26 (November 1993): 431; Sergio Bastianel, "L'enciclica sulla morale: 'Veritatis Splendor'," in La Civiltà Cattolica 144 (1993): 217-218.

Christ's crucifixion.<sup>159</sup> Thus, John Paul II decries the tendency to perform morally evil acts when faced by an exceptional circumstance or situation.<sup>160</sup> The martyrs are used as examples of Christians who underscore the inviolability of God's law. Their decisions to die are lauded as a warning to all other Christians against "the most dangerous crisis which can affect man: the confusion between good and evil, which makes it impossible to build up and to preserve the moral order of individuals and communities."<sup>161</sup> The encyclical proclaims that, while relatively few Christians are in fact confronted by situations demanding them to die as martyrs so as to avert committing morally evil acts, all Christians ought to prepare themselves for such a scenario.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>159</sup>Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 87, 89, in *Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor*, 132, 136; Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 87, 89, *Origins* 23 (14 October 1993): 323, 324. Furthermore, according to the encyclical, while maintaining God's law to the point of permitting oneself to die may be very difficult, it is never impossible. Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 52, 102, in *Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor*, 83, 153; Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 52, 102, *Origins* 23 (14 October 1993): 314, 327. Thus those persons are chastised who try to present their own "weakness [as] the criterion of the truth about the good, so that [they] can feel self-justified, without even the need to have recourse to God and his mercy." Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 104, in *Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor*, 155; Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 104, *Origins* 23 (14 October 1993): 327.

<sup>160</sup>"Martyrdom rejects as false and illusory whatever 'human meaning' one might claim to attribute, even in 'exceptional' conditions, to an act morally evil in itself." Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 92, 104, in *Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor*, 140, 155; Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 92, 104, *Origins* 23 (14 October 1993): 324, 327.

<sup>161</sup>Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 93, in *Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor*, 141; Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 93, *Origins* 23 (14 October 1993): 325.

<sup>162</sup>Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 93-94, in *Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor*, 141-142; Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* 93-94, *Origins* 23 (14 October 1993), 325. See also "The Pope Rides Out to Battle," *The Tablet* 247 (9 October 1993), 1283. The editor of *Commonweal* presents two criticisms of Pope John Paul II's commendation of martyrdom instead of violating God's law: (1) Christians may give up their lives unnecessarily or for bad causes: "It is dangerous to take the fact of persecution as confirmation of being right. Moral absolutes may demand martyrdom, but martyrdom does not necessarily demonstrate moral absolutes."; (2) martyrdom should be freely chosen (as Pope Benedict XIV insisted): Martyrdom "should not be sought out. It should not be imposed or induced. It is a gift of God and not a tool of church order." "Veritatis Splendor," *Commonweal* 120 (22 October 1993), 4. (On the other hand, in regard to the encyclical's theology of martyrdom, Zieba believes that "the Church, conscious that loyalty to the truth often demands heroism, does not impose truth but rather proposes it to human beings." Maciej Zieba, "Truth and Freedom in the Thought of Pope John Paul," *The Tablet* 247 (20 October 1993), 1512.) The important question, then, is whether Pope John Paul II, in the encyclical, coerces Roman Catholics into seeking martyrdom against their will so as to maintain Church order. On the question of coercion, it does not seem that John Paul II demands more than previous popes, bishops or theologians. Since the Early Church, certain acts have been prohibited, and Christians have been expected to die willingly rather than do them (e.g., the sacrifice test or publicly disavowing their faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ); otherwise they were judged to be apostates. Of course, the list of specifically forbidden acts ought to be scrutinized to determine the authority according to which or whom they have been prohibited. On the other hand, does the person who dies truly imitate Jesus Christ's crucifixion by refusing to do the acts

Summary:

It is clear that, in spite of the criticisms levelled against the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and their relics by Roman Catholics, by the people whom they have designated as heretics, and by the Reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, the traditional cult has maintained an important place in the Roman Catholic Church from the Council of Trent up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. The two roles played by the saints, as standards for imitation and as concerned heavenly intercessors on behalf of the living members of the Church, have been consistently confirmed in the documents of three ecumenical councils, numerous papal encyclicals, two universal catechisms, the eucharistic prayers of two nearly universal Roman missals, and two Codes of Canon Law. Moreover, it is significant that there has continued to be a great demand for local bishops, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, and popes to consider the causes of canonization of Servants of God who have been the objects of many new instances of spontaneously popular judgments that genuine martyrdom has occurred. This demonstrates that the martyr has maintained an important place in the Roman Catholic Church as a model of how one should act when confronted by a person or group that is perceived as a persecutor who hates the Christian faith itself, as it is expressed by Roman Catholic Church, or the virtues espoused by the faith. It will become clear in the second part of the present study that the theme of martyrdom is notably central in the writings of many Latin Americans today. The place of persecution and martyrdom in the writings of one of these authors, Gustavo Gutiérrez, is the principal subject matter of chapters five to eight, though many other Latin American authors, such as Jon Sobrino, Ignacio Ellacuría, Enrique Dussel, and Leonardo Boff, have also reflected theologically on this theme a great deal. Gustavo Gutiérrez is the Peruvian theologian who first formulated the methodology of the theology of liberation in July, 1968. The objective of chapters five to seven, then, is to trace the evolution of Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom in his pre-liberation theology and in his theology of liberation writings. His writings give evidence of his theological reflections, first, on the experiences of many Christians who have been killed in contemporary Latin America, especially since 1968, for committing themselves to what they believed are the interests of the poor and, second, on the reactions of many people who have witnessed these deaths. According to Gutiérrez, these Christians have been killed after denouncing injustices which they judged to be contrary to the will

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deemed to be wrong always and in every case? If so, this would be genuine martyrdom; indeed, John Paul II seems to suggest quite clearly that a person who dies instead of committing homicide, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, etc. (as enumerated above), would be genuine martyrs, and thus would be eligible for canonization. The editor's warning that the call to martyrdom not be used as a tool of Church order seems to question the appropriateness of designating all of these acts absolutely forbidden. It is unclear, however, which of these acts should not be absolutely prohibited, according to the editor. Does the editor believe that Pope John Paul II uses the absolute prohibition of certain acts which should not be forbidden absolutely so as to maintain a specific manifestation or even his vision of Church order?



of God (as expressed in the Bible), proclaiming a certain view of the Kingdom of God, which God promises will fully arrive at the end of history, and trying to help effect the transformation of both people (via conversion) and the structures of unjust social systems so that they may first attend to the needs of the poorest members of society. Chapter eight, which is the final chapter of the study, is devoted to an evaluation of the points of continuity between Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom and the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church and how his understanding differs from the traditional view and thereby contributes to a reinterpretation of it.

## PART TWO

### GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ'S CONCEPT OF PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM

The objective of this second part of the study is to determine how Gustavo Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom is continuous with the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church, and the ways in which his view of martyrdom contributes to the re-evaluation and reinterpretation of this traditional concept of martyrdom. A study of Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom should prove to be valuable because he is conspicuous as an unofficial spokesman for all those Latin American theologians who engage themselves in the methodology of a theology of liberation, as well as all those people, who are not professional theologians, but whose views Gutiérrez's works represent. In short, his theology of liberation is often treated as if it were synonymous with Latin American liberation theology, and his name, more than that of any other theologian, is most commonly associated with the methodology itself. He has frequently been called the "father" of liberation theology. Furthermore, the theme of martyrdom does constitute an important aspect of Gutiérrez's whole body of theological work, yet, it does not seem that the chronological evolution of his concept of martyrdom has been systematically examined in great detail. The present study is an attempt to contribute to the massive body of work that has been devoted to analyzing Gustavo Gutiérrez's theology of liberation, as well as to the still larger field concerned with the concept of authenticated martyrdom that prevails in the Roman Catholic Church, especially in the post-Vatican II church.

Gustavo Gutiérrez was born on June 8, 1928 in Lima, Peru.<sup>1</sup> He grew up in what he has called a "rather poor family." He reminisces, "when I began to come into contact with this Christian message that spoke of poverty, it felt very important."<sup>2</sup> His father was a poor urban worker, his mother had not gone to

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<sup>1</sup>In an interview, originally given in 1984 in the Lima daily newspaper, La República, Gutiérrez recalled that "I was born on Arco Street in the old part of Lima. Then we moved to Rímac and finally to Barranco [an older district just outside metropolitan Lima]." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 177, 10 May 1984): 5 (originally published in Spanish in La República [Lima, Peru] [20 April 1984]). See also Robert McAfee Brown, Gustavo Gutiérrez: An Introduction to Liberation Theology (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1990), 24.

<sup>2</sup>Furthermore, he explains: "To have belonged to this social milieu is important for me because I have known poverty directly by my own experience. Poverty is familiar to me--and very important in my thinking." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Opting for the Poor," interview by Kathleen Hayes, The Other Side 23 (November 1987): 12. In 1984, Gutiérrez opined that "I believe that an important aspect of my childhood were certain economic difficulties my family had which were quite serious at the time. [The interviewer's

school, and he grew up with two sisters.<sup>3</sup> Gutiérrez has also shared with the public the pains and joys that he experienced during his adolescence, when he suffered from an illness for six years, but at the same time developed a strong Christian faith, became a voracious reader, and formed lifelong friendships.<sup>4</sup> Shortly after the death of his mother in 1984, he spoke in an interview with the Lima daily newspaper, La República, of their special relationship and the influence of her firm, but simple Christian faith on him.<sup>5</sup> After graduating from the *colegio secundario* (i.e., high school), over the course of four and a half years, Gutiérrez simultaneously studied medicine (with the goal of becoming a psychiatrist) in the Facultad de Medicina at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, and philosophy at the Universidad

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question:] As serious as those of so many people who don't have enough to eat? [Gutiérrez's response] Yes, that serious. But only for relatively short periods of time." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 177, 10 May 1984): 5.

<sup>3</sup>Curt Cadorette, From the Heart of the People: The Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Oak Park, Ill.: Meyer-Stone Books, 1988), 2.

<sup>4</sup>"I was bedridden and in a wheelchair for six years, between the ages of 12 and 18. It was a rich period for me because of the tenderness and care my family gave me and on account of the intense friendships that I developed with many of my schoolmates and neighbors. During the years I was sick, my house became a regular center for meetings, conversations, games. I developed a real passion for chess and one of my frustrations as an adult is not having time to play. It was also a time when I developed my sense of faith. It is said that suffering brings maturity, and perhaps that is what I went through in those years.... Yes, there was physical pain, although I must say that the strong bonds of friendship that I formed in those years compensated greatly for my physical limitations. Friendships I still count on...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 177, 10 May 1984): 5. Gutiérrez suffered from osteomyelitis, which has left him with a permanent limp. He recalls, as well, the financial strain of his illness on his family. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Vamos a hablar de Vallejo: Entrevista a Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview by Carmen Pérez and Eduardo Urdanivia, Páginas 17, no. 114-115 (April-June 1992): 117. For another reference to Gutiérrez's illness an adolescent, see Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 22.

<sup>5</sup>"...there was always a very deep relationship between us. I wouldn't be saying anything new by calling that relationship irreplaceable. From her I learned the importance of simple, gratuitous love and the deep tenderness with which, in spite of everything, we must treat one another as fellow human beings.... I think her simple faith made me understand something that I later worked on theologically. That is, that the final basis for an option for the poor is found in the God I believe in. That conviction has led me to live a very deep spiritual experience—one that is not without its sorrow, but that is, in the last analysis, shot through with deep joy—a joy grounded in a firm faith in the Lord's resurrection." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Criticisms Will Deepen, Clarify' Liberation Theology," LADOC 15 (January-February 1985): 7. This was originally published in Spanish in La República (Lima) (14 September 1984). It was also reprinted in Spanish as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: Críticas profundizarán y clarificarán teología liberadora," Noticias Aliadas 2 (no. 35, 27 September 1984): 3-4.

Católica de Lima.<sup>6</sup> He was also a member of the Juventud Masculina de la Acción Católica Peruana (Male Youth of Peruvian Catholic Action). While a medical student at the Universidad Nacional de San Marcos, he was the president of the Centro Católico de Barranco (Catholic Center of Barranco).<sup>7</sup> He began to do preparatory studies for the priesthood in 1950. He studied philosophy at the Seminario Pontificio in Santiago, Chile for one semester during 1950.<sup>8</sup> Between 1951 and 1955, he studied philosophy, psychology, and theology at the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium, where he received a baccalaureate in philosophy and a licenciante in psychology. His thesis topic was "Le conflit psychique en Freud" [Psychic Conflict in Freud]. Among Gutiérrez's fellow students at Louvain were François Houtart, later, a very important sociologist of religion, and the Colombian, Camilo Torres Restrepo, who would later decide, in 1965, to leave the priesthood and join the Colombian guerilla group, Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN); in fact, Gutiérrez and Torres, who had come to Louvain in 1953 to study social sciences, became good friends.<sup>9</sup> Gutiérrez then studied theology from 1955 to 1959 in the Faculté de Sciences théologiques et canoniques at the Université de Lyon, France. There he received a licenciante in theology, with an unfinished thesis on religious liberty. Thereafter, Gutiérrez returned to Lima, where he was ordained a Roman Catholic

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<sup>6</sup>On March 19, 1992, Wilson Reátegui, the rector of the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, conferred an honorary doctorate on Gustavo Gutiérrez. On that occasion, Gutiérrez reminisced about the time he spent in premedical studies at the university. "San Marcos confiere Doctorado Honoris Causa a Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 17, no. 114-115 (June 1992): 155-166.

<sup>7</sup>Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú: Su historia social desde la Independencia (Lima, Peru: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1988), 324.

<sup>8</sup>Enrique Moreno, "Derecho del pueblo: Liberarse y pensar su fe," Pastoral Popular 30 (no. 1, 1979): 44.

<sup>9</sup>Torres was killed alongside his fellow guerrillas in 1966. For more information about Camilo Torres Restrepo (1929-1966), see the following works: Camilo Torres Restrepo, Obras escogidas (Montevideo, Uruguay: Provincias Unidas, 1968); Camilo Torres, Revolutionary Writings trans. Robert Olsen and Linda Day (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969); Germán Guzmán, Camilo Torres, trans. John D. Ring (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969); Richard Maullin, Soldiers, Guerrillas, and Politics in Colombia (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973), 46-48; María Eugenia Hernández-Hall, "La lucha del cura en Latinoamérica a través de la vida de Jorge Camilo Torres Restrepo" (M.A. Thesis, Arizona State University, 1974); Walter J. Broderick, Camilo Torres: A Biography of the Priest-Guerrillero (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, 1975); Roberto Loiveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología: Génesis y crecimiento de una reflexión (1966-1976) (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1977), 47-49, 65-68; John W. Hart, "Topia and Utopia in Colombia and Peru—The Theory and Practice of Camilo Torres and Gustavo Gutiérrez in Their Historical Contexts" (Ph.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1978); Charles Bergquist, Ricardo Peñaranda, and Gonzalo Sánchez, ed., Violence in Colombia: The Contemporary Crisis in Historical Perspective (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1992). Gutiérrez disagreed with Torres's decision to leave the priesthood and join the guerrillas. Walter Broderick, Camilo Torres, 257-258.

priest on January 6, 1959.<sup>10</sup> Soon after his ordination, Gutiérrez studied for one semester at the Pontificiale Università Gregoriana in Rome during 1959-1960.

Since 1960, Gutiérrez has spent a great deal of time doing pastoral work in Lima, especially in the neighborhood of Rímac, and he has been a parish priest there since 1981. He has also taught theology and the social sciences, "to students of the humanities and social sciences, never to students of theology," at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Lima (1960-1965)<sup>11</sup> and the Instituto de Pastoral Litúrgica de Medellín (Colombia). He has been a visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary (New York), Pacific School of Religion and at the Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley, Calif.), University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), Boston College, Maryknoll School of Theology (Maryknoll, N.Y.), and the Mexican-American Cultural Center (San Antonio, Tex.). He co-founded the Centro de Estudios Bartolomé de Las Casas (now called the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas-Rímac) in the Rímac neighborhood of Lima in 1975. He has also acted as a theological consultant for the journal, Páginas (published by the Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones in Lima), to which Gutiérrez has contributed numerous articles.<sup>12</sup> He has also been a member of the editorial board of the international journal, Concilium. After returning from Rome in 1960, he became the archdiocesan advisor of the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú (UNEC; the National Union

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<sup>10</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Opting for the Poor," interview by Kathleen Hayes, The Other Side 23 (November 1987): 12. For information about Gutiérrez's life before he was ordained in 1959 (though some of the exact chronological details are missing) by someone who had known him for nearly forty years by 1986, see the comments by the Bishop of Cajamarca, Peru: José Dammert Bellido, "Prólogo," in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones, Gustavo Gutiérrez (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1986), 1-3; José Dammert Bellido, "Monseñor José Dammert Bellido," in Teología y liberación: Perspectivas y desafíos. Ensayos en torno a la obra de Gustavo Gutiérrez (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1989), 37-40.

<sup>11</sup>"Enseñé teología en la Universidad Católica, a estudiantes de humanidades y de ciencias sociales, nunca a estudiantes de teología..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Paulinas, 1987), my translation, 71. In 1984, Gutiérrez reflected on the period when he taught at the Universidad Católica: "It seemed important to me to take up themes in my classes that would allow an examination of the meaning of human existence and the presence of God in the world in which my students lived. This led me to confront Christian faith with thinkers like Albert Camus, Karl Marx and others as well as film directors like Luis Buñuel and Ingmar Bergman and writers like [Peruvian novelist] José María Arguedas or poets like our Cesar Vallejo....I believe that dialogue of faith with contemporary thought, especially with thought that is critical of Christianity, is necessary and life-giving. I remember with great affection those years (1960-65) I spent at the University and the conversations with students such topics brought about." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 177, 10 May 1984): 6.

<sup>12</sup>The institute is located at the following address: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas-Rímac; Belisario Flores 687, Lima 14-Apartado 3090; Lima, Peru. The publisher is located at Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (CEP); Camilo Carrillo 479, Lima 11, Apdo. 11-0107; Lima, Peru.

of Catholic Students of Peru). He has been the national advisor for UNEC since later that same year, 1960.<sup>13</sup> He has also been a member, since its founding in 1968, of the national secretariat of the Oficina Nacional de Información Social (ONIS; the National Office of Social Information), a Peruvian priest movement that was working to effect social change;<sup>14</sup> an advisor for the Comunidades Eclesiales de Base en Perú (CEBAP; the Base Ecclesial Communities of Peru); an advisor of the doctrinal reflection unit of the Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (CELAM; the Latin American Bishops' Conference); a theological advisor at CELAM II, which met August 20 to September 6, 1968 at Medellín, Colombia; his influence is especially conspicuous in the conference document, "Paz" ("Peace");<sup>15</sup> and a member of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) since 1976. He also attended the fourth session of Vatican II during a period when he was working with Bishop Manuel Larraín of Talca, Chile, who was the president of CELAM at the time.<sup>16</sup> He received an honorary doctorate in theology from the Katholieke Universiteit te Nijmegen (Netherlands) on May 7, 1979,<sup>17</sup> and an honorary doctorate from the University

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<sup>13</sup>For more information about UNEC, which was founded in 1943 in Peru, see Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 326-328; Luis Pásara, Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana (Lima, Peru: Ediciones El Virrey, 1986), 39-44.

<sup>14</sup>For more information about ONIS, see Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 381-383; Luis Pásara, Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana, 45-50.

<sup>15</sup>"Paz," in Iglesia y liberación humana. Los documentos de Medellín. II Conferencia General del Episcopado Latino-americano, Colección "Tiempo de Concilio" (Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Nova Terra, 1969), 67-82. McAfee Brown, evaluating the sixteen documents of the conference, states that the "text of the most important one, the one on 'Peace,' was basically the work of a single priest who did the actual writing for the bishops dealing with that subject. The priest was Gustavo." Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 16. Klaiber, on the other hand, ascribes the authorship to Dom Hélder Câmara, José Gremillion, as well as Gutiérrez. Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 380.

<sup>16</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Review and Challenges," The Month (January 1995): 5. According to Gutiérrez, it was Bishop Larraín who "conceived the idea, toward the end of the [Vatican] Council, of a Latin American episcopal meeting in order to see our situation in the light of Vatican II. It was to take place two years later at Medellín," but, in the meantime, Bishop Larraín was killed in an automobile accident in June 22, 1966. "Don Manuel, a la sazón presidente del CELAM (don Helder Câmara era el vicepresidente), concibió la idea, hacia el final del Concilio, de una reunión episcopal latinoamericana para ver nuestra situación a la luz del Vaticano II. Ella tendrá lugar años después en Medellín." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana," my translation, Páginas 10, no. 70 (August 1985): 7. See also Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 379-380; Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 74.

<sup>17</sup>For biographical information about Gustavo Gutiérrez, see the following books, articles, interviews, and dissertations: Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino: Contours, Sources and Impact" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Methodist University, 1993), 33-38; "Conversación con Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview by Teófilo Cabestrero, in Conversaciones sobre la fe. Entrevistas con: Ladislaus Boros, Georges Casales, Joseph Comblin, Enrique D. Dussel, Segundo Galilea, Giulio Girardi, José M. González Ruiz, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hans Küng, Jürgen Moltmann, Karl Rahner, Joseph Ratzinger, Edward

of Tübingen (Germany) in 1985. On May 29, 1985, the Faculty of Theology at the Catholic Institute of Lyon, France awarded him a Doctorate in Theology for his successful defense of the following works: Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina (1970), Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (1971), Liberation and Change (1977), La fuerza histórica de los pobres (1979), El Dios de la vida (1982), Beber

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Schillebeeckx, Juan Luis Segundo, Jean-Marie Tillard, ed. Teófilo Cabestrero, Pedal 71 (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1977), 125 (See the English translation: "A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview by Teófilo Cabestrero, in Faith: Conversations with Contemporary Theologians, translated by Donald D. Walsh [Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1980], 95); Curt Cadorette, From the Heart of the People, 2, 67, 84; Rosino Gibellini, ed., "Gustavo Gutiérrez," in La nueva frontera de la teología en América Latina, (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1977), 286-287 (This was originally published in Italian as Rosino Gibellini, La nuova frontiera della teologia in America Latina [Brescia, Italy: Editrice Queriniana, 1975]. I have not been able to locate a copy of the original in North America. The citation from the English translation is as follows: Rosino Gibellini, ed., "Appendix I. Biographical and Bibliographical Data on the Contributors," in Frontiers of Theology in Latin America, John Drury [London, England: SCM Press, 1980], 311-313.); Luis Alberto Gómez de Souza, "La fuerza histórica de la reflexión de Gustavo Gutiérrez," in Teología y liberación: Perspectivas y desafíos, 73-77; Instituto Fe y Secularidad, "Reseña biográfica," in Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina: Encuentro de El Escorial, 1972 (Salamanca, Spain: Sígueme, 1973), 418; Peter Kendrick, "Christian Freedom and Liberation: A Biblical and Theological Critique of the Concept of Salvation in the Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez" (Diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 32-36; Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 324-325; Germán Le Baut, "Catequesis y teología de la liberación," in Reflexión sobre la teología de la liberación: Perspectivas desde el Perú, Gustavo Gutiérrez, José Luis Idigoras, et al. (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios Teológicos de la Amazonía, 1986), 216; Miguel Manzancra, Teología, salvación y liberación en la obra de Gustavo Gutiérrez. Exposición analítica, situación teórica-práctica y valoración crítica (Bilbao, Spain: Universidad de Deusto and Mensajero, 1978), 13; Lucas F. Mateo Seco, G. Gutiérrez, H. Assmann, R. Alves: Teología de la liberación, Colección Crítica Filosófica (Madrid, Spain: Editorial Magisterio Española, 1981), 37; Enrique Moreno, "Derecho del pueblo: Liberarse y pensar su fe," Pastoral Popular 30 (no. 1, 1979): 44; Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology: Gustavo Gutiérrez (Atlanta, Ga.: John Knox Press, 1980), 20-22, 28; Robert McAfee Brown, Gustavo Gutiérrez, 22-34; D.J. Molineaux, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Historical Origins," The Ecumenist 25 (no. 5, July-August 1987): 66; Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation: Gustavo Gutiérrez's Pilgrimage Towards Socialism" (Ph.D. diss. [Division of Religion], Emory University, 1985), 11-13; Tom Moylan, Rereading Religion: Ernst Bloch, Gustavo Gutierrez, and the Post-Modern Strategy of Liberation Theology (Milwaukee, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1986), 5-6; Jacques van Nieuwenhove, Bronnen van Bevrijding, 14-20; Odair Pedrosos Mateus, Razão da esperança: Utopia e classes populares na teologia de Gustavo Gutiérrez (São Paulo, Brazil: ASTE-Ciências da Religião, 1990), 85-87; Luis Peirano, "Entrevista con Gustavo Gutiérrez," Quehacer (March 1980): 116-117; Edward Schillebeeckx, "Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez recibe em Nimega o título de Doutor Honoris Causa," Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira 39, no. 155 (September 1979): 502-505; Paul E. Sigmund, Liberation Theology at the Crossroads: Democracy or Revolution? (New York and Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1990), 31-32; Christian Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory (Chicago, Ill. and London, England: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 154-155; Juan José Tamayo Acosta, La teología de la liberación (Madrid, Spain: Ediciones de Cultura Hispánica, 1990), 28; Sergio Torres, "Itinerario intelectual y espiritual de Gustavo Gutiérrez," in Teología y liberación: Escritura y espiritualidad. Ensayos en torno a la obra de Gustavo Gutiérrez (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1990), 202-204.

en su propio pozo: el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (1983), and many articles.<sup>18</sup>

Gustavo Gutiérrez publicly introduced the term, "*teología de la liberación*" ("theology of liberation"), during a lecture that he delivered at a conference sponsored by ONIS, the Segundo Encuentro de Sacerdotes y Laicos (Second Meeting of Priests and Laity). It gathered in Chimbote, Peru between July 22 and 25, 1968.<sup>19</sup> Gutiérrez has frequently reminisced that he formulated the principal features of his theology of liberation (hereafter, alternately called "liberation theology") between 1965 (which he has often emphasized was the year that represents the high point of violent revolution in Latin America) and 1968 due to the historical, social, and pastoral experiences (including the rise of base ecclesial communities) of Peruvians and Latin Americans during that time.<sup>20</sup> In retrospect, he believes that it was the end of Vatican

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<sup>18</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 2; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," in La verdad los hará libres, 9.

<sup>19</sup>"I believe it [liberation theology] arose in the 1960s, very rich and also very ambiguous years, years that were the springboard for many ideas and new directions in Latin America. We call one of them 'theology of liberation.' The term itself (although the term isn't the most important thing) was first used when I presented a paper at a pastoral meeting in Chimbote in July 1968, just before the Bishops' Conference in Medellín." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful,'" interview by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 5. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas CEP, 3 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1971), 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 71; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos: Introducción a la nueva edición," in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 14th rev. and enlarged ed., Verdad e Imagen, 120 (Salamanca, Spain: Sígueme, 1990), 17; "Entrevista al teólogo Gustavo Gutiérrez," Tierra Nueva 13-14, no. 52-53 (1985): 8 (originally published in Noticias Aliadas no. 18-19 [19-26 May 1983]: 5); Héctor Borrat, "Entre la proclama y los programas," Víspera 7, no. 30 (1973): 48; Rosino Gibellini, The Liberation Theology Debate, trans. John Bowden (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988), 2 (The original was published in Italian: Rosino Gibellini, Il Dibattito sulla Teologia della Liberazione [Brescia, Italy: Editrice Queriniana, 1986]. I have not been able to locate a copy of it in North America.); Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 41-43; Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 25; D.J. Molineaux, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Historical Origins," The Ecumenist 25 (no. 5, July-August 1987): 65, 68.

<sup>20</sup>At a seminar of four hundred pastoral agents in Quilmes, Argentina, which gathered March 2-9, 1986 at the meeting house, "Cura Brochero", Gutiérrez distinguished between his naming of a theology and his various experiences, especially pastoral experiences, of what many Latin American Christians had already been practicing, and which thereby inspired his articulation of the theology: "If the expression 'theology of liberation' is rightly awarded to me, the content was common in Christian groups who lived and reflected on the commitment to the poor. This which we call theology of liberation could have been named differently, but all the same it would have appeared...." "Si bien se me adjudica la expresión 'teología de la liberación', el término, el contenido era común en grupos cristianos que vivían y reflexionaban en el compromiso con los pobres. Esto que llamamos teología de la liberación podría haber sido llamado de otra forma, pero igual hubiera aparecido...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, my translation, 72. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: anunciar el Evangelio a los pobres, desde los pobres," Proceso no. 118 (February 1979): 10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: anunciar el Evangelio a los pobres, desde los pobres," Theologica Xaveriana 29, no. 50 (1979): 58; Gustavo Gutiérrez,



II that impelled him to develop another theology that would respond more directly to the problems of Latin America.<sup>21</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez contends that, ever since he was ordained in 1959, his primary task has been pastoral work, while teaching and writing theology have always been subordinate concerns.<sup>22</sup>

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"Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana," Páginas 10, no. 70 (August 1985): 8; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos: Introducción a la nueva edición," in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 14th rev. and enlarged ed., 31. At a lecture which he delivered at Regis College, Toronto, on March 22, 1983, the Uruguayan liberation theologian, Juan Luis Segundo, stated his belief that, indeed, liberation theology started much earlier than July, 1968: "Contrary to the most common assumptions, Latin American theology, without any precise title, began to have clear distinctive features at least ten years before Gustavo Gutiérrez's well known book *A Theology of Liberation*. This was a kind of baptism, but the baby had already been born.

The real beginning came simultaneously from many different theologians working in different countries and places in Latin America, even before the first session of Vatican II. In any case, these developments began some years before the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* in 1965, which, to a great extent, was used afterwards as an official support for the main views of this liberation theology." Juan Luis Segundo, "The Shift within Latin American Theology," Journal of Theology for Southern Africa no. 52 (September 1985): 17-18.

<sup>21</sup>In an interview in 1987, Gutiérrez recalled the origin of his theology of liberation: "I was not present for the conclusion of Vatican II. I was in Rome, but I preferred to stay in my room and listen by radio because it felt like a kind of contradiction for me. I was happy, but on the other hand it was not enough.

This moment was my starting point for many things, including the first seeds of liberation theology. Certainly at that moment I didn't have the exact idea of liberation theology in my mind, but I began to perceive this Western theology as not enough for the reality of my people." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Opting for the Poor," interview by Kathleen Hayes, The Other Side 23 (November 1987): 12. He reflected similarly and more fully on the same experience in a lecture during 1993: "I was invited to attend the closing ceremony, but did not feel like going. Instead, during those two days of December 7-8, 1965, I chose to make a retreat alone, and so that was the context in which I was lucky to hear on the radio one of Paul VI's finest addresses on the meaning of the Council. I found myself caught between mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was delighted with the results of the Council, for it reflected significantly the theology which I had studied and with which I identified. But on the other hand, I began to note a definite concern: the great challenges of the Latin American people had not found enough place in the Council.

The theme of poverty and the conflict-ridden situations gripping Latin America had scarcely been alluded to. Because of my studies in Europe my European side could be satisfied, but my Latin American side, more Indian or *mestizo*, remained at odds as if expecting something else. I clearly remember that those two days of spiritual experience, if you want to put a date on it, were when I began to take a certain distance from the theology which I had so fervently read and worked on until then. Having just done my first years of pastoral work, I had discovered in Latin America, particularly in my own country of Peru, a reality which had not been explicitly treated at the Council." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Review and Challenges," The Month (January 1995): 5. For a similar comment, see Pásara's interview with Gutiérrez in Luis Pásara, Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana, 51. Gutiérrez is a *mestizo*: he is part Quechuan. Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 21.

<sup>22</sup>He has made this comment many times over the years. See, for example: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: anunciar el Evangelio a los pobres, desde los pobres," Proceso no. 118 (February 1979): 10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: anunciar el Evangelio a los pobres, desde los pobres," Theologica Xaveriana 29, no. 50 (1979): 58. (Other examples will be supplied later.) See also Odair Pedroso Mateus, Razão da esperança, 87-89.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE EVOLUTION OF GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ'S CONCEPT OF PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM IN HIS PRE-THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION WRITINGS

The evolution of the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church, from the pre-Constantinian Church up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, was examined in chapters one to four, which constitute the first part of the present study. The objective of chapter five is to begin to analyze the chronological development of Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom, as well as the evolution of his theological reflections on some of the themes which he will thereafter associate with his concept of persecution and martyrdom (such as the mission that the Roman Catholic Church should have in the world, the relationship between charity and salvation, and the three biblical notions of poverty), by focusing on his pre-theology of liberation books, articles, and pamphlets. It is worthwhile to observe that Gutiérrez uses the word, "Iglesia" (i.e., "Church") to refer to the Roman Catholic Church, as well as to the pre-Constantinian Church. In the present study, "Church" is used as a synonym of the Roman Catholic Church. The expression, "pre-Constantinian Church" (and in that context, "Church"), is used whenever Christians during the pre-Constantinian era are discussed; this designation includes the Early Church in both the East and the West.

Gustavo Gutiérrez's works (many of them published but with limited distribution) which predate July, 1968 include the following books, mimeographed pamphlets, and articles: a first version of Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario [Mission of the Church and University Apostolate] from June, 1960, as well as a second version of it from a lecture in July, 1962;<sup>1</sup> "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con

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<sup>1</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario (Lima, Peru: UNEC, 1960). Robert Leroy Breckenridge also lists a similarly titled article in his bibliography. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Iglesia y apostolado universitario," 1960, Documents Collection, Centro de Bartolomé de Las Casas, Lima, Peru. Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 650. Both are reproductions of a lecture that Gutiérrez delivered to UNEC: the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú (National Union of Catholic Students in Peru) on June 26, 1960. They appear to be identical versions of the same work, but the former one was published by UNEC as a book in Lima, while the latter may be a mimeographed pamphlet. I have not yet been able to secure a copy of either the 1960 UNEC publication nor the version listed by Breckenridge. In the present study, a copy of Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, published in 1964, is used. It notes that the pamphlet is taken from a "talk given at the UNEC Training Conference, from June 26, 1960 and at the Latin America Meeting of PAX Romana--M.I.E.C., which took place July 20 to 25, 1962 at Montevideo, Uruguay." "Charla dada en al Jornada de Formación de UNEC, del 26 de junio de 1960 y en el Encuentro Latinoamericano de PAX Roamna--M.I.E.C., realizado del 20 al 25 de julio de 1962 en Montevideo, Uruguay." Gustavo Gutiérrez, my translation, Misión de la

el hombre en América Latina?" ["How to Establish Salvific Dialogue with Man in Latin America?"];<sup>2</sup> Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico [Charity and Human Love: Biblical Study];<sup>3</sup> Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana [Latin American University pastoral];<sup>4</sup> "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador" ["Religious Freedom and Salvific Dialogue"];<sup>5</sup> "Tres comentarios a la Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa" ["Three

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Iglesia y apostolado universitario, Serie Teología, no. 1 (Lima, Peru: Departamento de Publicaciones de UNEC, 1964), 1-2. The audience of the final part of the pamphlet, entitled "Lo UNEC", is clearly UNEC in Lima, not PAX Romana—M.I.E.C. in Montevideo, so this seems to be identical to the 1960 lecture, even though Breckenridge says that this same 1964 publication reproduces the 1962 version of the lecture and that it is "textually quite close" to the 1960 pamphlet, "but contains evidence of theological movement." Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 650. Breckenridge does not elaborate on his judgment, and Manzanera and Mottesi do not refer to the 1962 lecture, nor to this 1964 publication in their thorough studies of Gutiérrez's pre-liberation theology works. In the present study, the 1964 publication is used to examine the lecture that Gutiérrez delivered to UNEC in 1960, and the 1962 lecture is assumed to be identical to the earlier one until persuasive evidence to the contrary is obtained. Furthermore, Bishop José Dammert Bellido also mentions two works with Gutiérrez's input that predate Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario: He says that "Las exigencias sociales del catolicismo" ['The Social Demands of Catholicism'] explained in a cheerful and beautiful pastoral letter of the Episcopate of Peru in 1958, and completed in the First Social Week of the following year, outlined guidelines for the lay apostolate, especially welcomed by university students." Dammert's original comment is as follows: "Las exigencias sociales del catolicismo' expuestas en una feliz y hermosa carta pastoral del Episcopado del Perú en 1958, y completadas en la Primera Semana Social del año siguiente, trazaron orientaciones para el apostolado seglar, especialmente acogidas por los universitarios." José Dammert Bellido, "Prólogo," in La verdad los hará libres, Gustavo Gutiérrez, 2. I have not seen other references to these as being early works by Gutiérrez. Jeffrey Klaiber examines the January, 1958 pastoral letter and the Primera Semana Social, which Bishop Dammert Bellido had organized and which was celebrated August 1-9, 1959, but Klaiber does not note any input by Gutiérrez. Klaiber provides references concerning the publication of the two: the pastoral letter was published in El Amigo del Clero (January-February 1958): 8-21, while the Primera Semana Social was published as Primera Semana Social del Perú. Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 350-352.

<sup>2</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador en América Latina?" (Petrópolis, Brazil: mimeographed, February-March, 1964, 14 pages). It is also included in the mimeographed collection, Reunión de Petrópolis, febrero-marzo, 1964, which is available at the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas. Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 65-66. I have requested a copy from the institute, but I have not yet received a response.

<sup>3</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico, ed. Cecilia Tovar, Serie Bíblica, no. 1 (Lima, Peru: Ediciones Tierra Entera, 1966).

<sup>4</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, Serie Teología y Pastoral 2, Documento 1 (Montevideo, Uruguay: Secretariado Latinoamericano del M.I.E.C. [Pax Romana], 1966). In this work, Gutiérrez gathers together the subject matter of a seminar in Lima, Peru from August, 1965.

<sup>5</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," in Salvación y construcción del mundo, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Juan Luis Segundo, José Croatto, Bernardo Catao, and José Comblán (Santiago, Chile: Dilapsa; Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Nova Terra, 1968), 11-43.

Commentaries on the Declaration of Religious Freedom"];<sup>6</sup> La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina [The *pastoral* of the Church in Latin America];<sup>7</sup> Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta [Evangelical Poverty: Solidarity and Protest];<sup>8</sup> and Fe y compromiso [Faith and Commitment].<sup>9</sup>

In this chapter, seven major themes will be studied which Gutiérrez analyzes in his pre-theology of liberation writings. These themes are *la pastoral*—the way that the Roman Catholic Church acts and is present in the world; the relation between salvation and the practice of charity by means of unconditionally loving all people; the presence of the Church in the unique history where God acts; and the relation between religious freedom and salvation; the relation between the understanding of salvation and the way in which the Church is present in contemporary Latin America; the need for the Church to choose to become poor

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<sup>6</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Tres comentarios a la Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa," IDOC (Spanish edition) Dossier 66, no. 13 (July 1966). The original is written in French. In this study, I use the English translation, which is the only edition that I have been able to obtain: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Three Commentaries on the Declaration of Religious Freedom," IDOC (English edition) Dossier 66, no. 13 (17 August 1966): 1-11. Oliveros, Manzanera, Motessi, and Breckenridge do not include this article in their studies of Gutiérrez's pre-liberation theology works.

<sup>7</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Serie 1, Documento 15 (Montevideo, Uruguay: MIEC-JECI Servicio de Documentación, 1968). This book collects lectures delivered by Gutiérrez in January, 1967. The book was reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina," in Cristianismo y Tercer Mundo, Gustavo Gutiérrez and CENCOS, Colección "Pueblo de Dios", Serie D., no. 10 (Bilbao, Spain: Edita ZERO, 1973), 7-84. It was revised to take into account the methodology of Gutiérrez's theology of liberation, and it was published as the following book: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina [Pastoral Lines of the Church in Latin America] (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1970). There also exist a French translation of the latter book, which was published in 1971: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Réinventer le visage de l'Église: Analyse théologique de l'évolution des pastorales, (Paris, France: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971); and a somewhat revised second edition of the 1970 first edition, which was published in 1976: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, 2d ed. (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1976).

<sup>8</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1970). This article was reprinted (with minor revisions) in the Uruguayan journal, Víspera, in 1971: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta," Víspera no. 24-25 (1971): 3-19. In both cases, the essay is a slightly edited version (especially in regard to the bibliography) of a series of classes on "L'Église et les problèmes de la pauvreté" ["The Church and the Problems of Poverty"], which Gutiérrez taught at the Université de Montréal, Canada, during July, 1967. Gutiérrez then revised and lengthened the essay (especially the second half), and incorporated it into Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas as the final chapter, "Pobreza: Solidaridad y protesta" ["Poverty: Solidarity and Protest"]. This chapter has also been reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pobreza: Solidaridad y protesta," in Del Vaticano al Ecuador: "Teología desde América Latina" [From the Vatican to Ecuador: "Theology from Latin America."], ed. Jaime Ruiz N. (Quito, Ecuador: Fundación de Investigaciones Sociales "Luis Chusig"-F.B.U., 1984), 185-203.

<sup>9</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Fe y compromiso, Sub-serie 1, Documento 2 (Montevideo, Uruguay: Secretariado Latinoamericano del MIEC-JECI, Servicio de Documentación, 1968). This work is a lecture that Gutiérrez gave at a UNEC seminar in Lima, Peru that met October 7-8, 1967.

in order to protest against the widespread, scandalous, material poverty which exists in Latin America; the relation between one's Christian faith and the commitment to historical action. Gutiérrez will subsequently utilize these seven themes to formulate his concept of persecution and martyrdom in his theology of liberation writings. The themes are used as section headings in this chapter. Under these headings, the pre-theology of liberation works will be examined chronologically, according to the date when a given published lecture was delivered, rather than when it was published. If this specific date is unknown, then the date of publication is used. Thus, for example, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina is examined according to the January, 1967 lecture date, not the 1968 publishing date.

In these pre-theology of liberation works, Gutiérrez does not yet speak about the occurrence of persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America because, as he will state retrospectively, the repression of the Church and the murder of its members did not really begin on a large scale in contemporary Latin America until after the Medellín Conference of 1968. Indeed, several collections of Church documents since the mid-1960s supply some evidence that persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America did not constitute a principal theme of theological reflection until some time after 1968. For example, the theme does not appear in the collection, Signos de renovación: Recopilación de documentos post-conciliares de la Iglesia en América Latina, which gathers documents from 1966-1969, nor in the final document of the Medellín Conference.<sup>10</sup> In Signos de liberación: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1969-1973, the repression of some members of the Church who act in the interests of the poor is a significant theme, and Gutiérrez even notes, in his writings, some examples of clergy who had been killed during these four years. The theme of martyrdom, itself, however, is not prevalent in the collection of texts.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the examples of Roman Catholics who have subsequently been popularly

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<sup>10</sup>Comisión Episcopal de Acción Social, Signos de renovación: Recopilación de documentos post-conciliares de la Iglesia en América Latina (Lima, Peru: Comisión Episcopal de Acción Social, 1969).

<sup>11</sup>Gutiérrez names Henrique Pereira Neto, Néstor Paz, and Héctor Gallego. Gutiérrez's theological reflections on their deaths will be examined in chapter six of the present study. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana," in Signos de liberación: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1969-1973, Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (Lima, Peru: CEP-Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1973), 15, 34. Fr. Pereira Neto, a Brazilian priest, was a close friend of Gutiérrez. He was murdered in May 1969 when he was twenty-eight years old. Gutiérrez dedicated Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas to Pereira Neto and the Peruvian novelist, José María Arguedas. In an interview conducted in 1983, Gutiérrez recalled his death: "My book, A Theology of Liberation is specifically dedicated to two persons: one of them is a black Brazilian priest, a co-worker of Dom Helder Camara's who was murdered in May 1969. So martyrdom became a fact of life for us nearly 15 years ago.... I knew father Henrique Pereira well; he was a good friend....Father Pereira died bearing witness to his faith. But he also bore witness for poor blacks despised for their race, which is another reason I dedicated the book to him." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain Is Bearing Fruit,'" Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983), 5. This article appeared at the same time in Spanish in Noticias Aliadas 15, no. 19 (26 May 1983): 5-7; it was reprinted in Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Entrevista al teólogo Gustavo Gutiérrez," Tierra Nueva 13-14, no. 52-53 (1985): 10-12. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview

designated as martyrs from the period just before 1968 are exceptional.<sup>12</sup> Starting in the 1970s, a great deal of literature is devoted to the topic of the contemporary repression of the Church in Latin America or of some of its members. This literature includes martyrologies, some of them more popular in nature than others (with some even including Fr. Camilo Torres Restrepo, who had been killed while participating in revolutionary activities as a guerrilla in Colombia), as well as various theological reflections on the perceived persecution of the Church and the martyrdom of some of its members in different parts of contemporary Latin America.<sup>13</sup> The enormous body of literature devoted to the repression and alleged

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by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 8; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 5.

<sup>12</sup>The case of the Canadian Scarboro missionary, Father Arthur Mackinnon is notable because, though his death predates liberation theology, he is often cited in post-Medellín literature as an example of a priest killed for being in solidarity with the poor. On June 16, 1965 the thirty-seven people from Monte Plata, Dominican Republic (just north of Santo Domingo) were arrested without due process. Fr. Mackinnon was killed on June 22 by two police officers in the city after he confronted the authorities by refusing to lead a Corpus Christi procession unless the thirty-six people were freed. Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy (Bogotá, Colombia: Cepla Editores, 1977), 24; P. Ferrari, El martirio en América Latina (Mexico City: Misiones Culturales de B.C., A.C., 1982), 160-162; Equipo del Departamento de Comunicación del Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, Managua, Nicaragua, La sangre por el pueblo: Nuevos mártires de América Latina (Managua, Nicaragua: Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, Managua, Nicaragua; Panama: Centro de Capacitación Social, Panama, R.D.P., 1983), 138-139. Fr. Mackinnon had been stationed in San José de Ocoa. I have spent a great deal of time at a residence, education, training, and work center named after him. El Centro de Padre Arturo is located on la calle 16 de agosto, as one enters the center of San José de Ocoa, R.D.

<sup>13</sup>Some notable examples are the following: Enrique Dussel, Caminos de liberación latinoamericana: Interpretación histórico-teológica de nuestro continente latinoamericano (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Latinoamérica Libros, 1972), 113 (Borrat is critical of Dussel's use of the term martyr, and he is also skeptical of the use of it by liberation theologians, in general, to describe the murders of Christians while working alongside the poor in contemporary Latin America. His criticisms will be discussed briefly later in the present study. See Héctor Borrat, "Entre la proclama y los programas," Víspera 7, no. 30 (1973): 51-52); Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy; "Cap. IV Asesinados por causa de los pobres," chap. in Signos de lucha y esperanza: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1973-1978, Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1978), 231-268; Enrique Dussel, De Medellín a Puebla: una década de sangre y esperanza (1968-1979), Colección Religión y Cambio Social (Mexico City: Editorial Edicol-Centro de Estudios Euménicos, 1979); Gilmer Torres, La sangre de los mártires: Cantata popular (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1981); Morir y despertar en Guatemala (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones [CEP], 1981); Martin Lange and Reinhold Iblacker, ed., Witnesses of Hope: The Persecution of Christians in Latin America, trans. William E. Jerman (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981); P. Ferrari, El martirio en América Latina; "Capítulo IV: Muertes que expresan vida," chap. in Signos de vida y fidelidad: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1978-1982, Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones [CEP], 1983), 427-491; Concilium: Martyrdom Today 183 (1983); Equipo del Departamento de Comunicación del Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, Managua, Nicaragua. La sangre por el pueblo; Testigos de Cristo hasta la muerte: Martirologio latinoamericano. Resucitan en el pueblo de América Latina (Mexico City and Buenos Aires, Argentina: Servicio Paz y Justicia en América Latina, 1984); some documents included in "Capítulo III: Las nuevas víctimas del sistema: Refugiados, exilados, desplazados, torturados, desaparecidos," chap. in Signos

persecution of the Church in El Salvador and the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 24, 1980 is particularly conspicuous.<sup>14</sup>

Gutiérrez, himself, only begins to speak of the persecution of specific sectors of the Church in contemporary Latin America in his writings during 1969. Furthermore, he does not employ the religious

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de nueva evangelización: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1983-1987, Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (CEP), 1988), 177-278; Donna Whitson Brett and Edward T. Brett, Murdered in Central America: The Stories of Eleven U.S. Missionaries (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988).

<sup>14</sup>See the following examples (many more examples are listed in the bibliography of the present study): DOCET-CELADEC, Situación de la Iglesia de El Salvador (Lima, Peru: DOCET, 1978); CELADEC-Comisión Evangélica Latino Americana de Educación Cristiana, Muerte de Oscar Romero: Juicio del pastor (Lima, Peru: CELADEC, 1980); Plácido Erdozain and Maurice Barth, Salvador: Oscar Romero et son peuple (Paris, France: Éditions Karthala, 1980); Ana Gispert-Sauch, ed., El Salvador II: UN pueblo perseguido. Testimonio de cristianos. II. De octubre 79 a junio 80 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1980); Plácido Erdozain, Monseñor Romero: Mártir de la Iglesia popular (Lima, Peru: CELADEC, 1981); James R. Brockman, The Word Remains: A Life of Oscar Romero (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1982); Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador, la Iglesia en El Salvador (Salamanca, Spain: Lógica Ediciones, 1982); Oscar Romero, Romero: Martyr for Liberation. The Last Two Homilies of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador with an Analysis of His Life and Work by Jon Sobrino, SJ (London, England: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1982); Jesús Delgado, Oscar A. Romero: Biografía (Madrid, Spain: Ediciones Paulinas, 1986); Monseñor Romero Madrid, Spain: IEPALA Editorial, 1989); James Brockman, Romero: A Life (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1989); Giancarlo Collet and Justin Rechsteiner, ed., Vergessen heisst verraten: Erinnerungen an Oscar A. Romero zum 10. Todestag Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1990); Instituto de Estudios Centroamericanos and El Rescate, The Jesuit Assassinations: The Writings of Ellacuría, Martín Baró and Segundo Montes, with a Chronology of the Investigation (November 11, 1989-October 22, 1990) Kansas City, Mo.: Sheed & Ward, 1990); Jesús Aroyo Lasa, Ignacio Ellacuría, et al., Universidad y cambio social (Los jesuitas en El Salvador), Colección Universidades en América (Mexico City: Magna Terra Editores, 1990); Robert Weiner, "Documento especial. Una década de promesas incumplidas: la investigación del asesinato de Monseñor Romero. Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (New York, marzo de 1990)," Estudios Centroamericanos 45, no. 497 (1990): 191-207; Martin Bogdahn and Immanuel Zerger, ed., Ich habe das Schreien meines Volkes gehört: Die Kirchen in El Salvador 10 Jahre nach der Ermordung von Oscar Arnulfo Romero Munich: Claudius Verlag, 1990); Stan Granot Duncan, "The Roses of Odulio," ESA Advocate: Evangelicals for Social Action (March 1991): 9-10; Salvador Carranza Oña, Romero-Rutilio: Vidas encontradas (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1992); Salvador Carranza, Romero-Rutilio: Vidas encontradas (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1992); Salvador Carranza, ed., Mártires de la UCA 16 de noviembre de 1989, 2d ed. (San Salvador, El Salvador: UCA Editores, 1992); José María Tojeira, "La importancia de los mártires. Homilía," Estudios Centroamericanos 49 (1994): 1171-1184; Martha Lynn Doggett, "El asesinato de los jesuitas: lo que supo Estados Unidos," Estudios Centroamericanos 49 (1994): 1185ff.; "Ellacuría y Romero: el sabio y el santo," Estudios Centroamericanos 49 (1994): 1250-1253; "La esperanza y los mártires," Estudios Centroamericanos 49 (1994): 1254-1260; "Mi encuentro con los jesuitas," Estudios Centroamericanos 49 (1994): 1270-1274; Higiénico Alas Gomez, Monseñor Romero: Defensor de los derechos (San José, Costa Rica: CODEHUCA, 1994); "Monseñor Romero hoy. Camino de vida y signo de contradicción," Estudios Centroamericanos 50, no. 557 (March 1995): 176-184; Miguel Cavada Diez, "Predicación y profecía. Análisis de las homilias de Monseñor Romero," Estudios Centroamericanos 50, no. 558 (April 1995): 325-350; Ana Gispert-Sauch, "XV Aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero y Luis Espinal," Páginas 20, no. 132 (April 1995): 83-86.

terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" in his writings to refer to Christians who were killed as they worked alongside the poor in contemporary Latin America until 1978. Thereafter, however, Gutiérrez consistently employs these religious terms. For example, in his introduction to the fourteenth revised edition of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, which was published in 1990, Gutiérrez evaluates the experiences of the Church since the Medellín Conference. Viewing these experiences retrospectively, he is able to include martyrdom, along with solidarity and reflection, as characteristics that mark the post-Medellín (i.e., post-1968) Church in Latin America.<sup>15</sup> Gutiérrez's pre-theology of liberation works, which are the sources of this chapter, nevertheless provide evidence of his theological reflections on coercion in religious matters, on historical examples of persecution and martyrdom, as well as on some of the themes which he later associates with the formulation of his concept of persecution and martyrdom. Furthermore, Gutiérrez does anticipate, at least starting in 1967, the possibility that Christians who publicly denounce what they believe to be social injustices (activities that they judge to be contrary to the gospel demands of creating a loving communion among all people and between people and God) may risk being repressed and murdered.

#### A. La pastoral: The Way how the Church Acts and is Present in the World

The first major theme which Gustavo Gutiérrez addresses in his writings is how the Roman Catholic Church should act and be present in contemporary Latin America in order to lead people to their salvation. In Gutiérrez's first work, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, he presents, in an abstract manner, what he considers to be the mission of the Church in society. He distinguishes between the missions of priests (representing all clergy and religious) and laity, who are the two types of members of the Church. He focuses his study, however, on the mission of the laity because his audience is predominantly made up of members of the Roman Catholic laity. They are the members of the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú (UNEC), a group of Peruvian Roman Catholic university students. His methodology of applying an existing model of mission to the specific case of UNEC in this writing is notable because it contrasts sharply with his subsequent articulation of the methodology of the theology of liberation, which starts from experience rather than from theory.

In "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?" (March 1964), Gutiérrez develops his reflections on how the Church should act in Latin America. His objective is to find the specific way in which the Church should be present there so that it can most effectively fulfill its goal of leading all people in contemporary Latin America to salvation, especially the majority of the population

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<sup>15</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos: Introducción a la nueva edición," in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 14th rev. and enlarged edition, 20. See similar comments in Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29.



who are poor and members of the masses. Starting with this article, Gutiérrez adopts the term "*pastoral*", which he clearly defines in his later book, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina (January 1967; published in 1968), as "the action of the Church, the form of presence that it assumes in order to present the gospel message at a particular moment and in a particular reality."<sup>16</sup> In "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?" Gutiérrez begins to examine and criticize three distinct *pastorales* (that is, three different ways that the Church acts and is present in the world) that co-exist presently in Latin America: the *pastoral de cristiandad* (the *pastoral* of Christendom), the advanced stage of this *pastoral de cristiandad*--which he designates as the *pastoral de nueva cristiandad* (the *pastoral* of New Christendom) in all future writings--and a *pastoral espiritualista* (Spiritualist *pastoral*)--which he subsequently renames as the *pastoral de la madurez en la fe* (the *pastoral* of the Maturity in the Faith) or the "Distinction of Planes". He does not recommend any of these three options because they do not lead the poor masses to their salvation. In future writings, Gutiérrez continues to be particularly critical of the persistence of the *pastoral* of Christendom in contemporary Latin America because he believes that the traditional Church-state relation that characterizes it obstructs the majority of Latin Americans, who are poor, from having the freedom to accept God's offer of salvation. Nevertheless, Gutiérrez does not achieve his objective of finding the specific Church presence that, he believes, can most effectively fulfill the goal of leading all people in contemporary Latin America to salvation until La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, a short book in which he elaborates, criticizes, and ultimately advocates a fourth option, the *pastoral profética* (the Prophetic *pastoral*), which focuses on leading the poor masses to their salvation.

(1) Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario (1960 and 1962)<sup>17</sup>:

As the national advisor for the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú (UNEC), Gustavo

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<sup>16</sup>"La pastoral es el actuar de la Iglesia, la forma de presencia que asume para presentar el mensaje evangélico en un determinado momento y en una determinada realidad." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 9. According to Mottesi, Spanish utilizes the word *pastoral* as a noun, "traditionally referring to the care of souls, the shepherding of the flock, as well as to the church's commitment to its people in their need." He continues (writing in 1986): "During the last quarter of a century in Latin America, the churches--both Catholic and Protestant--have given a more inclusive meaning to the term *pastoral*. This change--developed progressively and from different theologico-ecclesiastical perspectives--is a consequence of the church's increasing concern not only for the family of faith, but also for society. In other words, *pastoral* comprises both an *ad-intra* and an *ad-extra* mission." Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 5.

<sup>17</sup>Miguel Manzanera and Osvaldo Luis Mottesi have summarized and analyzed the content of Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitaria (1960). See Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 18-19; Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 27-31, 64-65. For the present study, the 1964 publication of the June 26, 1960 lecture in Lima, Peru (and Gutiérrez's re-presentation of it July 20-25, 1962 at Montevideo, Uruguay) is used. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, Serie Teología, no. 1 (Lima, Peru: Departamento de Publicaciones de UNEC, 1964).

Gutiérrez presented this short book as a lecture to Peruvian university students who were members of UNEC at their training conference on June 26, 1960. In Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, Gutiérrez states that his objective is to address what the mission of the members of UNEC is in a university setting. This is an environment in which not all students, faculty members, or staff are Christians.<sup>18</sup> Thus Gutiérrez endeavours to examine the way that a certain group of Roman Catholic laity, the members of UNEC, ought to act and be present in their specific historical circumstances--Peruvian universities in the early 1960s. His methodology is to review the "theology of the lay apostolate" that was currently recognized in the Roman Catholic Church at the time of his lecture (1960), that is, the generally acknowledged mission of Roman Catholic laity in the world, and then to apply it to the case of UNEC. He cites, first, supporting biblical texts; second, statements concerning the mission of the Church, especially the mission of the laity, made by Pope Leo XIII, Pope Pius X, Pope Pius XI, and Pope Pius XII; and, third, some recent theological writings on the mission of the laity, especially ones written by Yves Congar and Karl Rahner. In this lecture, Gutiérrez defines theology as "a reflection made, in the light of the faith, on the Word of God, of which the Church is the depository."<sup>19</sup> He does not yet define theology as a second act constituted by the critical reflection on a first act, which is the pastoral action of the Church, in the light of the Word of God (as it is evidenced in the Bible), accepted in faith. This is the way he will define theology in his earliest theology of liberation writings. Instead, at this time (1960), he makes his reflections on the Bible and then applies them to his own situation. Gutiérrez's revised theological methodology is examined subsequently. Gutiérrez divides Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario into an introduction and four short sections, entitled "Plan de Dios" ["God's Plan"], "Misión de la Iglesia" ["Mission of the Church"], "El Laico" ["The Layman"], and "Lo UNEC" ["UNEC"]. These are reviewed briefly in the present study.

In "Plan de Dios", Gutiérrez states what he believes to be God's plan for humanity. According to Gutiérrez, before the creation of the world, God decided--by the will of God and due to his love of all humans--to give himself freely, gratuitously, and personally to all people, and he did this by choosing them to share in his existence. (He cites Ephesians 1:3-5 to support his view.)<sup>20</sup> God provided human beings, first, with the ability to receive his call for them to become adopted sons and daughters of God; this is his call for them to enter into intimate communion with him. Second, God bestowed on them the ability to

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<sup>18</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, 1.

<sup>19</sup>"...la teología es una reflexión hecha, a la luz de la fe, sobre la Palabra de Dios, de la que es depositaria la Iglesia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 2.

<sup>20</sup>"Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all the spiritual blessings of heaven in Christ. Thus he chose us in Christ before the world was made to be holy and faultless before him in love, marking us out for himself beforehand, to be adopted sons, through Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 1:3-5).

decide, freely and out of their love for him, to answer this call. According to Gutiérrez, the response that humans make to God's call has both a supernatural and a natural dimension. The supernatural dimension of the human response to God's call to communion with him is constituted by the offer of grace, defined by Gutiérrez as the work of the Holy Spirit, which people may freely choose to accept (or, apparently also, to reject, though Gutiérrez does not expressly speak of this second option in the book). While humans desire to enter into communion with God, they may only enter into it by means of grace. If people freely choose to accept the offer of grace, such grace gives them the ability to love God and other people.<sup>21</sup> In this book, Gutiérrez does not explain more precisely what he means by grace, but in the second section he explains how it operates. He also does not elaborate at length exactly how people accept or reject the offer of grace. The natural dimension of the human response to God's call to communion with him includes all the creative activities throughout history (such as science, art, economic activities, and the exploitation of natural resources), by which people make culture and civilization so as to fulfill themselves. For Gutiérrez, the work done in order to build civilization constitutes "an authentic response to the calling to the supernatural life, because it creates the natural conditions [that are] necessary so that man may be able to respond freely to the gift of grace"; that is, certain conditions must be present in a given society so that people may respond to God's call for them to enter into communion with him, but other conditions may also exist there that obstruct their ability to respond.<sup>22</sup> Gutiérrez explains this comment more clearly in the subsequent sections, especially when he cites Pope Leo XIII.

In the second section, "Misión de la Iglesia", Gutiérrez defines the "Church" as the "family of adopted children of God. In it [i.e., the Church] God gives himself to people as father and people [give themselves] to God as children, through Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit." It is "in the Church, and only in it, where the answer of faith can be given. We enter into the supernatural order through faith, and we receive faith, in the economy of salvation, in the Church."<sup>23</sup> In this book, Gutiérrez does not speculate on the salvation of non-Christians (such as Marxist atheists who are involved in revolutionary struggles in behalf of the poor in contemporary Latin America), but this understanding of "Church" seems to exclude

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<sup>21</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, 3-8.

<sup>22</sup>"En efecto, en su plano, la obra civilizadora, a través de la cual el hombre se instala en el mundo y se realiza humanamente, es una auténtica respuesta a la vocación a la vida supernatural, porque crea las condiciones naturales necesarias para que el hombre pueda responder libremente al don de la gracia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 10. See also *Ibid.*, 16-17.

<sup>23</sup>"...es en la Iglesia, y sólo en ella, donde puede darse la respuesta de fe. Por la fe entramos en el orden sobrenatural, y la fe, en la economía de la salvación, la recibimos en la Iglesia. Ella es la familia de los hijos adoptivos de Dios. En ella Dios se da [a] los hombres como Padre y los hombres a Dios como hijos, por Jesucristo y en el Espíritu Santo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 11.

them from the possibility of being saved outside the Church. He radically alters this perspective in his future writings. In this book, Gutiérrez expresses his belief that the Church's mission is comprised of two tasks: a direct mission and an indirect mission. The direct mission of the Church includes, first, evangelization, which is the proclamation of the gospel to all people so that they may choose to enter into communion with God; the second part of the Church's direct mission is to baptize people who freely accept this call to communion, and then to share with them the other sacraments. Gutiérrez explains that, because the Church is in direct communion with God (according to Roman Catholic tradition), Roman Catholics believe that grace operates through the sacraments which the Church gives in the name of God: "The Church calls people and gives them the capacity to respond, to respond according to the supernatural dimension. We respond supernaturally to God through the Church and in the Church."<sup>24</sup> Gutiérrez clearly associates salvation with participation in the sacraments of the Church, but he does not amplify this point. The indirect mission of the Church is to guide the construction of society morally by means of the Church's social doctrine. The Church concerns itself with the economic, political, and social situation of all members of each given society because it considers all people to be worthy of the dignity corresponding to their status as children of God, loved by him and called by him to salvation.<sup>25</sup> Thus, according to Gutiérrez, the Church "cannot remain indifferent to any form of social, economic or cultural life and [the Church] should try to make it conform to God's will...[which is] fraternity, service, justice, [and] love."<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, in accordance with this perspective, the Church must not intervene directly into the temporal realm by prescribing exactly how society should be organized politically, economically, and socially. Such directives would be outside the competence of the Church. Instead, the Church ought to denounce any conditions in society that obstruct the ability of people to respond freely to God's call to communion with him, and laud those social conditions that help people. Gutiérrez cites Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, Rerum novarum as an example of how and why the Church should guide society. He believes that the pope rejects the social conditions that concentrate wealth in the hands of few people while the majority are impoverished precisely because the violation of the latter's human dignity affects the ability that people possess to be saved. The Church, then, would not ask for the redistribution of wealth in society simply in order to achieve a temporal

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<sup>24</sup>"La Iglesia no sólo proclama la Palabra de Dios, sino que da también la gracia, por medio de los sacramentos, que permite a los hombres responder al llamado que les hace en nombre de Dios. La Iglesia llama a los hombres y les da el poder de responder, de responder según la dimensión sobrenatural. Respondemos sobrenaturalmente a Dios por la Iglesia y en la Iglesia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 13.

<sup>25</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, 19-20.

<sup>26</sup>"La Iglesia...no puede permanecer indiferente a cualquier forma de vida social, económica o cultural y deberá buscar conformarla a la voluntad de Dios, que es una voluntad de fraternidad, de servicio, de justicia, de amor." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 14.

objective. Instead, it would call for it "because this will contribute to man being fully man and to [him] being in conditions for giving an answer to the supernatural calling, free from external coercions."<sup>27</sup> Gutiérrez does not clarify whether he believes that such terrible social conditions obstruct one or both parties--the rich or the poor--from responding freely to God's call, but the reference to the need for freedom from "external coercions" points to social conditions that make life very difficult for the poor, and which thereby obstruct their ability to choose freely to be saved. He also does not note whether the example from Pope Leo XIII's encyclical might even be especially pertinent for contemporary Peru and Latin America. Furthermore, Gutiérrez does not explain what he means by a "temporal objective" of such a redistribution of wealth, nor how the living conditions that correspond to such a temporal objective would differ from those living conditions that all people deserve as adopted children of God.

In the section, "El Laico", Gutiérrez examines what he believes are the functions of priests and the laity in the Roman Catholic Church. According to Gutiérrez, when a man becomes a priest he renounces his role of participating, directly and actively, in the aforementioned creative, temporal activities (science, art, business affairs, and the exploitation of natural resources) through which people fulfill themselves and make civilizations more congenial for all people. Clergy dedicate themselves to realizing the tasks of the Church's direct mission--evangelizing and conferring the sacraments to the members of the Church.<sup>28</sup> The laity, however, have two tasks. First, as baptized and confirmed members of the Church, the laity should also proclaim the gospel to people outside the Church, especially by exemplifying through their acts what it means to live as Christians. Second, in their capacity as citizens (and not as representatives of the Church) the laity should insert themselves in society and act in it, in collaboration with both Christians and non-Christians, to create conditions that correspond to the will of God, as revealed in the Bible and according to Roman Catholic tradition. Thus they should "work for a more just, more fraternal, more human world." Moreover, such historical activities "contribute ultimately, to the arrival of the Kingdom of God."<sup>29</sup> It is notable, however, that, in Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, Gutiérrez stresses that the Kingdom of God, which he defines as communion with God, "is not found in the prolongation of the civilizing work--it comes from above--but there is a relation between both of them. Church and world,

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<sup>27</sup>"Lo que la Iglesia persigue con esta intervención no es un fin temporal. Si la Iglesia pide una mejor distribución de la riqueza, es porque esto contribuirá a que el hombre sea plenamente hombre y esté en condiciones de dar una respuesta libre de coacciones externas a la vocación supernatural." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 19.

<sup>28</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, 23-25.

<sup>29</sup>"Trabajar por un mundo más justo, más fraterno, más humano, es contribuir finalmente, al advenimiento del Reino de Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 28.

history of salvation and human history clearly differ from each other but they are not juxtaposed.<sup>30</sup> Such historical activities, however, contribute to the final arrival of the Kingdom of God only when they are done by Christians (and not by non-Christians) because their objective is to improve the social conditions in which people live so that they may respond affirmatively to God's call to communion with him. (In this book, Gutiérrez does not develop his explanation of how these activities contribute to the arrival of the Kingdom of God.) Thus Gutiérrez sees a close relationship, but not an identity, between historical activities of the laity that make societies more just and the building of the Kingdom of God. He refers to two, closely associated, histories: temporal history and salvific history. In contrast with this perspective, in Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico (January-February, 1965), and thereafter in all his other pre-liberation theology and theology of liberation writings, Gutiérrez affirms that only one history exists, and that all historical activities, whether by Christians or by non-Christians, insofar as they help build more just societies, contribute to the growth of the Kingdom of God in history (though they cannot effect its ultimate realization), and thus they have salvific value. In these future writings, he also views these historical activities as precisely the way that both Christians and non-Christians demonstrate their affirmative response to God's call for them to enter into the Kingdom of God, which he defines as communion with God and all other people. As was already noted, in Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, Gutiérrez does not explicitly mention the possibility of salvation for non-Christians outside the Church. In fact, he states very clearly that the civilizing work done by non-Christians in society is not an "apostolic activity"--that is, it does not contribute to the arrival of the Kingdom of God.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>"La comunión con Dios no se halla en la prolongación de la obra civilizadora--ella viene de lo alto--pero hay relación entre ambas. Iglesia y mundo, historia de salvación y historia humana se distinguen netamente pero no se juxtaponen." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 29.

<sup>31</sup>"In itself, (Ratione operis), the civilizing task--although it has favorable repercussions on the conditions of evangelization--by the objectives that specify it and the energies that it puts to work for its achievement, is not able to be considered, strictly speaking, as an apostolic activity....On the contrary, one would have to consider as an 'apostle' the non-Christian who participates in civilizing work....But that work, intrinsically temporal, can be done to give glory to God by the Christian....By the ultimate intention of the subject (Rationis operantis) the civilizing effort will be, then, an apostolic activity. It is a question of an intention that is located on the supernatural plane and which sustains and transfigures, in a certain way, the human action. In this event the work of the Christian and the work of the non-Christian differ from each other. The first is the work of an apostle, of one who is sent; the second, no." "En sí misma (Ratione operis), la tarea civilizadora--aunque repercute favorablemente en las condiciones de la evangelización--por los fines que la especifican y las energías que pone en obra para su consecución, no puede ser considerada, en rigor de términos, como una actividad apostólica....De lo contrario, habría que considerar como 'apóstol' al no cristiano que participe en la obra civilizadora....Pero esa obra, intrínsecamente temporal, puede ser hecha por el cristiano para dar gloria a Dios....Por la intención final del sujeto (Ratione operantis) el esfuerzo civilizador será, entonces, una actividad apostólica. Se trata de una intención que se sitúa en el plano de lo sobrenatural y que sostiene y transfigura, en cierta manera, la acción humana. En este caso se diferencia

Gutiérrez applies his reflections on the tasks of the laity in the world (as seen in "El Laico") to his specific audience, the members of UNEC (the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú) in the final section, entitled "Lo UNEC". Thus their mission, too, includes two tasks: first, as lay members of the Church, they should proclaim the gospel at the university and participate in Church activities there (by attending the liturgy, receiving the sacraments, praying, and involving themselves in other Church-related activities). Second, in their capacity as members of the student body, they should try to influence the whole university population so that it respects and promotes human dignity, and creates a more just, fraternal, and human community, in accordance with the will of God. Gutiérrez does not develop his comments in this section beyond what he has already said about the laity in general.<sup>32</sup>

The major theme which Gustavo Gutiérrez addresses in Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario—how the Roman Catholic Church should act and be present in contemporary Latin America in order to lead people to their salvation—continues to be evident throughout the rest of his pre-liberation theology and theology of liberation writings. In this first work, however, he applies an existing, abstract model of the Church's mission in society to his lay audience, the members of UNEC. He applies the model to the example of UNEC only in a brief and general way without explicitly underscoring issues that may be associated with the specific circumstances of the laity in Peru, including at the Peruvian universities. Thus the book is notable, first, because his theological reflections do not yet start from the experiences of his audience. This methodology contrasts with the methodology he subsequently adopts in the theology of liberation, which always starts from experience instead of theory. Second, Gutiérrez does not yet expressly acknowledge the possibility of salvation outside the Church. Third, although he recognizes a close relationship between the history of temporal activities and salvation history, he continues to distinguish between them. When Gutiérrez subsequently declares that only one history exists (one in which Jesus Christ's salvific work operates), thereby perceiving salvific value in the temporal activities of both Christians and non-Christians, he will also be able to assign the title "martyr" to those Christians who are killed because they attempt to build more just societies in accordance with the will of God. Thus the shift in Gutiérrez's understanding of the relation between salvation and the way that the Church acts in the world, subsequent to the publication of Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, is necessary before he can possibly formulate his concept of persecution and martyrdom in his theology of liberation writings.

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la obra de un cristiano y la de un apóstol, de un enviado; la segunda, no." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, my translation, 29-30.

<sup>32</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, 32-36.

(2) "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?" (March 1964):

Gutiérrez presented a lecture entitled, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", at the Primera Reunión de Teólogos Latinoamericanos [First Meeting of Latin American Theologians], which met at Petrópolis, Brazil during March, 1964. At that meeting, two other future liberation theologians, Lucio Gera and Juan Luis Segundo, also delivered papers. The meeting was organized by Ivan Illich.<sup>33</sup> Oliveros has lengthily quoted the stated objective of this meeting of Latin American theologians.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Given that the primary source has not yet been obtained, the present study depends greatly on those summaries and analyses of the short article made by Oliveros, Manzanera, and Mottes. See Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 52-57; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 20-21; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 32-36, 65-66. The author of the introduction to Salvación y construcción del mundo (a collection of some lectures gathered from the successor conference when many of the same theologians met in July, 1966 in Santiago, Chile) makes the following comment about the 1964 meeting: "In February, 1964 this same group of theologians had met for a week in Petrópolis (Brazil), in order to reflect on the principal theological needs of the continent, and to make a common plan for research in pastoral theology." The following is the Spanish original: "En febrero de 1964 este mismo grupo de teólogos se había encontrado por una semana en Petrópolis (Brasil), a fin de reflexionar sobre las principales necesidades teológicas del continente, y hacer un plan de trabajo investigador de teología pastoral en común." "Presentación," my translation, Salvación y construcción del mundo, 7. See also the comments on this article and the conference, itself, made in the following texts: Rosino Gibellini, ed., "Gustavo Gutiérrez," in La nueva frontera de la teología, 286; Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 25; Robert McAfee Brown, Gustavo Gutiérrez, 34-35; Odair Pedroso Mateus, Razão da esperança, 92-95; Edward Schillebeeckx, "Gustavo Gutiérrez recebe em Nimega o título de Doutor Honoris causa," Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira 39, no. 155 (September 1979): 502; Paul E. Sigmund, Liberation Theology at the Crossroads, 28-29; Christian Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology, 120.

<sup>34</sup>1) Ocasión so that a group of South American theologians (including Mexico) may get to know each other better and exchange their ideas. 2) By means of this group, to awaken in the different Faculties, Professors of Theology, etc., an attitude of active interest, by opening horizons and by defining topics of research, of *Latin American interest* (the emphasis is in the original). The idea is that this meeting could be the point of departure for theological research of the issues of Latin America. 3) To make a plan of topics to be examined, persons to invite, etc. of a course probably of 20 to 30 days, in July, 1964, for Latin American professors of theology, in the charge of three or four of the great European masters. 4) To choose some themes--it is the suggestion of a number of Bishops of CELAM--of possible Latin American episcopal pastoral letters." Reunión de Petrópolis, febrero-marzo de 1964, quoted in Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, my translation, 52. The Spanish original of Oliveros's quotation is as follows: "'1) Ocasión para que un grupo de teólogos sudamericanos (se incluye a México) se conozcan mejor e intercambien sus ideas.

2) Despertar a través de este grupo en las diversas Facultades, Profesores de Teología, etc, una actitud de interés activo, abriendo horizontes y definiendo asuntos de investigación, *de interés latinoamericano* (el subrayado es el del texto original). La idea es que este encuentro pudiera ser el punto de partida de un trabajo de investigación teológica de la problemática de la Iglesia latinoamericana.

3) Hacer un proyecto de temario, personas a invitar, etc. del probable curso de 20 a 30 días, en julio de 1964, para profesores de teología latinoamericanos, a cargo de tres o cuatro de los maestros europeos.

4) Elegir algunos temas--es la sugerencia de varios Obispos del CELAM--de posibles cartas pastorales del



In this article, Gutiérrez's goal is to encourage future discussion on the issue of how to bring the Latin American man to such a dialogue with God that would lead to his salvation.<sup>35</sup> He starts by distinguishing between three groups of Latin American men: the vast majority who are members of the popular masses, the intellectual and technical elite, and the conservative oligarchy. Gutiérrez is concerned with ascertaining the various options leading to salvation which exist for each of these distinct types of Latin Americans.<sup>36</sup>

Gutiérrez also expresses his desire that the various *pastorales* found in Latin America--the different ways in which the Church acts and is present there--be analyzed theologically.<sup>37</sup> In "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", he does this only in a brief and suggestive manner so as to guide future criticisms. As was already noted, he designates these three distinct ways that the Church is present in the world as, first, the colonial stage of the *pastoral* of Christendom; second, the advanced stage of it, which is characterized by the proliferation of Christian institutions (starting in Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana from a lecture during August, 1965, he renames this advanced stage as the *pastoral* of New Christendom); and, third, the Spiritualist *pastoral* (subsequently, the *pastoral* of the Maturity in the Faith or the "Distinction of Planes"). Gutiérrez's criticism that the third option is too "spiritualist and elitist" is particularly notable because this is the option that characterizes Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, his perspective from only four years earlier. Gutiérrez now judges that it "emphasizes the formation of small groups of select militants, when the situation of Latin America

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episcopado latinoamericanos'."

<sup>35</sup>Gutiérrez's gender specific reference to "the Latin American man" is preserved in the present study. Of course, he means both men and women, but, in 1964, this is his way of speaking, in the singular, about the individual Latin American person.

<sup>36</sup>"I believe in the first place that it is necessary to criticize these behaviors from the religious point of view, from the salvific point of view; to analyze which are the profound options of these different types of men." "Creo en primer lugar que es necesario hacer una crítica de estas conductas desde el punto de vista religioso, del punto de vista salvador; analizar cuáles son las opciones profundas de estos tipos diferentes de hombres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", 3, quoted in Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, my translation, 56. It is also cited in Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 33-34, 66; and quoted in Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 20.

<sup>37</sup>"A second point, starting partially from the aforesaid, that I also want to try and propose as a subject of work, is to criticize theologically different pastoral options that have already been taken in Latin America." "Un segundo punto, partiendo parcialmente de lo dicho, que quiero tratar y proponer también como un tema de trabajo, es el hacer una crítica teológica de determinadas pastorales que se han tomado ya en América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", 4, quoted in Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, my translation, 56. It is also quoted in Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 20.

demands the promotion of the masses in a slow and difficult process of personalization and social reivindicación.<sup>38</sup> "Reivindicación" signifies the process by which the rights of the poor majorities are reclaimed from the oligarchy--the people who hold the overwhelming amount of power in society. Gutiérrez develops his criticisms of the three options in Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador", La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, and Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina. In these later writings, Gutiérrez identifies several characteristics of the *pastoral* of Christendom: the Roman Catholic Church and the state are intimately associated, a major task of the state is to protect the Church, and the Church encourages its members to participate regularly in the sacraments, with such activities signifying the acceptance of that truth leading to salvation which, according to tradition, has been deposited exclusively in the Roman Catholic Church. In these future writings, Gutiérrez explains how the Church is sometimes complicit with governments that maintain unjust social orders when this first option is operative. According to the second type of *pastoral* (which Gutiérrez notes as being greatly influenced by the works of the Roman Catholic layman, Jacques Maritain [1882-1973]), the laity ought to form Christian political parties and other temporal institutions in order to influence reforms within a given society so that it may more closely approximate their vision of a Christian society. Gutiérrez believes that this *pastoral* appeals to the adult, personal faith sought by intellectual, technical, and political elites, but that it does not address the needs of the majority of Latin Americans who are poor and members of the masses.<sup>39</sup>

Motessi believes that, in "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo con el hombre en América Latina?", Gutiérrez opts for a *pastoral* of the masses, even though Gutiérrez does not sketch the characteristics of an alternative, fourth *pastoral* option. Gutiérrez will not do this, even in a suggestive manner, until the January 1967 lectures that were published in La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina. Even then, he, too, will acknowledge that his analysis of this fourth *pastoral* must be brief due to its novelty in Latin America. On the other hand, Manzanera (with Oliveros expressing essentially the same view) believes that "at this moment G. [Gutiérrez] still does not offer any solution, except to insist on the need to elaborate a new *pastoral* focus which considers 'the status of humanity touched by grace in the face of the Church-Institution' (64a, 9) and which investigates theologically the salvific dialogue between God and men, the

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<sup>38</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", 9, quoted and translated by Osvaldo Luis Motessi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 34, 66. See also Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 56; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 21.

<sup>39</sup>Gutiérrez continues to criticize Maritain in his liberation theology texts. For example, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 73-76. For an analysis of the criticisms of Maritain made by Latin American liberation theologians, especially Gustavo Gutiérrez, see John F.X. Knasas, "Aquinas and the Liberationist Critique of Maritain's New Christendom," The Thomist 52 (1988): 247-267.

salvation of the faithless, and the essential content of Christian life, points which will be developed by the same author in later works."<sup>40</sup>

In this article, Gutiérrez is primarily concerned with the salvation of the poor masses, the first of the three groups of Latin Americans that he has distinguished. In fact, Gutiérrez suggests that a theology ought to be developed that would consider the salvation of the people of Latin America, as well as the revolutionary activities in which many Latin Americans were already participating.<sup>41</sup> Thus, according to Mottesí, Gutiérrez recommends the following three themes for future theological study: "1) how to reconcile the revolutionary struggle with the preaching and teaching of pascual [i.e., paschal] kenosis [i.e., self-emptying]; 2) Christian love and revolutionary violence; and 3) the Latin American situation and the Church's teachings on birth control."<sup>42</sup> At least the first two themes, in fact, are among the principal concerns of his subsequent theological works.

The theme of persecution and martyrdom is not evident in the article, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?". Nevertheless, Gutiérrez's continuing preoccupation with the religious status of the poor masses in Latin America, as well as his call for a theological study of the revolutionary process supposedly aimed at reclaiming their social rights, clearly contribute to his formulation of theological reflection on the relation between salvation and historical activities in behalf of the poor. This relation is the central theme of the theology of liberation, and thus it is also a crucial aspect of his subsequent articulation of his concept of persecution and martyrdom.

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<sup>40</sup>"En este momento G. no ofrece todavía ninguna solución, sino que insiste en la necesidad de elaborar un nuevo enfoque pastoral que considere 'el estatuto de la humanidad tocada por la gracia frente a la Iglesia-Institución' (64a, 9) y que investigue teológicamente el diálogo salvador entre Dios y los hombres, la salvación de los infieles y el contenido esencial de la vida cristiana, puntos éstos que será desarrollados por el mismo autor en trabajos posteriores." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", 9, quoted and commented on by Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, my translation, 21. Oliveros quotes the identical passage of the article, and he makes the same analysis. Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 57.

<sup>41</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", 12, 14, cited in Osvaldo Luis Mottesí, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 35, 66.

<sup>42</sup>Osvaldo Luis Mottesí, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 34, 66, citing Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?", 14. Manzanera summarizes this part of the article in a similar manner. Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 21. As well, McAfee Brown's brief analysis of this article concurs with Mottesí's judgment. Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 25. Oliveros summarizes this last section of the article in almost the same manner as Mottesí, though with some notable variations: he summarizes the first point identically; he says that the second point is violence—he does not speak of the reconciliation of Christian love and revolutionary violence; in regard to the third point, Oliveros only notes Gutiérrez's concern with birth control, not specifically the reconciliation of the church's teaching on it with the Latin American situation. Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 57.

## B. The Relation between Salvation and the Practice of Charity by Means of Unconditionally Loving All People

In Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico, Gutiérrez begins to develop his explanation that the people who are saved are the ones who practise charity, regardless of whether they call themselves Christians or non-Christians. They do this by historically manifesting their unconditional love for all other people. According to this view, salvation does not depend upon whether people explicitly accept the salvific truth which Roman Catholics traditionally believe is deposited in the Roman Catholic Church. Although Gutiérrez does not speak expressly of the example of Marxists in this pamphlet, this understanding of the relation between salvation and the practice of charity would mean that Marxist atheists in contemporary Latin America could also be saved by Jesus Christ insofar as they practise charity. Gutiérrez will continue to elaborate this view in La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, and, thereafter, throughout his theology of liberation writings.

### (3) Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico (January-February, 1965):

This is a short essay on the relation between charity and human love in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Although Gutiérrez wrote the essay, it is important to recognize that this is the product of various studies made by eighty participants of a training camp for the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú (UNEC) during January and February, 1965.<sup>43</sup> Gutiérrez later revised this essay and included it in chapter ten of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (1971).<sup>44</sup>

In this essay, Gutiérrez explicitly states his belief that all people (including atheists and other non-Christians) are saved in principle by Jesus Christ.<sup>45</sup> People express their acceptance of the offer of salvation that God makes to them not necessarily through their Church membership, but by practising charity. Gutiérrez concludes, however, that the truly biblical significance of charity is universal love, that

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<sup>43</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico, 4. For studies of this essay, see Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 102-103; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 26-27; Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 41-44, 67-68; Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 650; Felipe Zagarra, "Gratuidad y liberación (Salmo 18, 2.20)," in Teología y liberación: Escritura y espiritualidad, 228. Mateus also comments on the essay, but his bibliography and his dependence on Oliveros's summary suggest that he has not seen the primary source. Odair Pedroso Mateus, Razão da esperança, 94-95.

<sup>44</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 231-260.

<sup>45</sup>"God...is present in all men, because Christ has become man for all men, a brother of everyone; Christ has saved in principle all of huamnity; through this every man is united radically to Christ...." "Dios...está presente en todos los hombres, porque Cristo se ha hecho hombre por todos los hombres; hermano de todos; Cristo ha salvado en principio a toda la humanidad; por esto todo hombre está unido radicalmente a Cristo...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano, my translation, 26.

is, loving all people without exception--one's enemies as well as one's friends.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, those people are saved who love all other people--their "neighbours"--authentically. One's "neighbour" is the person who is actively approached and made the object of one's love, rather than the person who approaches and asks for one's love. Universal love, then, means endeavouring to make all other people one's neighbours out of love for them.<sup>47</sup> This love is authentic, however, only when it is incarnated in historical relations--that is, in concrete acts towards other people--and when it is motivated by the desire truly to love these other persons unconditionally, not because such a love for others responds to a religious imperative. To try to love others unconditionally is to approximate how God loves all people. Furthermore, Gutiérrez contends that people love God precisely when they love their neighbour. This is because God is present in all people; this is a traditionally accepted statement of faith among Christians. Thus charity cannot exist outside human relations and acts of love without becoming an abstraction.<sup>48</sup> At this point, Gutiérrez does not yet distinguish between the universal love which ought to be directed toward all people and the preferential love for one's poor neighbours. As well, as Oliveros points out, in Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico, Gutiérrez does not yet speak of the need to opt for the popular class--the poor masses--in the existing

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<sup>46</sup>"Charity will be what determines the eternal destiny of men; whoever has loved their neighbour will be saved; whoever has not practiced charity for their neighbour will be condemned." "La caridad será la que va a definir el destino eterno de los hombres; se salvarán aquellos que hayan amado a su prójimo; se condenarán los que no hayan hecho caridad con su prójimo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano, my translation, 29. See also *Ibid.*, 19-20; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 26; Osvaldo Luis Mottesí, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 42, 68.

<sup>47</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano, 9-9.

<sup>48</sup>Thus Gutiérrez concludes that "1) To be Christian is to love. We have been created in order to love. 2) To love is to approach the other"; it means shifting from a perspective of seeing oneself as the centre towards which other people must approach, and only if they do approach would one be compelled to love them, to another perspective of seeing other people as the centre towards which one must choose to approach and then love them. Furthermore, "3) By encountering the neighbour, I encounter God. By approaching the neighbour I approach God. 4) I approach the neighbour with my ability of human love. Human love is not juxtaposed with human love, but passes through it; it is transmitted through it. 5) Christian charity is a human love. It knows no exceptions. 6) Charity is a grace: it is to love as God loves. 7) To be Christian is to enter into the ambit of divine love: [it is] to love as God loves and, by loving, to encounter God." "1) Ser cristiano es amar. Hemos sido creados para amar. 2) Amar es aproximarse, es decir: cambiar de centro, tener como centro al otro, el tú, proque es el tú el que me hace desplazarme. 3) Encontrando al prójimo, encuentro a Dios. Aproximándome al prójimo me aproximo a Dios. 4) Yo me aproximo al prójimo con mis facultades de amor humano. La caridad cristiana no se yuxtapone al amor humano, sino que pasa a través de él, es trasmitada por él. 5) La caridad cristiana es un amor universal. No conoce excepciones. 6) La caridad es una gracia: es amar como Dios ama. 7) Ser cristiana es entrar en el circuito del amor divino: amar como Dios ama y, amando, encontrar a Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano, my translation, 31. See also Osvaldo Luis Mottesí, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 43, 68; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 27.

struggle of classes so as to incarnate and verify charity historically.<sup>49</sup>

Because Gutiérrez does not express any expectation, in Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico, that Christians will be repressed and killed by authorities in contemporary Latin America, he also does not speak of the place that the practice of charity and the love of all other people might have in case such an event were to arise. He does note, however, that "Christians must love like Christ: universally, by giving their lives for their brothers." Furthermore, he claims that Jesus demonstrated and proved his love for his disciples precisely by giving his life for them; that is, by dying on account of his love for them.<sup>50</sup> He does not develop an explication of this point, but the idea, first, that Jesus allowed himself to be killed out of love for all of humanity and, second, that Christians should imitate how Jesus loved universally, thereby loving both their friends and their enemies, does underscore an unstated corollary that Christians should be willing in certain circumstances to permit themselves to be killed if this is the only way at the time not to renounce their love of all people. Gutiérrez substantially develops his reflections on the role that universal love, the love of all people, plays in one's willingness to act in the interests of some people up to the point of repression and even death, and thereby to act at the same time against the interests of others, in his pamphlet Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July, 1967), and thereafter in his theology of liberation writings.

### C. The Presence of the Church in the Unique History Where God Acts

The short pamphlet, Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana (August 1965), is notable because Gutiérrez explicitly rejects the perspective, traditionally recognized by Roman Catholics, that two histories--a "profane" history and a "sacred" history--exist at the same time. Instead, he claims that both human beings and God act in a single history. In this history, people demonstrate whether they accept God's universal call to salvation by either contributing to or obstructing the construction of a more just world, a world in which there is greater communion among people, and thus the partial realization of the Kingdom of God. In the context of contemporary Latin America, the task of Christians is to respond to a situation of crisis by collaborating with non-Christians in order to bring about greater communion. In this brief pamphlet, then, Gutiérrez considers many issues and he assumes several foundational convictions that will undergird his formulation of the theology of liberation. For example, he continues to develop his theological reflections on important aspects of the relation between salvation and historical activities, which is the central theme of the theology of liberation.

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<sup>49</sup>Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 103.

<sup>50</sup>"Los cristianos deberán amar como Cristo: universalmente, dando la vida por los hermanos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caridad y amor humano, my translation, 12. See also *Ibid.*, 14, 19.

(4) Pastoral universitario latinoamericana (August 1965):

In this short pamphlet, Gutiérrez synthesizes what was discussed by the theologians, sociologists, youths, professionals, and the directors and advisors of university religious movements who gathered in Lima during August, 1965 for a seminar devoted to the topic of the university *pastoral* in Latin America. According to Gutiérrez, their objective was to determine the best way for Christians to be present in universities that are located in their own historical reality of contemporary Latin America. Thus they consciously sought an answer derived from experiences in their own surroundings instead of blindly applying imported perspectives.<sup>51</sup> Because Gutiérrez wrote the article, he is henceforth treated as its author even though the ideas he expresses were generated in a community. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that, throughout his writings, Gutiérrez consistently claims that his ideas are inspired by his interactions with communities of people in which similar ideas were already circulating for some time.

As was already noted, in this article, Gutiérrez rejects the view, traditionally accepted by Roman Catholics, that two histories exist simultaneously: the "profane" history of the world and the "sacred" history of salvation. He acknowledges that Christians are often rightly accused of being inactive in the world, that is, of being complacent with the existing social order, precisely because they hold this perspective. These unstated critics presumably include non-Christians, such as Marxists, who claim that they are committed to transforming the circumstances so that they may become more just. Gutiérrez contends that, contrary to this traditionally Roman Catholic view, God's revelation of himself to humanity--the "word of God"--in fact, occurs in a single history which has "a double polarity" ("*una doble polaridad*"), consisting of "divine historicity" and "human historicity". On the one hand, God's revelation does not originate with people themselves, but with God. Indeed, God always acts freely, gratuitously, and in novel ways according to God's own will. On the other hand, the addressees of God's always novel, progressive communication of himself are people who live during different historical times. God definitively revealed himself to all of humanity and out of his love of humanity, however, when God the Son entered into this single history as God become man, that is, as Jesus Christ. By becoming man, God revealed to humanity exactly what it signifies to be a human being. To be a person ultimately means to be invited by God to be united in communion with God and with all other people. In order to stress this point, Gutiérrez draws attention to a passage of the Vatican II document, Lumen Gentium (no. 13), which states that God calls all people to salvation. He employs the expression "the People of God", used in Lumen Gentium, in order to refer to all people who are saved due to their love of other people. In fact, the "People of God" consist of whoever enters into communion with God precisely by acting towards everyone else out of love for them. These are the people who engage themselves in historical acts that transform the world so that it may become more

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<sup>51</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, 1.

human (characterized by justice and love for all), and thus they build communion among people. Such communion is evidence of the partial, historical presence of the Kingdom of God. Moreover, the mission of the Church is to manifest the Kingdom of God historically. Nevertheless, the final and full realization of the Kingdom of God, which is the complete communion among people and between people and God, only occurs with the return of Jesus Christ at the end of history. Thus, an affirmative response to the universal call to salvation signifies the personal decision to enter into a communion among all people and God, and not only into an individual relation with God.<sup>52</sup>

Gutiérrez then returns to the objective of the article: to ascertain what the presence of the Church should be in universities situated in contemporary Latin America. According to Gutiérrez, it is necessary to diagnose the present situation there. He identifies a number of features that characterize the continent. These include a rapid population growth, the presence of significant foreign influences, the relative worsening of the situation of underdevelopment, political crises, revolutionary changes, violence, the increased use of new technologies, overcrowding, and dechristianization. Furthermore, many people yearn for still more changes. These characteristics, together, demonstrate that the continent is undergoing a period of dramatic transition. In fact, it is in the midst of an acute crisis. Gutiérrez believes that the Church can either respond to this historical situation by trying to resist changes, that is, by endeavouring to preserve the traditional ways of doing things, in the form of "Christendom", which for him is alienating and ritualistic, or it can serve the interests of all humanity during this time of transition, not simply the traditional interests of the institutional Church and the beneficiaries of the existing, capitalist social order. Gutiérrez and the members of the university movements who met at the seminar reject the first option of how the Church could be present in the world (which includes both Christendom and the *pastoral* of New Christendom). Instead, they choose the second option. Gutiérrez designates this option as the "*pastoral de diálogo*", that is, the "*pastoral* of dialogue". It is characterized by Christians attempting to create a dialogue between the Church and human history, where God is always active in new ways, by inserting themselves into the midst of their surroundings and collaborating with other, non-Christian groups (presumably including Marxists, though he is not clear on this point) to create and achieve new cultural, political, and social projects, instead of remaining aloof from the historical concerns of humanity. People who adopt this option seek more and more to be a Church that is poor. Gutiérrez does not yet elaborate this point, but it will become an increasingly major theme of his subsequent writings, especially starting with Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July 1967).<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, 2-5.

<sup>53</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, 5-8.



#### D. The Relation between Religious Freedom and Salvation

During 1966, not long after the Declaration on Religious Freedom of the Second Vatican Council was completed (December 7, 1965), Gustavo Gutiérrez delivered two lectures devoted to the theme of how salvation and religious freedom are related: "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador" (in July) and "Tres comentarios a la Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa" (in September). He addresses the lectures to a Christian--in fact, a predominantly Roman Catholic--audience. It is worthwhile to recall that Gutiérrez had already been interested in the issue of religious freedom for at least a decade by the time he presented these lectures: while he studied at the Université de Lyon between 1955 and 1959, he worked on an unfinished thesis on the topic of religious freedom.

In the articles, Gutiérrez concurs with the Declaration on Religious Freedom that the state should guarantee freedom in religious matters for all people, not just Christians. This perspective implies that partial truths leading to salvation exist outside Christianity, but in this article Gutiérrez does not speak explicitly of the possible salvation of non-Christians. In Caridad y amor humano: Estudio bíblico and in Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, he has already addressed in a general sense how non-Christians, without specifically referring to Marxists, can manifest their acceptance of the truth that leads to salvation. Given that Gutiérrez analyzes the views of three other writers in "Tres comentarios a la Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa", it is understandable that he does not offer such reflections in the article. Nevertheless, it is unclear why he refrains from reflecting on how non-Christians may be saved in the article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador."

#### (5) "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador" (July 1966):

In the article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Gutiérrez examines the relation between religious freedom and salvation in the Vatican II document, Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Declaratio de libertate religiosa*), as well as the historical development of this relation.<sup>54</sup> Gutiérrez's discussion of this relation contributes some evidence of his theological reflections on some historical examples of the absence or restriction of freedom in religious matters, including even the repression and execution of the adherents of some religions by the members of another religion, especially one which is protected by the state. His short study of the causes of the persecution and the martyrdom of Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church, a period of pre-Christendom, is suggestive of the possibility of the violent death for which Roman Catholics ought to prepare themselves whenever the relation between Church and state is other than that of Christendom. At the same time, Gutiérrez's severe criticisms of the persistence of

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<sup>54</sup>For the English translation, Declaration on Religious Freedom (as well as the original Latin of the *Declaratio de libertate religiosa*), see Vatican II, Session 9 (7 December 1965), Declaration on Religious Freedom, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1000-1011.

Christendom in contemporary Latin America indicate that he believes that the religious freedom that many Roman Catholics in Latin America enjoy in their relations with the state comes at a very high price--in fact, too high a price.

Gutiérrez originally delivered "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador" as a lecture at a meeting of pastoral theology in Santiago, Chile in July, 1966. The theme of the conference was "Palabra y Evangelización" ["Word and Evangelization"]. The audience included professional theologians (Juan Luis Segundo, José Croatto, Bernardo Catao, and José Comblin also presented major addresses), pastoral workers, and advisors of student and professional groups.<sup>55</sup> The author of the introduction to the collection of addresses presented at this conference thinks that Gutiérrez's lecture contributes to the theme of the conference by showing that "a divine word which enters into dialogue with men...is only able to be sought and possessed by means of religious freedom, not just civil freedom."<sup>56</sup>

Gutiérrez's article has five sections: the introduction, "La verdad salvífica" ["Salvific Truth"], "La libertad del hombre" ["The Freedom of Man"], "La mediación humana" ["Human Mediation"], and "Reflexiones finales" ["Final Reflections"]. The titles of the three middle sections reflect some principal themes of the Declaration on Religious Freedom. They are also the themes that Gutiérrez uses to analyze the historical relation between religious freedom and salvation.

In the introduction, Gutiérrez once again demonstrates a concern for how the Church ought to act and be present in the world, especially in Latin America. He derives this interest from his extensive pastoral work in Peru ever since 1960. "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador" is clearly a further elaboration of the analysis that he already began in "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?". This article is an early attempt to elaborate on his suggestion, already stated in the 1964 lecture, that the various *pastorales* that exist in Latin America ought to be analyzed theologically in a systematic fashion. Gutiérrez subsequently provides more extensive theological analyses of them in La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina (January, 1967; published in 1968) and Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina (1970).

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<sup>55</sup>"Presentación," Salvación y construcción del mundo, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Juan Luis Segundo, José Croatto, Bernardo Catao, and José Comblin (Santiago, Chile: Dilapsa; Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Nova Terra, 1968), 7. For other summaries and analyses of the article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," see Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 22-26; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 36-41, 66-67. Breckenridge, in his annotated bibliography, states that the article is an "historical study of question of religious liberty and important reflections on its implications for the salvific dialogue between God and humanity." Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 651.

<sup>56</sup>"Una palabra divina que entra en diálogo con los hombres, muestra el trabajo de Gustavo Gutiérrez, sólo puede ser buscada y poseída a través de una libertad religiosa, y no sólo civil." "Presentación," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 8.

In the introduction of "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Gutiérrez reviews the understanding of salvation that is associated with each of two distinct ways in which the Roman Catholic Church has historically been present in the world. According to the first position, the Church, traditionally viewed as the exclusive depository of revealed salvific truth (i.e., the truth that God became man, and that Jesus was crucified, died, and was resurrected so that humans, too, may have the opportunity to be resurrected), should try to gather all persons to itself in order to present them with the opportunity to choose to embrace this truth so that they may be saved. For this end, the Church ought to inspire a Christian civilization because this would "allow all men, especially the 'least' humanly speaking, access to and abidance in the revealed truth. The Church then seems to be well represented by the biblical image of the net which gathers, at the same time, good and bad fish."<sup>57</sup> Here the "least" means the marginal and poor members of society. The second position criticizes the first one of neglecting the deepest and most authentic demands of the gospel. According to this position, instead of endeavouring to gather all people into its fold at the high cost of diluting gospel demands, the Church should provide a "witness of God's salvific love for all men."<sup>58</sup> This position may be manifested in two ways: by viewing the Church as a small elite living in the midst of the larger world, and, second, by extending the Church beyond its visible boundaries to incorporate implicit or "anonymous" Christians. Gutiérrez cites Karl Rahner (1904-1984) and Edward Schillebeeckx (born in 1914) as examples of theologians who hold the latter perspective.<sup>59</sup> Gutiérrez provides a more thorough study of these ways in which the Church has historically been present in the world and the view of salvation that corresponds to each of them in his January, 1967 lectures that were published in 1968 in his pre-theology of liberation book, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, and in its revised form, the 1970 book, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina. It is notable that, in "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," which dates from two years before he began to articulate his theology of liberation in July, 1968,

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<sup>57</sup>The full quotation follows: "Un pueblo cristiano no es posible sino en una civilización cristiana que permita el acceso y la permanencia en la verdad revelada a todos los hombres, en particular a los 'menores' humanamente hablando. La Iglesia les parece pues bien representada por la imagen bíblica de la red que recoge al mismo tiempo buenos y malos peces." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 14. See Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 23.

<sup>58</sup>The mission of the church "no sería tanto salvar integrando a todos los hombres gracias a una reducción de dichas exigencias del Evangelio, sino dar testimonio del amor salvífico de Dios por todos los hombres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 14.

<sup>59</sup>According to this perspective, anonymous or implicit Christians refer to those non-Christians who have freely accepted the partial truths, residing outside the visible limits of the church, which nevertheless may lead to salvation. For an example of this view, see the many works of Karl Rahner that are concerned with the salvation of non-Christians. See Manzanera's comments: Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 23.

Gutiérrez already judges, in regard to these two positions that concern the relation which the Church ought to have with the world (including, especially, the way that the Church seeks to promote the salvation of people), that "we [i.e., Gutiérrez] do not believe, nevertheless, that they constitute an authentic alternative," especially for Latin America.<sup>60</sup> In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, he will propose an alternative "Prophetic *pastoral*," which he will thereafter examine more thoroughly when he advocates a certain presence of the Church in the world, especially in Latin America, that corresponds to his theology of liberation. Gutiérrez's concern for how the Church ought to act and be present in the continent continues to be pre-eminent throughout his writings.

Gutiérrez believes that an effective way for ascertaining the manner in which the Church ought to be present in the world is to reflect on "how the notions...of salvation, mission of the Church, the relation [of the Church] with the world, are present in the theme of religious freedom" during different periods, as well as the "respective evolution" of these notions in the history of the Church.<sup>61</sup> He states his objective still more precisely using theological language: given that "the Christian life is essentially a relation between a God who communicates himself and a man who freely receives, *the question of religious freedom is...*[the question] *of human mediations which intervene in this salvific dialogue*. In effect, God speaks to men by means of men and ever since God became man, the relation between men mediates the relation between man and God."<sup>62</sup> Therefore, Gutiérrez's concerns are the means by which some people may communicate salvific truth to other people, as well as whether and how these other people are free to accept and reject this offer of truth during the different historical periods that lead up to and include Vatican II. Gutiérrez uses the Declaration on Religious Freedom document of the Second Vatican Council as the end-point for his historical study of how, in a given historical period, the Church's manner of being present in the world, the pre-eminent theology of salvation, and the concept of religious freedom embraced by the Church are,

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<sup>60</sup>"Las implicaciones pastorales, en América Latina en particular, de estas dos concepciones--que no creemos sin embargo que constituyan una auténtica alternativa--son muy grandes naturalmente...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 15.

<sup>61</sup>"...veremos cómo las nociones--y su respectiva evolución en la vida de la Iglesia--de salvación, misión de la Iglesia, relación con el mundo, están presentes en el tema de la libertad religiosa." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 15. See Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 23.

<sup>62</sup>"...trataremos de ver cómo, si la vida cristiana es esencialmente una relación entre un Dios que se auto-comunica y un hombre que acoge libremente, *la cuestión de la libertad religiosa es la de las mediaciones humanas que intervienen en este diálogo salvador*. Dios habla, en efecto, a los hombres a través de los hombres y desde que Dios se hizo hombre, la relación hombre-hombre es mediadora de la relación hombre-Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 15. These correspond to Gutiérrez's italics. Manzanera and Mottesì supply the same quotation. Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 24; Osvaldo Luis Mottesì, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 38

all three, interrelated. It will become evident, as well, from his conclusion ("Reflexiones finales") to the article, that Gutiérrez is concerned with the manner in which these three aspects ought to be interrelated in the present day (that is, 1966) Church in Peru, the Church in Latin America, and in the whole Roman Catholic Church.

Each of the three middle sections of the article ("La verdad salvífica," "La libertad del hombre," and "La mediación humana") has two parts. In the first part, Gutiérrez presents the manner by which the Declaration on Religious Freedom specifies the doctrine of religious freedom accepted by the Roman Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council. In the second part, Gutiérrez analyzes, one by one, the historical development of the three themes (salvific truth, the freedom of man, and human mediation), which has led up to the way that they are recognized in the declaration. In the present study, the second part of the three sections is examined first so as to ascertain Gutiérrez's analysis of the restrictions, repressions, and even executions that members of some religious groups have suffered in societies where the universal religious freedom demanded by the Declaration on Religious Freedom has not been sought. It is in these sections that Gutiérrez will contribute evidence of his concept of persecution and martyrdom. On the other hand, wherever the declaration is embraced, the Church and the government ought not to repress and kill the members of one religion while they protect the members of another religion.

Gutiérrez (as seen in the section, "La verdad salvífica"), examines three views of the relationship between religious freedom and the accessibility of salvation, each of which predominantly characterized a separate period in the Church: religious freedom for all people as a condition for access to religious truth; the Church's exclusive possession of religious truth leading to salvation, and the tolerance by the Church of others who do not accept such salvific truth; and the Church in diaspora and religious freedom.

Gutiérrez looks at how the relationship between religious freedom and salvation was pre-eminently viewed in the pre-Constantinian Church. According to Gutiérrez, Christian apologists, such as Tertullian (c.160-c.220) and Lactantius (c.240-c.320), "in the face of the hostility demonstrated by the Roman Empire, sought arguments that would help the free exercise of their religion."<sup>63</sup> Both believed that all people are capable of accepting the truth that leads to salvation, provided that they are not coerced in religious matters. Moreover, according to Gutiérrez, Tertullian believed that religious freedom for all people (not just Christians, as Gutiérrez makes clear in the section devoted to "The Freedom of Man") meant that people would be free to seek salvific truth, and that they would naturally be attracted to Christianity because this is where the full truth of salvation resides. Tertullian and Lactantius, and even more clearly, Justin Martyr (c.100-c.165), also affirmed that elements of partial truth exist outside of the Church in other religions so

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<sup>63</sup> "Ante la hostilidad manifestada por el Imperio romano a la comunidad cristiana, los apologistas buscan argumentos que hagan valer el libre ejercicio de su religión..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 18. Gutiérrez cites Tertullian, Apologeticum XXIV, 7 and 9.

that some non-Christians might possibly be saved.<sup>64</sup> According to Gutiérrez, this view is characteristic of the apologists during the period of hostility between Christians and Roman authorities.<sup>65</sup> Gutiérrez believes that persecution played a role in the development of this view. He says that these authors defend religious freedom "owing without a doubt to their historical situation," that is, as was already noted, the pre-Constantian historical circumstances in which they lived, "in the face of the hostility demonstrated by the Roman Empire."<sup>66</sup> In the section, "La mediación humana," Gutiérrez expresses his belief that the apologists developed a distrust of the intervention by state authorities in religious matters because Early Christians were confronted by the "intolerance and totalitarianism of the pagan State."<sup>67</sup> Citing Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 236), who was writing to this effect in 204, Gutiérrez affirms the obvious connection between the emergence of this view concerning the role that the state ought to have in religious matters and the experiences of persecutions and martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church: "The Christian community in the face of the pretension by the civil authority of obliging its members to offer sacrifices to the pagan gods, is led to an intelligence of the faith which permits them to affirm not only the free and personal character of religious behavior, but also to mark the limits of civil power."<sup>68</sup> According to Gutiérrez, it was the belief of early Christians that only the Church could certainly deliver salvific truth, and therefore they did not reckon this truth frivolously: it is their "perception of what this truth implies which brought Christians to refuse to offer sacrifices to the pagan gods," even if they were ordered to do this by the civil authority.

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<sup>64</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 18-20, 28-29. Gutiérrez cites Tertullian, Apologeticum, XXIV, 6; XVII, 1-4; XLVII, 2; Ad Scapulam, c. II; Lactantius, Epitome divinarum Institutionum, 54; De inst. Divina IV, 9; V, 21; and Justin Martyr, I Apol., XLVI, 2-4.

<sup>65</sup>Gutiérrez also refers to Athenagoras (second century), Tatian (c. 160), Minucius Felix (second or third century), and Justin Martyr as further examples of this view. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 28, n.35.

<sup>66</sup>The complete quotation is as follows: "Es necesario subrayar sin embargo que encontramos en ellos, debido sin duda a su situación histórica, la defensa de la libertad como condición de acceso y de puesta en práctica de la verdad religiosa, con una firmeza y prueba que los siglos inmediatamente posteriores van a olvidar parcialmente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 28-29. See also *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>67</sup>"Hemos señalado anteriormente una de las líneas de fuerza de la actitud de los primeros cristianos ante la intolerancia y totalitarismo del Estado pagano..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 34.

<sup>68</sup>"La comunidad cristiana ante la pretensión de la autoridad civil de obligar a sus miembros a ofrecer sacrificios a los dioses paganos, es llevada a una inteligencia de su fe que le permite afirmar no sólo el carácter libre y personal del comportamiento religiosa, sino también a marcar los límites del Poder civil." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 34. Gutiérrez cites Hippolytus, Coment. in Danielem III, 20-25, 31.

This perception also brought them to choose to die on account of their conviction that they ought not to act contrary to their faith.<sup>69</sup> It should be stressed, however, that the article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," is not the place to find an extended historical or theological study by Gutiérrez of the various persecutions or instances of martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church. Nevertheless, given Gutiérrez's usual focus on the common, poor masses of Latin America throughout his writings, which will also be evident in the conclusion of this article, it is notable that Gutiérrez does not venture to suggest what the views of the wider populace, not just the cited apologists, may have been in regard to the relationship between religious freedom (and its absence) and one's access to salvation. How did the common people popularly respond to dramatic, if only short-lived, restrictions of their right to religious freedom, especially in the more extreme situations of persecution and executions which, according to many Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church, were ordered because the Christian victims had refused to renounce their faith? It is worthwhile to recall that it was the masses who first popularly venerated those martyrs whose deaths demonstrate the at least occasional absence of religious freedom for the Early Christians, as was seen in chapter one.

Gutiérrez characterizes the historically second view of the relationship between religious freedom and access to salvation as one in which the Church holds an exclusive possession of the truth that leads to salvation, and merely tolerates the members of other religions. In this second period, the state plays an intermediary role in the dialogue between God and human beings: it is the state which guarantees the Church the freedom to evangelize, that is, to extend salvific truth throughout the empire, and it protects the Church so that it may do this.<sup>70</sup> During this second period, the state's primary task is to serve and to watch over the Church, so it grants a full right to freedom in religious matters only to those people who have received salvific truth. The degree of freedom enjoyed by those other people who have not subscribed to salvific truth is dictated by a state which favours the Church; such freedom is not a right for all people. This relationship characterizes the period from the fourth century, starting with the promulgation of the Edict of Milan in 313, which legislated the official tolerance of Christians, and the Decree of Thessalonica in 381, which declared Christianity the religion of the Roman state, until the modern era--until, at least, the sixteenth century. Gutiérrez observes that "starting with Constantine the civil Power is placed at the service of the mission of the Church and this new situation will gradually bring a subtle slide from the defense of

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<sup>69</sup>"Es pues la percepción de lo que esta verdad implica que lleva a los cristianos a negarse a ofrecer sacrificios a los dioses paganos y a negarle competencia al Estado para legislar en el terreno de la relación entre el hombre y Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 35.

<sup>70</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 35-36.

the *freedom in religious matters* to the affirmation of the *freedom of the act of faith*.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, during this second period non-Christians now possess significantly less freedom in religious matters: religious freedom thus "will be synonymous with the *right not to be restricted by the forced imposition of the faith*."<sup>72</sup> This means that, in place of insisting on the incompetence of the state in religious matters, during this second period, the "*State at the service of the true faith*" was asserted.<sup>73</sup> According to Gutiérrez, the need to specify the right to freedom from imposition reveals, of course, that non-Christians sometimes were forced to convert. Gutiérrez identifies Ambrose (c. 339-397) and Augustine (354-430) as two authors, from early in this second period, who somewhat continued to embrace the earlier apologists' view by teaching that one must freely choose to receive salvific truth in order to be saved, but who, contrary to the apologists, did not accept claims that some persons were not yet Christians simply due to ignorance, because they believed that the gospel had by now spread to all peoples.<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless, as was already stated, the truth which supposedly leads to salvation was not to be imposed on members of other religions. If they refused to receive the call to become Christians, thereby remaining in error, they were to be tolerated. Heretics were not to enjoy this restricted religious freedom, but were to be brutally punished. According to Gutiérrez, Augustine exemplifies this view.<sup>75</sup> In regard to the possibility of salvation outside the Church, Gutiérrez notes that it was during the Middle Ages that the view fully developed that partial truths did not exist outside the Church; this was clearly contrary to the apologists' view in the Early Church. Outside of the Church there was no salvation.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>"A partir de Constantino el Poder civil se pone al servicio de la misión de la Iglesia y esta nueva situación traerá gradualmente un sutil deslizamiento de la defensa de la *libertad en materia religiosa* a la afirmación de la *libertad del acto de fe*." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 29. The italics are those supplied by Gutiérrez.

<sup>72</sup>"La libertad en materia religiosa será sinónimo de *derecho a no ser coartado por la imposición forzada de la fe*." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 29. Gutiérrez provides these italics.

<sup>73</sup>"...tendremos ahora el que va de la *afirmación de la incompetencia del Poder civil* en materia religiosa a la reclamación del *Estado al servicio de la verdadera fe*." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 36. These are Gutiérrez's italics.

<sup>74</sup>Gutiérrez cites Ambrose, In Rom. II, 16; X, 17-18; Augustine, Contra epist. Manichei vocant Fundamenti, n. 2 and 3; Epist. 93, 5 and 7; In Joannem XXVI, n. 2. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 21, 29.

<sup>75</sup>Gutiérrez cites Augustine, Contra litteras Patiliani II, 83, 184; Retractatio II, 5. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 31.

<sup>76</sup>Gutiérrez quotes Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274), Summa Theologica, II-II, 9, 10, a. 11 c; and Ibid., II-II, q. 10, a. 8, ad 3. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 22, 31.



Gutiérrez's interest in this second period is not solely theoretical because the Church-state relation of this period also characterizes the relation between the Church and state (as well as other economic, political, social, and cultural powers in society) that has prevailed throughout most of the history of Latin America and which, according to Gutiérrez, persists in much of the region today. As was already emphasized in the study of Gutiérrez's introduction to the article, Gutiérrez judges that, when the Church is involved in this type of intimate relation with the government and centers of power in society, the manner in which the Church is present in the world does not constitute an authentic alternative for present-day Latin America.<sup>77</sup> In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina and thereafter, Gutiérrez denounces various forms of injustice that originate in and are maintained by this relation. It is worth bearing in mind that, in his theology of liberation writings, Gutiérrez will develop his discussion of persecution and martyrdom in modern Latin America precisely when he talks about those Christians who are killed after challenging such a traditional relation between the Church and state.

As was previously noted, Gutiérrez describes the third historical view of the relationship between religious freedom and access to salvation as a relationship which is peculiar to a Church in diaspora. According to Gutiérrez, the view of the relation between religious freedom and salvation, which predominantly characterized a period exceeding one thousand years during which the Church and government were closely associated and allied, begins to collapse in the sixteenth century.

According to the section, "La verdad salvífica" of Gutiérrez's article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," the division of Christendom and the discovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of non-Christian peoples heretofore unknown to European Christians upset the perception of religious unity upon which had previously lain social unity and order, and it helped to initiate the foundering of the Church-state relation which had characterized the second period, as well as the collapse of the distinctive view of the relation between religious freedom and salvation of that period.<sup>78</sup> In the section, "La libertad del hombre," Gutiérrez underscores another contribution to the start of the collapse of the existing Church-state relation in the sixteenth century: "a rediscovery of man as personal subject...up to the point in which one is able to speak of a new type of existence and reflection in contemporary man who is aware of himself as a creative

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<sup>77</sup>In his July, 1967 class lectures, which were published in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, and in his books, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina (January, 1967, published in 1968) and Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina (1970), Gutiérrez utilizes several examples from the various Latin American contexts in order to continue to develop his criticisms of the way in which the Church acts and is present in the world when the government, as well as other powers, and the Church are so closely associated. Mottesi makes a similar judgment that, "It is clear that Gutiérrez's interest in this historical research is not mere erudition. Rather, it is grounded in a practical-pastoral interest in the Church of Latin America." Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 39. Mottesi's judgment is almost identical to that of Manzanera. Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 25.

<sup>78</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 36.

subjectivity."<sup>79</sup> This signifies a shift toward the perspective that promotes the right of individuals to choose for themselves how and whether, if at all, to behave in religious matters. Nevertheless, the Church's concern for the salvation of all people motivated its endeavor to forestall these rapid changes to the status quo. The view of the second period, in fact, persists within the Church, largely unchallenged, doctrinally well into the nineteenth century.<sup>80</sup> It was not to be fully and officially overturned until the Second Vatican Council (the official recognition of the end of the Constantinian era, which in practice had ceased to exist in Europe much earlier), as is seen in the Declaration on Religious Freedom.<sup>81</sup> Throughout his writings, however, Gutiérrez will show that, in much of Latin America, this second period continues to be operative today, though usually not officially, in the close relationship between various sectors of the Church and the holders of power in society.

In the first part of each of the middle sections of the article, as was already mentioned, Gutiérrez examines the manner in which the three themes (salvific truth, the freedom of man, and human mediation) are recognized in the Declaration of Religious Freedom. Each of the first parts will now be examined for further evidence of Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom, as well as his reflections on the

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<sup>79</sup>"La época moderna se caracteriza por un redescubrimiento del hombre como sujeto personal. Los aspectos subjetivos y personales serán acentuados en filosofía, en la vida religiosa, en moral, en la vida política (libertades democráticas), hasta el punto de que puede hablarse de un nuevo tipo de existencia y de reflexión en el hombre contemporáneo que toma conciencia de él mismo en tanto que subjetividad creadora." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 31-32.

<sup>80</sup>In the section, "La verdad salvífica," Gutiérrez discusses the challenges to the view of the second period which was posed by Félicité de Lammenais (1782-1854) in the nineteenth century. He also states his belief that the intransigence of the various popes of the nineteenth century when confronted by modern freedoms is largely explainable by their concern for the eternal salvation of all people. Possible errors were not to be tolerated because they believed that salvation was only securable by accepting by faith the salvific truth of which the church is the exclusive depository. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 23-26, 37. For brief information about Lammenais, see Antoine Degert, "Lammenais, Félicité Robert de," in The Catholic Encyclopedia (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1913), 762-765; "Lammenais, Félicité Robert de," in The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F.L. Cross, 2d ed. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1989), 795-796.

<sup>81</sup>As Gutiérrez observes, the declaration incorporates the notion of creative, personal subjectivity, and therefore emphasizes that all individuals, not just Christians, have the right to religious freedom, and that this right is objectively based on human dignity. The role of the state is no longer to serve the true faith, but to guarantee the right that all people be free to seek religious truth. Declaration on Religious Freedom 1, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1001-1002; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 32, 38. On Gutiérrez's observation of the "decentralizing" of the Roman Catholic Church from "ecclesiocentrism" to "Christocentrism"--a shift from officially seeing the Church as the unique depository of salvific truth to the belief that grace operates outside the visible limits of the Church--see Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," *Ibid.*, 40-41; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflexiones finales: El Concilio Vaticano II," La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, 65-67.

theme of the gratuitous nature of God's offer of salvation to all people. He will later explicitly associate this theme with the formulation of his concept of martyrdom in his theology of liberation writings.

In the section, "La verdad salvífica," Gutiérrez notes that the Roman Catholic Church affirms, in the Declaration on Religious Freedom, that the revealed truth (that God became man, and that Jesus was crucified, died, and was resurrected so that humans, too, may have the opportunity to be resurrected) which leads to salvation is deposited in the Church. The revealed truth, then, does not exist to the same extent outside the Church in all religions or even among atheists. Here Gutiérrez agrees with the declaration. Moreover, according to Gutiérrez, those persons possess authentic human liberation who have freely accepted this salvific truth.<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless, he does not discuss his understanding of how God offers salvation to all people, nor does he explain how Christians, much less non-Christians, can demonstrate that they have freely accepted or rejected this offer of salvific truth.

It is in the section, "La libertad del hombre," that Gutiérrez most explicitly comments on the place of coercion, persecution, and martyrdom in the declaration. Here, Gutiérrez calls attention to the relation between human freedom and salvation: "The Christian life is a dialogue between a God who calls and a man who responds, but he responds freely, just as the gift which God wants to make of himself is free."<sup>83</sup> Then, Gutiérrez makes a very important judgement: for him, "the center of the Declaration is in the first part of n. 2." He follows this statement with a lengthy quotation from number two of the declaration, in which the declaration urges that all people should be protected from coercion in religious matters, that no one should be forced to act contrary to his or her conscience in said matters, that such religious freedom is founded on the dignity of the human person, the revelation of God's word, and reason, and, finally, that this freedom should be recognized legally by the state.<sup>84</sup> Gutiérrez, however, still does not explain how people manifest their free acceptance or rejection of the offer of salvation. Nevertheless, the link that Gutiérrez makes between human freedom in religious matters and salvation is intriguing because he thereby underscores what he believes to be the gratuitous nature of the relation between God and those persons who choose to accept salvific truth: God calls all people to receive the gift of an unmerited salvation and they respond freely by

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<sup>82</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 1, 11, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1002, 1007-1008; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 17.

<sup>83</sup>"La vida cristiana es un diálogo entre un Dios que llama y un hombre que responde, pero que responde libremente, como libre es el dono que Dios quiere hacer de sí mismo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 27. See also Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 38.

<sup>84</sup>"El centro de la Declaración está en la primera parte del n. 2..." Declaration on Religious Freedom 2, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1002; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 27.

either accepting or rejecting the offer. Whoever coerces people in religious matters thereby encumbers each affected person's ability to respond freely. Of course, one's religious freedom is particularly endangered during periods of persecution. This seems to suggest, then, that the decision to allow oneself to die may very well be a gratuitous act, in itself, when one believes that one's full adherence to the Christian faith is otherwise endangered. It will become clear that gratuitousness, in fact, will be a central theme in Gutiérrez's articulation of his theology of liberation (especially in his 1986 book, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job), and hints of this already appear in this article from 1966. (In future writings, Gutiérrez will develop the explanation of his conviction that those relations among people and between people and God are only authentic when they involve the unconditional delivery of oneself to the other person or people, and that this must be done out of love for the other. Furthermore, he will explicitly apply the theme of gratuitousness to the formulation of his concept of martyrdom.)

The section, "La mediación humana," is devoted to the role accorded, in the declaration, to human beings for safeguarding religious freedom. The declaration assigns to all governments the tasks of recognizing religious freedom and of favouring such a freedom, insofar as they do not interfere with the religious acts themselves. Gutiérrez emphasizes that the declaration recognizes this right to religious freedom for all people (as long as they do not disrupt public order), not just those whom the declaration regards as having accepted the religious truth that leads to salvation.<sup>85</sup>

In the conclusion of the article, "Reflexiones finales," Gutiérrez does what his audience has come to expect of him: he situates his preceding study by considering its relevance for his Latin American context, which is appropriate given that he is delivering his lecture primarily to Latin Americans, and that the meeting place is Santiago, Chile. In this regard, Gutiérrez observes that the theme of his study, the relation between religious freedom and salvation, has "a special urgency in countries of Christian majority--or [Christian] baptized--whose great problem is truly the promotion of the masses, their slow insertion into a process of personalization, their difficult...access to an adult faith, as is the case in Latin America."<sup>86</sup> Gutiérrez's motive for doing this study seems to be his concern for how salvific truth ought to be communicated to the masses, the vast majority of Latin Americans who are poor and who do not enjoy the rights of a creative, personal subject, in this case, the right to religious freedom. He explains, "this is a matter...in the last instance of how to conceive the respect due to the freedom of the process which brings

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<sup>85</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 3, 6-7, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, vol. 2, ed. Norman P. Tanner, 1003-1006; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 33.

<sup>86</sup>"El asunto cobra, sin embargo, una urgencia especial en países de mayoría cristiana--o bautizada--, cuyo gran problema es justamente la promoción de las masas, su lenta inserción en un proceso de personalización, su difícil y lúbil acceso a una fe adulta, como es el caso en América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 42.

man into a relationship with God.<sup>87</sup> He worries about how to bring the millions of poor Latin Americans to a true relationship with God. This is the question that impels Gutiérrez's lifetime of work.<sup>88</sup> He concludes that "this respect for and service to religious freedom ought to be studied, naturally, by taking into account the concrete conditions of the Latin American man, by avoiding transplanting issues which are not ours."<sup>89</sup> At the same time, he acknowledges that "theological questions evoked about salvation, the mission of the Church, and secularization" are all concerns that should be reflected upon by the whole Church, and there are aspects of these themes that the Church in Latin America ought to attend to for "an authentic fidelity to the Word of God in our continent."<sup>90</sup> Herein, Gutiérrez once again reveals his concern that he be at service to the people of Latin America, especially to the poor masses, to the Church in his Latin American Context, and finally, to the whole Roman Catholic Church. This, too, will be a stated preoccupation throughout all his writings. Nevertheless, it is notable that Gutiérrez really does not make any specific suggestions on how Christians in Latin America may nurture a more adult faith among the poor masses.

It is clear, then, that the article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," contributes to the study of Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom by providing his analysis of the historical evolution of the relation between religious freedom, as well as the absence of such freedom, and salvation. He does study persecution and martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church, though somewhat briefly, but he does not mention any examples of persecution and martyrdom from the period subsequent to the Early Church. It is notable that his application of the study to his Latin American context is limited, and more

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<sup>87</sup>"Se trata, limitémonos a subrayar esto, en última instancia de cómo concebir el respeto debido a la libertad del proceso que lleva al hombre a una relación con Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 42. See Mottesi's translation: Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 40.

<sup>88</sup>In the future, he will pose the same question in another way: How does one tell a poor people, who live in the midst of widespread and undeserved suffering, that God loves them? Gutiérrez will never veer from his pastoral concern for the salvation of the poor.

<sup>89</sup>"Este respeto y servicio a la libertad religiosa debe ser estudiado, naturalmente, teniendo en cuenta las condiciones concretas del hombre latinoamericano, evitando transplantar problemáticas que no son las nuestras." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 42. See Mottesi's translation of the same passage: Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 40. See, as well, Manzanera's comment on the same passage, which he also quotes: Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 25.

<sup>90</sup>"Las reflexión que en el plano de la Iglesia universal se está dando sobre las cuestiones teológicas evocadas de la salvación, de la misión de la Iglesia y de la secularización, debe proporcionarnos elementos que nos irán señalando líneas de una auténtica fidelidad a la Palabra de Dios en nuestro continente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, my translation, 42. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 25-26.

suggestive than actual. Moreover, in future books and articles it will be clear that this article supplies early evidence of his intuition that relations, whether between God and humans, or among humans, are only true when they are characterized by gratuitous love, that is, the freely made decision to love other people and God unconditionally. The theme of gratuitousness is worth bearing in mind when the pamphlet, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, is studied for further evidence of Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom, as well as of those aspects of his theology, especially his examination of the themes of poverty and charity, which he will utilize in order to support such a concept.

(6) "Tres comentarios a la Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa" (September 1966):

Gustavo Gutiérrez prepared this study of the Vatican II document, Declaration on Religious Freedom, for the Theological Congress that gathered in Rome during September 1966.<sup>91</sup> His stated purpose is to analyze three commentaries on the declaration, "deriving from three men with different views":<sup>92</sup> Fr. John Courtney Murray,<sup>93</sup> Fr. Teodoro Ignacio Jiménez-Urresti,<sup>94</sup> and Ángel Francisco Carrillo de Albornoz.<sup>95</sup> Gutiérrez's article is not the occasion for him to furnish his own thorough treatment of the declaration itself. He already provided such a study in his earlier article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador." Nevertheless, Gutiérrez does make two observations concerning these commentaries that allude to the theme of coercion in religious matters, persecution, and martyrdom in the document, Declaration on Religious Freedom. These will be considered shortly, but they ought to be contextualized by a short study of the theme in the declaration, itself.

The theme of the coercion of religious beliefs and practices (and of such graver expressions of coercion that are manifested in persecution and martyrdom) is central to the Declaration on Religious

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<sup>91</sup>Once again, the following text will be used: Vatican II, Session 9 (7 December 1965), Declaration on Religious Freedom, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1000-1011.

<sup>92</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Three Commentaries on the Declaration of Religious Freedom," IDOC Dossier 66, no. 13 (17 August 1966): 1. Manzanera and Mottesì, in their thorough summaries and analyses of Gutiérrez's pre-liberation theology works, and Breckenridge, in his comprehensive annotated bibliography, do not note the existence of this article.

<sup>93</sup>John Courtney Murray, "La Déclaration sur la Liberté religieuse," Nouvelle Revue Théologique 87 (January 1966): 41-67. A French translation of the declaration, (Declaration sur la Liberté religieuse), as well as the original Latin are published in Nouvelle Revue Théologique 87 (January 1966): 68-84.

<sup>94</sup>Fr. Jiménez-Urresti, La libertad religiosa (Madrid, Spain: Instituto Pastoral de la Universidad de Salamanca, 1965). See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Three Commentaries on the Declaration of Religious Freedom," 4, 10.

<sup>95</sup>A.F. Carrillo de Albornoz, "The Ecumenical and World Significance of the Vatican Declaration on Religious Liberty," The Ecumenical Review 18 (January 1966): 58-84.

Freedom. As the "general principle of religious freedom", the declaration states that every person has a right to religious freedom, which consists in "immunity from coercion by individuals, or by groups, or by any human power,...no one should be forced to act against his conscience in religious matters, nor prevented from acting according to his conscience, whether in private or in public, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits."<sup>96</sup> Moreover, this right to religious freedom "is firmly based on the dignity of the human person as this is known from the revealed word of God and from reason itself. This right of the human person to religious freedom should have the recognition of society by law as to become a civil right."<sup>97</sup> All people should have the opportunity to seek religious truth free from molestation by the state. While the declaration calls for the universal right to religious freedom, it does not claim that all religions equally possess the revealed truth that leads to salvation (i.e., that Jesus Christ lived, was crucified, and was resurrected so that all people, too, could be resurrected): the "one and only true religion subsists in the catholic and apostolic church."<sup>98</sup> In fact, in the declaration, this open atmosphere of religious freedom is considered to be ideal for people to encounter, accept, and live without fear the Christian faith--the one, true religion.<sup>99</sup> Therefore this declaration urges state powers to legislate immunity from coercion and from persecution, which is an extreme form of coercion, for the members of all religions. Furthermore, according to the declaration, it is the "proper purpose" of the state "to provide for the temporal common good," and thus it "should certainly recognise and promote the religious life of its citizens. With equal certainty it exceeds the limits of its authority, if it takes upon itself to direct or prevent religious activity."<sup>100</sup>

The Declaration on Religious Freedom categorically and explicitly rejects the persecution by the state not only of Christians, but also of the members of any religion and, apparently, also of atheists, though, in this regard, Gutiérrez notes Carrillo de Albornoz's concern that the protection of atheists is not

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<sup>96</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 2, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1002.

<sup>97</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 2, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1002.

<sup>98</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 1, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1002. The "catholic and apostolic church" clearly embraces more than the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>99</sup>"The act of faith is by its very nature voluntary. Human beings, redeemed by Christ their saviour and called to adoptive sonships through Jesus Christ, can only respond to God as he reveals himself if, with the father drawing them, they give to God a free and rational allegiance of faith. It is therefore entirely in accord with the nature of the faith that every kind of human coercion should be excluded from religion." Declaration on Religious Freedom 10, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1007.

<sup>100</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 3, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1004.

sufficiently safeguarded in an explicit manner in the declaration.<sup>101</sup> Gutiérrez offers his hope that the commentator's worry is unfounded and that the apparent reference to atheists is not open to misinterpretation.<sup>102</sup> This clearly underscores Gutiérrez's support of freedom in religious matters for all people, even if they choose not to pursue salvific truth in the context of any religion. It seems, then, that the declaration emphatically disallows the persecution of non-Christians (members of non-Christian religions and atheists), as well as the persecution of Christians who hold unpopular views, by any government that may engage in such activities while claiming to act in the best interests of Christians or of the Church. Indeed, the declaration does acknowledge, without specifying instances in which the Roman Catholic Church has been responsible for persecuting non-Christians or suspect Christians, that "the people of God" have sometimes acted contrary to the principle of religious freedom.<sup>103</sup> Gutiérrez brings attention to Carrillo de Albornoz's note that, with this matter of past errors, the declaration uses, perhaps deliberately, the term "people of God" rather than "Church".<sup>104</sup> This is significant because, in future works, such as La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez will emphasize that the Church as an institution, as well as some

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<sup>101</sup>It "is wrong for a civil power to use force or fear or other means to impose the acceptance or rejection of any religion, or to prevent anyone from entering or leaving a religious body. It is even more against the will of God and contrary to the sacred rights of the human person and of the family of nations, when force of any kind is used to destroy or to repress religion either in the whole human race or in any region or in any particular group." Declaration on Religious Freedom 6, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1005. The following statement apparently endeavours to safeguard the freedom of atheists to decide not to practice any religion, even if it is Christianity, the "one true religion," as declared by the declaration: "Thus the right to religious freedom is based on human nature itself, not on any merely personal attitude of mind. Therefore this right to non-interference persists even in those who do not carry out their obligation of seeking the truth and standing by it; and the exercise of the right should not be curtailed, as long as due public order is preserved." Declaration on Religious Freedom 2, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1003.

<sup>102</sup>A.F. Carrillo de Albornoz, "The Ecumenical and World Significance of the Vatican Declaration on Religious Liberty," The Ecumenical Review 18 (January 1966): 64; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Three Commentaries on the Declaration of Religious Freedom," 8.

<sup>103</sup>"Although at times in the life of the people of God, as it has pursued its pilgrimage through the twists and turns of human history, there have been ways of acting contrary to it, nevertheless the church's teaching that no one's faith should be coerced has held firm." Declaration on Religious Freedom 12, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1009.

<sup>104</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Three Commentaries on the Declaration of Religious Freedom," 9. In the judgment of Carrillo de Albornoz, "for someone who reads this statement with friendly and sympathetic eyes, there is nothing in it which could appear as contrary to historical fact. It is true that the Catholic Church never denied the doctrine that no one must be forced into the faith. It is also true that (at least one part of the truth), in the life of the People of God (curious that, for bad things, the 'Church' suddenly becomes the 'People of God'), there were ways less consonant and even opposite to the spirit of the Gospel." A.F. Carrillo de Albornoz, "The Ecumenical and World Significance of the Vatican Declaration on Religious Liberty," The Ecumenical Review 18 (January 1966): 80.



of its members, have had, and continue to have a role in engendering and maintaining various injustices that exist in society. On the other hand, the declaration specially recognizes those Christians who have been killed by persecutors: Christian "martyrs and faithful without number...throughout the ages and throughout the world" amply demonstrate that many Christians have "not [been] afraid to confront those in public office when they [have] opposed the holy will of God."<sup>105</sup> According to the declaration, religious freedom also means that governments should allow Christians to evangelize. This right to disseminate the tenets of one's religion is apparently also proper to the members of all other religions, yet this is not stated in an explicit manner, even though this clarification could be expected of a declaration on universal religious freedom. The declaration acknowledges, however, that some governments continue "to make life arduous and even dangerous for religious communities,"<sup>106</sup> and it reminds all Christians that they "should find prudent ways in which to spread the light of life to those outside their fold," even to the point of "shedding their blood."<sup>107</sup>

Finally, it is notable that, contrary to his usual practice, in this article Gutiérrez does not discuss, even in a cursory manner, the pertinence of the Declaration on Religious Freedom, nor of the three commentaries on the declaration, to the contexts of Latin America and Peru. His concern is clearly the whole Roman Catholic Church, rather than the Church in Latin America or the Church in Peru. This is probably explainable by the wider framework of the theological congress in Rome for which he prepared this article. While Gutiérrez will continue to be concerned about the whole Roman Catholic Church, it will become evident that, whatever may be the themes of his studies, he will usually also speak of how they bear upon his Latin American or Peruvian context.

This brief analysis of the Declaration on Religious Freedom clearly contributes to the study, already begun in chapters three and four, of the concept of persecution and martyrdom which is operative for the authentication of alleged martyrs in the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church, the period in which the theology of liberation arises in Latin America. The declaration establishes a general reference point against which the perceived coercion or persecution of the members of any given religious group by a government may be evaluated. Gutiérrez's article, "Tres comentarios a la Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa," itself, does provide some hints, in the form of allusions, in regard to Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and

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<sup>105</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 11, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1008. Of course, the declaration does not identify as martyrs those persons who have been killed as heretics.

<sup>106</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 15, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1010.

<sup>107</sup>Declaration on Religious Freedom 14, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 1010.

martyrdom. A great deal more of his concept of martyrdom was expressly manifested, however, in his more thorough study of the declaration and its theme of coercion, persecution, and martyrdom in his earlier article, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador."

E. The Relation between the Understanding of Salvation and the Way how the Church is Present in Contemporary Latin America

In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez identifies and analyzes four distinct ways in which the Roman Catholic Church acts and is present in contemporary Latin America, as well as the understanding of salvation that corresponds to each of them. His objective is to determine the specific way which the Church should adopt so as to lead all Latin Americans to salvation, especially the majority who are poor and members of the masses. He believes that those people are saved--regardless of whether they call themselves Christians--who decide to love all other people, and who truly manifest this love in historical relations. He defines salvation as communion among people and between people and God. The Church, then, should denounce all those historical relations which rupture communion among all people and between people and God, and it should endeavour to create relations that more closely approximate that full communion, called the Kingdom of God, which is proclaimed in the gospel. Gutiérrez maintains this understanding of salvation throughout his theological writings. In fact, Gutiérrez's reconsideration of the biblical notions of poverty in his subsequent work, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, arises from his attempt to determine the way that the Church, in collaboration with non-Christians, may most effectively contribute to the creation of more just societies, that is, societies that more closely approach the aforesaid, complete communion.

(7) La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina (January 1967):

Gustavo Gutiérrez's book, entitled La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, is a collection of recordings of the lectures that Gutiérrez delivered during January, 1967 in Montevideo, Uruguay at the Primera Sesión de Estudios (First Session of Studies) of the Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos (MIEC, i.e., the International Movement of Catholic Students) and Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional (JECI, i.e., International Catholic Student Youth). Cecilia Tovar revised the recordings.<sup>108</sup> Gutiérrez did not correct them before they were published. Gutiérrez had already presented many of the same thoughts at an earlier lecture in 1964. In both cases, university students were the audience of the

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<sup>108</sup>Oliveros dates the conference to February, rather than January, 1967. Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 105.

lectures.<sup>109</sup> Although the material from this book predates Gutiérrez's articulation and naming of his theology of liberation, many of the same ideas were included, in a largely unchanged form, in his later book, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, which was first published in 1970, as well as in the second edition of it, published in 1976. In fact, Gutiérrez did identify the 1970 book as part of his liberation theology corpus when he defended his doctorate at the University of Lyon on May 29, 1985.<sup>110</sup> He also revised and included it in chapter four of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas.<sup>111</sup> It is worthwhile, then, to ascertain the manner in which Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom is evident in La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina. Some of the comments that follow in reference to the content of the book will explicitly note points of continuity, as well as some of the changes, between this pre-liberation theology text and the text of the first edition of Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina.

In the preface of La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez states that his explicit goal is to reflect on the *pastoral* of the Church in Latin America. As was already mentioned in the analysis of Misión de la Iglesia y apostolado universitario, Gutiérrez defines *pastoral* as "the action of the Church, the form of presence that it assumes in order to present the gospel message at a particular moment and in a particular reality."<sup>112</sup> This is clearly a further development of the thoughts Gutiérrez already presented in "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?," Pastoral universitaria latinoamericana, and "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador." In the latter article, he examines systematically the distinct ways in which the Roman Catholic Church has been present in the world during different

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<sup>109</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, 7-9. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, 5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, 2d ed., 5. Breckenridge describes La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina as a "pamphlet antecedent of Líneas pastorales, extensively revised when released under the latter title." Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 651. That which he calls an extensive revision, however, corresponds principally, though significantly, to the section devoted to the fourth pastoral option, the Prophetic Pastoral, which exists in Latin America. Much of the rest of Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, however, is identical to the earlier book.

<sup>110</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 2; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," in La verdad los hará libres, 9.

<sup>111</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 71-80.

<sup>112</sup>"La pastoral es el actuar de la Iglesia, la forma de presencia que asume para presentar el mensaje evangélico en un determinado momento y en una determinada realidad." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 9. For identical quotations, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 2d ed., 5. Hereafter, references to the second edition will not be made unless the pertinent reference differs between the two editions. See Mottes's translation: Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 45. For Mottes's complete analysis of the book, see *Ibid.*, 44-57, 68-73. For Manzanera's analysis of the book, see Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 28-35.

historical periods. In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, however, he focuses on the various ways in which the Church is present in Latin America today (i.e., 1967). Gutiérrez then suggests that the Church should decide on the particular way that it acts and is present in the world (i.e., its specific *pastoral* from among the four possible pastoral options) according to two factors. The first factor is "the reality in which the Church works, with the demands that its [i.e., the reality's] special characteristics raise, to which the Church should respond; in our case, that reality is Latin America."<sup>113</sup> Thus present-day Latin America is the historical reality in which the Church should function. The second factor is theology, which he defines as "the intelligence of the faith; thus a *pastoral* does not consist solely in adapting oneself effectively to a reality; effectiveness is only one of the aspects." The other aspect "is the constant comparison of the work of the Church with gospel demands, the criticism of that work with regard to its faithfulness to that which is deepest in Christianity."<sup>114</sup>

Gutiérrez explains, however, that these gospel demands are not atemporal, and therefore the Church should not respond to them abstractly. Instead, the Church, itself, is historical, and it operates in a given historical period, with each period revealing new aspects of the complete gospel message or deepening the revelation of other aspects that are already partially known. At no time in history, however, does the Church have the final, insupplantable interpretation of the gospel because the meaning of the gospel, itself, is always inexhaustible. Therefore the *pastoral* of the Church, according to Gutiérrez, "will evolve in accordance with the historic moment, and this will be a real advance, a progress, a deepening."<sup>115</sup> In fact, the *pastoral* that prevails in each historic period also has "aspects of infidelity to the gospel," but Gutiérrez does not intend to criticize anachronistically the effects of these infidelities within their given periods of predominance as

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<sup>113</sup>"...la realidad en la cual la Iglesia actúa, con las exigencias que plantean sus características especiales, a las cuales la Iglesia debe responder; en nuestro caso, esa realidad es América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 9; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 5-6.

<sup>114</sup>"El segundo factor definitorio de la pastoral es la teología, la inteligencia de la fe; pues una pastoral no consiste únicamente en adecuarse efizamente a una realidad; la eficacia es sólo uno de los aspectos; y el otro es la constante confrontación del actuar de la Iglesia con las exigencias evangélicas, la crítica de ese actuar en cuanto a su fidelidad a lo más profundo del cristianismo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 9; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 6. See also Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 45-46.

<sup>115</sup>"La pastoral de la Iglesia evolucionará de acuerdo al momento histórico, y éste será un avance real, un progreso, una profundización." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 6. See Mottes's comments: Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 47-48.

if he could thereby effect changes in historical events.<sup>116</sup> The facts of historical events ought not to be evaded. Instead, for Gutiérrez, the real danger is to preserve steadfastly a given *pastoral*, which itself perhaps had been a legitimate, though imperfect, response to the given historic period in which it had been engendered, instead of responding to the present era. If the Church were to submit itself to this temptation, it would thereby be unfaithful to the gospel.<sup>117</sup> Gutiérrez's objectives for the book, then, are twofold: to analyze the four types of *pastorales* that do exist today in Latin America, though usually not in a pure state; to criticize each of them theologically by pointing out the theological concepts that support each of the *pastorales*, as well as the historical development of these concepts. It will become clear, however, that Gutiérrez is particularly concerned by the attempts made by many people in Latin America to preserve a specific one of the *pastorales*, which is already outdated in the Roman Catholic Church: the *pastoral* of Christendom, which is characterized by a certain, intimate Church-state relation that was already analyzed in "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador."

In the section entitled, "Qué es la teología" ("What is theology")<sup>118</sup> Gutiérrez continues to reveal his early preoccupation with the task of theology, and thus of the theologian; these are concerns which will henceforth mark his work. He identifies theological knowledge as the last of the four levels of knowledge, which also include natural or pre-reflective knowledge, scientific knowledge, and philosophical knowledge.<sup>119</sup> Gutiérrez says that theology is "the intelligence of the Faith"; he continues, thereby amplifying the aforementioned definition of theology: "Faith is not only the affirmation of truths, but accepting the word of God and living according to it. Theology then would be the intelligence of the word of God accepted and lived, the perception of the meaning of human existence starting from the word of

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<sup>116</sup> "...si bien encontraremos en cada *pastoral* aspectos de infidelidad al evangelio, no podemos tachar de falsa la *pastoral* o la teología que la respalda, como no podemos tachar de falsa una etapa histórica, porque es un hecho." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 6.

<sup>117</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 6-7.

<sup>118</sup>The question marks are missing, though implied. In fact, in Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, the new heading is, "A manera de introducción: ¿Qué es la teología?": "By way of introduction, what is theology?" Ibid., 9.

<sup>119</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 13-14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 9-10. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 29; Osvaldo Luis Mottesí, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 46.

God, as revelation of God includes a revelation about man."<sup>120</sup> With this definition, Gutiérrez stresses his conviction that theology ought to be verified in the context of a community. Gutiérrez will develop his concept of what constitutes theology in future works, especially in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas.<sup>121</sup> Gutiérrez's explication of the methodology that he uses in the theology of liberation is examined closely in chapter six of the present study.

Gutiérrez then identifies four historical functions of theology in the Church: a spiritual function, which was dominant during the first twelve centuries, and was typically practiced by the monk, who, living away from the world, understood his faith by contemplating or meditating on certain texts, usually biblical ones, so as to attain spiritual wisdom; starting in the twelfth century, a scientific function, identified with Albertus Magnus (c.1200-1280), Thomas Aquinas, and Bonaventure (c.1217-1274), which "proceeds by the use of logical reasoning and tries to place philosophy at the service of the intelligence of the Faith. One important mark is its disinterest";<sup>122</sup> starting in the fourteenth century, theology as the aid to the ecclesiastical magisterium, a function which has the risk of falling into dogmatism; and finally, the critical function of theology by which theologians scrutinize the operative *pastoral* of the Church—the way in which the Church acts and is present in the world.<sup>123</sup> In both the first edition and the second edition of Líneas

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<sup>120</sup>"La teología es la inteligencia de la Fe. La Fe no es sólo la afirmación de verdades, sino aceptar la palabra de Dios y vivir según ella. La teología sería entonces la inteligencia de la palabra de Dios aceptada y vivida, la percepción del sentido de la existencia humana a partir de la palabra de Dios, ya que la revelación de Dios comprende una revelación sobre el hombre." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 10.

<sup>121</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 15-34.

<sup>122</sup>"Esta teología científica procede por el uso del razonamiento lógico y busca poner la filosofía al servicio de la inteligencia de la Fe. Una nota importante es su disinterés,...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 15.

<sup>123</sup>Speaking in 1967 or 1968, Gutiérrez explains this critical function of theology: "Its beginning is recent, it has been produced during the last thirty or forty years and it has originated essentially in the great discovery that man makes of himself as creative subjectivity....This theology accompanies the pastoral of the Church by confronting it with the fundamental demands of the gospel and by seeking a greater fidelity. It has to do with a criticism of the pastoral options of the Church and it tries to explain the theological concepts that constitute the background of a pastoral act; and in this criticism of the behaviour often there is produced a discovery of new things, a deepening, [which is the] work of the Holy Spirit, present in the Church."

The following quotation is the original Spanish: "Su nacimiento es reciente, se produce en los treinta o cuarenta últimos años y se origina fundamentalmente en el gran descubrimiento que el hombre hace de sí mismo como subjetividad creadora....Esta teología acompaña la pastoral de la Iglesia confrontándola con las exigencias fundamentales del crítica de las opciones pastorales de la Iglesia y busca explicitar los conceptos teológicos que constituye el trasfondo de un comportamiento pastoral; y en esta crítica del comportamiento se produce muchas veces un descubrimiento de cosas nuevas, una profundización, obra del Espíritu Santo, presente en la Iglesia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 15.

pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina. Gutiérrez insists that, while both the spiritual and the scientific (which he now calls the rational) functions may have been dominant functions of theology during given historical periods, they have a permanent value. On the other hand, he omits the third historical function among the list of those with permanent value, and he further elaborates the critical function.<sup>124</sup> He will repeat this judgment in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, and many times thereafter.<sup>125</sup>

In the rest of the book, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez concerns himself with answering the question, "How does one establish salvific dialogue of the Church with the Latin American man?"<sup>126</sup> In other words, in what way ought the Church to be present in the world so that it can proclaim the gospel to the present-day Latin American? Although the noted recipient of the gospel sought in the first part of this book is the undifferentiated present day "Latin American man", and in fact the evangelization of all Latin American men and women will remain one of Gutiérrez's concerns throughout his works, it is clear from "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," and the section of La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, entitled "Pastoral Profética," that the masses, the vast majority of Latin Americans who are poor, already constitute that sector of the present day Latin American population whose salvation he believes ought to be particularly considered. When Gutiérrez speaks of the "average Latin American man", he means someone who is both poor individually, as well as a member of a whole people, a collective entity, which is poor. This observation will be reinforced by Gutiérrez's reflections on poverty in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta.

In part one of the book, Gutiérrez describes four pastoral lines that are present in Latin America to varying degrees around the time of his lectures in January, 1967. He focuses on comparing the relationship that the Church has with the world in each *pastoral*.<sup>127</sup> The primacy of Gutiérrez's concern with this Church-world relationship will be evident throughout all subsequent writings. In part two of the

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<sup>124</sup>This eliminates a possible misreading of Gutiérrez's two books that might have suggested that the first two functions could, and even ought to be superseded by a more recent function of theology, as if a given function were necessarily to be used exclusively. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 11. The same observation that these two functions have permanent value will be present in Teología de la Liberación: Perspectivas. For analyses of Gutiérrez's portrayal of the historical, theological functions, see Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 29; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 47.

<sup>125</sup>See Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 16-18.

<sup>126</sup>"¿Cómo se establece el diálogo salvador de la Iglesia con el hombre latinoamericano?" Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 17; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 13.

<sup>127</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 17. See Manzanera's and Mottes's analyses of Gutiérrez's examination of the four pastorals: Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 30-35; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 48-50.

book, Gutiérrez criticizes theologically the four types of *pastorales* which have emerged during different historical periods, and all of which continue to co-exist in contemporary Latin America. He designates these four pastoral types by using proper nouns. He calls them the *pastoral* of Christendom, the *pastoral* of New Christendom, the *pastoral* of the Maturity in the Faith (he no longer calls it the *pastoral* of the Maturity in the *Adult Faith*), and the Prophetic *pastoral*. In the context of Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom, his presentation of the *pastorales* ought to be studied closely because dramatic variances in opinion in regard to whether the Church in Latin America, in fact, is suffering persecution during a given period, seem to stem partially from differences in conviction concerning how the Church ought to be present in the world. This is a question, then, of the norm against which the Church's action and presence in the world ought to be judged at any given time in the present-day world, including in Latin America.

As was already observed in the study of "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Gutiérrez does not usually consider distant historical events for their own sake, but rather he either uses them to illustrate and analyze parallel and contrary situations that exist today, especially in Latin America, or he traces the historical development that led to a present-day situation. In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez engages in both of these activities. For example, he analyzes the scenario that prevailed during the period before Christendom in order to contrast it with Christendom, and he elaborates a lengthy study of Christendom because this continues to be the prevailing *pastoral* in much of Latin America today. He examines the *pastorales* of New Christendom and of Maturity in the Faith because they, too, are both present in Latin America today, and they also represent the historical route by which *pastorales* have evolved in the Roman Catholic Church, including in Latin America. It should be noted that the *pastoral* of Christendom will be subject to a fuller analysis in this study of Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom than these other two *pastorales* because Gutiérrez criticizes the *pastoral* of Christendom most severely for enduring beyond its legitimate usefulness for the Church in Latin America. Finally, Gutiérrez examines the Prophetic *pastoral* because it most closely approaches how he wishes the Church would act in contemporary Latin America. It is also the *pastoral* used for analyzing and criticizing the other three ones, most notably, the *pastoral* of Christendom. Gutiérrez's examination of the Prophetic *pastoral* will be studied rather closely because it is suggestive of that action and presence of the Church in Latin America which he will advocate in his future theology of liberation writings. It ought to be kept in mind, however, that in the cases of all four *pastorales*, Gutiérrez's goal is to determine whether, and to what extent, each one of them responds to the aforementioned question, "How does one establish salvific dialogue of the Church with the Latin American man?", a man (or woman) who is poor and who is a member of the masses.

The *pastoral* of Christendom, according to Gutiérrez, was the principal way in which the Roman Catholic Church acted and was present in the world from the conversion of Constantine up to the beginning of the modern era. It characterizes a Church in which a widespread assumption of Christian unanimity



exists. Gutiérrez explains that, during the Middle Ages, it was assumed that "everyone at that time was Christian and the exceptions are limited: the Jews enclosed in ghettos, the infidels."<sup>128</sup> He identifies four features of this *pastoral*: conversion--the prerequisite of salvation--is equated with belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, that is, with having been baptized in it; one's Christian life is judged according to the regularity with which one receives the sacraments; the maintenance of the Christian unanimity is the responsibility of political, economic, social, and cultural powers, which prohibit the development and spread of non-Christian or non-Roman Catholic ideas, thereby appealing to the ideal of a "Catholic country"; the center of Christian life is the local parish.<sup>129</sup> The practice of charity is notably absent as a requirement for membership in the Church. In fact, according to Gutiérrez, charitable acts are valuable in this first pastoral type insofar as they are expressions of faith rather than for the good that they do the other persons who benefit, and much less as expressions of love for them.

In the *pastoral* of Christendom, the political and religious realms are intimately connected, so that a ruler's primary task is to serve and safeguard the Church. Moreover, those people whom the Church officially denounces as heretics are judged to be social, as well as religious, dissidents. According to Gutiérrez, such a traditional relationship between Church and state appealed and frequently continues today to appeal to both the poor of Latin America, as well as the conservative holders of power in society there. He observes that "the *pastoral* of Christendom responds to a sector of Latin American man: the proletarian and subproletarian masses; but curiously it responds also to the sector of the conservative oligarchy, who appreciate the traditional Christendom as theirs."<sup>130</sup> Gutiérrez expresses, perhaps sarcastically, his wonder at this attraction of the first pastoral type to those who are powerful in society. He notes that these people, in fact, often bestow gifts to the Church.<sup>131</sup> The Church-state relation adopted by this Church that the powerful consider to be "theirs" should be borne in mind when Gutiérrez later speaks about the deaths that

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<sup>128</sup>The full quotation is as follows: "Esta época se caracteriza por una nota fundamental: la UNANIMIDAD CRISTIANA; todo el mundo de entonces era cristiano y las excepciones son limitadas: los judíos encerrados en ghettos, los infieles." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 18.

<sup>129</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 18-21. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 14-18.

<sup>130</sup>"La pastoral de cristiandad responde a un sector del hombre latinoamericano: la masa proletaria y subproletaria; pero curiosamente responde también al sector de la oligarquía conservadora, que aprecia este cristianismo tradicional y lo reconoce como suyo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 22. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 21.

<sup>131</sup>"The Church in this *pastoral* receives the economic support of the oligarchy in order to construct churches, colleges, seminaries, etc." "La Iglesia en esta *pastoral* recibe el apoyo económico de la oligarquía para construir templos, colegios, seminarios, etc." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 22. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 21.

will derive from the orders of some people in positions of power as they resist what they believe to be a threat to their Church by a questionable sector of the Church, which is seemingly infiltrated by outsiders--most disturbingly, by communists. It is notable that, in La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez does not demonstrate a similar astonishment about the attraction of the same *pastoral* to the poor masses; rather, for him, "one of the interesting aspects" of the *pastoral* of Christendom is that it has "a great feeling for the masses, depersonalized and in need of a certain framework in order to be able to live humanly and Christianly. The *pastoral* of Christendom is a *pastoral* for the masses and it has ways of reaching them; the masses are responsive to the methods of the *pastoral* of Christendom (processions, nine first Fridays...)." <sup>132</sup> He does not develop his explanation of why it is attractive to the poor. Apparently the poor's deepest reasons are sufficiently obvious to him, as well as to his Latin American audience, that he does not need to elaborate them lengthily. The *pastoral* may very well appeal to the poor due to the seeming perfection of the complete worldview that it presents. For example, it offers a definite path to salvation: according to this perspective, salvation is clearly obtainable by being baptized and thereafter by regularly participating in the Church's sacraments, activities which signify receiving and retaining a salvific truth that is traditionally viewed as residing solely in the Roman Catholic Church. <sup>133</sup> Moreover, Gutiérrez's reference to processions suggests that he believes that the poor are among the many people in Latin America who value the conspicuous rituals and symbols which tend to accompany this *pastoral*.

Gutiérrez observes, as well, that this Church-state relationship was evident in Spain and Portugal when the *conquistadores* arrived in the Americas, and that they transplanted it there. When European Roman Catholics, especially clergy, who embraced the *pastoral* of Christendom were confronted by a continent of previously unknown non-Christians, for them, the necessary response was widespread missionary activity, with the aim of securing the baptism of as many indigenous peoples and individuals as possible so that they could be saved. After all, as was already mentioned, it was widely assumed by Roman Catholics that salvation was impossible outside of the Church. <sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup>The complete citation follows: "Uno de los aspectos interesantes de este tipo de *pastoral* es el tener un gran sentido de la masa, depersonalizada y necesitada de un cierto encuadramiento para poder vivir humana y cristianamente. la *pastoral* de cristiandad es una *pastoral* de masas y tiene formas de llegar a ellas: las masas son sensibles a los métodos de la *pastoral* de cristiandad (procesiones, nueve primeros viernes...)." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 22.

<sup>133</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 53.

<sup>134</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 19, 31-35. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 15-16, 29-33. For example, it will be seen in Gutiérrez's many future studies of Bartolomé de Las Casas that the sixteenth century missionary, who devoted most of his life defending the American Aborigines' right to life, shared his contemporaries' profound concern for the Aborigines' salvation.

Gutiérrez's brief explanation of the persecution of Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church is intriguing, though much less developed in this book than in "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador." According to Gutiérrez, the persecutions periodically organized by the Roman state took place during the period before the *pastoral* of Christendom prevailed, at a time when the Church was not intimately united with the government:

In the first centuries there is a tension between the Church and the world, which is expressed in the strong hostility of the political power (the persecutions); but the Church remains internally very united: when in the fourth century such tension disappears for the Christianization of the world at that time, a tension inside the Church rises, which leads to the differentiation of the functions of the priest and laity. At that time, one will speak about the "two swords", spiritual and temporal, which correspond respectively to the priesthood and the laity. Given Christian unanimity and the nonexistence of a world outside the Church, both tasks happen inside the Church; one does not talk about the function of the laity in the world because the world does not have its own identity.<sup>135</sup>

As in "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Gutiérrez does not devote himself to a thorough study of persecution and martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church. Instead, as was already observed, Gutiérrez examines the pre-Christendom period not strictly for its own sake, but in order to contrast it with Christendom. Gutiérrez's historical study of Christendom seems to suggest a general rule: that, contrary to the era of pre-Christendom, as long as the Church is closely connected with the political and economic powers of a given society, as happens when the *pastoral* of Christendom is operative, then the Church does not usually experience government-directed persecutions or the martyrdom of its members within that society. Such a conclusion is largely evidenced by the study of martyrs in chapter one, which focuses on the martyrs prior to the Edict of Milan. Indeed, most of the persecutions and martyrdoms from the pre-Constantinian period were blamed on non-Christians (pagans and, to a considerably lesser extent, Jews) in positions of economic, political, or religious power, especially since the third century, when regional edicts began to be promulgated. (The mobs had a more significant role in persecutions prior to the third century.) As well, the study of martyrs during the period that Gutiérrez calls Christendom, in chapter two, would confirm a proposal that, in the case of persons judged to be orthodox in their Christianity, persecutions and

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<sup>135</sup>"...en los primeros siglos hay una tensión entre la Iglesia y el mundo, que se expresa en la fuerte hostilidad del poder político (las persecuciones); pero la Iglesia permanecen [sic] interiormente muy unida: cuando en el siglo IV desaparece dicha tensión por la cristianización del mundo de entonces, surge una tensión al interior de la Iglesia, lo que lleva a diferenciar las funciones del sacerdocio y del laicado. Se hablará entonces, de las "dos espadas", espiritual y temporal, que corresponden al sacerdote y al laico respectivamente. Dada la unanimidad cristiana y la no existencia de un mundo fuera de la Iglesia, ambas tareas se dan dentro de la Iglesia; no se habla de la función del laico en el mundo porque éste no tiene consistencia propia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 33; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 36-37.

martyrdoms are exceptional in those societies where Church and state are intimately associated. As was already seen, however, members of religions that are not allied with the state live a more precarious existence, depending on the tolerance of both the Church and the state, while those judged to be heretics are even more vulnerable--to persecutions and executions organized by the Church and state, and to acts of violence that are expressions of popular hatred toward suspicious groups and persons. (The example of John Hus illustrates this point. He was declared a heretic on July 6, 1415 at the fifteenth session of the Council of Constance, and then turned over to the secular authority to be burned at the stake.) Indeed, according to chapter two, those short-term persecutions of Roman Catholics that did arise between the fourth and fifteenth centuries within Christendom (obviously the situation of missionaries evangelizing outside Christendom was different), in fact, usually were attributed, first of all, to individuals and groups of individuals from marginal groups, such as Jews and other non-Christians, who at times may have been accorded limited religious tolerance, and secondly, such persecutions would be blamed on heretics (for example, in the case of the Arians, which was examined in chapter two).

A question does arise, however, in relation to Gutiérrez's treatment of the concept of Christian unanimity, which supposedly characterizes the *pastoral* of Christendom: it is not sufficiently clear from Gutiérrez's book how and why the concept arose and evolved in the Iberian peninsula, where Roman Catholics and Muslims (as well as Jews), living either together or adjacent to each other over the course of more than seven hundred years, in fact, did interact frequently, sometimes antagonistically, other times uneasily, and even, at times, also peacefully. Such a study would help one comprehend the remarkable endurance of the *pastoral* of Christendom in contemporary Latin America after it was transplanted to the continent five hundred years ago. This book, however, is clearly not the place to find a thorough, historical study of the evolution and endurance of the concept of Christian unanimity among Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American Roman Catholics.

In *La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina*, Gutiérrez once again observes that it was only during Vatican II that the Roman Catholic Church finally acknowledged that the era of Christendom was over: "The Council has declared passed away an era that in reality died four centuries before.... Nevertheless, Christendom still partially survives in Latin America."<sup>136</sup> According to Gutiérrez, the *pastoral* of Christendom, in fact, was the predominant way in which the Church acted and was present in

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<sup>136</sup>"...el Concilio ha declarado fenecida a una era que en realidad murió cuatro siglos antes....Sin embargo, la cristiandad vive todavía en parte en América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, *La pastoral de la Iglesia*, my translation. 18; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia*, 14.

the continent at the time of his writing (January, 1967).<sup>137</sup> For Gutiérrez, an especially grave expression of its survival in much of Latin America, has been the steadfast association between the Roman Catholic Church and traditional forms of society in Latin America:

The Church appears, moreover, strongly linked to traditional forms of society, to specific social classes, thereby presenting a shocking image for many men. In order to obtain the support of political and economic power it arrives at the point of making a series of concessions, thus occurring in Latin America the paradox of a Church supported by non-Christian politicians and governments, who do not believe in what the Church does, but who support it for political motives, economic interest, to conserve an order that favors their interests. The scandal sometimes happens of seeing the Church hand in hand with governments and groups not only non-Christian (a perfectly respectable thing) but scarcely honourable humanly speaking: dictators or corrupt politicians, things that the Church tolerates or forgives in return for political protection or economic help that "favours" the Christian life in the country. Today in Latin America, it is sad to admit that the Church bows before the powerful, whether or not governments, thereby producing unacceptable situations like that which was able to be seen during the dictatorship of Trujillo in the Dominican Republic.<sup>138</sup>

Throughout his writings, Gutiérrez will constantly return to this charge against the Roman Catholic Church, or at least sectors of it, in Latin America. As long as the Church maintains an agreeable relationship with certain powerful groups, it does not suffer persecution, but is instead favoured. For Gutiérrez, however, the Church pays an extremely high price when it is complicit with such powerful groups, in exchange for

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<sup>137</sup>"The four pastoral lines which we have pointed out exist at this moment on the continent, at different levels of extension and fulfillment. The *pastoral* of Christendom nevertheless has the largest presence." The Spanish original follows: "Las cuatro líneas pastorales que hemos señalado existen en este momento en el continente, en diversos niveles de extensión y realización. La pastoral de cristiandad tiene sin embargo una presencia mayortaria." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 29; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 31-32.

<sup>138</sup>"La Iglesia aparece, además, fuertemente ligada a las formas tradicionales de la sociedad, a determinadas clases sociales, presentando una imagen chocante para muchos hombres. Para conseguir el apoyo del poder político y económico llega a hacer una serie de concesiones, dándose en América Latina la paradoja de una Iglesia apoyada por hombres políticos y gobiernos no cristianos, que no creen en lo que la Iglesia hace, pero que apoyan por motivos políticos, por interés económico, por conservar un orden que favorece sus intereses. Se produce a veces el escándalo de ver a la Iglesia de la mano con gobernantes o grupos no sólo no cristianos (cosa perfectamente respetable) sino poco dignos humanamente: dictadores o políticos venales, cosas que la Iglesia tolera o dícupla a cambio de una protección política a de una ayuda económica que 'favorece' la vida cristiana en el país. Hoy en América Latina, es triste confesarlo, la Iglesia se inclina frente a los poderosos, gobernantes o no, produciéndose situaciones inaceptables como la que pudo presenciarse en República Dominicana durante la dictadura de Trujillo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 22. For an identical quotation, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 20-21.

their support and for their guarantee of a stable environment in which to engage in religious matters. In fact, such protection is scandalous for Gutiérrez precisely because he believes that the people behind these forces are not Christian, regardless of whether they persistently identify themselves as being members of the faithful. He judges them by their actions (or by their lack of actions), which, he believes, are contrary to the gospel. Thus Gutiérrez calls for the Church to distance itself from such individuals and groups.

Furthermore, Gutiérrez's study of the concept of Christian unanimity as an integral part of the *pastoral* of Christendom is certainly suggestive: it evokes some questions that may guide the continuing study of the development of Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom in his future books and articles. For example, one may wonder whether, according to Gutiérrez, the persons holding power in society (who often consider their Church to be the one characterized by the *pastoral* of Christendom) also embrace the concept of Christian unanimity. If so, they probably do not regard that sector of the Church which they will repress to be part of the true Roman Catholic Church, but rather, a suspicious congregation of persons whose beliefs and behaviors give evidence that they are not true Roman Catholics. They probably believe that it is just to manage them harshly or even to obliterate them. Would this support a proposal, already made, that Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom may very well manifest a perspective that represents one side in a conflict between at least two concepts of the Roman Catholic Church and two views of how the Church ought to be present in the world, especially in Latin America? These considerations will be reckoned with when Gutiérrez's future examinations of persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America are studied.

Finally, it is notable that, in this book, Gutiérrez does not explicitly address the anti-clericalism which characterized some of those persons of the liberal sectors in Latin America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After having embraced the Enlightenment, some of them viewed the Roman Catholic Church as a conservative institution, linked to those traditional and conservative forces in society that impeded what they believed to be necessary, progressive changes of the social, economic, political, and cultural orders. Clearly, these persons often faced an intransigent Church that Gutiérrez associates with the *pastoral* of Christendom. In fact, many clergy and laity have been beatified and canonized as martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church after being killed in persecutions during the French Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, and the Mexican Revolution. In *La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina*, Gutiérrez does allude to this when he says that "Christendom has hardly been broken in Latin America for one century, with independence, while in Europe the rupture occurred four [centuries] ago."<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>"La cristiandad se ha roto en América Latina hace apenas un siglo, con la independencia, mientras que en Europa la ruptura ocurrió hace cuatro." Gustavo Gutiérrez, *La pastoral de la Iglesia*, my translation, 19. For a similar quotation, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia*, 16.

Gutiérrez identifies the *pastoral* of New Christendom, the second way in which the Roman Catholic Church acts and is present in the world, as the reaction of some members of the Church against what they perceive to be the excessively other-worldly concern of the *pastoral* of Christendom. Gutiérrez believes that the *pastoral* of New Christendom began to appear in Latin America during the first half of the twentieth century (thirty or fifty years before his time of writing in January, 1967) due to the circulation of Jacques Maritain's writings. According to Gutiérrez, this second *pastoral* type starts from the conviction that "Christianity should be incarnated in a culture, in political institutions, in a struggle for justice, thereby manifesting the gospel message by means of that incarnation and showing that the gospel is not disinterested in the daily life of men."<sup>140</sup> Gutiérrez notes that this *pastoral* emphasizes the link between being Christian and seeking to create justice, but it also defends the right to private property, and names communism as the enemy of Christianity.<sup>141</sup> It attracts "the intellectual, technological, and political elite, committed to the social and political transformation of Latin America,"<sup>142</sup> while, ironically, the conservative oligarchy regard those Christians who have embraced it to be communists themselves (the supposed enemy of New Christendom as well), and therefore, they stop financially supporting whoever has adopted it. Roman Catholic laypersons begin to form and participate in temporal Christian institutions, such as non-confessional Christian political parties, unions, and worker and peasant organizations, in order to build a "Christian social order...to create a favorable environment for the life of the Church; therefore...the task of the laity...is to create that Christian society...[which] contributes to the growth of the Kingdom of God."<sup>143</sup> This second *pastoral* embraces much of the Enlightenment, such as viewing people as creative subjects, adopting a historical perspective, affirming the autonomy of nature, over against the religious interpretation of it, and

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<sup>140</sup>"La pastoral de nueva cristiandad parte del convencimiento de que el cristianismo debe encarnarse en una cultura, en instituciones políticas, en una lucha por la justicia, manifestando a través de esa encarnación el mensaje evangélico y mostrando que el evangelio no se disinteresa de la vida diaria de los hombres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 23; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 22.

<sup>141</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 25, 41; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 26, 48.

<sup>142</sup>"El sector que acoge más plenamente esta pastoral es el de la elite intelectual, técnica y política comprometida con la transformación social y política de América Latina, ya que encuentra en este rostro de la Iglesia la respuesta a sus aspiraciones." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 24; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 24.

<sup>143</sup>"La idea de fondo que se expresa a través de la fórmula de la consagración del mundo y de la construcción de un orden social cristiano, es la de crear un ambiente favorable a la vida de la Iglesia; por eso se dirá que la tarea del laico, que es crear esa sociedad cristiana, contribuye al crecimiento del Reino de Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 39; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 46.

praising the autonomy of the state, thereby discouraging the intervention of Church hierarchy in the government, and leaving political activities to the laity.<sup>144</sup> For Gutiérrez, a major danger of the the *pastoral* of New Christendom is to convert Christianity into an ideology by identifying it with specific, non-confessional, Christian political parties and workers' unions; this would divide Christians along lines that are not established specifically in the gospel.<sup>145</sup>

The *pastoral* of the Maturity in the Faith (which is the third *pastoral* type), according to Gutiérrez, is a reaction against the aforementioned danger of ideological compromise that exists with the *pastoral* of New Christendom. Instead, this third *pastoral* is concerned with nurturing the development of a minority of militant Christian elites, who supposedly have freely chosen a more mature, deeper, and purer personal faith than the Christians of the two previous *pastorales*. These Christian elites, living in the midst of the world, would supposedly act as models for many other Christians so as to inspire a greater personalization of the Christian faith among a larger portion of Christians. According to Gutiérrez, this is the *pastoral* which is evident in the model of the Church as the People of God, as well as in the Decree on Religious Freedom of the Second Vatican Council. This third *pastoral* type recognizes the autonomy of the temporal realm, and therefore demands that neither the hierarchy, nor any other Christian (whether clergy or laity), intervene in the name of the Church, in temporal matters, especially in politics. Instead, Christians, together with other people, are to endeavour to construct a "just and fraternal human society, which will create the favorable conditions so that man is able to hear and live the call of God. Temporal activity is an activity for the human community."<sup>146</sup> In fact, this *pastoral* criticizes any claims that the Kingdom of God can be built on earth.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>144</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 36-39; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 40-45. Thus the *pastoral* of New Christendom recognizes what are considered to be positive aspects of the Enlightenment, even though some of its proclaimers have been identified by the Roman Catholic Church as persecutors who were responsible for the deaths of various laity and clergy, between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe and Latin America, who have subsequently been beatified and canonized since the late nineteenth century, but especially during the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, thereby recognizing them as true and authentic martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church, as seen in chapter four.

<sup>145</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 23-26. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 21-27.

<sup>146</sup>"Los cristianos, en cuanto hombres, unidos a los demás hombres, intervendrán en la creación de una sociedad humana justa y fraterna, que creará las condiciones favorables para que el hombre pueda escuchar y vivir el llamado de Dios. La actividad temporal es una actividad por la comunidad humana." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 45; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 56.

<sup>147</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 48; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 59.



For Gutiérrez, a glaring shortcoming of the *pastoral* of the Maturity in the Faith is that it neglects to address the overwhelming majority of Latin Americans, who are poor and who do not have the same ability to act freely as do the aforementioned small groups of militant elites.<sup>148</sup> Thus Gutiérrez's principal criticism of this *pastoral* is that it is inappropriate for most Latin Americans.<sup>149</sup> Gutiérrez does not discuss the likelihood that these militant elites could arouse persecution, and thereby provoke their own martyrdom. In fact, Gutiérrez does not develop a discussion on the relationship between these militant Christian elites and those persons who held a great deal of power in Latin America in January, 1967 (the time when Gutiérrez delivered these lectures). It is not clear whether such a comment is lacking because the aforesaid Christian elites were new in Latin America and relatively insignificant in numbers, and perhaps also in influence at the time. Moreover, Gutiérrez observes that such persons involved themselves in political parties and movements only in their capacity as concerned members of society, and not as an expression of their Christian faith. This implies that militant Christian elites were unlikely to elicit harsh repressions from centers of power. After all, their activities generally would do little to mobilize the masses, the overwhelming majority of Latin Americans who are poor, a movement which would unnerve the aforesaid holders of social, economic, political, and cultural power, and likely elicit hostile reactions.

In both La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina and Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez names the fourth *pastoral*, that is, the fourth way in which the Roman Catholic Church acts and is present in Latin America, the Prophetic *pastoral*. This seems to be a nascent form of what he will later call a "theology of liberation". Gutiérrez does not believe that it is a reaction to the *pastoral* of the Maturity in the Faith, but rather a deepening of it. The starting point of the fourth *pastoral* type is an urgent concern with the religious status of the "average Latin American man", that is, with the vast majority of Latin Americans who are poor, and who are "not reached by the message of the gospel message centered

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<sup>148</sup>"The fundamental note of the formation of these Christians will be personal and adult Faith. To be Christian is to have accepted the Christian Faith in full freedom; this demand questions the situation of the majority of the population in Latin American which, conditioned by a series of factors, is not capable of making an act in full freedom." The Spanish original follows: "La nota fundamental de la formación de elites, de minorías de cristianos será la Fe personal y adulta. Ser cristiano es haber aceptado con plena libertad la Fe cristiana; esta exigencia cuestiona la situación de la mayoría de la población de América Latina que, condicionada por una serie de factores, no es capaz de hacer un acto de libertad plena." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 26; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 27.

<sup>149</sup>"Moreover, its insistence on personal faith on a continent like Latin America, where the depersonalized mass have great difficulties arriving at a mature faith makes it be hardly adequate for the immense majority of the Latin American people." This is the Spanish: "Además, su insistencia en la fe personal en un continente como América Latina, donde la masa depersonalizada tiene grandes dificultades de llegar a una fe madura, hace que sea poco adecuada a la inmensa mayoría del pueblo latinoamericano." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 27; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Líneas pastorales de la Iglesia, 29.

on the personal Faith."<sup>150</sup> Gutiérrez notes that this fourth *pastoral* was so new in Latin America at the time of his writing, that he was only able to sketch some basic questions that would guide it: in what forms are grace present among the Latin American majorities?; what is the essence of being Christian?; "if personal Faith is Christian fullness, [do there] exist different degrees, in which one may situate the average Latin American man"?<sup>151</sup> At the same time, Gutiérrez believes that this *pastoral* should be concerned with dialoguing with non-Christians, especially Marxists, "whose religious status it will try to discover."<sup>152</sup> (Gutiérrez will continue to reflect on the religious status of Marxists in some future works during the 1970s.) A Church which is in diaspora, conscious of existing in a pluralistic world, and therefore surrounded by non-Christians, ought to shift from an ecclesiocentrism to a christocentrism (as Gutiérrez notes had already occurred with Vatican II),<sup>153</sup> so as to reconsider the issue of the salvation of those many persons who are located outside the visible borders of the Church. Gutiérrez uses an extended study of charity to resolve the problem of how all people, including atheists, such as Marxists, may be able to choose freely whether to accept or to reject salvific truth, that is, the alleged truth that the salvation of all people has been won in principle by means of the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>154</sup>

Charity, which is the acting out of human love for other persons (i.e., "one's neighbour"), is central to the Prophetic *pastoral*, as it will be throughout Gutiérrez's future writings as he tries to articulate his theology of liberation. Gutiérrez, embracing the Prophetic *pastoral*, sketches out his theology of salvation as follows: he takes as a manner of Christian faith that all people were created and they were saved—at least, in principle—in Jesus Christ; therefore "all men have equal possibilities of salvation, whether or not in the Church";<sup>155</sup> but God also gave all people the freedom to accept or to reject the grace of salvation, so Gutiérrez's concern, then, is what exactly constitutes the requirement for salvation. (He does not explain

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<sup>150</sup>"Esta profundización parte de una mayor preocupación por la masa, por el estatuto religioso del hombre que no es alcanzado por la presentación del mensaje evangélico centrado en la Fe personal." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 28.

<sup>151</sup>"...se preguntará por la esencia del ser cristiano, descubriendo que, si bien la Fe personal es la plenitud cristiana, existen grados diversos, en los que se sitúa el hombre medio latinoamericano." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 28. See also the similar discussion in *Ibid.*, 50-51, 61-62.

<sup>152</sup>"...un mayor interés para el diálogo con el mundo no cristiano, marxista en particular, cuyo estatuto religioso tratará de descubrir..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 28. See also *Ibid.*, 50; and Osvaldo Luis Mottesí, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 52.

<sup>153</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 56, 66.

<sup>154</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 52.

<sup>155</sup>"...todos los hombres tienen posibilidades iguales de salvación..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 51.

exactly what he understands by grace, but he does define salvation as "communion with God".) He believes that, according to the Prophetic *pastoral*, the crucial condition for salvation is to love: "salvation is the fruit of love; that [person] is saved who loves; that is to say, he who enters into communion with God [is] the one who enters into communion with men."<sup>156</sup> This love for other people, this charity, exists only when it is incarnated historically in freely chosen, loving relations with others.

Gutiérrez describes two characteristics of an incarnated charity, that historically manifested love of others which Gutiérrez believes leads to one's salvation, regardless of whether one expressly accepts the salvific truth deposited in the Church. The first feature of charity is a universal love, a love for all people: "the love that makes salvation possible ought to be a universal love...which admits no exceptions...in principle, it ought to be a universal love, although in fact sometimes failures exist."<sup>157</sup> Therefore loving some people while hating others is irreconcilable with charity. The second characteristic is "the going out of oneself or, more precisely, the delivery of oneself; it is the passage from personal egoism to an offering each time more total, which we could call a paschal passage: death to egoism and resurrection to communion with others and with God."<sup>158</sup> This understanding of charity requires that people deliver themselves both to God and to other people. According to Gutiérrez, those persons who deliver themselves to others, thereby also deliver themselves to God, and they will be saved, regardless of whether they have explicitly accepted salvific truth: "Every man who delivers himself, who aspires to universal love, who authentically encounters the other, will be encountering God, and will be on the path of salvation, which is none other than communion with God."<sup>159</sup>

According to Gutiérrez, God offers all people the grace that leads to salvation, regardless of whether they live within the visible boundaries of the Church. In this work, Gutiérrez does not elaborate

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<sup>156</sup>"...la salvación es fruto del amor; se salva aquél que ama; es decir, entra en comunión con Dios el que entra en comunión con los hombres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 51. See Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 52.

<sup>157</sup>The full Spanish quotation follows: "...el amor que posibilita la salvación debe ser un amor universal, es decir, que no admite excepciones; esto no significa que desde un primer momento se de [sic] en nosotros un amor sin excepciones, sino que nuestro amor se oriente definitivamente a la universalidad; en principio, debe ser un amor universal, aunque de hecho algunas veces existen fallas, precisamente por eso son fallas." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 52.

<sup>158</sup>"...la salida de uno mismo o, más precisamente, la entrega de uno mismo; es el paso del egoísmo personal a una oblación cada vez más total, que podríamos llamar un paso pascual: la muerte al egoísmo y la resurrección a la comunión con los demás y con Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 53.

<sup>159</sup>"Todo hombre que salga de sí mismo, que aspire a un amor universal, que encuentre auténticamente al otro, estará encontrando a Dios, y estará en el camino de la salvación, que no es otra cosa que la comunión con Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 53.

exactly how God offers all people the grace leading to salvation, but his explanation that people are in communion with God precisely by being in communion with other people suggests that, according to Gutiérrez, God offers grace to people through their interactions with other people. He does not develop this point. Given that salvific grace is made available to all people, they are not able to be neutral before this grace, nor are they able to be neutral in relation to the God who extends the offer of grace to them.<sup>160</sup> Finally, they are not able to be neutral toward all other persons, who have also been created and saved, in principle, in Jesus Christ. In fact, according to Gutiérrez, each person manifests his or her acceptance or rejection of grace, and of God, precisely by means of the love they give to or withhold from others: "There is no neutrality before God, facing that which constitutes the heart of the Christian life: charity. Either one loves one's neighbour or one does not love [him or her]; either one is an egoist, or one lives at the service of others."<sup>161</sup> (As was already mentioned, Gutiérrez does not elaborate further what exactly constitutes grace.) Ultimately, the other person is so important, according to Gutiérrez, who cites Matthew 25, because one meets God in the other person.<sup>162</sup> Matthew 25, especially verses 31 to 46, continues to be central to Gustavo Gutiérrez's theological reflection throughout his works.<sup>163</sup> Although Gutiérrez ponders the religious status of the Latin American poor, in this book, he does not explicitly identify the other person, to whom people ought to deliver themselves, as a poor person or a poor people (the poor understood as a collective whole). As well, he does not yet clearly distinguish between universal love and that love which ought to be accorded preferentially to that other person, who is poor. This is a distinction about which Gutiérrez speaks at length in his future writings.

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<sup>160</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 55.

<sup>161</sup>"[...] no hay neutralidad frente a Dios, frente a lo que constituye el corazón de la vida cristiana: la caridad. O se ama al prójimo, o no se le ama; o se es egoísta, o se vive al servicio de los demás." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 56. See Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 53.

<sup>162</sup>"Basically, in the center of this spirituality is the idea that one meets God in one's neighbour (Mt. 25); therefore, every life is a relation with God, because every life is a relation with one's neighbour, since man is social, he is a being-with-others." The Spanish text follows: "En el fondo, en el centro de esta espiritualidad está la idea de que se encuentra a Dios en el prójimo (Mt. 25); por tanto, toda la vida es una relación con el prójimo, ya que el hombre es social, es un ser-con-otros." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 58.

<sup>163</sup>See the following examples: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 241-253; "Con Gustavo Gutiérrez, en Lima," interview by Teófilo Cabestrero, in Diálogos sobre la Iglesia en América Latina, Teófilo Cabestrero, D. Sergio Méndez Arceo, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Segundo Galilea, Juan Luis Segundo, Tomás Balduino, Fernando de Brito, D. Adriano Hypólito, and Arturo Paoli, Colección Tercer Mundo/Tercera Iglesia, 4 (Bilbao, Spain: Editorial Española Desclée de Brouwer, 1978), 41; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 16.

The primacy of charity in Gutiérrez's theology of salvation (charity is "that which is essential...the rest should be enlivened through it")<sup>164</sup> is clearly suggestive for the future study of Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom, though in this section of the book, Gutiérrez does not yet explicitly apply the theme of charity and universal love to a discussion of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America. It would seem, however, that if the delivery of oneself to others in life is charity, and that it is, in fact, the only manner of accepting, first, the salvific grace offered by God, second, the God who presents this offer, and, finally, all other people who are similarly offered this grace, then the supreme act of charity, as well as the perfect act of accepting grace, God, and all other people, may very well be to choose to love other people by delivering oneself up to the point of dying out of a love for these other people and God. Martyrdom would then be the antithesis of selfishness, and of those acts which are done for the sake of oneself.

In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez also reconsiders the crucial question concerning what now constitutes the mission of the Roman Catholic Church, given that people can be saved outside of it. He believes that, in fact, "its mission is not to save, in the sense that only inside of it does one find salvation. The one who saves is Christ. The Church has a salvific mission,...which consists in revealing the already acting presence of salvation among men, the communion with God."<sup>165</sup> Gutiérrez amplifies his explanation of the relation between salvation and the mission of the Church: "There is no salvation without grace, but there is salvation outside the visible Church because grace acts in all men, whether or not they belong to the Church. The mission of the Church is to reveal and to bring to fullness, by the word of God, that salvific presence of grace [which is] in humanity."<sup>166</sup> Gutiérrez explains that this means that the Church has a mission which is prophetic: it must make judgments of what takes place in history by using the gospel, which is supposedly the revealed word of God, as its reference point. Stated more precisely, the Church's prophetic mission is "to denounce all that which, by going against man, stands in

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<sup>164</sup>"Lo esencial es la caridad, el resto debe estar vivificado por ella." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 53. Oliveros quotes the same passage: Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 100.

<sup>165</sup>"...su misión no es salvar, en el sentido de que sólo dentro de ella se da [sic] la salvación. El que salva es Cristo. La Iglesia tiene una misión salvífica,...que consiste en revelar la presencia ya actuante de la salvación entre los hombres, la comunión con Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 54.

<sup>166</sup>"No hay salvación sin la gracia, pero hay salvación fuera de la Iglesia visible porque la gracia actúa en todo hombre, pertenezca o no a la Iglesia. La misión de la Iglesia es revelar a su plenitud, por la palabra de Dios, esa presencia salvífica de la gracia en la humanidad." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 54.

the way of communion among men and communion with God."<sup>167</sup>

Gutiérrez also re-examines the related concept of eschatology, according to the Prophetic *pastoral*. Contrary to a common, traditional concept of eschatology, by which the communion among people and between people and God is viewed principally as a concern of the hereafter, the Prophetic *pastoral* treats eschatology as the "motor of human history":<sup>168</sup> there is communion among people and between people and God within history, and such existing communion impels attempts to create future historic communions that more closely approximate the complete communion, which, itself, will only be fully realized by God at the end of history. The Church's mission, then, is to examine historical communities so as to evaluate how closely the relations among people in those communities approximate that communion among people and between people and God which is demanded in the gospel. According to this fourth pastoral type, the Church is supposed to denounce all instances of anti-evangelical injustice (those activities that are contrary to the demands of the gospel), and to praise those relations and those activities within society that are more just—that is, those that it judges as more closely approaching the gospel ideal of communion (i.e., the Kingdom of God).

Gutiérrez warns, however, that the Church's prophetic mission presents the risk that one may believe or act as if one believed oneself to be the exclusive owner and interpreter of the gospel. All other interpreters of the gospel would thereby be mistaken. In order to avert the danger of erroneously falling to this temptation, Gutiérrez is convinced that Christians must adopt an attitude of spiritual poverty, which

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<sup>167</sup>"Por su misión profética, la Iglesia debe denunciar todo aquello que, por ir contra el hombre, obstaculiza la comunión entre los hombres y la comunión con Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 55. See Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 53. In future books and articles, Gutiérrez will use the theological term, Kingdom of God, to name the communion among people and between people and God, a communion which will only be finally and fully embodied with salvation, that is, with the resurrection of those who have accepted salvific truth either explicitly or implicitly.

<sup>168</sup>"If the grace of God is present and acting in all men, the communion of men with God, that which we call eschatology, is already present in the life of men. Eschatology is not, then, something which comes after history, but it is encountered in the heart of it [i.e., history], stirring it from within; eschatology is the motor of human history. The communion of men with God and of men among themselves is already present in history and it constitutes the key of history." The Spanish text follows: "...si la gracia de Dios está presente y actuando en todos los hombres, la comunión de los hombres con Dios, lo que llamamos escatología, está ya presente en la vida de los hombres. La escatología no es, pues, algo que viene después de la historia, sino que se encuentra en el corazón de ella, moviéndola desde dentro; la escatología es el motor de la historia humana. La comunión de los hombres con Dios y de los hombres entre sí está ya presente en la historia y constituye la clave de ésta." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 57. Gutiérrez will call eschatology the "motor of history" on many future occasions. See, for example, Gutiérrez's study of eschatology in chapters nine and eleven of Teología de la liberación: perspectivas.

means humbly making oneself available to God's will.<sup>169</sup> He does not develop this comment in the book, but spirituality will continue to be an important topic in his future writings. Furthermore, he will explain that Christians confronted by persecution and even their own imminent deaths need to nurture an attitude of spiritual poverty.

Near the end of the book, Gutiérrez returns briefly to the question, "How does one establish salvific dialogue of the Church with the Latin American man?"<sup>170</sup> He expresses his opinion that, if Marxism is able to appeal to the poor masses, then, surely, Christianity is not overly complicated either: "Christianity is not impossible to understand; that which is essential about it, charity, delivery [of oneself] to others, is not difficult to understand intellectually."<sup>171</sup> That which is essential in Christianity, then, is loving one's fellow human beings. Gutiérrez suggests that one way for the Church to bring the gospel to the poor masses is by means of Christians participating politically so as to try to effect social and economic change in Latin America, that is, to endeavour to create a society that more closely approximates the full communion among people and between people and God that is demanded by the gospel.<sup>172</sup>

Finally, it is worthwhile to note that, in addition to the aforementioned danger of believing oneself the exclusive owner and interpreter of the gospel, Gutiérrez also cautions against two other possible deviations of the Prophetic *pastoral*: these are the dangers of confusing between that which is Christian and that which is human, and minimizing various important aspects of Christianity because of a desire to engage in dialogue with non-Christians, most notably, Marxists.<sup>173</sup>

The book, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, then, is the occasion for Gutiérrez to present his analysis of the understanding of salvation that corresponds to each of the four types of *pastoral*, that

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<sup>169</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 55. See Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 51. Gutiérrez will explain in future works that this means that one must attend closely to what the text, itself, expresses (taking into account the consideration of the exegetes) and to the interpretations submitted by other Christians concerning the relevant passages, rather than simply trying to justify positions already taken before hand. Gutiérrez will convey this by using the expression "we read the gospel and the gospel reads us." For example, see his discussion of this expression in Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985). This will be discussed briefly in future chapters.

<sup>170</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 17.

<sup>171</sup>"Pero el cristianismo no es imposible de comprender, lo fundamental de él, la caridad, la entrega a los demás, no es difícil de comprender intelectualmente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, my translation, 62.

<sup>172</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 62. See Osvaldo Luis Mottesi, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 55.

<sup>173</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia, 28-29.

is, to each of the specific ways that the Roman Catholic Church acts and is present in contemporary Latin America. He will continue to reflect on the relation between these two important themes, the understanding of salvation and the operative *pastoral*, throughout his works. More specifically stated, Gutiérrez will continue to concern himself with the religious status of all people, especially the poor in Latin America, and the presence that the Roman Catholic Church ought to have in the world, especially in Latin America today, so as to work towards creating a society that more closely approximates the communion among people and between people and God which he believes the gospel demands. Gutiérrez's further study of the same themes will allow him to elaborate, in a considerably more explicit manner, his concept of martyrdom. Of course, the evolution of Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom will especially be stimulated by his attempt to reflect theologically on the meaning of the deaths of those contemporary Latin American Christians who are killed in the era subsequent to the Medellín Conference.

#### F. The Church's Adoption of Poverty in order to Protest Against Widespread, Scandalous, Material Poverty in Contemporary Latin America

Gutiérrez's study of the Biblical notions of poverty constitutes another major theme, evident in his pre-theology of liberation writings, which he subsequently uses to formulate his concept of persecution and martyrdom. In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, Gutiérrez explained that people, whether Christian or non-Christian, explicitly or implicitly accept God's offer of salvation by loving all other people; they demonstrate this love historically by attempting to create a communion among people that more closely approximates the fully realized communion, the Kingdom of God. In Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, Gutiérrez stresses that, in contemporary Latin America, the reality in which these loving relations should be manifested is one where the overwhelming majority of people suffer scandalous poverty. This reality grossly contradicts the full communion among people and between people and God proclaimed by the gospel. Thus Gutiérrez's advocates, first, that the Church in Latin America denounce everything that causes and maintains this terrible reality, and, second, that it adopt the poverty of the majority of Latin Americans out of love for them and in order to protest against the poverty which the poor masses suffer involuntarily. Gutiérrez recognizes that this means that the Christians who voluntarily adopt poverty should prepare themselves for the possibility of being murdered on account of the fury which they will likely provoke among people who vigorously disagree with their perspective. Gutiérrez begins to speak of the persecution and martyrdom of Christians in contemporary Latin America in his theology of liberation writings during the period subsequent to the Medellín Conference. This is the subject matter of chapters six and seven of the present study.



(8) Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July 1967):

The pamphlet, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, was originally presented in French in a course, "L'Église et les problèmes de la pauvreté" ["The Church and the Problems of Poverty"], that Gutiérrez taught at the Université de Montréal during July, 1967. In this essay, Gutiérrez examines the biblical meaning of "poverty".<sup>174</sup> Gutiérrez incorporates a somewhat revised and expanded version of Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta in chapter thirteen, the final chapter, of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas.<sup>175</sup> Therefore, even though the essay predates the term, "theology of liberation", it is nonetheless an important part of Gutiérrez's corpus of theology of liberation writings.

In the introduction, Gutiérrez notes that such a reconsideration of the meaning of poverty has an impressive antecedent from almost five years previous. In a radio message on September 11, 1962, just prior to the opening of the Second Vatican Council (October 11, 1962), Pope John XXIII declared that, for the underdeveloped countries, the Roman Catholic Church is and wants to be present as the Church of everyone, especially as the Church of the poor.<sup>176</sup> In fact, on December 6, 1962, during the last two days of the first

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<sup>174</sup>For other analyses of Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, see Roberto Oliveros Maqueo, Liberación y teología, 98-99; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 35-37; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 57-60, 73-74. Mateus comments briefly on it as well, but his bibliography and his dependence on Oliveros's summary and analysis suggest that he has not seen the primary source. Odair Poderoso Mateus, Razão da esperança, 95. Other authors refer to this essay and the course in Montreal very briefly. See Rosino Gibellini, ed., "Gustavo Gutiérrez," in La nueva frontera de la teología, 286-287; Robert McAfee Brown, Makers of Contemporary Theology, 25; Robert McAfee Brown, Gustavo Gutiérrez, 35; Edward Schillebeeckx, "Gustavo Gutiérrez recebe em Nimega o título de Doutor Honoris Causa," trans. not listed, Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira 39, no. 155 (September 1979): 502.

<sup>175</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pobreza: Solidaridad y protesta," chap. in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 351-372.

<sup>176</sup>Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 1; Pope John XXIII, Acta Apostolicae Sedis, 682. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Assessment and Implications," trans. Heidi Epstein, ARC, The Journal of the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill 22 (1994): 62-63, and the Spanish translation: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Opción por los pobres: Evaluación y desafíos," Allpanchis no. 43-44 (1994): 583-585. Gutiérrez delivered the latter lecture in French on September 16, 1993 at a conference marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Faculty of Theology at the Université de Montréal. To a great extent, this article is Gutiérrez's reflection on the same subject matter that occupied him in the 1967 class lectures. Note that Gutiérrez has returned to the same points in regard to the theme of church of the poor at Vatican II on many other occasions. See, for example: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza: Consecuencias eclesiológicas (Lima, Peru: Universidad Católica del Perú, 1983), 1, 8-9; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit,'" Latinamerica Press 15 (19 May 1983): 5-6; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Por el camino de la pobreza," Páginas 8, no. 58 (December 1983): 2-4, 8-10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Por el camino de la pobreza," Servir 20 (1984): 247-250, 268-276; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful,'" interview by Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 3 (originally published in Spanish in La República [Lima, Peru] [20 April 1984]); Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 7; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana," Páginas 10, no. 70 (August 1985): 2-12; Gustavo

session of the ecumenical council, Cardinal Lercaro, the archbishop of Bologna and a close friend of Pope John XXIII, proposed that poverty, more specifically, the evangelization of the poor, should not be simply one of several themes of the council, but rather its foremost theme so that the Roman Catholic Church could respond to the truest and deepest demands of the present era and to the hope of unity shared by all Christians.<sup>177</sup> Nevertheless, while poverty is mentioned in many of the ecumenical council documents, it is clearly subordinate to the two principal themes manifested in the documents: the opening of the Church to the modern world and the opening of the Church to the Christian world (and in a less accentuated manner, to the non-Christian world), that is, to ecumenical (and interreligious) dialogue. According to Gutiérrez, the more important references to poverty in the documents are in Gaudium et spes [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the World of Today], where it is referred to fourteen times, and Lumen Gentium [Dogmatic Constitution on the Church], with sixteen references. For Gutiérrez, the most important of these references is in Lumen Gentium, no. 8. Within the body of this article, Gutiérrez does not explain specifically why he believes that this section of Lumen Gentium is the most outstanding reference to poverty in the documents of Vatican II; he simply makes this comment in a footnote.<sup>178</sup> Gutiérrez also praises Pope Paul VI's encyclical, Populorum Progressio, as an advance, but its starting point is not that of the underdeveloped, Third World, where the majority of Latin Americans live. Thus Gutiérrez observes in 1967, the year before the second Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) met at Medellín, Colombia, that "it will devolve upon a Church that lives in a continent of misery and injustice to give the theme of poverty the proper importance: a testimony on which the authenticity of the preaching of the gospel message depends."<sup>179</sup> Gutiérrez's references to the place of poverty in Vatican II and in a papal encyclical are significant. They demonstrate what will be normative, on his part, throughout the formulation of his

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Gutiérrez, "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," in La verdad los hará libres, 25; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 19, 78-88; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado y alcance de Medellín," in Irrupción y caminar de la Iglesia de los pobres: Presencia de Medellín, José Dammert, Gustavo Gutiérrez, et al. (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas-Rímac and Centro de Estudios de Estudios y Publicaciones (CEP), 1989), 25-37; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La evangelización de América Latina," Ciencia Tomista 116 (May-August 1989): 367-374; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Church of the Poor," The Month 22 (July 1989): 264; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos: Introducción a la nueva edición," in Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 14th rev. and enlarged ed., 28-29, 46-47; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Review and Challenges," The Month (January 1995): 5-8.

<sup>177</sup>Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y pobreza, 1; Cardinal Lercaro, Documentation Catholique (3 March 1963): col. 321, n. 2. See also Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 56.

<sup>178</sup>Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 2.

<sup>179</sup>"Pero corresponderá a una Iglesia que vive en un continente de miseria e injusticia dar al tema de la pobreza la importancia debida: un testimonio del cual depende la autenticidad de la predicación del mensaje evangélico." Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, my translation, 2.

theological writings: that he always seeks to develop his theology within the context of the whole Roman Catholic Church, by searching for the validation of his reflections in the gospel, in Church tradition, and finally, in papal teaching.<sup>180</sup>

In the first section, "Ambigüedades del término pobreza" ["Ambiguities of the Term Poverty"], Gutiérrez criticizes two tendencies that some Christians have concerning their concepts of poverty: first, the inclination to praise material poverty, "to see it as almost a human and religious ideal, an ideal of austerity and indifference before the goods of this world, [as the] condition of a life in agreement with the Gospel";<sup>181</sup> second, the tendency to consider spiritual poverty to signify the detachment from whatever material possessions one may have.<sup>182</sup> Gutiérrez's primary concern is that these two definitions of poverty are abstractions that encourage people to evade all responsibility for analyzing and criticizing the causes of the real, historical, material poverty in which the majority of Latin Americans live. They may very well even end up justifying the existing social order, even if its beneficiaries are few, and the number of people who are exploited is many.<sup>183</sup>

In the second section, "Significación de la pobreza evangélica" ["Meaning of Poverty in the Gospel"], Gutiérrez offers three interrelated notions of poverty, all of which, he claims, are present in the Bible: material poverty, which is a scandalous state; spiritual poverty, which is spiritual childhood; voluntary poverty, which is a commitment of solidarity and protest against scandalous material poverty. In the first notion, people are materially poor because they are the victims of the unjust acts of other people. This is

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<sup>180</sup>For example, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Aspectos teológicos de la encíclica 'Laborem Exercens'." in Significación y aportes de la encíclica Laborem Exercens, Oscar Alzamora, Rolando Ames, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Caudernos de Teología, 2 (Lima, Peru: Departamento de Teología, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Teología del Perú, 1981), 1-16; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Evangelio del trabajo," in Sobre el trabajo humano: Comentarios a la encíclica "Laborem Exercens", Gustavo Gutiérrez, Rolando Ames, Javier Iguñiz, and Carlos Chipoco (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones (CEP), 1982), 9-63; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Las cosas nuevas de hoy: Una relectura de *Rerum Novarum*," Páginas 16 (August 1991): 7-22; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una relectura de la *Rerum Novarum*," in De la *Rerum Novarum* a la *Centesimus Annus*. Los cambios en el Perú y el mundo, Gustavo Gutiérrez and Alfonso Grados Bertorini (Lima, Peru: Universidad del Pacífico, Centro de Investigación (CIUP), 1992), 17-29.

<sup>181</sup>"Pero, en los ambientes cristianos se tiene tendencia, a menudo, a dar a la pobreza material una significación positiva, a verla casi como un ideal humano y religioso, un ideal de austeridad y de indiferencia frente a los bienes de este mundo, condición de una vida conforme al Evangelio." Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, my translation, 3.

<sup>182</sup>Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 4. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 36; Osvaldo Luis Motteses, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 58.

<sup>183</sup>Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 3-5.

always contrary to God's will. Spiritual poverty means humbly making oneself available to God's will.<sup>184</sup> Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom is evident when he explains the third notion of poverty. For Gutiérrez, the voluntary descent of Jesus Christ to assume a human existence because of his love for human beings is the model for the third notion of poverty. Jesus Christ assumed the condition of a human being, which is a sinful condition, and chose to suffer the consequences of the condition, including a trial and a crucifixion, not in order to set this sinful condition as an ideal, but "because of love and solidarity with the men who suffer it [the sinful condition] and in order to redeem them from sin, to enrich them with his poverty, to struggle against human selfishness, against everything that divides men, against everything that makes there be rich and poor, owners and non-owners, oppressors and oppressed."<sup>185</sup> Thus Jesus Christ allowed himself to be crucified because of his love for human beings.

For Gutiérrez, the third notion of poverty is prescriptive: in imitation of Jesus Christ, Christians should voluntarily choose to become materially poor because of their love for other people: "if the final cause of the exploitation and alienation of man is selfishness, the deep reason for voluntary poverty is the love of the other."<sup>186</sup> This means a commitment of solidarity with the poor who suffer the consequences of unjust, selfish actions—actions which are a manifestation of sin, the rupture of community among people, and between people and God—so as to protest against the poverty caused by such actions.

In answer to the natural question, "who are the poor?", Gutiérrez is very clear: "The 'poor', today, is the oppressed, those marginalized by society, the proletariat who struggles for his or her most elementary rights, the exploited and dispossessed class, [and] the country that fights for its liberation."<sup>187</sup> Such a decision to be in solidarity with the poor means that a person really, rather than abstractly, acts in ways that demonstrate his or her option in favour of those who suffer injustices. Gutiérrez identifies the latter as "the

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<sup>184</sup>Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 5-14. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 36-37; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 58-59.

<sup>185</sup>Gutiérrez explains why God became man, even though man has a sinful condition: "Pero la condición pecadora, y sus consecuencias, no es asumida, evidentemente, para idealizarla, sino por amor y solidaridad con los hombres que padecen y para remitirlos del pecado, para enriquecerlos con su pobreza, para luchar contra el egoísmo humano, contra todo lo que divide a los hombres, contra todo lo que hace que haya ricos y pobres, propietarios y no propietarios, opresores y oprimidos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, my translation, 16. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 37; Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 59.

<sup>186</sup>"Si la causa última de la explotación y alienación del hombre es el egoísmo, la razón profunda de la pobreza voluntaria es el amor al prójimo." Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, my translation, 16.

<sup>187</sup>"El 'pobre', hoy, es el oprimido, el marginado por la sociedad, el proletario que lucha por sus más elementales derechos, la clase social explotada y despojada, el país que combate por su liberación." Gustavo Gustavo, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, my translation, 17.

oppressed". It also means that he or she acts against those who perpetrate and maintain such an unjust system. Gutiérrez calls these latter people "the oppressors". Real, historical acts of solidarity with the poor finally means "running personal risks--including placing one's life in danger. That is what is happening with many Christians--and non-Christians--committed to the Latin American revolutionary process. Thus new ways of living poverty are emerging that are different from the classic 'renouncing the goods of this world'."<sup>188</sup> Just over one year later, this three-fold definition of poverty was largely incorporated into the Medellín document, "Pobreza." The three notions of poverty will remain a central concept for Gutiérrez throughout his works.

It is clear, then, that even before Gustavo Gutiérrez had applied the term, "a theology of liberation", to his methodology of doing theology, he had already formulated a three-fold definition of poverty that also signified an incipient concept of martyrdom. In fact, his explication of the third notion of poverty probably explains Gutiérrez's attraction to Lumen Gentium, no. 8 because the expectation of suffering on account of the faith corresponds to this text.<sup>189</sup> The corollary of this third notion of poverty is that those people who choose to struggle in solidarity with the poor of Latin America and to protest against the perceived causes of poverty should anticipate the possibility of repression, and, even, of death. At this point, 1967, however, Gutiérrez does not yet use the terms, persecution and martyrdom, to give religious value to the

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<sup>188</sup>"En nuestros días y en nuestro continente, solidarizarse con el 'pobre' significa correr riesgos personales--incluso poner en peligro la propia vida. Es lo que ocurre a muchos cristianos--y no cristianos--comprometidos en el proceso revolucionario latinoamericano. Surgen así nuevas formas de vivir la pobreza, diferentes a la clásica 'renuncia a los bienes de este mundo'." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, my translation, 17. Mottes, quoting the same passage, makes the following judgment: "In this work Gutiérrez, developing the concept of solidarity and protest, utilizes for the first time two categories out of Marxism. They are: 1) the dialectically opposite realities 'oppressed-oppressor,' and 2) the inevitability of participating--at some level--in the class struggle after opting for this new form of living poverty, which assumes a liberating political character when it is experienced as the expression of revolutionary commitment." Osvaldo Luis Mottes, "An Historically Mediated 'Pastoral' of Liberation," 59.

<sup>189</sup>The following extract from Lumen Gentium clearly encapsulates what will become a principal theme of Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom: the suffering of persecution by some of those persons who commit themselves to struggling in solidarity with the poor so as to evangelize the poor. "Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and persecution so the church is called to follow along the same way in order that it may communicate to humanity the fruits of salvation. 'Though he was in the form of God', Christ Jesus 'emptied himself, taking the form of a servant' (Ph 2, 6-7); and for our sake 'though he was rich, he became poor' (2 Cor 8, 9). So also the church, though it needs human resources to carry out its mission, is not set up to seek glory, but to spread humility and self-denial also through its own example. Christ was sent by the Father 'to preach good news to the poor...to restore the broken-hearted' (Lk 4, 18), 'to seek and to save the lost' (Lk 19, 10): in the same way the church surrounds with love all who are afflicted with human infirmity, indeed in the poor and suffering it recognises the face of its poor and suffering founder, it endeavours to relieve their need and in them it strives to serve Christ." Vatican II, Session 5 (21 November 1964), Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter 1, The Mystery of the Church 8, in Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, ed. Norman P. Tanner, vol. 2, 854-855.

risk of suffering and of even delivering one's life while engaging in a struggle for the cause of the poor. In fact, as has already been seen, when Gutiérrez speaks from a more distant vantage point some years later, he will assign the period around the Medellín Conference (1968) as the approximate start of the persecution of the Church in Latin America, as well as of a wave of martyrdom. As was seen in the case of the murder of Gutiérrez's close friend, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, this wave of repression and murder (or persecution and martyrdom, using religious language) began in Brazil among some of those Christians who were involved in what they believed to be the cause of improving the situation of the poor. It is also notable that Gutiérrez places Christians (signifying all Christians, not simply Roman Catholics) and non-Christians (a group which does not necessarily preclude Marxists) on the same level: both suffer meaningful deaths in so far as they die while participating in the revolutionary cause of the Latin American poor, but he does not use religious language to describe their deaths. In this instance, he does not designate either Christians or non-Christians as martyrs. As well, Gutiérrez does not discuss revolutionary violence in this work, even though he had already included this among the themes which ought to be subject to theological analysis, in his 1964 article, "¿Cómo establecer el diálogo salvador con el hombre en América Latina?"

#### G. The Relation between Faith and the Commitment to Historical Action

In Fe y compromiso (October 7-8, 1967), Gutiérrez continues to develop his theological reflections on what will be the central theme of the theology of liberation: the relation between faith and the commitment made by Christians to act in history. This is another way of examining the relation between salvation and historical activities, including political activities.

#### (9) Fe y compromiso (October 7-8, 1967):

Gutiérrez presented the pamphlet, Fe y compromiso, as a lecture at a conference of the Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos del Perú (UNEC), which met in Lima on October 7-8, 1967. His objective is to examine the relation between one's Christian faith and a commitment to act in the world. This issue is especially pertinent because, by this time, many Latin American Christians feel compelled to commit themselves to promote social change. For Gutiérrez, then, this issue is significant because it is another way of considering a question asked by many Christians in contemporary Latin America: is it still meaningful to be a Christian?<sup>190</sup> In other words, is one's Christian faith relevant if one holds the conviction that society must be changed so that it may be more just for all people?

In order to facilitate his examination of the relation between commitment and faith, Gutiérrez explains his understanding of both of them. By "commitment", he means, first, one's recognition that all people are members of the same collective group by virtue of their human condition. Thus commitment

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<sup>190</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Fe y compromiso, 1-2.

signifies recognizing that, insofar as one is aware of the atrocities suffered by other people, yet does not protest them, then one is complicit with them, regardless of whether they have been personally viewed. He states very clearly that no neutrality is possible in such a scenario because the "decision" not to act means consenting to the preservation of the existing situation. Therefore the first obligation for people is to acknowledge that one way or the other they are committed to a position. Second, by commitment, Gutiérrez means the decision made by means of one's free will in regard to how one should act in the specific historical circumstance of the present situation. Therefore people make decisions about how they will act in a specific situation--that is, they assume a given commitment in relation to it. Then they guide their actions, revise their commitment, and correct it. The observation that human beings live as persons but also as members of a collective group (all of humanity) should be sufficient to impel all people (whether Christians or non-Christians) to choose to participate in activities that make the world more just for all people. By faith, the second element in the relation, Gutiérrez refers specifically to the Christian faith, which is his own faith and that of his audience. Gutiérrez explicates what it means to embrace the Christian faith. Having Christian faith signifies believing in Jesus Christ. Christians should hold the perspective that human history is where God progressively reveals himself as being committed to humanity, and that, when God became man, Jesus Christ, this was the definitive way for God to commit himself and reveal himself to humanity. Thus to have faith means that Christians should value human history because this is the unique history in which God acts. In fact, it is by means of historical activities that Christians demonstrate that their faith is a commitment both to God and to all other people. Their faith is evidenced by constantly endeavouring to construct a more just society, that is, greater communion among all people. At the same time, however, all historical achievements are radically relativized because the complete communion among people and between people and God (i.e., the Kingdom of God) will only occur at the end of history, according to Gutiérrez's interpretation of the New Testament. Therefore Christians acting in history should always be future-oriented; it is this eschatology which ought to guide their historical activities forward in the direction of the full communion. The faith of Christians should make them constantly critical of the shortcomings of every society, and it should also alert them to new problems that arise. Nevertheless, all historical actions do possess religious value precisely because they either contribute to or obstruct the building of this communion.<sup>191</sup>

The lecture, Fe y compromiso, then, is notable because, unlike in his future theology of liberation writings, Gutiérrez remains relatively vague in his explicit diagnosis of the existing social arrangement. For example, he does not even refer directly to the scandalous poverty suffered by the majority of Latin Americans, as he already had done in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta. He also does not evaluate the ultimate causes of injustice. Instead, Gutiérrez seems to be speaking in this lecture to an audience which

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<sup>191</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Fe y compromiso, 3-7.

is already fully aware of the inhumanity of their surroundings, and of their obligation to commit themselves to transform an unjust society into a more just one. Indeed, his repeated warnings about the danger of committing oneself to social change at the expense of losing one's faith suggest that much of his audience has already committed itself to engage in activities aimed at bringing about social change.<sup>192</sup>

Summary:

Gustavo Gutiérrez, in his various pre-theology of liberation writings, introduces various major themes that he later employs when he articulates his concept of persecution and martyrdom in his theology of liberation writings. He demonstrates his concern for the manner in which the Roman Catholic Church acts and is present in contemporary Latin America, and he is especially critical of the intimate Church-state relation which prevails in Latin America under the *pastoral* of Christendom. He expressly states his preoccupation with how to bring the average Latin American, who is both poor and a member of the masses, into salvific dialogue with God. His reflection on the universal accessibility of salvation impels him to state his belief that the practice of charity is the manner by which one freely accepts the grace leading to salvation. That charity is authentic, however, only when it is incarnated historically in human relations of love. This love ought to be directed universally by the delivery of oneself to others. This will remain a central theme throughout his works. In July, 1967, with Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, however, Gutiérrez begins to distinguish between universal love and the preferential love for the poor which is expressed by delivering oneself to the poor masses. This is the corollary of the third notion of poverty. His discussion of the prophetic mission of the Church, together with his rejection of scandalous material poverty and of the abstract spiritualization of spiritual poverty, demonstrate his conviction, already in the period just before the Medellín Conference, that the institutional Church and Christians ought to side with the poor and denounce those social structures and relations within society that they judge to be unjust because they appear to contravene the demands of the gospel. The evolution of Gutiérrez's theological reflections on these themes represents an important contribution to Gutiérrez's formulation of his concept of persecution and martyrdom. His express discussion of persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America, however, will not begin until the post-Medellín period, which is the subject matter of the next chapter, because it is only then that Christians who believe that they are acting together with the poor and in the best interests of the poor will be the objects of brutal repressions leading to their deaths in many parts of Latin America. It is only then that Gutiérrez and many other Latin Americans will begin to use religious language as they reflect theologically on the meaning of these deaths.

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<sup>192</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Fe y compromiso, 5-7.



## CHAPTER 6

### THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ'S CONCEPT OF PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM FROM JULY, 1968 TO 1982

In chapter five, the evolution of Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom in his pre-theology of liberation writings (before July, 1968) was analyzed. Some of the major themes that he subsequently uses to formulate his concept of martyrdom in his theology of liberation writings were also explored. These included *la pastoral*--the way the Church acts and is present in the world; the relation between salvation and the practice of charity by means of unconditionally loving all people; the presence of the Church in the unique history where God acts; the relation between religious freedom and salvation; the relation between the understanding of salvation and the way in which the Church is present in contemporary Latin America; the need for the Church to choose to become poor in order to protest against the widespread, scandalous, material poverty which exists in Latin America; the relation between one's Christian faith and the commitment to engage oneself in historical actions. While Gutiérrez does speak in some of these early writings about the occurrence of persecution and martyrdom in the past, especially in the pre-Constantinian Church, it is only in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July 1967) that he first expresses his anticipation that a sector of the Roman Catholic Church will be repressed in contemporary Latin America for denouncing the causes of injustice, working alongside the poor as they try to emancipate themselves, and proclaiming the coming of the Kingdom of God. In 1969, Gutiérrez begins to develop his theological reflections on the theme of persecution and martyrdom in response to the reality that a greater number of Latin American Christians are being repressed and killed for committing themselves to the process of liberation, a process which they believe is in the best interests of the poor masses.

The objective of chapter six is to examine the continuing evolution of Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom between July, 1968 (when he first used the expression "*teología de la liberación*" at a conference in Chimbote, Peru) and 1982, as well as the development of four major themes that he associates with his concept of martyrdom. This chapter includes two sections. The first section consists of subsections for each of the principal themes that Gutiérrez utilizes when he formulates his understanding of martyrdom. These themes include his explication of the term "liberation"; his explanation of the theological methodology of his theology of liberation; his view of the relation between salvation and one's actions in the world, including political actions; his understanding of the factors which caused the execution of Jesus of Nazareth. The analysis of the specific theme in each subsection traces the chronological evolution of Gutiérrez's theological reflections on it in his writings. The second section of this chapter concerns Gutiérrez's analysis

of the repression of the Church and the murder of its members in Latin America during this period. He already employs the religious terms "persecution", "persecutor", and "persecuted" in 1969 to refer to the various parties involved in the repression of some sectors of the Church. He does not begin to utilize the traditional, religious terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" for the Christians who are killed and how they died until 1978. Thereafter he uses these terms consistently to refer to people like Archbishop Oscar Romero, as well as to the many bishops, priests, religious, and laity who have been murdered for participating in the process of liberation alongside the poor. Six major themes are evident in the evolution of Gutiérrez's theological reflections on persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America. These include the division of the Church and the persecution of Christians committed to the process of liberation (writings from July, 1968 to 1976); Gutiérrez's understanding of anti-clericalism during the French Revolution and his view on the significance of the Cristero Rebellion in Mexico from 1926 to 1929 (Teología desde el reverso de la historia--1977); martyrdom as a great wealth of the Church in Latin America (writings from 1977 to 1978); the theme of persecution and martyrdom in the final document of the Puebla Conference (1979); the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero as the dividing line in the history of the Church (writings from 1980); true martyrdom as a way of giving the poor hope by dying as a witness to the biblical God of life (writings from 1981 to 1982).

#### A. Four Major Themes Basic to Gutiérrez's Concept of Martyrdom

Gutiérrez's theological reflections on persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America constitute a significant part of his complete body of theological writings, and they can only be understood in relationship to this larger whole. It is therefore necessary, first, to comprehend what he means by the process of liberation and why he insists that Christians must commit themselves to participate in it. Gutiérrez asserts that the critical theological function employed by liberation theologians is a new theological methodology rather than simply a new theme for traditional methods. It is therefore also important, second, to analyze the evolution of his formulation of this methodology. He contends that the central theme of the theology of liberation is the relation that exists between historical action, including political action, and salvation, so this is the third and most thoroughly analyzed theme in the first section of this chapter. Fourth, the fact that Jesus' crucifixion ultimately provides the traditional model for martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church (as well as among all other Christians) means that Gutiérrez's brief studies on the causes of this execution must be analyzed.

##### 1. The Meaning of Liberation:

Gutiérrez lives in a continent where the overwhelming majority of the population is destitute. His conviction that this state of widespread poverty is contrary to the will of the biblical God drives him to

analyze what causes it. This conviction also impels him to participate in a single process, the process of liberation, aimed at transforming the existing situation. Gutiérrez delineates three distinct but mutually interpenetrating levels of meaning for the term "liberation" that together constitute the unique process of liberation. The ultimate endpoint of the process of liberation is the emancipation of all people from suffering and their entrance into full communion with each other and with God, that is, their salvation. Therefore, the objective of this subsection is to examine the evolution of Gutiérrez's formulation of the meaning of liberation in his writings between 1968 and 1982.

As was already seen in Gutiérrez's pre-theology of liberation writings, the author is intensely concerned about the desperately poor condition of most Latin Americans, including his fellow Peruvians. As a Christian, it is natural that he would search the Bible for resources that will help him to comprehend this grave reality. According to his interpretation, the Bible clearly and consistently denounces all inhuman situations of poverty as being scandalous in the eyes of God. It is imperative, then, that all Christians who claim to believe in the biblical God respond to the poverty around them by seeking permanent solutions. Thus in "¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado?" (December 13 and 20, 1968),<sup>1</sup> he insists that it is not sufficient for the Roman Catholic Church in Peru, confronted by widespread poverty, to resort exclusively to its traditional appeals for benevolent gifts to the poor because these simply alleviate the effects of poverty in the short-term. Instead, the Church must first of all ascertain what are the structural causes of local poverty and then involve itself in uprooting them. He claims that local poverty in Peru and in other underdeveloped Latin American nations is not at all accidental or even simply a matter of improperly managed development. On the contrary, it is a "byproduct of the development of other countries, with the complicity of national groups."<sup>2</sup> This poverty is due to foreign capitalists and local minorities who selfishly pursue their own

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<sup>1</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado?" ["Separate the Church from the State?"] [Part 1], Oiga no. 303 (13 December 1968): 31-32; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado?" [Part 2], Oiga no. 304 (20 December 1968): 21-22. The source used in the present study is a newly entitled reprint of the two parts: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional: ¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado?" ["Apart from the Constitutional Debate: Separate the Church from the State?"], CIDOC: Centro Intercultural de Documentación Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 1-5. It was also reprinted as a pamphlet: Gustavo Gutiérrez, ¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado? (Lima, Perú: Centro Intercultural de Información, Documentación y Difusión, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>"Permitirían también percibir las causas profundas—internas y externas—de nuestro subdesarrollo tomado como un fenómeno global, subproducto del desarrollo de otros países, con la complicidad de grupos nacionales." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," my translation, CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 4. See Gutiérrez's similar comments regarding how generous hand-outs alone do not uproot the causes of poverty: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Evangelio y praxis de liberación" ["Gospel and Praxis of Liberation"], in Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina: Encuentro en el Escorial, 1972, ed. Instituto Fe y Secularidad (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1973), 234; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización" ["Praxis of Liberation, Theology, and Evangelization"], in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano--CELAM (Bogotá, Colombia: Ediciones Paulinas, 1974), 70; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación. Teología y anuncio" ["Praxis of

interests while impoverishing the masses. He cites the document, Paz, of which he was a principal author, to show that the majority of bishops who gathered at the Medellín Conference (August 26 to September 6, 1968) approved a similarly stated assessment of the causes of poverty in the continent. In fact, Paz uses the expression "institutionalized violence" to describe a situation in which the national groups create and maintain societal structures that progressively enrich their small part of the population while making the vast majority still poorer than ever.<sup>3</sup> This means that Latin American societies are characterized by structures that lead inevitably to the systematic exploitation of the masses.<sup>4</sup>

The Roman Catholic Church throughout Latin America, however, has been traditionally linked with governments and powerful groups who preserve these structures, and therefore it has been dependent on them for much of the social prestige that it has enjoyed. In Peru, Gutiérrez's homeland, the relationship between the Church and the government usually has been particularly intimate because the government has possessed a right (called the "*Patronato*"), dating from colonial times, to intervene in the internal affairs of the Church. It even includes the right to present a list of candidates for ecclesial offices. The "*Patronato*" was enshrined in legislation included in the Constitution until 1980.<sup>5</sup> In "*¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado?*", Gutiérrez denounces this right as an anachronistic and artificial vestige of the era prior to the Enlightenment. It grants special privileges to the Roman Catholic Church, and it disregards the freedom in religious matters for all people which the Declaration on Religious Freedom demands. It also forces the Church to forfeit its independence in exchange for governmental protection to engage in spiritual activities. Nevertheless, many clergy relish the benefits they receive from the government so they make a public spectacle of their close relation with it. Gutiérrez, however, adamantly criticizes the Church in Peru for traditionally participating alongside the government in various public activities, affairs, and celebrations, not demanded by the gospel, which effectively serve to legitimize both the government and its behavior, and to make the Church

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Liberation, Theology and Proclamation"], Concilium no. 96 (June 1974): 355.

<sup>3</sup>Paz no. 16, in Iglesia y liberación humana. Los documentos de Medellín, 76-77; Peace no. 16, in Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops. The Church in the Present-Day Transformation of Latin America in the Light of the Council. II. Conclusions, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Division for Latin America-USCC, 1973), 61-62.

<sup>4</sup>In an article from 1980, "La violencia de un sistema," Gutiérrez argues that it is accurate to describe the existing social system as being in a state of institutionalized violence for two reasons: first, "it is violence because it effectively deals in negation of and contempt for human life"; second, "it is institutionalized because it is not something fleeting or occasional, but a social system built on, institutionalized in, the death of the poor for the profit of the few." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 94.

<sup>5</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 1. The Peruvian government had several ways to exert its power over the Church until changes were made in the Constitution in 1980. See Luis Pásara, Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana, 62.

complicit in those injustices for which the government is responsible. According to Gutiérrez, the Church in Peru thereby pays the "high price of lacking real autonomy...in the face of civil power," whenever it aligns itself with the government.<sup>6</sup> For the Church to be authentically present in contemporary Peru, Gutiérrez insists that it must enter into "solidarity with the Peruvian man in his process of liberation from everything that oppresses him, and ignominiously keeps him without power to develop his personal condition and hence his condition as a son of God."<sup>7</sup> Thus Gutiérrez advocates that the Church in Peru should actively distance itself from all compromising relations with people who engender and maintain unjust structures in society; it should use the great social weight that it still possesses to denounce these structures prophetically; and it should voluntarily choose to become poor (the third notion of poverty), so as to be in the same vulnerable condition as the majority of Peruvians who are poor. The best way that the Church may demonstrate God's love for humanity is by committing itself to serve the poor by working alongside them in the process of their liberation from scandalously dehumanizing, material poverty (the first notion of poverty).<sup>8</sup> In fact, the Church may even be transformed--Gutiérrez says that it may be converted--precisely by inserting itself into such a brutal reality where it will have the opportunity to listen to God, "who speaks to it [the Church] by means of reality, through men who are hungry and [who] aspire to live with dignity."<sup>9</sup>

In his preface to Signos de renovación: Recopilación de documentos post-conciliares de la Iglesia en América Latina (February 1969),<sup>10</sup> Gutiérrez underscores this same point when he speaks about the

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<sup>6</sup>"Privilegio que como lo acabamos de recordar es pagado al alto precio de la ausencia de una real autonomía de la Iglesia frente al poder civil." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," my translation, CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 1.

<sup>7</sup>"La primera condición de una auténtica presencia de la Iglesia es su solidaridad con el hombre peruano en su proceso de liberación de todo que lo oprime, y mantiene ignominiosamente sin poder desarrollar su condición de persona y por ende de hijo de Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," my translation, CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 1.

<sup>8</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 4-5.

<sup>9</sup>"Pero si la Iglesia por escuchar al Señor que le habla a través de la realidad en que está inserta, a través de los hombres que tienen hambre y aspiran a vivir con dignidad, se convierte siguiendo su ejemplo, en 'signo de contradicción' ¿no habría sido precisamente fiel a su propio ser?" Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," my translation, CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 3.

<sup>10</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in Signos de renovación: Recopilación de documentos post-conciliares de la Iglesia en América Latina (Lima, Peru: Comisión Episcopal de Acción Social, 1969), 6-16. Gutiérrez presented this preface a year later as a lecture at the Simposio sobre Teología de la Liberación [Symposium on Liberation Theology], which took place in Bogotá, Colombia on March 6-7, 1970. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Crece o declina la Iglesia latinoamericana?" ["Is the Latin American Church Growing or Declining?"], in Liberación: Opción de la Iglesia latinoamericana en la década del 70. Documentos de reflexión. Simposio

Roman Catholic Church throughout the continent. He observes that the national groups responsible for maintaining unjust structures are the powerful members of Latin American societies with whom the Church has traditionally nurtured an intimate relationship. He is especially perturbed by their customary excuses, often made publicly, that they simply aspire to sustain a "Western and Christian" society.<sup>11</sup> Because their transparent personal interests tend to conform with the interests of dominant groups in foreign countries (notably the multinational companies) that embrace capitalism, the two parties, together, maintain a situation of internal colonialism and external neo-colonialism from which they benefit. Gutiérrez argues that these are the fundamental structural causes of underdevelopment and widespread abuses of human rights in Latin America.<sup>12</sup> It is important to recognize that Gutiérrez considers the systematic exploitation of the poor masses by the local rich and foreign capitalists to be an observable, social reality. Nevertheless, theories for explaining what engenders an observable reality ought to be formulated. Such theories, however, are not all equally valid. The most realistic theories concerning the causes of local poverty are developed through experience: by inserting oneself into the situation, by trying to transform it, and then by reflecting on this

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sobre Teología de la Liberación. Bogotá, marzo 6 y 7 de 1970 (Bogotá, Colombia: Editorial Presencia, 1970), 3-24. The preface was reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Participar en el proceso de liberación (febrero 1969)" ["Participating in the Process of Liberation (February, 1969)], in La fuerza histórica de los pobres: Selección de trabajos [The Historical Power of the Poor: Selection of Works] (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1979), 39-60. The preface was first translated into English in Between Honesty and Hope (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1970). A newly edited and translated version also exists in English: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Involvement in the Liberation Process," in The Power of the Poor in History, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1983), 25-35.

<sup>11</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in Signos de renovación, 8. "In fact, conservative sectors frequently appeal to Christian notions in order to justify the social order that serves their interests and maintains their privileges. That is why the communication of the message [i.e., the Gospel] reread from the world of the other, the poor, and the oppressed will unmask every attempt to ideologize the Gospel and to justify a situation contrary to the most basic gospel demands." "Es frecuente, en efecto, que los sectores conservadores apelen a nociones cristianas para justificar el orden social que sirve a sus intereses y mantiene sus privilegios. Es por ello que la comunicación del mensaje leído desde ese mundo del otro, del pobre, del oprimido tendrá una función desenmascadora de todo intento de ideologizar el Evangelio y justificar una situación contraria a las más elementales exigencias evangélicas." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización," my translation, in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 82. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación. Teología y anuncio," Concilium no. 96 (June 1974): 368-369; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change. Experience, Faith, ed. Francis A. Eigo (Villanova, Penn.: Villanova University Press, 1976), 19; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina, 1973-1978 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1978), xviii. Moreover, when conservative sectors justify their actions by saying that they are maintaining a Christian society, "this is one of the great lies of Latin American society." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C. (San Antonio, Tex.: Mexican American Cultural Center, 1974), 51.

<sup>12</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in Signos de renovación, 8-10. He cites Paz 1, 4, 16.

experience. Thus theories should always be in process; they should be changing in response to reflections on actions. At this time (1969), Gutiérrez (like most of the bishops who gathered at the Medellín Conference) tentatively accepted the theory of dependence (which was formulated starting from a Latin American perspective by such social scientists as Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto, and Theotonio Dos Santos) as providing an explanation that most accurately reflects this reality. Gutiérrez, however, always portrays the dependence of the Latin American masses on more than narrow economic lines: they are economically, politically, socially, and culturally dependent. His choice of the theory of dependence comes out of his own employment of the social sciences and his readings of the findings reported by various Latin American social scientists. In fact, he insists that the Bible is not an appropriate tool for engaging in specific analyses of all the variables associated with one's own circumstances. Thus his own evaluation of his surroundings is not derived directly from the Bible, and he contends that it is not a statement of Christian faith. It is clear, then, that he uses the social sciences as instruments for more effectively understanding the particular situation in which he lives, but he argues that the social sciences must be used critically. Gutiérrez consistently insists on the primacy of experience for evaluating whether the social sciences accurately portray reality. Thus the use of any given theory is necessarily provisional and must be verified in practice. Regardless of the theory currently favoured for explaining the different variables related to creating and maintaining an unjust system, simply recognizing the radical incompatibility between the will of God evident in the Bible and the observable reality that the few exploit the poor masses should be enough to impel Latin American Christians to commit themselves to participate in the process for liberating them from their condition. For Gutiérrez, the Church's first task is to distance itself from its traditional allies among the powerful. Then Christians should endeavour to effect, simultaneously, radical transformations of both persons, through conversion, and societal structures so that they might especially serve the needs of the poorest people.<sup>13</sup>

Gutiérrez states that he prefers the term "liberation" to "development" because it corresponds better to the all-encompassing process of completely eradicating the causes of all human suffering. In a lecture

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<sup>13</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in *Signos de renovación*, 11. Many European theologians met in 1976 at a conference devoted to the theme of the theology of liberation. Gutiérrez was a panelist at it. He was asked whether he does the theology of liberation using an inductive or a deductive methodology. He answered that this question was somewhat baffling. Instead of either one, the theology of liberation establishes a circular relation between theory and practice. It is not a matter of applying a well conceived theory to practice; rather, every theory must always be verified in practice. Michel Schooyans, "La théologie de la libération" ["The Theology of Liberation"], *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 7 (1976): 321, 323. See also Miguel Manzanera, *Teología, salvación y liberación*, 121-128; Gregory Baum, "German Theologians and Liberation Theology," *The Ecumenist* 16 (May-June 1978): 49; Curt Cadorette, *From the Heart of the People: The Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez*, 104-105; Gregory Baum, "Gutiérrez and the Catholic Tradition," *The Ecumenist* 21 (September-October 1983): 81; Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 320-322.

entitled "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation),"<sup>14</sup> which Gutiérrez delivered at a conference in Cartigny, Switzerland in November, 1969, he reviews and examines the origin and evolution of the concept of development. He distinguishes three uses of the term: development as economic growth, development as a broader social process, and, finally, development as a more comprehensive process built upon a given concept of what it is to be human. The three distinct notions of development share the assumption that poor nations can replicate, or at least approximate, the development process already followed by a certain, "developed" nation (for example, the United States or Great Britain). During

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<sup>14</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development: Papers from a Consultation on Theology and Development Held by Sodepax in Cartigny, Switzerland, November, 1969, Sodepax (Lausanne, Switzerland: La Concorda, 1970), 116-179. The original lecture was in Spanish. None of the Spanish versions published subsequently is identical to Gutiérrez's original lecture, though Hacia una teología de la liberación (1971) corresponds most closely to the official English translation of the lecture. Even this book includes small amounts of new material, other small passages are deleted, and the footnotes include some recent sources not included in the English version. The present study utilizes primarily the English version, translated by CELAM, which was included in the official publication of the papers delivered at the conference. The Spanish version of Hacia una teología de la liberación (1971) is supplied in footnotes whenever a quotation is utilized. The other available Spanish versions are also consulted. It is notable that certain terms in the official English translation are translated erroneously, thereby deviating from Gutiérrez's perspective. For example, when Gutiérrez analyzes the various *pastorales* of the Church in Latin America, the translator supplies the incorrect terms, "Christianity" ("cristianismo") and "New Christianity" ("nuevo cristianismo"), instead of the author's precise use of "Christendom" ("cristiandad") and "New Christendom" ("nueva cristiandad"). Among the numerous adapted, abridged, and translated versions of this lecture, see (1) Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," Theological Studies 31 (June 1970): 243-261 [This translation differs from "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)": the information provided in pages 126-136 of the official English version is left out, and pages 137-142 are abridged], and an abridged version of this article: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Notes for a Theology of Liberation," Theology Digest 19, no. 2 (Summer 1971): 141-147; (2) Gustavo Gutiérrez, "A Latin American Perception of a Theology of Liberation," in Conscientization for Liberation: New Dimensions in Hemispheric Relations (Washington, D.C.: USCC [Division for Latin America-United States Catholic Conference, 1971], 57-80 [This is an abridged version of the same paper; Gutiérrez delivered it at the 1970 Catholic Interamerican Cooperation Program (CICOP) Conference, which met February 5-8, 1970 in Washington, D.C., with the theme, "New Dimensions in Hemispheric Realities".]; (3) Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Notes pour une Théologie de la Libération" ["Notes for a Theology of Liberation"], IDOC International no. 30 (1970): 54-78; (4) Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Appunti per una teologia della liberazione" ["Notes for a Theology of Liberation"], in Religione: oppio o strumento di liberazione?, IDOC Documenti nuovi, 22 (Milan, Italy: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1972), 23-41, and this Italian version was then translated into Spanish as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Apuntes para una teología de la liberación," in Religión: ¿Instrumento de liberación?, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Rubem Alves, and Hugo Assmann, trans. Roser Berdagué (Madrid, Spain: Editorial Marova; Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Fontanella, 1973), 23-76 [This Spanish version includes the whole lecture. It seems, however, that it is a Spanish translation of the Italian translation, made for Religione: oppio o strumento di liberazione?, of the original Spanish language lecture, rather than a reprint of Gutiérrez's original Spanish lecture]; (5) Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación [Towards a Theology of Liberation], Colección Iglesia Nueva, 8 (Bogotá, Colombia: Indo-American Press Service, 1971); (6) Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Bemerkungen zu einer Theologie der Befreiung," in Katholische Theologie, ed. P. Knauer and F. Mennekes (Henn: Ratingen and Kastellaum, 1975), 202-217.



the late 1950s and early 1960s many different development programs were implemented in Latin American nations. The disappointing results alarmed many people. Contrary to expectations during the decade, the disparity between the few rich and the poor masses continued to grow. This was enough to disillusion Gutiérrez and many other theologians and social scientists in Latin America. They concluded that the programs were doomed to fail because they had not taken into account political factors and were based upon the abstract and ahistorical assumption that Latin Americans could mechanically imitate the paths already successfully taken by others. In reality, however, historical circumstances are always new. "Developing" countries now have to contend with powerful, "already developed" nations that continue to seek their own interests. Even the notion that the development of capitalist countries like the United States has been successful and is worth emulating should be questioned because it has come at the high price of impoverishing the majority of the world's population. Thus Gutiérrez rejects the concept of "developmentalism" (*desarrollismo*) itself. In fact, he uses the term "developmentalism" pejoratively to signify the implementation of superficial reforms of the economic system that only amount to slight ameliorations in the situation of the poor. They temper the harsher consequences of the existing system without fundamentally altering the system itself.<sup>15</sup> Gutiérrez believes that, when people base their actions upon one of these notions of development, they do not take into account the structural causes of underdevelopment and thus they cannot possibly contribute to eliminating them. Moreover, powerful persons and groups residing outside poor countries (especially American capitalists), with the complicity of local oligarchies, often manipulate the notion of development itself in order to persuade the public that they are implementing progressive reform programs when, in reality, these programs simply function to help the powerful further their own interests and keep the poor subservient. Gutiérrez asserts that recognizing a people and a country as being dominated and oppressed necessarily precipitates discussions about the need of the poor to become the agents of their own process of emancipation or liberation.<sup>16</sup> He then reviews what, he believes, constitutes the history of the process of liberation in Latin America since the 1950s. He judges that armed struggles during that decade contributed significantly to a single "process of the emancipation...all through history, a process which aims at a society in which man will be free from all

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<sup>15</sup>See "La théologie de la libération: Une interview de Gustavo Gutiérrez" ["The Theology of Liberation: An Interview with Gustavo Gutiérrez"], interview with Thérèse Naillet, Croissance des Jeunes Nations no. 121 (1972): 13-14; Roberto Oliveros, Liberación y teología, 42-46.

<sup>16</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 121-126, 136, 156-159. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una teología política en el Perú del siglo XVI" ["A Political Theology in Sixteenth-Century Peru"], Allpanchis 19 (1982): 12; Christian Duquoc, Libération et progressisme: Un dialogue théologique entre l'Amérique latine et l'Europe (Paris, France: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1987), 17-18.

forms of servitude, and in which he will determine his own destiny."<sup>17</sup> He anticipates that, given the resilience of the unjust system based on the exploitation of the masses, violent revolutions will naturally continue to arise throughout the continent, but he does not say that he advocates them.

Gutiérrez's lecture, "Apuntes para una teología de la liberación," is almost identical to the one he gave in Switzerland four months earlier. He delivered this new lecture at the Simposio sobre Teología de la Liberación [Symposium on Theology of Liberation], which met March 6-7, 1970 in Bogotá, Colombia.<sup>18</sup> In it, however, he makes a valuable additional comment. He concludes his study of the notion of development and the need for Christians to engage themselves in the process of liberation by finally, though only briefly, delineating three distinct levels of meaning for the term "liberation". They are the "political liberation of oppressed countries and social sectors; liberation of man throughout history; and liberation from sin, [which is the] root of all evil." Liberation from sin is the "condition for a life of communion of all men with the Lord."<sup>19</sup> Thus, at this point, he simply sketches the levels of meaning without yet contemplating how they are interrelated.

In "De la teología de la misión a la teología del encuentro" (March 21-27, 1971),<sup>20</sup> Gutiérrez reckons that decisions to sin are the ultimate cause of the unjust social relations, societal structures, and

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<sup>17</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 136. "Es, más profundamente, ver el devenir de la humanidad como un proceso de emancipación del hombre a lo largo de la historia, orientado hacia una sociedad en la que el hombre se vea libre de toda servidumbre, en la que sea sujeto de su propio destino." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1971), 50-51.

<sup>18</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Apuntes para una teología de la liberación" ["Notes for a Theology of Liberation"], in Liberación: Opción de la Iglesia latinoamericana en la década del 70, 24-62. This is mainly an abridged version of the earlier article, Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)": the whole second section of the original is left out. The major addition is the statement that there are three levels of meaning for liberation. This article was reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Apuntes para una teología de la liberación," Cristianismo y Sociedad no. 24-25 (1970): 6-22. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Apuntes para una teología de la liberación (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1970); "Theology of Liberation. Bogotá, 1970," IDOC International no. 14 (28 November 1970): 66-67.

<sup>19</sup>"Tres niveles de significación del término liberación: liberación política de los pueblos y sectores sociales oprimidos; liberación del hombre a lo largo de la historia; y liberación del pecado, raíz de todo mal y condición de una vida de comunión de todos los hombres con el Señor." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Apuntes para una teología de la liberación," my translation, in Liberación: Opción de la Iglesia latinoamericana en la década del 70, 36.

<sup>20</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la teología de la misión a la teología del encuentro" ["From the Theology of Missions to the Theology of Encounter"], in Antropología y teología en la acción misionera, Vicariato Apostólico de Iquitos, Peru--Departamento de Misiones del CELAM (Bogotá, Colombia: Indo-American Press Service, 1971), 79-86. Gutiérrez presented this article as a lecture at a meeting of anthropologists and theologians from Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia concerning the missions of the Roman Catholic Church in el Alto Amazonas. The meeting took place in Iquitos, Peru.

activities that mark the continent. He defines sin as a "concrete historical reality" with social, as well as personal dimensions. It is not tangential to social interaction, but is, instead, "the root of every rupture of fraternity among men. Moreover: every rupture of fraternity is sin."<sup>21</sup> As a statement of faith, Gutiérrez believes that Jesus Christ, by his death and resurrection, saves all people, in principle, from this source of all injustice--sin.<sup>22</sup> His brief discussion of salvation broaches aspects of the third level of meaning of liberation, namely, the liberation from sin, which he subsequently explicates more fully.

Gutiérrez then develops his delineation of the three levels of meaning for "liberation" in Marxismo y cristianismo (April 14-16, 1971).<sup>23</sup> These three distinct levels of meaning are interrelated, and they comprise a single process of liberation. They include political liberation through the creation of a just

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<sup>21</sup>"El pecado como realidad concreta histórica, aparece así, no como una evasión o un añadido, sino como la raíz de toda ruptura de fraternidad entre los hombre. Es más: toda ruptura de fraternidad es pecado." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la teología de la misión a la teología del encuentro," my translation, in Antropología y teología en la acción misionera, 85.

<sup>22</sup>"By redeeming us from sin, Christ does not redeem us from 'something spiritual', but from the source, itself, of every injustice, scorn by another person, oppression, domination. Christ with his death and resurrection comes to save us from sin [bringing us] to grace, from rupture to communion, from death to life, from that which is subhuman to the human. Christ and his Spirit bring a radical and total liberation and not a 'religious' liberation. The people who reduce the work of Christ are the ones who limit it to 'what is spiritual' and do not see its total character." " Al redimirmos del pecado, Cristo no nos redime de 'algo espiritual', sino de la fuente misma de toda injusticia, desprecio por el otro, opresión, dominación. Cristo con su muerte y resurrección viene a salvarnos del pecado a la gracia, de la ruptura a la comunión, de la muerte a la vida, de lo infrahumano a la humano. Cristo y su Espíritu aporta una liberación radical y total y no una liberación 'religiosa'. Los que reducen la obra de Cristo son los que la limitan a 'lo espiritual' y no ven su carácter total." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la teología de la misión a la teología del encuentro," my translation, in Antropología y teología en la acción misionera, 85.

<sup>23</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Marxismo y cristianismo. Una conferencia de Gustavo Gutiérrez dada en la Jornada "Participación de los Cristianos en la Construcción del Socialismo en Chile"--Santiago--abril de 1971. Conferencia y diálogo [Marxism and Christianity. An Address Given by Gustavo Gutiérrez at the Conference "Participation by Christians in the Construction of Socialism in Chile"--Santiago--April, 1971. Address and Dialogue] (San Bernardo, Chile: Secretariado Sacerdotal "Cristianos por el socialismo", 1971). Gutiérrez's paper was fully reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Marxismo y cristianismo," Pasos: Un documento de reflexión por semana no. 13 (7 August 1972): 1-27. The paper was then reprinted again in 1972, but without the second part or the question and answer period: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Marxismo y cristianismo. Una conferencia de Gustavo Gutiérrez, dada en la Jornada de los Cristianos en la Construcción del Socialismo en Chile," in Cristianos latinoamericanos y socialismo (Bogotá, Colombia: CEDIAL, 1972), 15-35. The full text of the paper was reprinted in July, 1973, but with the questions and answers that followed the lecture missing: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Marxismo y cristianismo," in La Iglesia latinoamericana y socialismo: Documentos de la jerarquía y de grupos eclesiales, Dossier, no. 8 (Hervelé-Louvain, Belgium: Information Documentaire d'Amérique Latine, A.S.B.L., 1973), 154-165. Eighty priests who favoured the socialist politico-economic option for contemporary Latin America gathered at this conference. In their joint press release, they expressed their belief that Christianity is more compatible with socialism than capitalism. They also urged collaboration between Christians and Marxists for the construction of a new society. "Jornadas: 'Participación de los Cristianos en la Construcción del Socialismo en Chile' Santiago de Chile--abril 1971. a.--Comunicado a la prensa de lso sacerdotes participantes," in *Ibid.*, 152-153.

society; the liberation, throughout history, by which people take control of their own destiny; and, finally, liberation from sin and entrance into communion with God.<sup>24</sup>

In chapter two of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (December 31, 1971),<sup>25</sup> Gutiérrez substantially expands his explanation of the three different levels of the meaning of liberation. Together they embrace all dimensions of human existence.<sup>26</sup> He designates the first level of liberation as political liberation. It "expresses...the aspirations of the oppressed countries, social classes, and social sectors, and it emphasizes the conflictual aspect of the economic, social, and political process which puts them in opposition to the rich nations and powerful groups."<sup>27</sup> This means that a conflict between the people who are rich and the poor masses already exists because of the all-encompassing political, economic, social, and cultural system of domination--of institutionalized violence--maintained by the rich. This conflict is exacerbated as the poor try to change the system both by their use of revolutionary violence and by the repressive violence employed by the rich to preserve the order of things. Second, at a deeper level, liberation signifies the process, throughout history, by which humanity consciously tries to assume greater

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<sup>24</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Marxismo y cristianismo, 22-23.

<sup>25</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas [Theology of Liberation: Perspectives], CEP, 3 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1971). Parts of this book have been translated or reprinted many times. For example, see the following: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Liberation and Development," Cross Currents 21 (Summer 1971): 243-256 [This reprints chapter two of the first Peruvian edition.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1972) [The first Spanish edition includes some revisions.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Jesus and the Political World," Worldview 15 (September 1972): 43-46; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fraternità cristiana e lotta di classe" ["Christian Brotherhood and Class Struggle"], in La fede come prassi di liberazione: Incontri a Santiago del Cile a cura di I-doc internazionale (Milan, Italy: Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Editore, 1972), 35-42 [This is a translation of pages 340-349 of the first Peruvian edition.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation, trans. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973) [This is a translation of the first Spanish edition.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fe, utopía y acción política," in Marxismo y fe cristiana (materiales de trabajo) (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1975), 231-241 [This reprints pages 309-320 of the 1974 Spanish edition.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Jesús y el mundo político," in *Ibid.*, 265-272 [This reprints pages 297-309 of the first Spanish edition from 1972.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Jesús y el mundo político" ["Jesus and the Political World"], in Panorama de la teología latinoamericana I, Equipo Seladoc (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1975), 105-115 [This reprints pages 297-309 of the 1974 Spanish edition.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of the Term *Liberation*," in Third World Theologies: A Reader, ed. Deane William Fenn (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1986), 15-16; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "A Spirituality of Liberation," in *Ibid.*, 17-21 [These past two articles are reprinted from A Theology of Liberation, 36-37, 203-208.

<sup>26</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 35-53.

<sup>27</sup>"Liberación expresa, en primer lugar, las aspiraciones de los pueblos, clases y sectores oprimidos, y subraya el aspecto conflictual del proceso económico, social y político que los opone a los pueblos opulentos y grupos poderosos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 58.

control over its own destiny. People attempt to effect social changes that expand the real range of freedom that they enjoy. In the case of the poor masses, this level of liberation signifies their shift away from being objects to becoming subjects of their own history. In fact, in chapter seven of the book, Gutiérrez emphasizes that efforts to transform Latin American societies will not truly constitute an authentic process of liberation until the oppressed masses themselves become the protagonists of their own historical liberation, without any mediators.<sup>28</sup> The ultimate objectives of this second level of liberation are to create a new way of being human (a "new man"), a permanent cultural revolution, and a qualitatively different society (a "new society"), where the needs of the poorest are met first. At the third and deepest level, liberation means salvation: "Christ the Saviour liberates man from sin, the ultimate root of every rupture of friendship, every injustice, and [every] oppression, and He makes him authentically free...to live in communion with Him, [which is] the basis for all human fraternity."<sup>29</sup> Communion is built among people when they truly and unconditionally love each other. Therefore Jesus Christ died and was resurrected not so that people could concern themselves with their own self-interests, but so that they would be free to love each other, to deliver themselves over to others, to consider preferentially the needs of people who suffer. Loving, then, is contrary to sinning. All three levels are aimed at affirming the right of all people to life rather than to death. According to Gutiérrez, these three levels of the meaning of the term "liberation" are distinct, but they express interdependent aspects of a unique, all-encompassing process of liberation that ultimately leads to salvation, which is the complete liberation of humanity from sin and its consequences. Salvation, however, always remains a gift from God. Analyzing how the three levels are interrelated is the central task of Gutiérrez's theology of liberation, because this is another way of reflecting on the relation between salvation and the historical activities that contribute to the process of liberation.<sup>30</sup> (The three levels

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<sup>28</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 153. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Evangelio y praxis de liberación," in Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina, 245; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 15a, 46; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and the Chinese Experience," in Christianity and the New China: Volume II. Chinese Faith and the Chinese Experience. Papers and Reports from an Ecumenical Colloquium Held in Louvain, Belgium September 9 to 14, 1974, Lutheran World Federation/Pro Mundi Vita (South Pasadena, Calif.: Ecclesia Publications, 1976), 106; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 45; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia [Theology from the Underside of History] (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1977), 33, 43; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutierrez, in Liberation and Change, Gustavo Gutiérrez and Richard Shaull (Atlanta, Ga.: John Knox Press, 1977), 87-88.

<sup>29</sup>"Cristo salvador libera al hombre del pecado, raíz última de toda ruptura de amistad, de toda injusticia y opresión, y lo hace auténticamente libre, es decir, vivir en comunión con El, fundamento de toda fraternidad humana." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 59.

<sup>30</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 63.

of meaning of liberation delineated by Gutiérrez are subsequently recognized and affirmed in the final document of the Puebla Conference [no. 322], which met January 27 to February 13, 1979 in Puebla, Mexico.)<sup>31</sup> Gutiérrez uses the notion of "utopia" to mediate between faith and political action. The interrelationship between the three levels of meaning of liberation and the role played by utopia in it is examined in the third subsection of the present chapter when Gutiérrez's view of the relation between salvation and historical activities is studied more closely.

In chapter six of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, Gutiérrez expands his presentation of some criticisms levelled against developmentalism by people who have formulated the theory of dependence. According to this theory, the "dynamics of the capitalist economy lead to the establishment of a center and a periphery, and they generate, simultaneously, progress and growing wealth for the few and social imbalances, political tensions, and poverty for the many."<sup>32</sup> He emphasizes, however, that much still has to be done in formulating the theory of dependence so that it can more accurately assess what lies behind

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<sup>31</sup>See Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla [The Poor and Liberation at Puebla] (Bogotá, Colombia: Indo-American Press Service, 1979), 40-44. "Freedom always implies the capacity we all possess in principle to be our own person and to act on our own initiative (GS: 17), so that we can go on fashioning community and participation, to be embodied in definitive realities, on three inseparable planes: our relationship to the world as its master, to other persons as brothers or sisters, and to God as God's children." Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Part 2, Chapter 1, The Content of Evangelization, no. 322, in Puebla and Beyond: Documentary and Commentary, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), 168.

<sup>32</sup>En efecto, la dinámica de la economía capitalista lleva al establecimiento de un centro y una periferia, y genera, simultáneamente, progreso y riqueza creciente para los menos y desequilibrios sociales, tensiones políticas y pobreza para los más." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 105-106. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 15; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutierrez, in Liberation and Change, 77; Curt Cadorette, From the Heart of the People: The Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez, 23. The Colombian, Mons. Alfonso López Trujillo contends that Gutiérrez (along with Hugo Assmann, José Comblin, and Juan Luis Segundo) is overly influenced by the European theology of revolution, the theory of dependence, the socialist revolution, and the notion that politics rather than faith is the starting point of theological reflection. Mons. Alfonso López Trujillo, "Las teologías de la liberación en América Latina," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 45. For similar criticisms, see Enrique J. Laje, "La 'teología de la liberación' según Gustavo Gutiérrez," Stromata 19 (1973): 303-304 [For an examination of Laje's criticisms, see Horacio Cerutti Guldberg, Filosofía de la liberación latinoamericana, Colección Tierra Firme (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1983), 122-126.]; Jeffrey Klaiber, La Iglesia en el Perú, 417 [he summarizes the criticisms made by other writers]. In 1978, Gutiérrez criticizes the *documento de consulta*, a preparatory document for the Puebla Conference, for ignoring the reality that dependent capitalism causes the exploitation of the Latin American poor. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta para Puebla" ["Regarding the Consultation Document for Puebla"], Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 3.

the indisputable fact that the prevailing system is one based on the exploitation of the masses.<sup>33</sup> In his treatment of the theory of dependence in the first Spanish edition of the book (published in 1972), he draws attention to something that is implied in the first Peruvian edition (1971), but not sufficiently articulated in it: the opposition between oppressor nations and oppressed peoples that is posited by the theory of dependence is most realistically perceived when it is recognized that it is taking place in the context of a worldwide class struggle between an oppressor class (and whoever is complicit with them) and an oppressed class (and whoever commits themselves to their process of liberation).<sup>34</sup>

In "La fuerza histórica de los pobres" (July 1978), Gutiérrez praises the theory of dependence for having been useful to the process of liberation. Despite its limitations for evaluating the numerous aspects of a complex reality, it has impelled many Latin Americans to recognize the observable social reality that local and rich minorities and their foreign allies systematically exploit the poor masses. Gutiérrez enumerates certain features of reality that must now be reconsidered because their ramifications were previously underestimated by the theory. These include, first, the campaign by the poor masses (along with whoever is committed to their interests) to liberate themselves historically and, second, the growing internationalization of capital, which is demonstrated by the prosperity of multinational corporations and the ease with which they transfer capital from nation to nation. For Gutiérrez, these changes in the international economic order in the interests of the capitalists have caused poor countries and peoples to become even more dependent on the rich. Moreover, the misery of the poor masses is aggravated by Latin American governments, usually military ones, upholding a national security state ideology and sharing the same interests as foreign capitalists.<sup>35</sup>

## 2. The Methodology of the Theology of Liberation:

Gutiérrez contends that the theology of liberation employs a new methodology for doing theology. It is situated in praxis: the historical circumstances which theologians enter into in order to denounce injustices, proclaim the Kingdom of God, and endeavour to effect transformations that contribute to the process of liberation. Theologians discover that the poor masses, too, have the right to think, to read and

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<sup>33</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 112.

<sup>34</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (1972), 219. This clarification is also included in the first English edition of the book: "To take into account only the confrontation between nations misrepresents and in the last analysis waters down the real situation. Thus the theory of dependence will take the wrong path and lead to deception if the analysis is not put within the framework of the worldwide class struggle." Gustavo Gutiérrez, A Theology of Liberation, trans. and ed. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson, 87. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 128; Horacio Cerutti Guldberg, Filosofía de la liberación latinoamericana, 135-136.

<sup>35</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xvii-xxv.

interpret the Bible, and to evangelize. The objective of this subsection is to trace the evolution of how Gutiérrez formulates his theological methodology from July, 1968 to 1982.

Gutiérrez begins to sketch the methodology of the theology of liberation in his lecture at the II Encuentro de Sacerdotes y Laicos [Second Meeting of Priests and Laity], which met July 21-25, 1968 at Chimbote, Peru. This lecture was published a year later in Hacia una teología de la liberación.<sup>36</sup> Gutiérrez explains that theology is a mental activity by which one reflects on the pastoral action of the Church--the ways that Christians historically demonstrate their commitment to God and to all other people--in the light of God's revelation of himself to humanity, as it is evident in the Bible. Thus theology is a second act following participation in one's own historical circumstances. Since Latin America is a continent where most people are poor and a great deal of injustice is evident, the first act of Christians should be to insert themselves into history where, out of love of God and of all other people, they should endeavour to effect changes that contribute to the "process of liberation". This is a process of constructing a progressively more just society, a society where more people are free to assume control over their own destiny, and where there is greater communion among all people. As a second act, theology should guide each subsequent activity by which people involve themselves in the process of liberation so that it can always more closely correspond to what the gospel demands of people.<sup>37</sup> Gutiérrez further formulates the methodology of the theology of liberation in all of his subsequent writings.

As was already seen in his pre-theology of liberation writings, Gutiérrez believes that theology as spiritual wisdom and theology as rational knowledge are two functions of theology possessing permanent value. In "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)" (November 1969), he further examines the third, recently manifested, theological function that complements the other two: theology as the critical contemplation of the pastoral action of the Church--the contemplation of how the Church acts and is present in the world, in this case, in contemporary Latin America--in the light of revelation accepted in faith. Gutiérrez observes that many Christians in Latin America, having recently recognized charity as the principal concern of life, now evaluate how they live their faith according to their commitment and service to God and to other people. He stresses that Christians must first insert themselves into history and act in it by serving other people; this is how they truly practice charity. Only later ought they to reflect theologically on their pastoral action, in the light of the Bible, in order to ascertain whether the Holy Spirit, in fact, has been present in their relations with other people. The notion that the Holy Spirit is active in human history is a statement of faith. Theology, then, is the second step. This is precisely the methodology

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<sup>36</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación [Towards a Theology of Liberation], Servicio de Documentación, Serie 1, Documento 16 (Montevideo, Uruguay: MIEC-JECI, 1969).

<sup>37</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1969), 3-5, 8-14.



that Gutiérrez has adopted for doing the theology of liberation.<sup>38</sup> He also notes that a spirituality has developed from the reflections on the actions of Christians in the world. He designates this as a "spirituality of liberation." He elaborates this observation in "De la teología de la misión a la teología del encuentro" (March 21-27, 1971), where he emphasizes that contemplative activities must not be sacrificed, even though historical activities are central to the life of Christians committed to the process of liberation. He insists that the Church's first task always is to celebrate the Eucharist because this is the means by which Christians can contemplate and celebrate as a community the gratuitous gift leading to salvation which humankind has received from God by means of the presence of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in human history and in all people. Contrary to advocating that Christians engage themselves exclusively in a certain activism in history, Gutiérrez stresses that "there is no Christian life without *contemplative* attitude."<sup>39</sup>

Gutiérrez reconsiders the three functions of theology in chapter one of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (published on December 31, 1971).<sup>40</sup> According to Gutiérrez, theological reflection, which he defines as the intelligence of the faith, arises spontaneously and necessarily in every person who, having accepted the Christian faith, tries to live it authentically and completely. Thus faith is the foundation on which theological reflection is built.<sup>41</sup> He defines the third function of theology in two different ways. He states that theology is the critical reflection on historical praxis in the light of the faith. He then clarifies this definition: theology is the critical reflection on the actions that people engage themselves in with the objective of transforming the historical circumstances; this reflection is done in the light of the Word of God--God's revelation to humanity as it is evidenced in the Bible--accepted in faith. Historical actions that are objects of theological reflection include economic and political activities in societies and the pastoral action of the Church. Such theological reflection must be done starting from a recognition of one's own context, the circumstances in which one acts. In the case of Christians, all historical activities are occasions for proclaiming the gospel, that is, for communicating to people that they are loved by God and called by him to accept his offer of salvation. This means demonstrating to people that God wants them to enter into communion with him and into communion with all other people. Theological reflection signifies evaluating historical activities, subsequent to engaging in them, in order to ascertain whether they have been inspired

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<sup>38</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 117-120, 153-156.

<sup>39</sup>"Sin actitud *contemplativa* no hay vida cristiana." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la teología de la misión a la teología del encuentro," my translation, in Antropología y teología en la acción misionera, 86.

<sup>40</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 15-34. See also Gutiérrez's review and restatement of these three functions in an interview during 1973: "Diálogo con Gustavo Gutiérrez (I)," interview with Vicente Vetrano, Actualidad Pastoral no. 67 (1973): 157.

<sup>41</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 15.

by the Holy Spirit. The issue, then, is whether Christians' activities are truly an expression of faith in a God who, according to the Bible, wills communion among all people. The evaluation is made by referring to the Bible. One's judgment of past activity should guide future activities. Of course, each subsequent activity also has to be judged for the role that the Holy Spirit plays in it. Given the historical circumstances of contemporary Latin America where the poor, exploited, and oppressed masses constitute the majority of the population, this third theological function should be utilized in the theology of liberation to judge whether particular historical activities, aimed at transforming the world as part of the process of liberation, really do create communion among people and between people and God. Engaging in the theology of liberation presupposes that theological reflections are made by people who are actively committed to the process of liberation in the interests of the poor masses because their condition of life is contrary to the will of God.<sup>42</sup>

In chapter ten of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, Gutiérrez continues to formulate a "spirituality of liberation" ("*una espiritualidad de la liberación*"). He defines spirituality as "a concrete way of living the Gospel, inspired by the Spirit." It is a specific manner of living in relation with God and in solidarity with all people. "It arises from an intense spiritual experience, which is then explicated and witnessed to."<sup>43</sup> A "spirituality of liberation" is based on "a *conversion* to one's neighbour, the oppressed person, the exploited social class, the despised race, [and] the dominated country."<sup>44</sup> By conversion, Gutiérrez means a permanent process of transforming oneself in order to live more closely in imitation of Jesus Christ. By being converted to the neighbour, one is also converted to the God whose Spirit resides in all people. Conversion to one's neighbour, especially to the poor, is characterized by a radical break from one's past and the renunciation of selfishness. The process of conversion is engendered by participating in history, encountering the poor there out of an unconditional love for them, and committing oneself to their liberation. Conversion requires opening oneself up to both God and other people. Furthermore, the spirituality of liberation is characterized by a sense of "gratuitousness": the grateful recognition that the communion of people with God and among themselves is ultimately given to humanity by God for no other

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<sup>42</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 20-34, 179.

<sup>43</sup>"Una espiritualidad es una forma concreta, movido por el Espíritu, de vivir el Evangelio. Una manera precisa de vivir 'ante el Señor' en solidaridad con todos los hombres, 'con el Señor' y antes los hombres. Ella surge de una experiencia espiritual intensa, que luego es tematizada y testimoniada." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 254. See also Gregory Baum, "Liberation Theology and 'The Supernatural'," The Ecumenist 19 (September-October 1981): 86.

<sup>44</sup>"Una espiritualidad de la liberación estará centrada en una *conversión* al prójimo, al hombre oprimido, a la clase social expliada, a la raza despreciada, al país dominado." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 254. See also "Derecho del pueblo: Liberarse y pensar su fe," interview with Enrique Moreno, Pastoral Popular 30 (no. 1, 1979): 45; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo" ["Drinking from One's Own Well"], Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 3-7.

reason than his love of all people. In the spirituality of liberation, prayer is one way by which people express their gratitude to God for his gift to them. Therefore, Christians involved in the process of liberation process should cultivate contemplative activities in their spiritual lives, and they should always gather as a community of believers to celebrate the Eucharist.<sup>45</sup> Gutiérrez's insistence on the need for all Christians, including theologians, to develop a spirituality of liberation demonstrates that historical activities represent only one essential aspect of the first step in Gutiérrez's theological methodology, with theological reflection constituting the second step. The second essential aspect to this first step is this spirituality consisting of contemplative activities.

Gutiérrez further elaborates the theology of liberation over the course of many subsequent writings. In them, he insists that Christians committed to the process of liberation should situate themselves so that, by collaborating with the poor in their liberation, they start to see history and the world around them in the perspective of the poor. They should also reread the Bible in the perspective of the poor. These shifts in perspective challenge "official history" and traditional interpretations of the Bible, both usually made in a perspective other than that of the poor masses. It is only in the perspective of the people who suffer the dehumanizing consequences of unjust social systems, which ultimately arise from historical instances of sin, that Christians can understand the radicalness of the liberation from sin achieved by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Theological reflections in the viewpoint of the poor should thus impel future actions with the goal of contributing further to the process of liberation. Gutiérrez often designates the activities aimed at transforming society in the interests of the poor and from the perspective of the poor as a "liberating praxis".<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 253-260; 324-329. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Movimientos de liberación y teología," Concilium no. 93 (March 1974): 453; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 5-6; Roberto Oliveros, Liberación y teología, 280-291.

<sup>46</sup>Furthermore, he has noted on many occasions that the two central intuitions of the theology of liberation are, first, the recognition of the centrality of a certain understanding of poverty in the gospel (as he has discussed in his studies on the three gospel notions of poverty) and, second, the elaboration on a distinct way of doing theology. The first one comes from the liberation theologians' experiences of poverty in their historical circumstances: they are surrounded by poverty, and they have entered into the world of the poor by working and living with the poor. The second intuition--the methodology of doing theology--reflects their lifestyle and their spirituality: they proclaim the gospel while acting, in their historical circumstances, out of commitment to the liberation of the poor, and then they reflect on their historical activities. Moreover, he has claimed on numerous occasions that one is a theologian only insofar as one's reflections are associated with the life and commitments of a Christian community. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Evangelio y praxis de liberación," in Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina, 245; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Movimientos de liberación y teología" ["Liberation Movements and Theology"], Concilium no. 93 (March 1974): 453-455; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and the Chinese Experience," in Christianity and the New China. Volume II, 103-104; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 16; 42; Gustavo Gutiérrez,

In "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana" (August 1973)<sup>47</sup> and "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización" (November 19-24, 1973), Gutiérrez cautions against the perennial danger of Christians ideologizing the gospel to justify political positions that they have already taken.<sup>48</sup> In the latter article, he

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Teología desde el reverso de la historia, 42-52; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Los pobres en la Iglesia" ["The Poor in the Church"], Concilium no. 104 (no. 2, 1977): 106-107; "Conversando con Gustavo Gutiérrez" ["Conversing with Gustavo Gutiérrez"], interview with Teófilo Cabestrero, in Conversaciones sobre la fe, 127-129; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xvii-xix; "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Anunciar el Evangelio a los pobres, desde los pobres" ["Gustavo Gutiérrez: Proclaiming the Gospel to the Poor"], an interview, Proceso (5 February 1979): 9-10; "Derecho del pueblo: Liberarse y pensar su fe" ["Right of the People: To Liberate Themselves and to Think their faith"], interview with Enrique Moreno, Pastoral Popular 30 (no. 1, 1979): 45; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in La Iglesia latinoamericana entre el temor y la esperanza. Apuntes teológicos para la década de los años 80, Pablo Richard, Colección Testimonios (San José, Costa Rica: DEI-Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones, 1980), 9-14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding our Way to Talk about God," trans. John Drury, in Irruption of the Third World: Challenge to Theology. Papers from the Fifth International Conference of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, August 17-29, 1981, New Delhi, India, ed. Virginia Fabella and Sérgio Torres (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books), 224-226; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida" ["The God of Life"], Páginas 6, no. 40 (September 1981): 4; "A los diez años de 'teología de la liberación' ["At Ten Years from 'Theology of Liberation'"], an interview, Quehacer 15 (February 1982): 46.

<sup>47</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana" ["Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith"], in Signos de liberación: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1969-1973 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1973), 36. This article has been reprinted many times: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana (Bilbao, Spain: Zero, 1974); Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana," in La Iglesia en América Latina: Testimonios y documentos (1969-1973) (Estella, Spain: Editorial Verbo Divino, 1975), 11-48; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana," in La nuova frontiera de la teología en América Latina, ed. Rosino Gibellini (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1977), 13-40; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana," in La fuerza histórica de los pobres, 61-127; The article has been translated into English: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis of Liberation and the Christian Faith," trans. Olga Prendergast, Lumen Vitae 29 (September 1974): 373-400; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith," trans. John Drury, in Frontiers of Theology in Latin America, ed. Rosino Gibellini (London, England: SCM Press, 1980), 1-33; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Liberation Praxis and the Christian Faith," in The Power of the Poor in History, trans. Robert R. Barr, 36-74.

<sup>48</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana, 40; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 82. This is precisely his criticism of another theology, the "theology of revolution" (which often hides a "theology of violence" behind it): it always risked being transformed into a "Christian revolutionary ideology"; the temptation existed of "baptizing" a given revolution. See "La théologie de la libération: Une interview de Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Thérèse Nallet, Croissance de Jeunes Nations no. 121 (1972): 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Movimientos de liberación y teología," Concilium (Spanish edition) no. 93 (March 1973): 450-451; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 10-11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 22-23; 42-43; 48-49; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, 40-41; "Conversando con Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Teófilo Cabestrero in Conversaciones sobre la fe, 129; 132-135. Mons. Alfonso López Trujillo contends, however, that the distinction Gutiérrez makes between the theology of liberation and the theology of revolution is theoretical rather than real. Gustavo Gutiérrez, et al., "Diálogo," in Liberación: Diálogos en

notes that the gospel does not prescribe any specific social, economic, and political system, but that it is critical of every single one of them across time and in different places: "The word of the Lord interpellates every historical achievement and positions it in the broad perspective of the radical and total liberation of Christ, the Lord of history."<sup>49</sup> Gutiérrez, however, believes that an indigenous form of socialism--one which responds to the needs of the poorest members of society within the specific circumstances of individual Latin American nations--is superior to capitalism, but he makes this decision as the result of his analysis of society utilizing the social sciences. It is not a statement of faith derived directly from the Bible. Therefore, whenever Christians reflect on historical activities in light of the Word of God revealed in the Bible, they should evaluate the present situation, starting from their active engagement in the present circumstances, against the characteristics of the Kingdom of God--the communion between people and God and the communion among people--which Jesus Christ proclaimed. This should always guide them forward towards trying to create more just societies.

Gutiérrez asserts, in "Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia" (March 1976),<sup>50</sup> that the poor, too, must become the active bearers of the gospel message to others. This would help to free the gospel message from interpretations domesticated by the interests of the powerful. He calls this a need for a "social appropriation of the Gospel" ("*una apropiación social del Evangelio*"). The poor should demonstrate that the true message of the gospel--the coming of the Kingdom of God--is scandalous for many people; the gospel would not be presentable in proper society because it demands a radical transformation of both self and society in the interests of those who are poorest.<sup>51</sup> Gutiérrez subsequently notes that the evangelizing potential of the poor is affirmed in the final document of the Puebla Conference (no. 1147).<sup>52</sup> Furthermore,

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el CELAM, 95-96; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutterriez, in Liberation and Change, 83.

<sup>49</sup>"La palabra del Señor interpela toda realización histórica y la coloca en la ancha perspectiva de la liberación radical y total de Cristo, Señor de la historia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización," my translation, in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 82.

<sup>50</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia," Páginas 3 (March 1976): 1-12. In the present study, the following reprint is used: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia, Servicio de Documentación 21 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Documentación del MIEC-JECI, 1977).

<sup>51</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia, 22, 25-26; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, 50-53; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutterriez, in Liberation and Change, 93-94; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Los pobres en la Iglesia," Concilium no. 104 (no. 2, 1977): 108; Alvaro Quiroz Magaña, Eclesiología en la teología de la liberación, Verdad e Imagen 78 (Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Sígueme, 1983), 68-69.

<sup>52</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, 45-50; "Entrevista con Gustavo Gutiérrez" ["Interview with Gustavo Gutiérrez"], interview with Luis Peirano, Quehacer 3, no. 28 (March 1980): 109. "Commitment to the poor and oppressed and the rise of grassroots communities have helped to discover the

in a short presentation to the Catholic Theological Society of America, entitled "The Voice of the Poor in the Church" (June 7-10, 1978), as well as in "La fuerza histórica de los pobres" (July 1978), Gutiérrez insists that poor Christians, themselves, must engage in theological reflection as an expression of their right to think. In fact, all Christians should be theologians insofar as they ought to reflect on their actions in community in the light of the Christian faith. This does not supplant the special, additional role of particular people as professional theologians who have a solid knowledge of the Bible, Christian tradition, and contemporary theology.<sup>53</sup>

Gutiérrez reports, in "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)" (February 21-March 2, 1980), that, in fact, the poor have now begun to assume control over their own destiny both in society and in the Church in Latin America. He uses the expression "irruption of the poor" ("*irrupción del pobre*") to describe this occurrence, which he judges to be the most important event in the recent history of the continent. This means that the poor are rising up from their traditionally passive position in both society and the Church, and they are now becoming active subjects who claim their right to participate in both of them.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Gutiérrez characterizes the poor masses in Latin America as an oppressed

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evangelizing potential of the poor. For the poor challenge the Church constantly, summoning it to conversion; and many of the poor incarnate in their loves the evangelical values of solidarity, service, simplicity, and openness to accepting the gift of God." Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Part 4, Chapter 1, A Preferential Option for the Poor, no. 1147, in Puebla and Beyond, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury, 265-266.

<sup>53</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Voice of the Poor in the Church," in The Catholic Theological Society of America, Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Annual Convention, ed. Luke Salm (New York: Catholic Theological Society of America, 1979), 30-31. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxix-xlii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)" ["Christian Base Communities (Ecclesiological Perspectives)"], Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980): 5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in La Iglesia latino-americana entre el temor y la esperanza, Pablo Richard, 10-11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding Our Way to Talk about God," trans. John Drury, in Irruption of the Third World, 224-231; Alvaro Quiroz Magaña, Eclesiológica en la teología de la liberación, 70-71; Anthony J. Russell, "Theology in Context and 'The Right to Think' in Three Contemporary Theologians: Gutiérrez, Dussel and Boff," Pacifica 2 (October 1989): 282-322. "Theology is to think and it is a right of the poor people.... To think is a way to have power in history, because if we do not have a theology coming from the poor people, then *others* are thinking for us! If we don't read the Bible, others are reading the Bible for us. And theology in this context is an expression of this right to think.... This theology from the poor people is always a theology about life because the main expression of the poor people is the right to life. They exist!" Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church," in Seeds of a People's Church: Challenge and Promise from the Underside of History. Presentations from the Neil C. McMath Lectureship of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, Detroit, August 1-4, 1980, ed. Linda Unger and Kathleen Schultz (Detroit, Mich.: Seeds of a People's Church, 1981), 2.

<sup>54</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980): 4-6. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo" ["In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ"], Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 1 (30 June 1980): 83; Gustavo Gutiérrez,

and believing people. For Gutiérrez, it is essential that Christians recognize that the same poor people have the potential to transform the world around them (nature and society) and to develop a mature faith, free from resignation and fatalism. Only then will Christians truly understand that the political dimension and the faith dimension are two aspects of a single process of the liberation of the poor. The two dimensions are united in the struggles of the same people. Therefore he warns against any political or spiritual reductionism that does not take both dimensions of the people seriously. Moreover, he believes that the faith that the poor have shown throughout time (for example, in their expressions of popular religiosity) "also implies, as is shown by their practice, the immense potentiality of a liberating faith."<sup>55</sup> As was already mentioned, the evangelizing potential of the poor is recognized in the final document of the Puebla Conference (no. 1147). Evidence of this liberating faith among poor masses is the principal roles they have assumed in "basic (or base) Christian communities" (*comunidades cristianas de base*), which are also called "basic (or base) ecclesial communities" (*comunidades eclesiales de base*). Gutiérrez has worked for many years with such communities in Peru. He explains that, in fact, they are created by poor Christians, and arise as the expressions of their attempts to live their faith within their historical context of exploitation. The communities also include other Christians who are not poor, but who are committed to their liberation. The poor read and reflect on the Bible within these communities. Furthermore, many poor people have also assumed the aforementioned task of becoming bearers of the gospel both to other people who participate in the communities and to others who are not part of them.<sup>56</sup> From his experience of doing pastoral work with the poor, he has learned that the poor evangelize by becoming truly liberated: by emancipating themselves from injustices, which originate in sin, they create communion among people, and they make the Kingdom of God evident in history.<sup>57</sup> (The notion that the Kingdom of God is present in history is examined in the third subsection of the present chapter devoted to the relation between salvation and

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"The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church," in *Seeds of a People's Church*, 1; Pablo Thai-Hop, "Hacia una ética desde los pobres," in *El quehacer teológico desde el Perú: Perspectivas*, ISET, Colección Aportes, no. 1 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Superior de Estudios Teológicos-ISET-Juan XXIII, 1986), 50-51.

<sup>55</sup>"La dimensión creyente del pueblo implica también, como su práctica lo demuestra, la presencia de una inmensa potencialidad de fe liberadora." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," my translation, *Páginas 5*, no. 29 (May 1980): 8. See also Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 155-164.

<sup>56</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," *Páginas 5*, no. 29 (May 1980): 9-11. For a study of Gutiérrez's portrait of how the poor evangelize, see Alvaro Quiroz Magaña, *Ecclesiológia en la teología de la liberación*, 113-117.

<sup>57</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," *Páginas 5*, no. 29 (May 1980): 11-13. See also Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 184-186; James B. Nickoloff, "Church of the Poor: The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez," *Theological Studies* 54 (Summer 1993): 532-533.

historical activities.)

Gutiérrez briefly explains how he reads and interprets the Bible in "Iglesia de los pobres: Perspectiva bíblica," which records a course he gave in March, 1980.<sup>58</sup> This explanation is significant because the gospel demands present in the Bible constitute the reference point against which Christians committed to the process of liberation ought to evaluate their actions in history to determine whether the influence of the Holy Spirit is present in them. Gutiérrez presupposes that the person who is interpreting the Bible is an active member of an ecclesial community. As was already noted, Gutiérrez emphasizes that there are social as well as personal elements to one's spirituality. Individual prayer, alone, is not sufficient; participation in a community of believers, especially in the Eucharist, is a primary obligation of Christians. Gutiérrez proposes three hermeneutical principles for interpreting the Bible. First, when Christians read the Bible they usually read it from a faith perspective, that is, as people who believe the gospel. Of course, they can also read the Bible as a literary text, but for the purpose of doing theology, they ought to view it as the Word of God conveyed throughout the history of the Jewish people. Starting in this perspective of faith, Gutiérrez advises Christians to read the Bible, but at the same time they should also let the Bible "read them". By this, he means that the Christians who approach the Bible should be open to being changed by what they read, instead of searching for confirmations of positions already taken. Second, Christians should recognize that, when they read the Bible, they are reading the history of the relation between God and the Jewish people, which is constituted by the self-communication of God to the Jewish people across time. Christians are reading it, however, in the vantage point of their own history, that is, their own time and place. Third, Christians should recognize that they are simultaneously positioned close to the Bible, but also very distant from it. Many of the biblical episodes and characters resonate with their own immediate experiences because they are reading about a believing people. On the other hand, the Bible refers specifically to people who were living and events that occurred more than two thousand years ago in a very different world than contemporary Latin America. Therefore, it is imperative that Christians use various available exegetical tools in order to try to understand better the experiences of the Jewish people in the distant past. Furthermore, it is helpful and necessary to get to know how these passages have been interpreted throughout time. Finally, Gutiérrez supplies two warnings about biblical interpretation. His first warning is that Christians should not search in the Bible for answers which it does not offer. His second warning is that, in addition to learning what the Bible affirms on a given matter, it is also essential to

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<sup>58</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La Iglesia de los pobres: Perspectiva bíblica," Pastoral Andina no. 30 (April 1980): 13-32.



recognize what the Bible rejects.<sup>59</sup>

### 3. The Relation between Salvation and Historical Activities:

The relation between historical activities (including political action) and salvation is the central theme of the theology of liberation. Gutiérrez's major concern is to examine how one's participation in the process of liberation is a salvific activity that contributes to the partial realization, in fact, the growth, of the Kingdom of God in history, but not to its complete fulfillment. In order to do this, he reconsiders several classic theological themes, such as the significance of sin, charity, and universal love. He also examines less traditional themes, such as God's preferential, but not exclusive, love for the poor and oppressed masses, the implications of the reality of the worldwide class struggle for the Christian's love of others, the intermediary role played by utopia between faith and action, the status of the poor masses as "non-persons" rather than as "non-believers", and the notion that Jesus Christ's resurrection implies that, in spite of the overwhelming predominance of pain and suffering in the world, life has the final word in history, not death. Thus the objective of this subsection is to trace the development of Gutiérrez's study of the relation between salvation and historical activities in his writings from July, 1968 to 1982.

In Hacia una teología de la liberación (July 21-25, 1968) and in his preface to Signos de renovación (February 1969), Gutiérrez rejects a view, traditionally held by Roman Catholics, that two histories, sacred and profane, exist simultaneously in a juxtaposed or closely linked manner. Thus Gutiérrez also rejects any notion that the Church should remain aloof from passing judgment on economic and political activities as if they were part of a transitory "profane history" which is less important than a more real "sacred history" where one's salvation is worked out. Indeed, Gutiérrez believes that the gospel reveals only one history--not two juxtaposed histories--and it is a history in which Jesus Christ's salvific work operates. He employs two gospel themes to sustain his claim: Jesus Christ's role in both creation and salvation; the messianic promises. For Gutiérrez, creation is the first part of a process leading to salvation, and history, itself, is the prolongation of the creative act. Whenever people utilize natural resources in order to transform the earth and to construct societies that are more human, they extend creation. If this is done justly, in the interests of all people, especially the poorest, then this is also a salvific activity. Thus Gutiérrez claims that "building the temporal city is not simply a humanizing stage of pre-evangelization as it used to be said in theology until a few years ago; it is to insert oneself fully into a salvific process which includes every man." On the other hand, everything that ruptures communion among people, that is, "every wrong, every humiliation,

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<sup>59</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La Iglesia de los pobres: perspectiva bíblica," Pastoral Andina (April 1980): 14-16. For analyses of the hermeneutical tools Gutiérrez uses for interpreting the Bible, see Germán Correa, "Leyendo el Exódo y a Gustavo Gutiérrez," Tierra Nueva 7 (1973): 88-94; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 383-390; Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 388-393.

every alienation of human work, is an obstacle to the work of salvation."<sup>60</sup> Injustices, then, obstruct historical attempts to build more just societies--societies that better approximate the complete communion among people and between people and God, which he identifies as the Kingdom of God. Messianic promises are the second theme that Gutiérrez utilizes to support his claim that only one history exists. According to Gutiérrez, the biblical prophets proclaim a kingdom of peace, which is incompatible with social injustice. Instead, the kingdom of peace is characterized by "the establishment of justice, the defense of the rights of the poor, the punishment of oppressors, and a life free from the fear of being enslaved by others."<sup>61</sup> Therefore historical activities that counteract "servitude, exploitation, and alienated work" (i.e., the deprivation of labourers from the profits of their work) provide historical signs of the arrival and the presence of the Messiah who will bring about the final realization of this kingdom of peace.<sup>62</sup> Gutiérrez thinks it is important that Christians in Latin America, a continent where a great deal of injustice is evident, should insert themselves into the unique history where Jesus Christ engages in his salvific work, and they should commit themselves to struggle alongside the poor in the process of the latter's liberation from everything contrary to the kingdom of peace. Furthermore, Gutiérrez, citing Matthew 25:31-46, expresses his belief that it is precisely when Christians participate alongside the poorest and most exploited members of society in their struggles for liberation that they will encounter Jesus Christ because he is always present among the poor.<sup>63</sup>

In Marxismo y cristianismo (April 14-16, 1971), Gutiérrez develops his study of the relation that, he believes, exists between creation and salvation, and eschatology and political action. According to Gutiérrez, Jesus Christ's incarnation in history signifies an historical realization of the Kingdom of God, but also an announcement of the full realization of it, which is still to come in the future. Thus eschatology "has a tendency towards two inseparable aspects: an orientation towards the future...and at the same time

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<sup>60</sup>"Construir la ciudad temporal no es una simple etapa de humanización, de pre-evangelización como se decía en teología hasta hace unos años; es colocarse de lleno en un proceso salvífico que abarca todo el hombre. Toda ofensa, toda humillación, toda alienación del trabajo humano, es un obstáculo en la obra de salvación." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación, my translation (1969), 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," my translation, in Signos de renovación, 14.

<sup>61</sup>"Los profetas anuncian un reino de paz. Pero la paz supone el establecimiento de la justicia, la defensa de los derechos de los pobres, el castigo de los opresores, una vida sin temor de ser esclavizado por otros." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación, my translation (1969), 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," my translation, in Signos de renovación, 14.

<sup>62</sup>"Luchar por un mundo justo, en el que no haya servidumbre, ni opresión, ni trabajo alienado, será anunciar, significar la venida del Mesías." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," my translation, in Signos de renovación, 14. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1969), 11-12.

<sup>63</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1969), 12-14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in Signos de renovación, 14.

an historical present....Moreover it is orientation towards the future because it is [an] historical present."<sup>64</sup> Therefore the construction of a more just historical communion among people represents a partial historical realization of a fullness that is yet to arrive.<sup>65</sup>

Gutiérrez further elaborates his view concerning the relation between salvation and historical activities in chapters nine to thirteen of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (December 31, 1971).<sup>66</sup> While "salvation" ultimately means the entrance into the Kingdom of God, Gutiérrez intends to demonstrate that it also has meaning in connection with historical activities. Thus he defines salvation as the "communion of men with God and the communion of men among themselves...which embraces all of human reality, transforms it, and brings it to its fullness in Christ."<sup>67</sup> His view on the relation between salvation and historical activities is built upon a particular understanding of sin. He defines sin as an historical rupture of communion among people, and thereby also a break of communion with God, arising from selfishness, which is the refusal to love others by serving them. Sin has both personal and social dimensions. Individuals are the ones who selfishly choose to turn their attention and efforts towards fulfilling their own interests, instead of engaging themselves in the historical task of building communion, thereby demonstrating their decision to reject the gospel demand to love all people. Sin, however, also has historical ramifications that are social in nature: injustice and exploitation arise precisely when people choose not to love all other people; they evidence a breach in the communion among people. Thus Gutiérrez insists that an "unjust situation is not an accident, it is not something marked by an unavoidable destiny: there is a human responsibility behind it."<sup>68</sup> The condition of poverty that a person and a collective people

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<sup>64</sup>"La escatología tiende a dos aspectos inseparable: una orientación al futuro (de donde viene la definición de tratado de los fines últimos, de lo último=escata) y al mismo tiempo una actualidad histórica.... Todavía más es orientación al futuro porque es actualidad histórica." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Marxismo y cristianismo, my translation, 19-20.

<sup>65</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Marxismo y cristianismo, 19-22.

<sup>66</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 177-372.

<sup>67</sup>"La salvación--comunidad de los hombres con Dios y comunión de los hombres entre ellos--es algo que se da, también, real y concretamente desde ahora, que asume toda la realidad humana, la transforma, y la lleva a su plenitud en Cristo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 187.

<sup>68</sup>"...una situación de injusticia no es una casualidad, no es algo marcado por un sino fatal: hay detrás de ella una responsabilidad humana." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 225. See also *Ibid.*, 222, 244, 334. The "very root of all exploitation and injustice...[is] the rupture of friendship with God and among men." "...la raíz misma de toda explotación e injusticia: la ruptura de amistad con Dios y entre los hombres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Evangelio y praxis de liberación," my translation, in Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina, 245. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana, 37; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de la liberación, teología y evangelización," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 74; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación. Teología y anuncio,"

suffer is not due to fate, and therefore, it must be rectified. It is a consequence of a situation of sin.

Gutiérrez designates this single history as a "Christo-finalized" history because "in Christ everything has been created, [and] everything has been saved."<sup>69</sup> Jesus Christ's salvific work engenders simultaneously liberation from sin and liberation from all the consequences of sin: despoliation, injustice, and hatred.<sup>70</sup> Thus Jesus Christ's salvific work embraces all three levels of liberation that constitute a single process of liberation: political liberation, liberation across history so as to take control of one's own destiny, and liberation from sin and entrance into communion with God.<sup>71</sup> According to Gutiérrez, all people are saved in principle by Jesus Christ: "by his death and resurrection," Jesus Christ "redeems man from sin and all its consequences."<sup>72</sup> This signals the historical arrival of the Kingdom of God, thereby fulfilling the prophets' messianic promises of a kingdom of peace based upon justice and characterized by "the defense of the rights of the poor, the punishment of oppressors, a life free from the fear of being enslaved by others, [and] the liberation of the oppressed."<sup>73</sup> The complete realization of these messianic promises with the final manifestation of the Kingdom of God in the future is anticipated by Jesus Christ's resurrection, but it will

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Concilium no. 96 (June 1974): 360-361; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 13, 41-42; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 42; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutteriez, in Liberation and Change, 84; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 94-95; Marciano Vidal, "El 'Misterio de Iniquidad' en las estructuras: La categoría teológico-moral del 'pecado estructural'," Verdad y Vida 44 (1986): 391-395.

<sup>69</sup>"...en Cristo todo ha sido creado, todo ha sido salvado (cf. Col. 1, 15-20)." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 198.

<sup>70</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 188, 198, 222, 226-227.

<sup>71</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 229.

<sup>72</sup>"Por su muerte y resurrección redime al hombre del pecado y todas sus consecuencias..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 227. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana, 38; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación u fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 42; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 35.

<sup>73</sup>"Los profetas anuncian un reino de paz. Pero la paz supone el establecimiento de la justicia: 'el producto de la justicia será la paz, el fruto de la equidad, una seguridad perpetua' (Is. 32, 17; cf. también salmo 85), la defensa de los derechos de los pobres, el castigo de los opresores, una vida sin temor de ser esclavizado por otros, la liberación de los oprimidos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 214.

not occur until Jesus Christ returns in history, and thereby ends history.<sup>74</sup> According to Gutiérrez, the opportunity of salvation is a gift presented gratuitously by God to all people (both Christians and non-Christians), regardless of whether they are aware of it. God does this due to his love of all people, and, through his offer of this gift, he invites them to enter into communion with him and with each other. Gutiérrez uses the term "charity" to signify God's love of all people, a love which is present in all of them. People, in turn, may choose freely either to accept or to reject the offer of salvation. They demonstrate that they recognize his love for them and that they choose to accept his gift of salvation precisely by the way that their actions historically manifest their love of all people, but especially of the poor--those people who particularly suffer the injustices that are the consequences of sin. According to Gutiérrez, God loves all people, yet he loves the poor preferentially, not because they are good and deserve his special love for them, but simply because they are the sufferers of injustices and this is God's way of loving. God demonstrates his love for all people by showing his love for those who are the least in society, that is, the unloved.<sup>75</sup> This love of other people has its source in charity; as was noted, this signifies God's love of people which is present in all of them. Charity is manifested historically precisely in human relationships of love (for example, within families and among friends). Truly loving others, however, means actively seeking them, approaching them, and making them one's neighbour. It means initiating an encounter by placing oneself in the other's path rather than waiting for an encounter to be brought about when the other is met in one's

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<sup>74</sup>"The full encounter with the Lord will put an end to history, but it will take place in history." "El encuentro pleno con el Señor podrá fin a la historia, pero se da ya en la historia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 215. See also *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>75</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 238-248. In a future article, Gutiérrez develops his reflection on why God prefers the poor: "Jesus declared the poor blessed....the Gospel of Jesus proclaims to us God's love for the poor, on account of being that, poor. And not necessarily and primarily due to being stronger believers, [and] morally good or better than others. [It is] Because of being poor, being hungry, being persecuted. Only on this foundation can the later elaborations on or clarifications of the gospel meaning of the poor be understood.... The beatitudes, in fact, are more a revelation about God than the poor. They tell us who God is and what his Kingdom is like, they speak to us about God as defender of the poor, their protector, their liberator. Only in this way will it be possible for us to understand the privileged role that the poor--the concrete poor, the dispossessed, the oppressed--have in his Kingdom." "Jesús declaró bienaventurados a los pobres....el Evangelio de Jesús nos anuncia el amor de Dios por los pobres por ser eso, pobres. Y no necesaria y primeramente por ser más creyentes, más buenos o mejores, moralmente hablando, que otros. Por ser pobres, por tener hambre, por ser perseguidos. Sólo sobre esta base pueden ser comprendidos los enriquecimientos o precisiones ulteriores sobre el sentido evangélico del pobre.... Las bienaventuranzas son, en realidad, más una revelación sobre Dios y cuál es su Reino, nos hablan de Dios como defensor de los pobres, su protector, su liberador. Sólo así nos será posible comprender el papel privilegiado que los pobres--los pobres concretos, los desposeídos, los oprimidos--tienen en su Reino." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," my translation, in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxxii--xxxiii. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 10-11; "Entrevista con Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Luis Peirano, Quehacer 3, no. 28 (March 1980): 110; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church," in Seeds of a People's Church, 3.

own path.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, "love for God is expressed inescapably *through* love of one's neighbour....God is loved in the neighbour....To love one's brother, to love all men, is a necessary and unavoidable mediation of the love of God, *it is* to love God."<sup>77</sup> Therefore, God is met through one's encounters with the neighbour. This is why Gutiérrez often designates activities that are truly in solidarity with the poor and oppressed as a "praxis of love".

One's neighbour, however, is not just an isolated individual. This other person exists within the context of social relationships and is part of a social class with its own distinct culture. For Gutiérrez, the existence of different social classes and the conflict between them are observable facts. The relevant issue for Christians and the Church is not whether class conflict should be advocated, as if one were thereby creating a conflict that did not yet exist. Instead, given that class conflict is already a socially observable fact, the issue is how one should act in order to uproot its causes--injustice and, ultimately, sin--so that there will no longer be a division of humanity between classes. Christians should contribute to the process for eliminating the source of class conflict by recognizing the existence of the conflict, and then entering into the conflict. Gutiérrez warns, however, that "neutrality in this matter is impossible." All people, especially Christians, must opt for one side or for the other. He advocates that the Roman Catholic Church should side with the oppressed class because Christians should always opt for people who suffer the consequences of

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<sup>76</sup>According to Gutiérrez, the neighbour in Luke 10: 29 and 36 "was the Samaritan who *approached* the injured man and *made him his neighbour*. One's neighbour...is not the person I find in my path, but the one in whose path I place myself. He is the person whom I approach and actively seek." "Prójimo fue el samaritano que se *aproximó* al herido y lo hizo su prójimo. Prójimo, como se ha dicho, no es aquél que yo encuentro en mi camino, sino aquél en cuyo camino yo me pongo. Aquél a quien yo me acerco y busco activamente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 245. Similarly, he declares in his lecture at the El Escorial Conference (July 8-15, 1972) that "as long as the neighbour is the 'nearby person', the one whom I encounter in my path, my world carries on the same as before. If, on the contrary, I consider as my neighbour the one whose path I place myself on, the one whom I approach,...'the distant person', than my world changes. That is what is happening with the 'option for the poor'. That option constitutes the axle on which turns a new way of being a Christian in Latin America today." "...mientras el prójimo sea el 'cercano', aquél que yo encuentro en *mi* camino, mi mundo sigue igual. Si por el contrario, considero como mi prójimo a aquél en cuyo camino yo me pongo, aquél a quien yo me aproximo...el 'lejano', mi mundo cambia. Eso es lo que ocurre con la 'opción por el pobre'. Esa opción constituye el eje sobre el que gira hoy una nueva manera de ser cristiano en América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Evangelio y praxis de liberación," my translation, in Fe cristiano y cambio social en América Latina, 234.

<sup>77</sup>"Es necesario afirmar, además, que el amor a Dios se expresa ineludiblemente *en* el amor al prójimo. Más todavía, a Dios se le ama en el prójimo.... Amar al hermano, a todo hombre, es una mediación necesaria e insoslayable del amor a Dios, *es* amar a Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 248. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de la liberación, teología y evangelización," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 73; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación. Teología y anuncio," Concilium no. 96 (June 1974): 360; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutierrez, in Liberation and Change, 82; 85.

an unjust system rooted in sin. All Christians should make the interests of the poor and oppressed their own interests. The decision to side with some people and against others, however, "poses problems to the universality of Christian love and the unity of the Church."<sup>78</sup> For Gutiérrez, love for all people remains an abstraction until it is manifested historically by demonstrating one's love of particular persons: the poor, exploited, and oppressed person, as well as the whole oppressed people as a collective group. Indeed, love is universal precisely when people commit themselves, simultaneously, to participating alongside the oppressed to help them effect their liberation, and to contributing to the liberation of the oppressors from their power, ambition, and selfishness—that is, from their propensity to sin. Thus "oppressors are loved by liberating them from their characteristic and inhuman position as oppressors, by liberating them from themselves. But this can only be achieved by resolutely opting for the oppressed, that is to say by combating the oppressor class." Therefore people have to "combat really and effectively, not hate." Moreover, "in that consists the challenge, as new as the Gospel: to love one's enemies."<sup>79</sup> For Gutiérrez,

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<sup>78</sup>"Es innegable que la lucha de clases plantea problemas a la universalidad del amor cristiano y a la unidad de la Iglesia. Pero toda consideración sobre este asunto debe partir de dos comprobaciones elementales: la lucha de clases es un hecho y la neutralidad en esa materia es imposible." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 340-341. "The Gospel announces God's love for all men and asks us to love like he loves, but to accept the struggle of classes means to opt for some men and against others. To live both things without juxtapositions is a great challenge for the Christian committed to the totality of the process of liberation. A challenge that leads him to deepen his faith and to mature his love for others." "El Evangelio anuncia el amor de Dios por todos los hombres y nos pide amar como El ama, pero aceptar la lucha de clases significa optar por unos hombres y contra otros. Vivir ambas cosas sin yuxtaposiciones es un gran desafío para el cristiano comprometido con la totalidad del proceso de liberación. Un desafío que lo lleva a profundizar en su fe y a madurar en su amor a los demás." *Ibid.*, my translation, 344. See also "La théologie de la libération: Une interview de Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Thérèse Naillat, Croissance des Jeunes Nations no. 121 (1972): 12; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana, 19-24; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de la liberación, teología y evangelización," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 79; 83-85; Gustavo Gutiérrez, et al., "Diálogo," in *Ibid.*, 89-90; 94-95; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación. Teología y anuncio," Concilium no. 96 (June 1974): 366; 372-374; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 14-25; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutierrez, in Liberation and Change, 77; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxxiii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church," in Seeds of a People's Church, 1. Gutiérrez explains that the isolated poor does not exist; all poor are part of a poor people; they are members of a collective group who share the same experiences. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980): 6. Mons. Alfonso López Trujillo, of Colombia, has accused Gutiérrez, along with Hugo Assmann and José Comblin, firstly, of uncritically accepting the Marxist view that only two social classes exist, and, secondly, of fomenting the class struggle. Gustavo Gutiérrez, et al., "Diálogo," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 94; Mons. Alfonso López Trujillo, "Las teologías de la liberación en América Latina," in *Ibid.*, 51-52.

<sup>79</sup>"Se ama a los opresores liberándolos de su propia e inhumana situación de tales, liberándolos de ellos mismos. Pero a esto no se llega sino optando resueltamente por los oprimidos, es decir combatiendo contra la clase opresora. Combatir real y eficazmente, no odiar, en eso consiste el reto, nuevo como el Evangelio: amar a los enemigos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 344. See

this means that people should recognize that they do have class enemies, but they must always love them.

One's neighbour includes the "exploited social class, the dominated people, the marginalized race." Indeed, "the masses are also our neighbour."<sup>80</sup> As a statement of faith, Gutiérrez believes that God is met in all loving encounters with other people, but especially in encounters "with those whose human face oppression, despoliation, and alienation have disfigured." He cautions, however, that "to give something to eat or drink nowadays is a political act: it means the transformation of a society structured for the benefit of a few people who appropriate the surplus value of work done by most of the population."<sup>81</sup> All people demonstrate their explicit or implicit decision whether to accept God's offer of salvation and whether to love all people by the role they assume in the process for liberating the oppressed. They either contribute to the process of liberation (by transforming societies so that they approach the justice, peace, and freedom from oppression promised by the prophets) or they obstruct it.<sup>82</sup> A commitment to the process of liberation means participating alongside the oppressed, due to one's love for the oppressed, so as to assist them as they try, first, to achieve more fully their economic, political, and cultural liberation, and, second, to become the protagonists of their own destiny. Historical activities that foster communion among people by making societies more just signify an acceptance of the offer of salvation; they contribute to the partial fulfillment of the Kingdom of God; and they are suggestive of future changes orientated towards more closely approximating the complete fulfillment of it. Not opting to commit oneself to the process of liberation clearly signifies opting to accept a situation of ruptured communion among people, a situation caused by sin, which is contrary to the Kingdom of God.

As was already noted in the previous subsection of the present chapter, Gutiérrez uses the term "utopia" to explain the interrelationship between the three different levels of meaning of liberation that are

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also "La théologie de la libération: Une interview de Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Thérèse Nailliet, Croissance des Jeunes Nations no. 121 (1972): 12-14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 18; Curt Cadorette, From the Heart of the People: The Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez, 108-110; Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 138-142; Stephen J. Pope, "Proper and Improper Partiality and the Preferential Option for the Poor," Theological Studies 54 (June 1993): 242-271.

<sup>80</sup>The neighbour: "Es, igualmente, la clase social explotada, el pueblo dominado, la raza marginada. Las masas son también nuestro prójimo, como dice M.D. Chenu." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 251-252.

<sup>81</sup>"En efecto, dar de comer o de beber es en nuestros días un acto político: significa la transformación de una sociedad estructurada en beneficio de unos pocos que se apropian de la plus-valía del trabajo de los más.... Los hombres son la mediación necesaria de nuestro encuentro con el Señor, sobre todo aquellos a quienes la opresión, el despojo y la alienación han desfigurado el rostro humano...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 252.

<sup>82</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 186-187, 200, 226, 253.



all part of a single process of liberation.<sup>83</sup> The three levels include political liberation, liberation across time by which people progressively assume greater control over their own destiny, and liberation from sin and entrance into communion with God and with all other people, which ultimately signifies salvation. The first level of meaning of liberation "corresponds to the level of scientific rationality which supports a real and effective transforming political action."<sup>84</sup> The social sciences are among the tools used for understanding the existing circumstances. The third level of meaning of liberation corresponds to the level of faith. Utopia functions on the second level of meaning, and it thereby mediates between faith and political action. At the outset, Gutiérrez, citing the sociologist Karl Mannheim, accepts the notion that utopia signifies "the historical project for a qualitatively different society," as well as "the aspiration to establish new social relations between men."<sup>85</sup> Utopia--the vision of a different order of things, a new society in the future--comes from the creative imaginations of people and it is necessarily related rationally to the existing circumstances. This vision of a better future arises in the imaginations of people who actively participate in the existing circumstances where they perceive certain deficiencies. As was already noted, Gutiérrez contends that the Bible does not prescribe a specific political, economic, social, and cultural program for human living that is true for all places and times. Thus utopia is not a naively mechanical application of some model derived from the Bible, which concerns a different people living in a different time, but instead it responds to the present situation. Thus, on the one hand, utopia is a denunciation of the existing society

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<sup>83</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 296-307. For studies of Gutiérrez's concept of utopia, see the following: José Ignacio González Faus, "La teología latinoamericana de la liberación," Actualidad Bibliográfica de Filosofía y Teología 10 (1973): 426; Jacques van Nieuwenhove, "The Theological Project of Gustavo Gutiérrez: Reflections on his 'Theology of Liberation'," trans. Olga Prendergast, Lumen Vitae 28 (September 1973): 420-421; Jacques van Nieuwenhove, "Les 'théologies de la libération' latino-américaines," in Théologies de la libération en Amérique Latine, Jean-Marie Aubert, Julien Freund, Eduardo Ibarra, Jacques van Nieuwenhove, and Marc Michel (Paris, France: Beauchesne, 1974), 100-103; Carlos Bravo, "Notas marginales a la teología de la liberación," Eclesiástica Xaveriana 24 (1974): 14-17; Xosé Miguélez, La teología de la liberación y su método: Estudio en Hugo Assmann y Gustavo Gutiérrez (Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Herder, 1976), 149-157; Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 132-143, 342-382; Roberto Oliveros, Liberación y teología, 274-279; Oscar S. Suarez, "Theology and the Human Condition in the Work of Gustavo Gutiérrez," Tugon 10 (no. 1, 1990): 59-61; James B. Nickoloff, "A Future for Peru? Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Reasons for his Hope," Horizons 19 (Spring 1992): 34-35; James B. Nickoloff, "Church of the Poor: The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez," Theological Studies 54 (Summer 1993): 515-517, 523.

<sup>84</sup>"La primera corresponde al nivel de la racionalidad científica en la que se apoya una real y efectiva acción política transformadora." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 302.

<sup>85</sup>"El término utopía ha vuelto a ser empleado en las últimas décadas para designar el proyecto histórico de una sociedad cualitativamente distinta y para expresar la aspiración al establecimiento de nuevas relaciones sociales entre los hombres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 296.

for its deficiencies that lead to injustice. In contemporary Latin America, a utopia would involve the denunciation of the structural causes that lie behind the widespread oppression of the masses, and it would also call for the complete uprooting of these causes rather than simply reforming the situation superficially. On the other hand, utopia signifies the announcement of a qualitatively new society. A utopia is realistic and thereby valuable, first, only if it is related to the various possibilities available in the present situation and, second, if people in fact try to realize it historically by endeavouring to transform the existing society so that it can become more human and thereby more just for all people, not simply for a minority of the population. Thus a given utopia is necessarily related to the political action that is undertaken: in fact, "an authentically utopian thought postulates, enriches, and gives new goals to political action, but at the same time it is verified by this political action."<sup>86</sup> Gutiérrez contrasts utopia with the notion of ideology. The objective associated with ideology is to preserve an unjust existing social order. An ideology, rather than a utopia, is evident in the imaginations of the minority of the population who hold power in Latin America. They have no vision of a better future for all people, but instead they do everything they can to maintain control over a system that serves their own self-interests at the expense of the masses. They exert repressive violence to quell all attempts to transform the system. Such repression is often disproportionately harsh when the true threat to their status is measured. It becomes especially severe when it is a reaction to any evidence of counter-violence, which in turn had been engendered in the first place as a response to the original institutionalized violence of the existing system. Gutiérrez states that he concurs with the assertion made by the Brazilian pedagogue, Paulo Freire, that only the poor and oppressed masses can truly generate a revolutionary utopia for denouncing the existing system and announcing a better future for all people because everyone else benefits in some way or another from the existing system and thereby tends to conceive and adhere to conservative or reformist ideologies.<sup>87</sup> Thus each utopia expresses a forward-looking project aimed at creating better living conditions for all people in a more just society that is qualitatively different from the existing one. It also seeks a new way of being human, characterized by a new social consciousness, where the needs of the poorest are foremost. Gutiérrez has personally opted for some form of socialism, characterized by the social appropriation of the means of production, of the political process, and of the enjoyment of freedom, but he emphasizes that it must be a socialism that corresponds to the circumstances of contemporary Latin America, not Soviet state-controlled communism or the

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<sup>86</sup>"Un pensamiento auténticamente utópico postula, enriquece y da nuevas metas a la acción política, pero al mismo tiempo es verificado por ésta." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 299.

<sup>87</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 301-302.

"dictatorship of the proletariat".<sup>88</sup> Such an indigenous form of socialism could only be created by people who are committed to transforming Latin American society. (It is not worthwhile investigating Gutiérrez's writings for a detailed prescription for a society that corresponds to his vision for a better future. He does not pretend to be an economist, politician, and psychologist. He is a priest, a pastoral worker, a teacher, a public speaker, a writer, and--he claims only in his spare time--a theologian. In any case, for Gutiérrez all new societies are the joint creation of a people, not the demagogic application of one person's vision. It is contrary to his intentions to prescribe a model that he would thereby "canonize" as being appropriate for all times and places. Of course, his reticence to be more specific has often been criticized as evidence that he is both evasive and a dreamer, who is out of touch with reality.) For Christians, the partial or complete realization of every utopia--that is, the creation of every social arrangement that is more just than the previous society--is necessarily relativized and questioned by the Kingdom of God, the final fulfillment of communion among people and between people and God. Thus Gutiérrez contends that "the Bible presents eschatology to us as the motor of salvific history oriented towards the future."<sup>89</sup> The hope that Christians have in the final fulfillment of God's promise of the Kingdom of God drives them to recognize that every society remains short of this final communion. They should soberly face the present society with the recognition that it is not, nor could it ever be, the full realization of the Kingdom of God. Because structures leading to injustices always exist, a newer utopia should be generated creatively in people's imaginations so that they will be motivated to denounce injustices and to announce a more just vision that still is yet to be achieved historically.<sup>90</sup> The historical manifestation of more just societies, however, are not neutral to salvation. In fact, Gutiérrez contends that the activities which create more just societies are salvific work because they really do contribute to the growth of the Kingdom of God in history, insofar as they possess features that characterize the Kingdom of God promised by God in the Bible (for example, love, friendship,

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<sup>88</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 118-121. See also Miguel Manzanera, Teología, salvación y liberación, 130-131; Curt Cadorette, From the Heart of the People: The Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez, 79-81; Luis Pásara, Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana, 56; Octavio Corral Romero, Filosofía de la teología de la liberación de Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino (Chihuahua, Mexico: Centro Librero La Prensa, 1986), 87; Peter Burns, "The Problem of Socialism in Liberation Theology," Theological Studies 53 (September 1992): 493-516.

<sup>89</sup>"...la Biblia nos presenta la escatología como el motor de la historia salvífica radicalmente orientada hacia el futuro." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 206. See also *Ibid.*, 263; "Diálogo con Gustavo Gutiérrez (I)," interview with Vicente O. Vetrano, Actualidad Pastoral no. 67 (1973): 158.

<sup>90</sup>"The core of eschatological thought is in this tension towards that which is to come, towards a new action of God." Gustavo Gutiérrez, A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation, trans. and ed. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson, 163. "La fibra del pensamiento escatológico está en tensión hacia lo que vendrá, hacia una nueva acción de Dios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 207.

and justice). For Gutiérrez, the idea that these activities have salvific value, however, does not imply that people ultimately cause the complete fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. This is a task which is proper only to God. Nevertheless, Gutiérrez believes that "there is no growth of the Kingdom without liberating historical events"; therefore, the Kingdom of God may be partially realized historically only through actions that contribute to the process of liberation. Gutiérrez resolutely admonishes of any pretension that a given society constitutes the full realization of the Kingdom of God because all human efforts throughout history that contribute to the process of liberation "will not have conquered the roots themselves of oppression, [and] man's exploitation of man," which is sin. This will only occur with "the coming of the Kingdom, which is above all a gift."<sup>91</sup> Indeed, only the final realization of the Kingdom of God, which remains God's gift to humanity, can end sin and its consequences.

In "Significado de Medellín para la Iglesia latinoamericana" (October 1973), Gutiérrez deals with the issue of how to reconcile the Christian faith with the use of violence.<sup>92</sup> Of course, revolutionaries often use violence with the objective of furthering the process of liberation, so the issue must be considered. Gutiérrez believes that all violence is contrary to the Christian faith, and that Christians should employ it in historical circumstances only as a last resort. Furthermore, he asserts that it is necessary to distinguish between different types of violence. Christians should especially reject the original violence known as "institutionalized violence" (which was recognized at Medellín). This is the already present violence of an unjust social system that keeps most Latin Americans in a condition of poverty. The counter-violence utilized by revolutionaries to overturn such a system, while remaining contrary to the demands of the gospel, is a reaction to institutionalized violence; it is engendered by the existing system of injustice. Gutiérrez stresses the following query: if Roman Catholic tradition provided the resources for justifying the violence used by Christians, alongside non-Christians, in the French resistance movement during World War II, why should it not do the same for those Christians confronted by misery and injustice in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru? He wonders whether Latin Americans are not also faced by situations that challenge their Christian conscience. Moreover, he notes that Pope Paul VI, in fact, already declared counter-violence legitimate

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<sup>91</sup>"Sin acontecimientos históricos liberadores no hay crecimiento del Reino, pero el proceso de liberación no habrá vencido las raíces mismas de la opresión, de la explotación del hombre por el hombre, sino con el advenimiento del Reino, que es ante todo un don." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 228. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Movimientos de liberación y teología," Concilium no. 93 (March 1974): 455; Alvaro Quiroz Magaña, Eclesiología en la teología de la liberación, 141.

<sup>92</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado de Medellín para la Iglesia latinoamericana" ["Meaning of Medellín for the Latin American Church"], in Cinco años de Medellín: 1968-1973, Rolando Ames, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and German Schmitz. Departamento de Teología y Gráfica, 30 (Lima, Peru: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1973), 13-22. This is reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado de Medellín para la Iglesia latinoamericana," in Profecía y evangelización: Bartolomé de Las Casas-Medellín, Colección Páginas, no. 2 (Lima, Perú: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1978), 77-97. The reprint is used in the present study.

under certain circumstances, in the papal encyclical, Populorum Progressio (March 26, 1967).<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, he emphasizes his agreement with the Brazilian bishop, Dom Hélder Câmara, that the use of violence is always ambiguous because it creates the danger of begetting still more violence. This is what Câmara calls the "spiral of violence".<sup>94</sup> In a subsequent interview entitled, "Terrorism, Liberation and Sexuality" (April 1977), Gutiérrez delineates three types of violence present in Latin America: the institutionalized violence of the present social system; counter-violence, which reacts to this first one, sometimes in the form of terrorism; and repressive violence used to ensure that the powerful remain in their positions. For Gutiérrez, all three forms of violence are evil, but the second form is the least evil of the three because it is not the original one. Moreover, he believes that every instance of counter-violence cannot be called an example of terrorism *a priori*, but must be evaluated. He also judges that, contrary to usual thinking, even a government may be guilty of practicing terrorism.<sup>95</sup>

Because the first act of the theology of liberation is the commitment to transforming one's own historical circumstances, the principal group addressed by Christians when they proclaim the Kingdom of God differs somewhat from place to place. Thus in "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización" (November 19-24, 1973), Gutiérrez declares that the major challenge for Christians in contemporary Latin America is not, as in Western Europe and North America, how to preach the gospel to modern non-believers living in an "adult world" so that they can be saved, but rather: how to proclaim God "as Father in a world

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<sup>93</sup>"We know, however, that a revolutionary uprising--save where there is manifest, long-standing tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country--produces new injustices, throws more elements out of balance and brings on new disasters. A real evil should not be fought at the cost of greater misery." Pope Paul VI, Populorum Progressio: On the Development of Peoples (March 26, 1967) no. 31, in The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teachings since Pope John, ed. Joseph Gremillion (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976), 396.

<sup>94</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado de Medellín para la Iglesia latinoamericana," in Profecía y evangelización: Bartolomé de Las Casas--Medellín, 95-96. See also Thomas C. Fox, "Liberation Theology Tests U.S. Conscience," National Catholic Reporter 11 (no. 39, 5 September 1975): 4; "God Put His Foot in History," interview with Dawn Gibeau, The Magazine, in National Catholic Reporter 12 (10 September 1976): 8.

<sup>95</sup>"The word *terrorism* itself has become ambiguous. Those of us who deal with Latin America would call some acts counter-violence that the ruling regimes of the country would call terrorism. I would say Chile [i.e., under Pinochet] is an example of a terroristic regime. There is no organized resistance to the Chilean government at present; yet the powers continue to perpetrate terroristic actions against some sections of the population. We make a mistake when we *always* describe terrorists as people who are against the government. I would describe another aspect of terrorism as 'selective actions against individuals for the purpose of...' and then you have a whole string of purposes. For the person going against the government it's to undermine the government. For the government, it's to intimidate the populace. But it's still terrorism." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Terrorism, Liberation and Sexuality," interview with William Wipfler, The Witness (April 1977): 11.

that is not human?"<sup>96</sup> The issue, then, is how to tell the poor--"non-persons"--that, contrary to the evidence provided by the pain and misery they experience, God loves them and invites them to accept his gift of adopted filiation, communion with him and communion among all people, and salvation. In Teología desde el reverso de la historia (January 1977), he distinguishes among the many oppressed Latin Americans who, together, constitute the masses: if one speaks of all the poor as being exploited, then Latin American women are "doubly exploited, marginalized, and disparaged."<sup>97</sup> They are often abused within the poor communities themselves.

In "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding Our Way to Talk about God" (August 17-29, 1981), Gutiérrez continues to reflect on the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection for Christians. He contrasts an existence marked by poverty with the resurrection: the first is a sign of death, while the second is a sign of life. For Gutiérrez, the "proclamation of Christ's resurrection is the heart of the gospel message because it fully and forcefully reveals the kingdom to be a kingdom of life. That message calls us together as a church, as a community of witnesses to the fact that death is not history's last word." Christians play a special role in a continent where the sign of death is pervasive: "To be witnesses to the resurrection means to give life, and bearing witness takes on special importance from the standpoint of Third World poverty."<sup>98</sup> Thus, to struggle for the liberation of the poor is to opt for life versus premature

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<sup>96</sup>"La pregunta no será por lo tanto cómo hablar de Dios en un mundo adulto, sino más bien cómo anunciarlo como Padre en un mundo no humano?" Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación, teología y evangelización," in Liberación: Diálogos en el CELAM, 78-79. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación u fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 34; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Praxis de liberación. Teología y anuncio," Concilium no. 96 (June 1974): 366; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change. Experience, Faith, 37; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, 34; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," in Liberation and Change, 79; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxx-xxxi; "Derecho del pueblo: Liberarse y pensar su fe," interview with Enrique Moreno, Pastoral Popular 30 (no. 1, 1979): 45-46; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding Our Way to Talk about God," trans. John Drury, in Irruption of the Third World, 227-228. Gutiérrez criticizes the preparatory document, *documento de consulta*, of the Puebla Conference for addressing the non-believer before the non-person. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 4.

<sup>97</sup>"La mujer de esos sectores sociales es doblemente explotada, marginada y depreciada." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, my translation, 34. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxxviii; "Derecho del pueblo: Liberarse u pensar su fe," interview with Enrique Moreno, Pastoral Popular 30 (no. 1, 1979): 49; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980): 5. This observation was included in the final document of the Puebla Conference (no. 1135) See Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, 27.

<sup>98</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding Our Way to Talk about God," trans. Kohn Drury, in Irruption of the the Third World, 232. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la Vida," Páginas 7, no. 40 (September 1981): 9; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La hora de Jesús" ["Jesus' Time"],

death caused by poverty. Showing one's faith in a God who liberates means showing one's faith in a God of life--a God who wills life rather than death. The contrast Gutiérrez draws between life and death demonstrates that he has adopted mystical language. This is the product of his own contemplative life of prayer, as well as the contemplative activities of the people whose lives he shares in his pastoral work with basic ecclesial communities.

#### 4. The Causes of Jesus of Nazareth's Death by Crucifixion:

Gutiérrez does not develop his Christology substantially during the period from 1968 to 1982. Nevertheless, it is important to examine his short studies on the causes of Jesus of Nazareth's execution because Jesus has traditionally been the model for all Christian martyrs. While Gutiérrez does speak about these causes, he does not explicitly portray how Jesus confronted his own imminent death, which is a classic issue in the Roman Catholic Church for determining whether someone truly died as a martyr.

Gutiérrez does not speak in any detail about the historical Jesus Christ, whom he calls "the man, Jesus of Nazareth", until the subsection, "Jesús y el mundo político" ["Jesus and the Political World"] in chapter eleven of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (December 31, 1971).<sup>99</sup> Gutiérrez's objective in this short study is to examine Jesus of Nazareth's perspective on the political situation of the world in which he lived because this interests many Christians who are committed to the process of liberation in contemporary Latin America. At the outset, however, he warns that "wanting to discover in Jesus the least characteristics of a contemporary political militant would not only misrepresent his life and his witness...[and] show a poor understanding of politics in the present world, but we would also deprive ourselves of exactly what is deep and universal in his life and, therefore, of what is applicable and concrete in it for man today."<sup>100</sup> First, while Gutiérrez notes some similarities between Jesus' and the Zealots' expectation of the imminent arrival of a "kingdom from Heaven," which would end the contemporary situation of injustice, he stresses Jesus' belief that people can contribute to the partial manifestation of the Kingdom of God in history, but that its full realization is ultimately a gift from God, and that its intended recipients are not simply Jews, but all people. Second, Gutiérrez argues that Jesus criticized the Jewish leaders who did not attend to bringing about justice in behalf of the poor, but who instead concerned

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Páginas 6, no. 36-37 (May 1981): 55.

<sup>99</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 284-296.

<sup>100</sup>"Queriendo descubrir en Jesús las más menudas características de un militante político contemporáneo no sólo tergiversaríamos su vida y su testimonio, no sólo revelaríamos una pobre concepción de lo político en el mundo presente, sino que, además, nos frustraríamos precisamente de lo que esa vida y ese testimonio tienen de profundo y universal y, por lo mismo, de vigente y de concreto para el hombre de hoy." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 285.

themselves with narrower, personal and group interests (e.g., Herod, some Sadducees, and some Pharisees). Third, according to Gutiérrez, Jesus was executed by Roman political authorities who were the oppressors of the Jewish people after they had convicted him at a political trial for being a Zealot leader. He constituted a political threat presumably by presenting himself as the Messiah and the King of the Jews. The Sanhedrin, on the other hand, had both religious and political reasons for condemning Jesus and for turning him over to the Roman authorities: he claimed to be the Son of God; and his teachings provoked people to confront the Jewish leaders for the power and privilege that they enjoyed over the rest of the Jewish population.<sup>101</sup> Gutiérrez claims that Jesus' criticisms of political and religious authorities and of the injustices that they caused arose from his understanding of the proper communion between people and God and among people which would characterize the imminent, full realization of the Kingdom of God.<sup>102</sup> While Gutiérrez briefly examines the causes of Jesus' execution in this book, he does not specifically discuss how Jesus confronted his imminent death.

In "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future" (Spring 1975), Gutiérrez posits that Christians ought to believe that Jesus expressed his love for all of humanity "by loving His contemporaries to the point of giving His life for them." Furthermore, "He loved the poor by preference and for them confronted the great and powerful of his time, and He was put to death as a subversive; he [sic.] is God."<sup>103</sup> Thus, according to Gutiérrez, Jesus acted out of love for all people, especially whoever suffers; he unmasked the causes of these injustices and revealed who their perpetrators were (i.e., the powerful); he allowed himself to be killed; and he was killed because he challenged the people who create injustice.

Gutiérrez develops his study of who Jesus of Nazareth was and how he died, in "Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia" (March 1976). For Gutiérrez, "Jesus Christ is precisely *God become poor*."<sup>104</sup> He argues that God's preferential relation with the poor is the center of the message revealed to humanity through the Bible. God the Son's insertion of himself into history is consistent with this particular concern for the poor: Jesus was born into poverty; he lived with the poor; he announced the Kingdom of God to all people, but preferentially to the poor; he criticized whoever abused the poor; and

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<sup>101</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 286-291.

<sup>102</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 291-296. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Evangelio y praxis de liberación," in Fe cristiana y cambio social en América Latina, 240-241.

<sup>103</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 41.

<sup>104</sup>"El núcleo de mensaje bíblico está...en la relación Dios-pobre. Jesucristo es precisamente *Dios hecho pobre* porque esa fue la vida humana que asumió y a partir de la cual lo reconocemos como Hijo del Padre." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia, my translation, 15.



he displayed a profound spiritual poverty by his openness to God the Father. Moreover, he was executed because he had proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of God, which demands that people struggle for justice until God fully realizes it.<sup>105</sup> In "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem" (1976), he adds two comments: that Jesus confronted the powerful due to his preferential love for the poor, and that he was executed because he was a subversive.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, in an interview published in September, 1976, Gutiérrez emphasizes that Jesus' death really should not be understood in isolation from his subsequent resurrection. For Gutiérrez, this means that the triumph of life and communion among people and with God constitute the final word of history, instead of suffering and death.<sup>107</sup> Gutiérrez does not discuss more specifically what caused Jesus' death, nor does he consider exactly how Jesus faced his imminent crucifixion in any of these articles.

#### B. The Evolution of Gutiérrez's Concept of Persecution and Martyrdom (July, 1968-1982)

While the persecution of the Church and the martyrdom of some of its members is not a principal theme of Gutiérrez's pre-theology of liberation writings, the experiences of Christians in contemporary Latin America during the following years have stimulated him to reflect theologically on it. Indeed, the methodology of the theology of liberation presupposes that reflections are made on what has been experienced only after participating in one's historical surroundings and endeavouring to effect their transformation so that they will be more just for all people. These activities are part of the unique process of liberation. Christians committed to the process of liberation began to be repressed and even murdered in the late 1960s, most notably in Brazil (starting in 1968). They were often accused of being communists rather than Christians. Among the priests murdered was Gutiérrez's close friend, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto. His death obviously had a profound effect on Gutiérrez because he dedicates his first major book, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, to him. Gutiérrez emphasizes in his writings from 1968 to 1976 that there is an acute division of the Church, with some Christians among the persecutors and others among the persecuted. Nevertheless, he does not utilize the traditional, religious terms "martyrdom" and "martyr" until 1978, when he criticizes the consultation document of the Puebla Conference for not recognizing the commonplace occurrence of martyrdom throughout the continent. For Gutiérrez, such an omission of official

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<sup>105</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia, 5-17.

<sup>106</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutteriez, in Liberation and Change, 83. See also Curt Cadorette, From the Heart of the People: The Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez, 119-121.

<sup>107</sup>"God Put His Foot in History," interview with Dawn Gibeau, The Magazine, in National Catholic Reporter 12 (10 September 1976): 7-8.

recognition should never happen again after the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 24, 1980. He designates this as the single outstanding event that has divided the history of the Church in Latin America into a "before" and an "after". Since then, Gutiérrez has consistently employed the terms "martyrdom" and "martyr" in his writings to speak of the Christians who have been killed for participating in the process of liberation in the interests of the poor masses. Thus the objective of this second section is to examine the evolution of Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom, especially as it takes place in contemporary Latin America.

1. Division of the Church and the Persecution of Christians Committed to the Process of Liberation (writings from July, 1968 to 1976):

In "¿Separar la Iglesia del Estado?" (December 13 and 20, 1968), which was published in the Peruvian weekly magazine, Oiga, Gutiérrez expresses to the public his anticipation that many people would be surprised if the Roman Catholic Church were, in fact, to denounce social injustices and their causes prophetically: "it is possible that it will scandalize all those who complacently see a Church bound to the present state of things or one withdrawn into its church buildings, if not into its sacristies."<sup>108</sup> Gutiérrez, however, does not speculate on the different ways that certain powerful persons, shocked by this betrayal of the usual order of things, might manifest their outrage towards the Peruvian Christians who have chosen to become poor in solidarity with the masses and to struggle alongside them for their liberation, nor does he discuss how these newly poor Christians might respond to the hostile reactions that they may arouse. Nevertheless, it is clear that the laity, priests, nuns, and bishops who truly assume the vulnerable condition of poverty have also chosen to join a class of people who are relatively defenseless against the possibility of being harassed, repressed, and even murdered, so they, too, insofar as they remain committed to the poor, would not be able to opt out of this insecure existence at the first sign of danger. At least some of these Christians would decide that aligning themselves with the poor means a commitment up to the point of death, instead of renouncing their relation with the masses. It is not particularly surprising, however, that Gutiérrez does not yet speak explicitly of the possible future repression of the Church, or at least some of its members, in contemporary Peru because the changes that he recognizes as already taking place in the Church in some parts of Latin America are not yet widespread in his country.

Two months later, Gutiérrez unambiguously states his expectation that some powerful members of society will not easily forgive Christians who sever the traditional relation between the Church and the state (and their allies who hold societal power), but will instead repress them. Thus in his preface to Signos

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<sup>108</sup>"Es posible que ello escandalice a todos los que ven con complacencia una Iglesia ligada al actual estado de cosas o replegada a sus templos, cuando no a sus sacristías." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Al margen del debate constitucional," my translation, CIDOC Doc. 69, 132 (January-June 1969): 3.

de renovación (February 1969), Gutiérrez warns Christians that, if they distance themselves from the Church's traditional allies, this means "attracting the hostility of the dominant groups--with all the risks that entails."<sup>109</sup> Gutiérrez, however, does not speculate on how such hostility might be manifested.

At a conference in Cartigny, Switzerland during November, 1969, Gutiérrez draws the attention of his international audience to the fact that government officials and people in positions of power recently have publicly accused many bishops in Latin America of interfering in a realm outside their competence or of being inordinately influenced by Marxism precisely on those occasions when they have prophetically denounced social injustices suffered by the poor masses and the traditional relations in society which they believed were the structural causes of these injustices. Such accusations of interference, however, have not been voiced whenever bishops have consented to the traditional arrangement of Christendom. Gutiérrez expressly designates these accusations, as well as other violent activities against Christians participating in the liberation process, as manifestations of the persecution of the Church in contemporary Latin America for siding with the poor. As in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, Gutiérrez identifies the people who constitute the poor: they are the masses who are economically, socially, politically, and culturally marginalized. While they are clearly materially poor, it is not specifically their economic status, but their whole way of life, their whole culture, which is despised by many people in power. Thus to opt for the masses is a subversive choice. It means choosing to be against the existing social arrangements that benefit the few, and anticipating that a high price may have to be paid for making this choice. Therefore Gutiérrez feels that it is imperative that he caution Christians that acting in solidarity with the poor masses means "even taking personal risks, including that of endangering one's life. This is what is happening to many Christians--and non-Christians--engaged in the revolutionary process."<sup>110</sup> By 1969, the Church had already begun to be repressed in Brazil. Gutiérrez identifies his intimate friend, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, who had been a colleague of Dom Hélder Câmara and a professor of sociology at the University of Pernambuco, as one example of a priest who was murdered for criticizing the government's treatment of the masses. He was murdered in Recife, Brazil on May 26, 1969 after numerous death threats had been issued.<sup>111</sup> It is notable

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<sup>109</sup>"Supone ganarse la hostilidad--con todos los riesgos que eso conlleva--de los grupos dominantes...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," my translation, in Signos de renovación, 11.

<sup>110</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 152. "Hoy, solidarizarse con el 'pobre' puede significar correr riesgos personales--inclusivos poner en peligro la propia vida. Es lo que ocurre a muchos cristianos--y no cristianos--comprometidos en el proceso revolucionario." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1971), 80.

<sup>111</sup>See the following sources of information about Fr. Pereira Neto: Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy (Bogotá: Cepla Editores, 1977), 47-48; P. Ferrari y Equipo, El martirio en América Latina (Mexico City: Misiones Culturales de B.C., A.C., 1982), 208-209; La sangre por el pueblo: Nuevos mártires de América Latina, Equipo del Departamento de Comunicación del Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, Managua, Nicaragua (Managua, Nicaragua and Panama: Instituto Histórico Centroamericano, Managua, Nicaragua and

that Gutiérrez does not yet explicitly identify Fr. Pereira Neto or any other Christians as contemporary Latin American martyrs.

Gutiérrez quotes an article, "La Iglesia perseguida: desafío latinoamericano" ["The Persecuted Church: Latin American Challenge"], published in July, 1969, to support his claim that the Church in Latin America is starting to be persecuted. In this article, the author, César Aguiar (a professor of sociology at the National University of Uruguay), speaks in general of the surprising, recent murder of priests in Latin America. Aguiar contends that no one had anticipated such events five years earlier when only small pockets of Christians across the continent had opted for the cause of the poor.<sup>112</sup> For Gutiérrez, then, this is just the start of a wave of repression which will probably become increasingly evident in countries besides Brazil because whenever people truly side with the poor, repression is a possible consequence. Of course, whenever one speaks of persecution, there must be both persecutors and the persecuted. (This was already seen in Cardinal Lambertini's schema of the necessary characteristics of all genuine examples of martyrdom, which was examined in chapter three of the present study.) In this regard, Gutiérrez draws attention to an acute division that has developed in the Church in contemporary Latin America: some Christians are among the persecuted and oppressed because they support the efforts of the poor to become agents of their own

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Centro de Capacitación Social, Panama, 1983), 116. On the repression of the Church in Brazil in the late 1960s, see Christian Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology, 139.

<sup>112</sup>The ordinary events in the life of the Church surpass the expectations of the average Christian. Who would have thought, five years ago, that in our continent priests would be assassinated, Christians persecuted, priests deported, Catholic press media closed down or attacked, church buildings destroyed, etc? Probably no-one: for the more radical Christians of five years ago the process had a utopian flavour, unable to grasp the historical drama which it implied." César Aguiar, "La Iglesia perseguida: desafío latinoamericano," Perspectivas para el Diálogo (Montevideo, Uruguay) no. 35 (July 1969): 148, quoted and translated in Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 174. "Los hechos ordinarios de la vida de la Iglesia superan las expectativas medio. [sic.: "¿" is missing] Quién podía pensar, hace cinco años, que en nuestro continente habrían sacerdotes asesinados, cristianos perseguidos, sacerdotes deportados, clausura y ataque a la prensa católica, allanamiento de locales eclesíásticos, etc.? Probablemente nadie: para los cristianos más radicalizados cinco años atrás el proceso se revestía de tintes utópicos y no lograba tomarse conciencia de la dramaticidad histórica que implicaba." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1971), 62. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 166. For other comments by Aguiar on the persecution of the Church in contemporary Latin America, including his reflections on the murder of Fr. Pereira Neto, see César Aguiar, "Currents and Tendencies in Contemporary Latin American Catholicism," in Conscientization for Liberation, 45-48; César A. Aguiar, "Currents and Tendencies in Contemporary Latin American Catholicism," IDOC International (North American Edition) no. 13 (14 November 1970): 63, 73. Gutiérrez supplies one reference to Fr. Pereira Neto's murder: SEDOC (August 1969): 143-149. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 170. In the updated Spanish version of the lecture, he provides two further references: "Ante el asesinato del P. Henrique Pereira," Spes (Montevideo, Uruguay) no. 1 (September 1969), and Buenaventura Pelegri, "Meditación ante el cadáver del Padre Henrique," Víspera no. 12 (September 1969): 3-7. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hacia una teología de la liberación (1971), 56. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 136.

process of social emancipation, they denounce injustices prophetically, they adopt poverty voluntarily, and they try to develop a distinctly Latin American identity for the Church in the continent, whereas other Christians, enraged by the audacity of people who seek these changes, are among the persecutors and oppressors.<sup>113</sup> The notion that members of the Church can be among the persecutors and the persecuted is intriguing because both parties consider themselves to be Christians. While Cardinal Lambertini had already included Roman Catholics among the possible persecutors of the Church in De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, the situation of contemporary Latin America is nevertheless unusual because this is not a matter of one group consciously and publicly declaring itself hostile towards the Church. The notion that Roman Catholics can be among the persecutors and the persecuted of the Church is examined in chapter eight of the present study when Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom is evaluated in relation to the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church.

In "De la Iglesia colonial a Medellín" (1970), Gutiérrez repeats the observations he had already made in "The Meaning of Liberation (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)" (November 1969) about the repression of some members of the Church who work in solidarity with the poor, but he now provides one significant additional comment. He judges that nowadays "a situation is beginning to take shape (not without ambivalences) that no one would have imagined a few years ago: important sectors of the Church are persecuted in a traditionally Catholic continent."<sup>114</sup> Gutiérrez's assessment that Christians did not foresee this persecution is confirmable in his own writings; as was already noted, he did not begin to express his anticipation of the possibility of repression until 1967 in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta. Furthermore, his judgment that the situation is "not without ambivalences" demonstrates his recognition of the novelty of the present situation. All the variables associated with it are still difficult to assess. He also repeats his evaluation that the Church is divided between some Christians who are oppressors and persecutors and other Christians who are oppressed and persecuted, though he now adds his observation that Christians are also among the torturers and the tortured.<sup>115</sup> He does not provide examples, but he clearly treats this as if it were a Latin American phenomenon, rather than one limited to the Church in Brazil.

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<sup>113</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 140-144, 171-174.

<sup>114</sup>His full comments are as follows: "Todo esto ha causado frecuentes alegatos hoy en el sentido de que muchos cristianos, laicos, monjas y obispos sean considerados como elementos 'subversivos' y sean vigilados o requeridos por la policía. Algunos se encuentran en prisión, algunos son torturados. Otros son forzados a dejar el país, o asesinados por grupos 'anticomunistas'. Está empezando a tomar forma una situación (no sin ambivalencias) que nadie habría imaginado pocos años atrás: importantes sectores de la Iglesia son perseguidos en un continente tradicionalmente católico." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la Iglesia colonial a Medellín," my translation, Víspera 4, no. 16 (1970): 5.

<sup>115</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la Iglesia colonial a Medellín," my translation, Víspera 4, no. 16 (1970): 6.

Furthermore, his adoption of the religious terms "persecution", "persecutor", and "persecuted" shows that he believes the repression has significant implications for the identity of the Church throughout the continent.

A year later, in "El fenómeno de la contestación en América Latina" (1971), Gutiérrez underscores the conflictual reality experienced by the Church in contemporary Latin America. He observes, first, that many laity, priests, nuns, and bishops have clashed with other members of the Church, including members of the hierarchy closely tied to the government and to powerful members of society. Second, he states once again that they have been repressed by authorities. According to Gutiérrez, they are repressed precisely because of their participation in the process of liberation: "It is common today for priests--and religious--to be regarded as 'subversive' elements. Many are watched and wanted by the police; others are imprisoned, tortured, expatriated (Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, can all offer significant examples), or assassinated by terrorist anti-communist gangs."<sup>116</sup> Although Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto is again the only murdered priest whom Gutiérrez names, the repression of Christians is evidently no longer an exceptional phenomenon. Priests and religious are targeted by authorities charged with maintaining public order and stability, as well as by more secretive groups, including "terrorist anti-communist gangs," which sometimes have the tacit approval of authorities. Thus these priests and religious are treated as if they endanger the security of their nations. In fact, they are repressed as communists rather than for traditionally recognized religious reasons. Gutiérrez enumerates four countries where this phenomenon has spread into on a large scale, with other countries apparently possible scenarios for similar repression in the future. An obvious assessment may thus be made: for Gutiérrez, the cause of the aforementioned laity, religious, priests, and bishops who are repressed for siding with the poor masses in their process of liberation is right and just because it is in accordance with the will of God, while the motive of the authorities and of the other parties who repress them, allegedly because they are communists, is selfish, and thus sinful.

The book, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (December 31, 1971), is Gutiérrez's systematization of his earlier ideas, supplemented with some new comments. Many of his passages referring to repression and persecution in this book are identical to or very similar to ones that have already been examined, but he sometimes does add nuances to his reflections on them. Concerning the already noted "subversive" behaviour of priests and religious, Gutiérrez now observes that such "subversion" surprises

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<sup>116</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Contestation in Latin America," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 68 (1971): 48. See also Stephen Scharper, "The Church and the National Security State," The Ecumenist 20 (November-December 1981): 7. According to Pásara, most members of the hierarchy in Brazil remained silent during the 1960s while priests and lay leaders were being kidnapped and tortured. Luis Pásara, Radicalización y conflicto en la Iglesia peruana, 146. Molineaux adds that the Church in Uruguay, Paraguay, El Salvador, and Guatemala had also suffered persecution and martyrdom by 1971 for siding with the poor masses, with Chile and Argentina following soon after. D.J. Molineaux, "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Historical Origins," The Ecumenist 25 (July-August 1987): 68.

many powerful persons because they are not accustomed to it. He contends that "the role that priests and religious have traditionally played in Latin America makes...their dissidence appear particularly dangerous."<sup>117</sup> This suggests that the periodic mobilizations of popular insurrections, especially when they are associated with violent, Marxist revolutions, are comprehensible to the powerful. The presence of clergy, however, adds an unexpected dimension to such subversive activities. Their input is "particularly dangerous" because it represents a complete reversal of tradition, of everything that is known. According to Gutiérrez's comment, then, the authorities' harsh reactions to their dissidence probably signifies their admission that the religious factor has heretofore played a crucial role in keeping the poor masses subservient. It is also notable that Gutiérrez speaks of the "role that priests and religious have traditionally played in Latin America," thereby underscoring a continent-wide norm. This means that the renunciation of the traditional complicity with societal authorities may now arouse repression throughout Latin America. Gutiérrez also repeats his earlier comments on the harassment that some bishops have suffered, especially those located in the poorest regions, because they denounced injustice, but to these he now adds the observation that some bishops have even been threatened with death by "extreme rightist groups," though he does not supply any examples of bishops, nor does he identify any "extreme rightist groups," or even the countries where they operate.<sup>118</sup> In any case, the death threats indicate that these bishops are treated as if they have links to Marxist groups. Gutiérrez also provides the same quotation from César Aguiar's article, "La Iglesia perseguida: desafío latinoamericano," about the unexpected murder of priests in Latin America during recent years. He even dedicates Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas to Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto (along with José María Arguedas, a famous Peruvian author of literature who had become an intimate friend of Gutiérrez during the years before he died in 1969).<sup>119</sup> Gutiérrez judges that the Church in Latin America, especially the ecclesiastical authorities, did not anticipate this repression of some sectors of the Church. The authorities continue to be poorly prepared to cope with issues related to it. Gutiérrez does not seem to be suggesting that they should have foreseen these attacks, but simply that, now that they have begun, they should prepare themselves and the people under their charge for the possibility of repression in the future. He quite clearly does not advise Christians to flee or to temper their commitment to the poor. Instead his admonishment suggests that he thinks they should be fully aware of the facts of the present situation so that they can decide whether they are ready to continue to act in the interests of the poor, even if it could mean suffering repression and being killed. Gutiérrez also repeats his observation that some Christians are among

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<sup>117</sup>"El papel que tradicionalmente han jugado los sacerdotes y religiosos en América Latina, hace, más bien, que su disidencia aparezca como particularmente peligrosa." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 136-137.

<sup>118</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 138.

<sup>119</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 5.

the oppressors, torturers, and persecutors, whereas others are among the oppressed, tortured, and persecuted.<sup>120</sup> He insists that the Church should especially use the social weight it still enjoys to criticize injustices and their structural causes in countries where it is the only social force that is able to "raise its voice and protest publicly," in spite of the fact that "when some churches have begun to do this they are harassed by dominant groups and repressed by the political power." The fact that the Church is likely to be repressed does not free it from the responsibility of steadfastly supporting the interests of the poor. The reality that the Church often stands alone makes it even more imperative that Christians show their determination to be the public voice of protest in behalf of the masses. Repression is the present and foreseeable future condition of the Church in Latin America. Thus Gutiérrez, citing another article by César Aguiar, approves of the author's suggestion that a theology of persecution ought to be developed in response to the repression of some sectors of the Church in contemporary Latin America.<sup>121</sup> Christians ought to reflect theologically on this experience of the Church in the light of the Bible.

In chapter eleven of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, Gutiérrez emphasizes what he considers to be a patent fact: regardless of whether people recognize it, the Roman Catholic Church has always assumed a political stance in Latin America. It has traditionally taken a political position by virtue of its ties to powerful persons who try to preserve an unjust social system. He advocates that the Church should now publicly acknowledge the role it has often played in the suffering of the poor masses; renounce this connection; prophetically denounce the unjust system and its causes; announce the coming of the Kingdom of God, as well as the different features that characterize such a communion among people and between people and God; and "be resolutely in solidarity with the oppressed and exploited, in the struggle for a more just society."<sup>122</sup> When the Church truly reverses its political position, however, it will arouse a severe reaction: "the groups who hold economic and political power unlawfully--as has already begun to occur--will not forgive it and they will withdraw their support, [which is] the principal source of the

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<sup>120</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 166, 171.

<sup>121</sup>"Con frecuencia sólo ella [la Iglesia] está en condiciones de elevar públicamente su voz y su protesta. Cuando algunas Iglesias lo han comenzado a hacer son hostilizadas por los grupos dominantes y reprimidas por el poder político." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 173. See César Aguiar, IDOC (International Edition) no. 30, p. 18. Gutiérrez does not supply the full citation in the first Spanish edition of the book. See the English translation of the article: César Aguiar, "Currents and Tendencies", IDOC (North American Edition) no. 13, p. 63. Gustavo Gutiérrez, A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation, trans. and ed., Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), 141.

<sup>122</sup>"...pero creemos que precisamente la mejor manera de lograr ese desprendimiento es solidarizarse resueltamente con los oprimidos y despojados, en la lucha por una sociedad más justa." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 331.



ambiguous social prestige that the Church enjoys in Latin America today."<sup>123</sup> Gutiérrez's judgment that some authorities "hold economic and political power unlawfully," suggests that, at the very least, he is pointing to military regimes that have undemocratically assumed power by means of coups, as well as to people who remain silent in the face of coups because they benefit from such an illegal system. He could very well be making an even more severe judgment, given his criticisms of capitalism for the dependent relations it has engendered in Latin America and his advocacy of the social appropriation of the means of production, of the political process, and of the enjoyment of freedom. This would mean that, regardless of whether legislation is in place that supports economic and political activities in the name of capitalism, insofar as these laws allow resources and the benefits from the system to be concentrated in the hands of the few at the expense of the majority, the people and groups who possess economic and political power in society do so unlawfully. That is, they contravene the "law" or "will" of God as it is revealed in the Bible (at least according to one interpretation). Therefore the system, itself, is unlawful insofar as the interests of the poorest members of society are not considered preferentially. Gutiérrez's comment also suggests that the social prestige enjoyed by the Church whenever it is aligned with the powerful is always allocated to them only if they fulfill certain conditions. Gutiérrez clearly does not consider the people who hold power unlawfully to be acting like Christians because their selfish activities are contrary to the will of God. Nevertheless, Gutiérrez stresses that the Church must ever more effectively use the social influence that it still does possess in order to denounce social injustices and to announce the Kingdom of God. According to Gutiérrez, the Church's public statements, in fact, are influential. They have already destabilized old social orders (though he does not provide any examples), and they have even prompted violent responses: "by simply 'speaking' and 'making declarations' some organisms of the Church and many Christians have suffered harsh attacks and have had serious difficulties with the representatives of the established order--up to the point of the loss of freedom and even the loss of life."<sup>124</sup> The fact that their words elicit a violent reaction proves that they are effective. A slightly revised version of Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta constitutes chapter thirteen of Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, so Gutiérrez's comment at the time (July, 1967), in which he anticipated the risk to one's life due to opting for the oppressed and against the oppressor, need not be reconsidered.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup>"Los grupos que detentan el poder económico y político--como ya ha comenzado a ocurrir--no se lo perdonarán y le retirarán su apoyo, fuente principal del ambiguo prestigio social del que hoy goza la Iglesia en América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 331-332.

<sup>124</sup>"Tan es así que sólo por 'hablar' o 'hacer declaraciones' algunos organismos de Iglesia y muchos cristianos han sufrido duros ataques y han tenido dificultades graves--que han ido hasta la pérdida de la libertad e incluso de la vida--con los representantes del orden establecido." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 334.

<sup>125</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 371.

In "Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana" (August 1973) and in his course lectures collected in the book, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiano/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith (June 1-5, 1974), Gutiérrez further analyzes the nature of the traditionally close relation between the Roman Catholic Church and the persons who hold power in Latin America. He observes in the latter writing that the protection granted to protect the Church "was always on condition," that is, it always had a price, but nowadays the offer is also "accompanied by a threat: if it is rejected, hostility and repression are soon to come."<sup>126</sup> This suggests that the powerful concur with Gutiérrez's declaration that the Church must be either for or against the present social arrangement, and that neutrality is impossible. In both writings, he cites Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto and Fr. Héctor Gallego as examples of priests who have been killed because they angered the powerful members of society, but he does not designate them as martyrs. He provides Néstor Paz Zamora as an example of a pastoral worker killed while siding with the poor. Néstor Paz Zamora was killed on October 8, 1970 after joining a Bolivian guerrilla movement, the Teoponte movement, which was mostly composed of university students.<sup>127</sup> Fr. Gallego was a Colombian murdered in Panama on June 9, 1971 after being apprehended by two men who claimed that they were acting on the orders of a superior officer. Just two weeks earlier, he survived a previous attempt on his life, when he escaped from his bamboo house in the middle of the night, after it had been set on fire while he was sleeping in it.<sup>128</sup> In addition to these three,

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<sup>126</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 4-5.

<sup>127</sup>See Gutiérrez's references to Paz Zamora: Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 121, 253. He also cites "Néstor Paz Zamora. El místico cristiano de la guerrilla," NADOC, no. 185 (January 1971): 18-19. This was translated as "Nestor Paz: Mystic, Christian, Guerrilla," IDOC-NA, no. 23 (10 April 1971): 45. See also Nestor Paz, My Life for My Friends: The Guerrilla Journal of Nestor Paz, Christian, trans. Ed García and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1975); "Al pueblo de Bolivia: Proclama revolucionaria de Néstor Paz," in Signos de liberación, 43-45; "Extracto del diario de campaña de Néstor Paz," in Ibid., 45; Edward L. Cleary, Crisis and Change: The Church in Latin America Today (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1985), 37. Gutiérrez has also always respected the memory of his friend, Camilo Torres Restrepo, who joined Colombian guerrillas after being laicized, and thereafter was killed in combat.

<sup>128</sup>See Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy, 49-55; P. Ferrari y Equipo, El martirio en América Latina, 166-173; Eduardo Ibarra, "Le contexte de la théologie de la libération," in Théologies de la libération en Amérique Latine, 49; Mons. Martín Legarra, "Soliloquio con el padre Héctor Gallego," in Signos de liberación, 66-68; Enrique Dussel dedicated a book to Gallego, naming him as a martyr: Enrique Dussel, Caminos de liberación latinaoamericana (Buenos Aires, Argentina: n.p., 1972). He says that already "there are hundreds, almost thousands, of martyrs, and as clear in their martyrdom as those in the Roman circus. We would not have been able to say this ten years ago." "...hay cientos de mártires, casi miles, y con tanta claridad en su martirio como los del circo romano. Esto no podríamos haberlo dicho hace diez años." Ibid., my translation, 113. In his review of Dussel's book, Héctor Borrat agreed that there are martyrs in contemporary Latin America, but he cautioned against establishing any kind of a program corresponding to the notion that the Church in the continent is a martyrial Church because true martyrdom is always a grace received from God. Héctor Borrat, "Entre la proclama y los programas," Víspera 7, no. 30 (1973): 52. In a later lecture, Dussel cites Gallego along with Fr. Pereira Neto and several other priests as martyrs

Gutiérrez notes that many other priests and laity, who are "still alive, are tortured and maligned in the name of 'Western and Christian civilization'." They demonstrate that "all dissidence is punished by those who hold the power, what often is fervently justified by those who call themselves Christians."<sup>129</sup> Gutiérrez

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of the Church in Latin America. Enrique Dussel, "Sobre la historia de la teología en América Latina," in Liberación y cautiverio: Debates en torno al método de la teología en América Latina (Mexico City: Encuentro Latinoamericano de Teología, 1976), 61-62. In a letter to Orbis Books, dated November 10, 1978, Dussel expresses his opinion on what he considers to be a very serious question. For him, most of the Christians who are commonly considered as martyrs in contemporary Latin America, in fact, "are strictly martyrs in the meaning of the primitive Church....All our theology is founded on the blood of those martyrs....The examples of Carlos Mujica [killed in Buenos Aires on May 11, 1974], Antonio Enrique Pereira Neto, Héctor Gallegos, Rutilio Grande [murdered in El Salvador on March 12, 1977], to name some, have the same meaning as...the martyrs of Lyon or those who died in the persecutions by Diocletian." "Pienso que la mayoría de ellos son estrictamente mártires en el sentido de la Iglesia primitiva, y no puedo dejar de expresar mi opinión sobre una cuestión tan grave. Toda nuestra teología está fundada sobre la sangre de esos mártires....Los ejemplos de Carlos Mujica, Antonio Enrique Pereira Neto, Héctor Gallegos, Rutilio Grande, para nombrar algunos, tienen el mismo significado que...los mártires de Lyon o los que murieron en las persecuciones de Dioclesiano." Enrique Dussel, quoted in El martirio en América Latina, my translation, 22. An attempt was made on the life of Dussel, himself, in 1973 by the Argentine military government when they firebombed his house. Christian Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology, 195. Silva Gotay lists numerous priests, ministers, and laity, including Fr. Gallego, who "have given their lives for their brothers in the last seven years." "...detenemos el recuento aquí y no entramos en detalles sobre la heroica participación de las docenas de sacerdotes, pastores y cristianos que ya han dado a su vida por sus hermanos en estos siete años..." Samuel Silva Gotay, El pensamiento cristiano revolucionario en América Latina y el Caribe: Implicaciones de la teología de la liberación para la sociología de la religión, 2d ed. (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Cordillera and Ediciones Sigueme, 1983), my translation, 71. He also dedicates the book (in a dedication dated October 25, 1980) to the "1,514 priests, ministers, religious and laity murdered, captured, persecuted, kidnapped, and sent into exile between 1964 and 1978. Most especially, to my teacher, friend, and brother Mauricio López, martyr of the church of brothers in Argentina,...to brother Oscar Romero, archbishop of San Salvador,...and finally but most sincerely, in honour of Augusto Cotto, soul brother who encouraged me so much in the research for this book, professor of theology, Baptist minister, and minister of foreign affairs in the revolutionary forces of El Salvador, and who gave his life for the liberation of his brothers this past month." "...a los 1.514 sacerdotes, pastores, religiosos, religiosas y laicos asesinados, apresados, perseguidos, secuestrados y enviados al exilio entre 1964 y 1978. Muy especialmente, a mi maestro, compañero y hermano Mauricio López, mártir de la iglesia de los hermanos en Argentina,...al hermano Oscar Romero, arzobispo de San Salvador,...y finalmente pero más sentido todavía, en homenaje a Augusto Cotto, hermano del alma que tanto me alentó en la investigación de este libro, profesor de teología, pastor bautista y ministro de relaciones exteriores de las fuerzas revolucionarias de El Salvador, y quien diera su vida por la liberación de sus hermanos este mes pasado." Ibid., my translation, 9.

<sup>129</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 54. The same English version of the quotation is supplied in Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 50. "Otros, todavía en vida, son torturados y calumniados en nombre de la 'civilización occidental y cristiana'.... Toda disidencia es castigada por quienes detentan el poder, lo cual a menudo es justificado fervorosamente por quienes se proclaman cristianos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana, 51. For an English translation of this passage that differs slightly from the English version provided for the course at the Mexican American Cultural Center (M.A.C.C.) in San Antonio, Texas, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Praxis of Liberation and the Christian Faith," trans. Olga Prendergast, Lumen

obviously concurs with the powerful that Pereira Neto, Paz Zamora, and Gallego were killed and many others have been repressed because they acted contrary to, and they even threatened, the continuing existence of "Western and Christian society". Gutiérrez, however, does not consider such a society to be Christian; even the Christian faith itself of people who kill in order to maintain such a society is suspect.

## 2. Gutiérrez's Understanding of Anti-Clericalism during the French Revolution and His View of the Cristero Rebellion (*Teología desde el reverso de la historia*--1977):

Up to now, Gutiérrez has reflected on the repression of Christians in contemporary Latin America, including the murder of priests. For further insights into Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom, it is worthwhile to analyze his treatment of the repression of the Roman Catholic Church during another period and in different place. In his lecture, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem" (1976), and even more so in his book, *Teología desde el reverso de la historia* (January 1977), Gutiérrez briefly examines why anti-clericalism broke out during the French Revolution. He attributes the outbreak of such repression, first, to the absence of a widespread experience of the Reformation in France and, second, to the lack of an earlier revolution there through which political power could have been distributed more broadly. He contrasts late eighteenth century France, in the first case, to Germany, where many people who embraced the Reformation valued "the subjective aspects of religious experience," that is, living their religious beliefs in accordance with their individual consciences, and, in the second case, to England subsequent to the English Revolution. Gutiérrez does not further develop his analysis of French anti-clericalism, so this remains a relatively unsophisticated explanation.<sup>130</sup> Regardless of whether Gutiérrez's explanation is essentially accurate, it is insufficiently nuanced. For example, in the context of the present study, it is notable that Gutiérrez does not speak of the victims of anti-clericalism during the French Revolution as being martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church, even though dozens of people had already been beatified by the time he published the article and the book.<sup>131</sup> Gutiérrez, however, does draw attention to the pronouncements made by popes against "Modern Liberties" during the nineteenth century, which arose as reactions against the experience of anti-clericalism that had coincided with the declaration of such liberties in France. He judges that these papal pronouncements are part of a "painful history which is

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Vitae 29 (September 1974): 398-399.

<sup>130</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutierrez, in *Liberation and Change*, 29-30; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Teología desde el reverso de la historia*, 11.

<sup>131</sup>By the time of Gutiérrez's writing, martyrs who were the victims of anti-clericalism during the period of the French Revolution had been beatified by Pope Pius X on May 27, 1906, by Pope Benedict XV on June 13, 1920, by Pope Pius XI on May 10, 1925 and June 17, 1926, and by Pope Pius XII on June 19, 1955. Pierre Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations*, 475-492.

worthwhile remembering nowadays in the face of the insistence by short-sighted people on always securing new condemnations. This time [it is] against people who, according to them, threaten the same previously rejected 'Modern Liberties' by claiming the rights of the oppressed of this world."<sup>132</sup> Thus Gutiérrez speaks very little of anti-clericalism itself, but instead emphasizes the "short-sightedness" of people, in this case popes, who try to impede the attempt made by other people to become the protagonists of their own destiny (the second level of meaning for liberation). According to Gutiérrez, then, it is ironic that the same class of people who had tried to thwart the extension of liberties during the nineteenth century now consider themselves the guardians of these liberties (for example, the freedom to unrestricted self-determination to make money via the capitalist system), even if it means obstructing the poor masses from having control over their own destiny. For Gutiérrez, the liberals of today act no differently than the conservatives whom they had supplanted. They are both part of the same oppressor class.

In Teología desde el reverso de la historia, Gutiérrez also suggests that the history of the "Cristeros" in Mexico ought to be re-examined as an example of political-religious messianism based on an ideological foundation.<sup>133</sup> In Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, Gutiérrez contrasts "político-religious messianism" with "utopia". He defines such messianism as "a conservative reaction to a new situation," which the followers of the messianism "are not capable of confronting with the appropriate attitude and means."<sup>134</sup> It does not correspond to the Christian faith because it is backward-looking and aimed at steadfastly preserving an archaic social order instead of forward-looking with the goal of transforming the present circumstances so that a new and better situation can be created. The Cristero movement (1926-1929) was engendered when President Plutarco Elías Calles signed a decree on June 14, 1926 (which went into effect July 31, 1926) whereby he ordered state governments to enforce articles of the Mexican Constitution that limited some traditional religious rights and privileges enjoyed by Roman Catholics. The Cristero rebellion was a populist uprising. Many people who participated in it were from the poor, rural masses with a few young, middle-class militant leaders drawn from Catholic Action. Gutiérrez does not develop his brief comment, but an interesting study could be done comparing and contrasting the

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<sup>132</sup>"Es una dolorosa historia que vale la pena recordar en nuestros días ante el empeño de los miopes de siempre por obtener nuevas condenaciones. Esta vez contra los que reclamando los derechos de los oprimidos de este mundo amenazan, según ellos, esas mismas 'Libertades Modernas' antes rechazadas..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, my translation, 16. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutterriez, in Liberation and Change, 34-48.

<sup>133</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, 28. He recommends that the following book be used as a starting point for such a re-examination: María Isaura Pereira de Queiroz, Historia y etnología de los movimientos mesiánicos (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1969).

<sup>134</sup>"...el mesianismo político-religioso es una reacción arcaizante a una situación nueva, a la que no se es capaz de enfrentar con la actitud y los medios apropiados." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, my translation, 303.

popular movement in contemporary Latin America with the localized Cristero movement.<sup>135</sup> It is also notable, that Gutiérrez does not contextualize his comments on the Cristeros by mentioning the many priests, religious, and laity who were killed while not bearing arms during this period of anti-clericalism. (Many clergy and laity did die bearing arms.) For example, he does not mention the Jesuit priest, Fr. Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, who was executed on November 23, 1927 because authorities accused him of being involved in an attempt to assassinate the ex-president, Alvaro Obregón on November 13; they also suspected that he had ties with the Cristero movement. At the time of Gutiérrez's writing, he and many other priests, religious, and laity killed during the era of the Cristeros were popularly considered as martyrs (in fact, Fr. Pro's cause of canonization had already begun), though Fr. Pro was not beatified until September 25, 1988. He was beatified as a martyr of the Roman Catholic Church killed during a period of anti-clericalism, and not as a representative or supporter of the Cristeros.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup>The resources available on the Cristero rebellion and the legislation on religious matters are enormous. See "La legislazione persecutore nel Messico," La Civiltà Cattolica (vol. 3, 1926): 289-304; "La persecuzione religiosa nel Messico," La Civiltà Cattolica (vol. 1, 1927): 70-80; Philip Hughes, Pope Pius the Eleventh (London: Sheed and Ward, 1937), 291-297; Jesús García Gutiérrez, Acción anticatólica en Méjico, 3d ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1958), 163-189; Spectator, pseud., Los Cristeros del Volcán de Colima: Escenas de la lucha por la libertad religiosa en México 1926-1929, vol. 1, 2d. ed (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1961); David C. Bailey, ¡Viva Cristo Rey! The Cristero Rebellion and the Church-State Conflict in Mexico (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1974; Jean Meyer, Enrique Krauze, and Cayetano Reyes, Historia de la Revolución Mexicana 1924-1928. Estado y sociedad con Calles (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1977), 217-256; Lorenzo Meyer, Rafael Segovia, and Alejandra Lajous, Historia de la Revolución Mexicana 1928-1934. Los inicios de la institucionalización (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1978), 11-21; Jim Tuck, The Holy War in Los Altos: A Regional Analysis of Mexico's Cristero Rebellion (Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Press, 1982); Leslie Bethell, ed., The Cambridge History of Latin America, vol. 5 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 166-170. See also the weekly reports on the uprising in America in the section devoted to Latin America religious news. These are listed in the bibliography of the present study.

<sup>136</sup>For studies of Fr. Pro and other Mexican martyrs from the same period of Mexican anti-clericalism, who have since been beatified, see the following: J. Rimmer, "Miguel Pro, S.J.," The Tablet 158 (21 November 1931): 658-659; A. Smith, "Patron for the Working Man," America 50 (25 November 1933): 180-181; "Decennial of Father Pro," America 58 (20 November 1937): 156-157; W.M. Langford, "Laughing Saint," Catholic Digest 3 (December 1938): 45-49; M. Dempsey, "Mexican Martyr," Catholic Digest 2 (December 1938): 64-66; W.P. Donnelly, "Priest in Overalls: Father Pro," Catholic World 148 (December 1938): 298-303; S. Redmond, "Father Miguel Pro, S.J.," Irish Monthly 77 (January 1949): 34-38; J. Coagley, "There are no Words," Commonweal 54 (28 September 1951): 590; Antonio Dragon, Vida íntima del padre Pro, trans. Rafael Martínez del Campo, 3d ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1961); David C. Bailey, ¡Viva Cristo Rey!, 167-170; Paolo Molinari, "Il Beato Michele Agostino Pro: Martire della fede," La Civiltà Cattolica 139 (vol. 4, 1988): 128-140; Pope John Paul II, "Ready to Confess Christ: Homily of Pope John Paul II on the Solemnity of Christ the King," The Pope Speaks 38 (May-June 1993): 134-137; Pope John Paul II, "Homiliae I. In area basilicae Petrianae habita ob decretos Dei Servis Michaeli Pro, Iosephi Benedicto Dusmet, Francisco Faà di Bruno, Junipero Serra, Friderico Janssoone, Mariae Iosephae Naval Gírbés Beatorum caelitum honores," Acta Apostolicae Sedis 81 (6 February 1989): 162-169; Pope John Paul II, "In basilicae S. Petri habita ob decretos Dei servis Christophoro Magallanes et Sociis necnon Mariae a Iesu S. Venegas Beatorum caelitum honores," Acta Apostolicae Sedis 85 (9 September 1993): 745-

### 3. Martyrdom as a Great Wealth of the Church in Latin America (writings from 1977 to 1978):

In Teología desde el reverso de la historia (January 1977), Gutiérrez examines the ecclesiological significance of the recent torture and murder of many Christian peasants, especially in Bolivia and Honduras, and various priests, most notably in Argentina and Brazil, who were committed to the process of liberating the poor. For Gutiérrez, these events demonstrate that the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America "is now paying the price of having rebelled against a centuries-old oppression and of having begun to understand what it is to be a Christian and a Church today."<sup>137</sup> For Gutiérrez, truly living as Christians and as a Church in contemporary Latin America means inserting oneself into an ambiguous reality and helping the poor to liberate themselves because this is the way that one responds to the gospel demands to build communion among people and between people and God today. Repression and even murder are possible consequences of truly living as Christians and as a Church in these circumstances. Furthermore, according to Gutiérrez, "these lives and blood...place the entire Church (not only the Latin American Church) before a radical challenge...[the Church's] fidelity to its own, authentic tradition and through it to the Lord who 'establishes justice and what is right'."<sup>138</sup> Even though Gutiérrez does not use the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom", his association of the image of blood with the challenge to be faithful to the Church's "authentic tradition" certainly alludes to a tradition of martyrdom. The issue, then, for Gutiérrez, is the Church's faithfulness to what he believes to be the demands of the gospel, in spite of the high price of death. This is a challenge to the whole Church, not just to the Church located in Latin America. The Church located outside the continent must also respond to the fact that its members are among the dominators who keep the poor masses in Latin America subservient. Furthermore, it also benefits from the riches, power, and security derived from the capitalist system. To be truly Christian and a Church in the dominant countries outside Latin America, then, means having the courage to stand up and criticize those persons and groups, including Christians, who create and maintain an economic, social, political, and cultural system that benefits the few at the expense of the majority of the world's population. It also means recognizing the Church's complicity in this system, breaking from it, and announcing the Kingdom of God.

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<sup>137</sup>Concerning the Church: "se está pagando el precio de haberse rebelado en estos años contra una opresión secular y de haber comenzado a comprender lo que es ser cristiano e Iglesia en este tiempo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, my translation, 55. He repeats this comment and the following one in Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Los pobres en la Iglesia," Concilium (Spanish edition) no. 104 (no. 2, 1977): 109.

<sup>138</sup>"...esas vidas y esa sangre...colocan a la Iglesia entera (no sólo a la Iglesia latinoamericana) ante un radical desafío; en ese reto se juega su fidelidad a su propia y auténtica tradición y a través de ella al Señor que 'establece la justicia y el derecho'." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, my translation, 55.

Thus Gutiérrez's audience is world-wide: from his perspective, the experiences of the Church in Latin America and the willingness of Christians there to die for their conviction of what it means to believe in a God who promises a kingdom of justice should move all Christians to reconsider what it means to be Christian and a Church throughout the world today.

One of Gutiérrez's major criticisms of the consultation document (i.e., the *documento de consulta*), of the Puebla Conference is the absence of any acknowledgement whatsoever of the many Christians who have been persecuted and killed during the decade subsequent to the Medellín Conference, as well as the lack of any theological reflection on the meaning of this experience for the Church in the continent. In "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla" (April 10, 1978),<sup>139</sup> Gutiérrez notes that, during the past decade, the Medellín Conference has impelled many Christians, convinced that God loves all people, but especially the poor, to proclaim the Kingdom of God by committing themselves to the process of liberating the poor masses. Due to their commitment, many peasants, workers, students, religious, priests, and bishops have been imprisoned, tortured, and killed. For Gutiérrez, it is shocking that they are not mentioned at all in the *documento de consulta*. He believes that the deaths of these Christians demonstrate both their faith in God and their love for the poor up to the point of death. He explicitly designates them as martyrs, and he asserts that their "blood...is proof that Medellín was not a useless word and it is also proof that it will not be easy to erase their memory from the heart of the poor in the continent."<sup>140</sup> Gutiérrez claims that the *documento de consulta* itself is an attempt to turn back the clock to what one sector of the Church considers to be a more comfortable arrangement. The objective of its supporters is to spiritualize, and thereby to neutralize, everything stated in the documents of Medellín. If, as Gutiérrez claims, the martyrs express what the consequences are of truly acting in the spirit of Medellín, then such a document is also an attempt to hide the evidence of the martyrs who had died taking the Medellín Conference seriously. For

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<sup>139</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," *Páginas* 3, 16-17 (June 1978): 1-24. This article has been reprinted. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta para Puebla," in *Cruz y resurrección; Presencia y anuncio de una Iglesia nueva*, Colección "Teología Latinoamericana" 7 (Mexico City: CRT-Servir, 1978), 3-45.

<sup>140</sup>"La sangre de estos mártires es prueba de que Medellín no fue palabra vana y es prueba también de que no será fácil borrar su memoria del corazón de los pobres del continente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," my translation, *Páginas* 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11. Edward Schillebeeckx delivered an address concerning the upcoming Puebla Conference at the Catholic University of Nijmegen (The Netherlands) on October 13, 1978. In it he observes that many Christians who have taken the spirit of the Medellín Conference seriously have been murdered for siding with the poor: "Medellín proclaimed the message of God's Kingdom and Jesus' predilection for people on society's boundaries. And what was true for Jesus is also true for Latin Americans: when one confronts the ideology of world power one gets killed. Medellín's spirit resulted in martyrs! This was the spirit that liberation theologians called to life." Edward Schillebeeckx, "Liberation Theology between Medellín and Puebla," *Theology Digest* 28 (Spring 1980): 3. This article originally appeared in German as Edward Schillebeeckx, "Befreiungstheologien zwischen Medellín und Puebla," *Orientierung* 43 (15-31 January 1979): 6-10, 17-21.



Gutiérrez, if the words of the conference helped motivate many Christians to die in behalf of the poor, then the words must truly be valuable, and it is imperative that they not be renounced or even softened so that they could be uttered in "polite and respectable company". Furthermore, Gutiérrez insists that nothing can erase the memory of these martyrs from the minds of the poor masses. As long as the poor exist, they will remember the people who died while struggling alongside them and out of love for them. The *documento de consulta*, then, is simply one more attempt to prevent the poor from remembering their own history. Gutiérrez also expresses his evaluation that the martyrs' deaths are one of the greatest riches of the Church in Latin America, and thus he finds their omission from the consultation document lamentable. These deaths are so valuable because they provide models of what it means to be a Christian and a Church in the continent today. Gutiérrez states that it is especially painful and offensive that these Christians have often been killed in the name of Christian principles and in order to defend a "Western and Christian civilization", that is, so that Christendom may prevail past its time of usefulness.<sup>141</sup> The hatred out of which these people are killed, however, underscores the fact that there is nothing Christian about the interests which the powerful wish to preserve.

Speaking at the 1978 Catholic Theological Society of America Convention, Gutiérrez informs his international audience that to be a theologian in Latin America today means risking imprisonment, torture, and death. The theologians' tasks include proclaiming the gospel, reflecting on God's love for the poor, and denouncing the domestication of the gospel by the powerful. These prompt the aforementioned punishments from the powerful, including the risk of being killed, but he emphasizes that the prophets, Jesus, John the Baptist, and Paul were already killed for engaging in the same activities.<sup>142</sup> This means that the theologians' motives are in accordance with a long history of people who were murdered because they practised what they believed was true, that is, their actions were consistent with their words, and these same people have subsequently provided the traditional models of martyrdom in the Church. Gutiérrez is clearly suggesting that contemporary theologians are killed for reasons that correspond to genuine martyrdom.

Martyrdom (along with errors and impasses), according to Gutiérrez, is one of the high prices the poor masses in Latin America have paid for beginning to assume control over their own historical liberation during the decade subsequent to the Medellín Conference. Gutiérrez characterizes the poor as being "anonymous" and heretofore "absent from history". This means that they are not known, and they are not

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<sup>141</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," *Páginas* 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11.

<sup>142</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Voice of the Poor in the Church," in *The Catholic Theological Society of America. Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Annual Convention*, 32. He repeats some of these comments in the following writings, but deletes Jesus from the list: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in *Signos de lucha y esperanza*, xxxviii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in *La Iglesia latino-americana entre el temor y la esperanza*, Pablo Richard, 11-12.

significant to the powerful oppressors, who have always disparaged whatever memories the poor have retained of their past. In "La fuerza histórica de los pobres" (July 1978),<sup>143</sup> he observes that suffering, torture, death, and *martyrdom* are features of all historical progress by the poor in Latin America because their expression of hope for communion among people in a better future—which is not a naively euphoric and illusory optimism, as Gutiérrez has stressed on numerous occasions—calls into question the present state of affairs: a social system created and maintained so that the poor masses die prematurely, that is, "before their time" ("*morir antes de tiempo*") due to hunger, poverty, and repression. Gutiérrez adopts this notion of dying before one's time from his readings of Bartolomé de Las Casas. It means that the present social arrangement causes most Latin Americans to die substantially earlier and more painfully than they otherwise would if their interests were paramount to all people. Whatever gains the poor have made, however, further alarm whoever traditionally benefits from the existing system, but at the same time they encourage the poor to seek even more gains. This cycle of gains has the effect of "provoking fears and hostility among the oppressors, and raising the hope among the disinherited."<sup>144</sup> Moreover, the hope of the masses in the future and the advancements they make challenge the static view of reality held by whoever is not simply pessimistic about the present, but also about the future. In contrast to Gutiérrez's experience of the hope that the poor have in a better future, these pessimists believe that realism signifies recognizing whatever is and always seems to have been the state of things because this is what will naturely continue to prevail. Any endeavour to subvert the present system is not realistic for them because it ultimately undercuts a system from which they benefit. Gutiérrez notes that some intellectual elites are among these pessimists. It is also notable that Gutiérrez contends that martyrdom is always part of all historical progress by the poor. True progress, as was already noted, also signifies the growth of the Kingdom of God. Thus, while the individual poor person and the poor masses themselves are not necessarily morally superior to any other person or social class, their interests, insofar as they guide the process of liberation, correspond to the will of God. Christians who die for this just cause are thereby martyrs. It is important to recognize that Gutiérrez never uses the religious terms "martyr" or "martyrdom" for non-Christians, even though he values the deaths of Marxist atheists and of anybody else, if they are truly suffered in the interests of the poor. He also does not use the terms for Christians who die bearing arms (such as his friend, Camilo Torres Restrepo, or Néstor Paz Zamora), even though he respects the difficult decisions that they made to join the guerrilla forces with

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<sup>143</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xv-xlii. This is reprinted as Gustavo Gutiérrez, La fuerza histórica de los pobres, (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1978), xv-xlii. The article has been translated into English: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Historical Power of the Poor," in The Power of the Poor in History, trans. Robert R. Barr, 75-107.

<sup>144</sup>"Y lo hacen provocando temores y hositildad entre los opresores, y levantando la esperanza entre los desheredades." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," my translation, in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xvi.

whom they fought and ultimately died, apparently in the interests of the poor. All their deaths, too, would be salvific events that help partially realize the Kingdom of God on earth. Gutiérrez probably does not use the terms for non-Christians or Christians dying in combat because this would likely be perceived by many people as bankrupting their traditionally religious meanings. He always tries to respect what he considers to be the authentic traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. Gutiérrez's writings up to this time do not reveal compelling evidence that he has reflected theologically at length on the issue of whether these are truly martyrs.

Gutiérrez claims that by 1978 the imprisonment, torture, and murder of Christians are now commonplace. This represents a full decade of persecution since such events began to take place from time to time in Brazil (including the frequently cited example of the murder of Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto). For Gutiérrez, the recent waves of persecution in Argentina, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico are especially notable, though he does not offer specific examples. He thinks that Christian peasants, workers, students, religious, priests, and bishops are persecuted because of how they evangelize and make themselves present among the poor, rather than due to holding controversial religious ideas. They are not repressed and killed because they have proposed heterodox ideas but, instead, because their fidelity to a particular understanding of who God is and what he demands of them has caused them to denounce publicly what they believe to be the true interests of the powerful, especially whenever they try to cloak their motives in a religious garb. According to Gutiérrez, these Christians are persecuted and murdered because they believe in a God who is a liberator due to his love for all people, but who is especially concerned with the poor masses who suffer injustices engendered by sin. Their faith leads them, first, to commit themselves to struggle alongside the poor in order to help effect their historical liberation; second, to situate themselves so that they see history, including the present social arrangements in the world, and reread the Bible from the perspective of the poor; and, third, to denounce all injustices and their causes. The suffering of these particular Christians should be recognized as proof that many Christians truly participate in the process of liberation and that their commitment is effective because it elicits harsh responses. He is pleased that priests and bishops are included among these numbers because a vulnerable Church further contributes to confirming that it is a scandalous and monstrous lie whenever people claim that they are simply acting in the interests of "Western and Christian society" as they repress the poor and whoever else is committed to their liberation. Gutiérrez claims that when such religious explanations are not sufficiently persuasive to their traditional allies in the institutional Church, the powerful then often try to employ non-religious reasons so as to evade potential questions about whether these subversive activities by the poor masses and their supporters, in fact, may be founded on their Christian faith, rather than on an anti-Christian philosophy, such as Marxism. Gutiérrez is also pleased that priests and bishops are targeted alongside the poor because this demonstrates that the powerful are desperate. They are losing control over the system. Furthermore, he expresses his annoyance with the Christians who remain silent in the face of this repression. These people reveal themselves to be

spinelessly complicit with the powerful and, still worse, followers of a false god.<sup>145</sup> Gutiérrez subsequently develops his studies of idolatry, that is, the activities demonstrating that one is serving a false god.

For Gutiérrez, the widespread persecution and murder of Christians throughout Latin America, but especially in the aforementioned countries, have led to an "impressive series of martyrs who constitute one of the greatest riches of the Latin American Church today."<sup>146</sup> Gutiérrez underscores the fact that these deaths alarm the powerful. Many people who consider themselves to be the protectors of the traditionally Christian order of things are shocked by "anyone who can give his [or her] life for a faith that, to them, means no more than tranquility and religious justification of a centuries-old social injustice."<sup>147</sup> Because these people are killed on account of their ties with the poor, their conspicuous deaths also draw public attention to the substantially greater number of "unknown" deaths suffered by the poor masses, who are killed "before their time" by hunger arising from an unjust social order and by repressive violence. Gutiérrez believes that the corpses themselves of the Christians killed are subversive, so the authorities do not deliver them over to their families. He cites the example of Enrique Ángel Angelelli, the bishop of La Rioja and an outspoken critic of the Argentine government's "dirty war", who disappeared on August 4, 1976.<sup>148</sup> Gutiérrez claims that his disappearance, too, demonstrates the powerful's unfamiliarity with the Christian faith, because this situation evokes Jesus' empty tomb: it prompts Christians to reflect on and to understand the victory of resurrection over all death. Furthermore, Gutiérrez distinguishes between the publicized deaths of bishops, priests, and some religious and laity who were well-known by many people in life and the peasants, students, and workers who were similarly killed, but who were unknown to most people while alive, and who remain just as anonymous in their martyrdom as the poor masses themselves are who still live. Nevertheless, the poor value greatly the deaths of all people, known and unknown, because, together, according to Gutiérrez, they inspire the poor and their allies to continue the process of liberation, and they awaken, among people and the Church, faith in a God who promises the full realization of the Kingdom

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<sup>145</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvi-xxvii.

<sup>146</sup>"De Brasil, para no hablar de la última década, este nuevo tipo de persecución a la Iglesia--¡por pretendidos motivos cristianos!--se extendió, y sabemos con qué ferocidad, a Argentina, Honduras, El Salvador, México y a todo lo largo y ancho de América Latina; hasta llegar a esa impresionante serie de mártires que constituye hoy una de las mayores riquezas de la Iglesia latinoamericana." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," my translation, in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvii.

<sup>147</sup>"...los sectores dominantes ven más bien con sorpresa que alguien pueda dar su vida por una fe que a ellos no les significa más que tranquilidad y justificación religiosa a una secular injusticia social." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," my translation, in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvii.

<sup>148</sup>For information about Bishop Angelelli, La Sangre por el pueblo, 187-192; El martirio en América Latina, 54-67; "Enrique Angelelli," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, 250-251; "Despedida en nombre de los sacerdotes," in Ibid., 251-252. This collection of Church documents from 1973 to 1978 also includes articles on the murder of other clergy and laity who were working alongside the poor. See Ibid., 233-268.

of God at the end of time. That is when God is supposed to establish full communion among people and between people and God, thereby liberating whoever accepts his freely given offer of salvation. The arrival of the Kingdom of God also signifies the definitive conquering of death with life.<sup>149</sup>

#### 4. Martyrdom in the Final Document of the Puebla Conference (1979):

In Gutiérrez's study of the final document of the Puebla Conference, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla (June 1979), he observes that, in spite of the important experience of martyrdom during recent years by the Church in Latin America, the bishops at the conference did not assign a major place in the document for a reflection on the theme. He designates as martyrs those people who were killed as "witnesses of faith in the God of the poor."<sup>150</sup> For Gutiérrez, they were killed because they demonstrated that they believed in a God who prefers the poor and oppressed masses. Nevertheless, he detects allusions to martyrs and to martyrdom in three sections of the final document. First, he notes that the document, "Opción Preferencial" (no. 1138) refers to the persecution of the Church, and that, when it does so, it emphasizes that the poor themselves have been the first to be punished for challenging the existing social order. He thinks that this accent on the persecution of the poor is significant because the poor are routinely overlooked in documents; they are usually treated as if they are the "anonymous" characters, in fact, the

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<sup>149</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvii-xxviii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, La fuerza histórica de los pobres (1978), xxvii-xxviii. Gutiérrez concludes, "Rarely have so many deaths given so much life to a people and a Church. Because, as the prophet Ezekiel remembered, there are really no dried bones except when there is no hope. But the living God is with his people, his spirit present in those deaths fills them with life and leads all people to stand up like a 'great, very great army'. ... (Ezekiel, 37: 1-14)." "Pocas veces tantas muertes dieron tanta vida a un pueblo y a una Iglesia. Porque, como lo recordaba el profeta Ezequiel, en verdad no hay huesos secos y muerte sino cuando no hay esperanza. Pero el Dios vivo está con su pueblo, su espíritu presente en esos muertos los llena de vida y lleva a todo el pueblo a ponerse de pie como un 'ejército grande, muy grande'. ... (Ezequiel 37, 1-14)." Ibid., my translation, xxviii. Quiroz Magaña quotes part of this passage in order to provide evidence that persecution and martyrdom often accompany, give support to, and dynamize the expression of one's faith while building the Church in the midst of the oppressed masses, but he does not develop his comment. Alvaro Quiroz Magaña Eclesiología en la teología de la liberación, 184. Gutiérrez makes many of the same comments about martyrdom in a later article as he does in "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," but in a somewhat abbreviated manner. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Comunidades cristianas de base (perspectivas eclesiológicas)," Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980): 6, and an edited English translation of the latter article: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Irruption of the Poor in Latin America and the Christian Communities of the Common People," in The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities, 111-112.

<sup>150</sup>"Compromiso que ha traído difamación, prisión y muerte a muchos de ellos; son los mártires--testigos de la fe en el Dios de los pobres--de la historia reciente de América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, my translation, 54.

non-characters of history.<sup>151</sup> Second, Gutiérrez points to another text (no. 92), which he considers as proof that the bishops gathered at the conference recognize the reason why Christians are killed in contemporary Latin America: persecution and death evidence that the Church really is fulfilling its prophetic mission--that is, its mission of committing itself to the poor, announcing the Kingdom of God, and denouncing injustice.<sup>152</sup> Third, he notes a passage (no. 160) that observes the displeasure felt and expressed by dominant persons and groups in society when confronted by the Church's shift towards becoming a Church that serves the poor preferentially.<sup>153</sup> Nevertheless, the absence of martyrdom as a theme in the Puebla document demonstrates the lack of unanimity concerning the matter among the bishops gathered at the conference. The majority of them clearly were not willing to use the religious terms "martyrdom" and

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<sup>151</sup>"The prophetic denunciation of the Church and its concrete commitments to the poor have brought no shortage of various kinds of persecutions and afflictions: the poor themselves have been the first victims of these afflictions' (No. 1138)." "La denuncia profética de la Iglesia y sus compromisos concretos con el pobre le han traído en no pocos casos persecuciones y vejaciones de diversa índole: Los mismos pobres han sido las primeras víctimas de estas vejaciones' (No. 1138)." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, my translation, 55. See also Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Part 4, Chapter 1: A Preferential Option for the Poor no. 1138, in Puebla and Beyond: Documentation and Commentary, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), 264.

<sup>152</sup>"... 'the Church has had to endure persecution and sometimes, death as evidence of its prophetic mission' (92)..." "... 'la Iglesia ha debido soportar la persecución y a veces, la muerte en testimonio de su misión profética' (92)..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, my translation, 55. "The Church's awareness of its evangelizing mission has led it in the past ten years to publish numerous pastoral documents about social justice; to create organisms designed to express solidarity with the afflicted, to denounce outrages, and to defend human rights; to give encouragement to the option of priests and religious for the poor and the marginated; and to endure the persecution and at times death of its members in witness to its prophetic mission. Much remains to be done, of course, if the Church is to display greater oneness and solidarity. Fear of Marxism keeps many from facing up to the oppressive reality of liberal capitalism. One could say that some people, faced with the danger of one clearly sinful system, forget to denounce and combat the established reality of another equally sinful system. We must give full attention to the latter system, without overlooking the violent and atheistic historical forms of Marxism." Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Part 1, Chapter 3: The Ecclesial Reality Today in Latin America no. 92, in Puebla and Beyond, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury, 135.

<sup>153</sup>"The collective voice of the Episcopacies has been awakening an interest present in public opinion, while encountering, nevertheless, frequent reservations in some dominant sectors with little social sensitivity, which is a sign that the Church is occupying its position as Mother and Teacher of everyone' (No. 160)." "La voz colectiva de los Episcopados ha ido despertando un interés presente en la opinión pública, encontrando, sin embargo, frecuentes reservas en ciertos sectores dominantes de poca sensibilidad social, lo cual es un signo de que la Iglesia está su puesto de madre y Maestra de todos' (No. 160)." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, my translation, 55. See also Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate, Part 1, Chapter 4: Present-Day Tendencies and Evangelization in the Future no. 161, in Puebla and Beyond, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury, 142.

"martyr" for deaths that occurred in what they already recognized as persecutions of the Church.<sup>154</sup>

5. The Murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero as the Dividing Line in the History of the Church in Latin America (writings from 1980):

For Gutiérrez, the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 24, 1980 is a unique event in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America. While visiting Rome after attending Romero's funeral in El Salvador (which took place on March 30, 1980), he explained in an interview (published on April 25, 1980) that the bishops who had gathered at the Puebla Conference disagreed on whether they should speak about the murder of Christians committed to the cause of the poor as having arisen due to either political or religious reasons, with the majority favouring a political interpretation. Romero's death, however, demonstrates that they all had died, like Romero, for religious reasons. In the case of Romero, this is verified by the fact that "he was killed not because he defended the right of the church, but because he defended the rights of the poor."<sup>155</sup> Gutiérrez's explanation suggests that he thinks that the alleged rights of the Church can sometimes represent a political reason, while truly dying in the interests of the poor is unambiguously a religious reason. The true interests of the poor always signify the construction of communion among people, which also means the growth of the Kingdom of God. Gutiérrez contrasts the cause of Romero's death with people killed for some abstract notions of human rights derived from the French Revolution. Instead, "we are talking about the rights of a particular sector of society, the poorest." Therefore, Gutiérrez contends that "Romero is a martyr to this option for the poorest."<sup>156</sup> He does not provide an illustrative example of what he means by struggling for abstract notions of human rights, but

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<sup>154</sup>Teófilo Cabestrero, a Spanish priest and a journalist who often reports on liberation theology, considers the official silence of the Church concerning contemporary martyrs in Latin America to be a scandal of "continental proportions," but he assures his audience that it is still significantly less important than the recognition they receive from God and the faithful, by whom he apparently means the common laity, especially the poor masses. Moreover, the absence of official recognition ensures that people not become triumphalistic. He claims that martyrdom is authenticated by "giving of one's life for one's brothers, the service of a liberating love, and dying in order to liberate a man, men, and a people who suffer." "Lo que autentifica el martirio es el dar la vida por los hermanos, el servicio del amor liberador, morir por liberar al hombre, a los hombres, al pueblo que sufren." Teófilo Cabestrero, "Señales de esperanza desde América Latina," my translation, in Desafíos cristianos, Misión Abierta (Madrid, Spain: Lóquez Ediciones, 1988), 483. For a similar caution against all triumphalism whenever members of the Church are killed for siding with the poor masses, see José Marins, "El martirio: Consecuencia de la lucha contra el sufrimiento," Christus 49 (March-April 1984): 65.

<sup>155</sup>Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered', interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2.

<sup>156</sup>*Ibid.*, 2.

he seems to be alluding to people who fight for rights that, once they have won them, they then restrict from the poor. As was already seen, Gutiérrez criticizes people who kill the poor in the name of protecting their "Modern Liberties" and in order to serve their own narrow self-interests. For Gutiérrez, then, a genuine martyr is a Christian who, like Romero, dies for the poor. Of course, a political interpretation of Romero's death would suggest that he was murdered for legitimizing a violent revolution against the existing system. According to Gutiérrez, however, Romero did not advocate violence. As a starting point, he opposed all violence as being contrary to the gospel, but he recognized that, according to traditional Roman Catholic teaching, the circumstances also have to be considered. Romero, having opted for the cause of the poor, opposed the institutionalized violence of a system that kept them poor. After comprehending the nature of his society, he then began to view the counter-violence of an insurrection as the last alternative for the poor masses to create a just society. Gutiérrez believes, however, that the ultimate cause of Romero's death was his final homily, when he pleaded with the army to serve the poor rather than the oligarchy. Thus he was murdered because he called for building communion among people--a society where the interests of the poorest are foremost. Pondering the immediate repercussions of Romero's murder on the Church in Latin America, Gutiérrez remarks, "one should note that only one out of five bishops of El Salvador was present at the funeral. The others had constantly opposed him. No representative of CELAM was present. Yet this was the most important event in recent church history."<sup>157</sup> It is notable that Gutiérrez calls it the most important event in *all* recent Church history, without restricting its significance to Latin America. It is the "most important event" precisely because Romero died for the poor, not for some other, lesser reason. Romero, then, provides a model of what it truly means to be a Christian for all Christians throughout the world. Gutiérrez is also clearly disturbed by the absence of people who hold positions of authority in the institutional Church in El Salvador and CELAM, the episcopal organization that recently produced the Puebla Conference document which did not recognize the occurrence of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America. As was aforementioned, Gutiérrez himself attended Romero's funeral despite the obvious risks to his own life. From Gutiérrez's perspective, it is lamentable that some of these same bishops are able to find the time to attend public ceremonies, which he has often denounced for legitimizing the powerful protectors of a Western and Christian civilization, but they do not appear in public at the funeral of a man whom Gutiérrez saw as providing a model for building a new way of being Church. Finally, in this article, Gutiérrez stresses that, whenever Christians, such as those involved in base communities, recognize that the possibility exists of being murdered for following what they believe to be the way of Jesus Christ, that is, by engaging in a commitment to the poor, this real "prospect of martyrdom" causes them to adopt "a different approach to doing theology": it deepens their spirituality. He claims that this can be seen in their

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<sup>157</sup>Ibid., 2.



approach to prayer and liturgy.<sup>158</sup> He does not develop this comment, but he must have witnessed this effect through his frequent participation in the activities of base communities. The dimension of martyrdom in the spirituality of liberation is examined more thoroughly in a section of chapter seven.

Martyrdom is one of the major experiences of the Church in Latin America during recent years, according to Gutiérrez, in his article, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo" (June 30, 1980). He draws attention to the "generous delivery of lives, [and] blood" by many Christians whose commitment to the liberation of the poor had aroused hostility in people who are willing to kill in order to maintain the existing social order. For Gutiérrez, it is "on the blood of martyrs like Mons. Oscar Romero that a Church is constructed which testifies effectively to the death and resurrection of Christ."<sup>159</sup> He enumerates three reasons why Romero (as well as many other Christians) was killed: first, because he testified "to the existence of the poor and oppressed in his country," second, because he showed his commitment to the liberation of the poor, and, third, because he bolstered the hope of the poor "in the God who is incarnated in history."<sup>160</sup> Thus the assassination of Romero brings into the public eye the existence of the masses who suffer scandalous poverty, engendered ultimately by sin. This is significant because many people would rather deny the existence of the poor or offer various unrealistic reasons why so many people are poor, but these reasons usually demonstrate their evasion of all personal blame for the creation and maintenance of a system that keeps the poor subservient.<sup>161</sup> For Gutiérrez, Romero was killed precisely because he

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<sup>158</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>159</sup>"Esto ha sido la ocasión del lanzamiento de múltiples experiencias pastorales; de gestos de solidaridad con los oprimidos; de un encuentro con los aspectos contemplativos de la espiritualidad cristiana; de la entrega generosa de vidas, sangre de mártires como la de Mons. Oscar Romero sobre la que se construye una Iglesia que da testimonio eficaz de la muerte y resurrección de Cristo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," my translation, Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 7 (30 June 1980): 83. The issue, Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980), is devoted to reflections on Romero's murder.

<sup>160</sup>"...evoquemos a Mons. Oscar Romero, asesinado--como mucos antes de él en estos últimos años--por dar testimonio de la existencia de pobres y oprimidos en su país, por comprometerse con su liberación y por sostener su esperanza en el Dios que se encarna en la historia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," my translation, Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 7 (30 June 1980): 104.

<sup>161</sup>Enrique Dussel, in his preface from 1982 to a study of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America, makes a similar observation. He contends that martyrs are killed for prophetically denouncing injustice; because they die for this reason, they make "visible, obvious, [and] transparent the death which the poor suffer" on a daily basis. Martyrs "bear witness before the system of its sinfulness, [and] reveal...its wickedness [and] its idolatry." "El mártir, al profetizar la injusticia que se realiza contra el pobre, torna visible, evidente, inocultable la muerte que padece el pobre. Testimonia ante el sistema su pecado, revela a la carne (la totalidad de Egipto) su maldad, su idolatría." Enrique Dussel, "Palabras preliminares," my translation, in El martirio en América Latina, 4. According to Dussel, they are killed because they publicly condemn a system in which the masses are deprived of the fruits of their labours. The continual and systematic dispossession of a starving people is contrary to the will of God. Ibid., 3-7.

contributed to the liberation of the poor. His hope in the "God who is incarnated in history" means a hope in a God who inserted himself into history by becoming human, who lived, who was crucified for denouncing the existing order and announcing the Kingdom of God, and who, thereafter, was resurrected. For Gutiérrez, resurrection signifies the final victory of life over sin and death. He explains that the delivery of Romero's life and the lives of many other Christians on account of the poor encourages many other people to engage in further theological reflections starting from the perspective of the poor. Gutiérrez's statement that a Church is built on martyrial experiences suggests that these deaths on behalf of the poor provide models for other people to follow. Their faith up to the point of death verifies that efforts to build communion among all people are worth the risk of losing one's life. Gutiérrez's comment that the deaths are effective evidence of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection indicates that he thinks that they should impel other people to believe that the full realization of the Kingdom of God—which signifies resurrection—will overcome the deaths of the martyrs. They will be resurrected. This is a very traditional idea, as was seen in chapters one to four of the present study. Gutiérrez, however, does not speak in the traditionally temporal terms as if the martyrs were now already in heaven where they would be eligible to receive prayers invoking their intercession. At the same time, Gutiérrez does not make any comments denying this traditional belief among Roman Catholics. This is not surprising because, contrary to claims frequently made by critics, Gutiérrez does not think that he is advocating radical challenges to the whole nature of doctrine or dogma in the Church. For example, he does not call for an alternative magisterium or a parallel "popular church". Similarly, while he seems to desire greater democracy in the Roman Catholic Church, he always obeys the orders or requests made of him by his ecclesial superiors. In this article, Gutiérrez also draws a parallel between the martyrs in contemporary Latin America and Bishop Antonio Valdivieso (bishop of Nicaragua 1544-1550). He calls Valdivieso a martyr from the past who was murdered by "encomenderos" (landowners who had kept the Aborigines in a condition of servitude) on February 26, 1550 on account of his commitment to the poor Aborigines of Nicaragua. One similarity between Romero and Valdivieso is their deaths on behalf of the poor while holding the position of bishop. The fact that Gutiérrez draws this parallel suggests that, for him, these new martyrs are part of a long list of martyrs from throughout the history of the Church. Valdivieso, however, like almost all missionaries and the other clergy who were murdered while working in colonial Latin America, has never been canonized as a martyr of the Roman Catholic Church, though he is popularly recognized as a martyr.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>162</sup>See Gutiérrez's source for Valdivieso's murder: González Dávila, Teatro eclesiástico de la primitiva Iglesia de las Indias Occidentales, vol. 1, p. 235-236, cited by Enrique Dussel, El episcopado latinoamericano y la liberación de los pobres, 1504-1620 (Mexico City: Centro de Reflexión Teológica, 1979), 335-336. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 7 (30 June 1980), 104; 108. According to José Oscar Beozzo, who was the rector at the Theological Institute of Lins, São Paulo when he wrote the article, "Valdivieso died on 26 February 1550,

In "The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church" (August 1-4, 1980), which Gutiérrez delivered to a predominantly American audience, he adds to his reflections on the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, though he does so in only a brief manner. He informs the audience that Romero spoke a great deal about resurrection because he was committed to the poor and, therefore, he lived immersed in the experiences of their frequent deaths. Gutiérrez states that Romero considered these suffering people to be his own. He strongly believed that God would resurrect the poor. Gutiérrez uses the example of Romero to illustrate his opinion that one cannot really talk about the resurrection of Jesus as the ultimate triumph over death, unless one first speaks of the death of Jesus, but, if one does not truly understand the real sufferings and deaths of the poor who are present throughout the world today, then indeed it would be very difficult to understand the death and resurrection of Jesus which occurred so many centuries ago.<sup>163</sup> This means that people who are surrounded by death have insights into resurrection, the ultimate victory over death, that are elusive to people who are isolated from the pervasive death suffered by the majority of the world's population, either through their geographical distance or due to their cultures.

Gutiérrez reflects again on the significance of Archbishop Oscar Romero's murder in his article, "La violencia de un sistema" (December 1980).<sup>164</sup> He calls this event a "landmark in the course of the Church in Latin America" because of what it means for the Church there.<sup>165</sup> First, he emphasizes that Romero was aware of the fact that he was being targeted, and that he even confronted political authorities publicly about the possibility of his imminent assassination one month before it happened. He warned them not to use violence in order to try to silence whoever called for change. In spite of the fact that he knew that his criticisms would likely lead to his death, Romero boldly asked the government to change its ways--to stop using repressive violence in order to maintain an unjust social system of institutionalized violence. Second, Gutiérrez stresses that Romero was killed and he was willing to die so as to give witness to a living God--what Gutiérrez calls a "God of life". A God of life contrasts with a God who is indifferent to the

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a martyr to the struggle against the violence used on the Indians. He was a victim of the same violence because, like others, he understood that the enslavement, brutal treatment and exploitation of the Indians by the colonial system could not serve as a basis for evangelization." José Oscar Beozzo, "Evangelization and History," Lumen Vitae 33 (no. 3, 1978): 299. Enrique Dussel draws a parallel between Fr. Antonio Pereira Neto and Valdivieso when he calls them both martyrs in the dedication of his history of the Church in Latin America. Enrique Dussel, Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina: Colonaje y liberación (1492-1973), 3d ed. (Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Nova terra, 1974), 7.

<sup>163</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church," in Seeds of a People's Church, 3.

<sup>164</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 93-100.

<sup>165</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 98.

sufferings of those people who are exploited in the existing social system. Romero was able to persevere up to the point of death because he had a profound faith in this God, and this faith had brought him to commit himself to the liberation of the poor. Third, Gutiérrez draws attention to the fact that Romero called for peace and love, and that he did not advocate any form of violence, but that he especially rejected the original violence of an unjust system and the repressive violence used by authorities to maintain it. He judges that the spilling of Romero's blood on March 24, 1980 "sealed the alliance he had made with his God, his people and his Church."<sup>166</sup> Therefore, Gutiérrez views Romero's death as a public event which arose from his relations with God, the whole Church, and the poor, and which had ramifications on them. He explains that "martyrdom is the last act of life, a specific gesture toward the poor and so a meeting with the Lord."<sup>167</sup> Given that the God who prefers the poor is met whenever one meets and loves the poor, Christians are martyrs if they truly die out of love for them because this means that, at the same time, they are dying out of love for God. Furthermore, Gutiérrez stresses that Romero is a "martyr-bishop". This means that he died as a member of the institutional Roman Catholic Church. He did not renounce his office as a bishop but instead transformed the post so that he would be a leader and a model suitable for imitation among the people. Gutiérrez emphasizes that a message can be learned from Romero's life and death, as well as from the lives and deaths of many other people like him: despite what many people claim to the contrary, whenever people struggle on behalf of the poor against the existing system, they are opting for life and against death. For Gutiérrez, all the martyrs, including Romero, supply evidence, which runs contrary to the claims made by many people, "out of self-interest or intellectual conviction," that committing oneself to the poor distorts or reduces the gospel: "The witnesses of the martyrs will show up the real pettiness and alienation from the gospel of these power-ploys, accusations and jealousies. These witnesses to the faith and the resurrection of the Lord, the definitive victory of life over sin and injustice, prove that those who sow death will go away empty-handed, and that only the poor have their hands full of history and life."<sup>168</sup> Self-reliance, selfishness, and self-interest, then, alienate oneself from God and from other people. Giving oneself to all people, especially to the poor, and willingly siding with the poor up to the point of death contribute to the growth of communion and the Kingdom of God, and it signifies that one has set oneself in right relation with God. Gutiérrez's comment that "only the poor have their hands full of history" is, of course, a charged statement. Despite what some people may immediately assume, this does

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<sup>166</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 98.

<sup>167</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 98-99.

<sup>168</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 99.

not mean that Gutiérrez "canonizes" or idolizes the poor, either as individuals or as a social class, as if they were morally superior to everyone else. He has deflected that criticism on numerous occasions as being unfounded; after all, as he has often stated, he has lived for too many years in crime-ridden, poor neighbourhoods in Lima to entertain that self-delusion. For him, however, the Bible shows very clearly that the poor are preferred by God precisely because this is God's way of loving, not on account of any personal merits or qualities they may possess. On the other hand, Gutiérrez could be accused of stating that he is assuring the entrance of the poor into heaven, in spite of their own choices and behaviour. In this article, Gutiérrez provides insufficient evidence to dissuade fully such a criticism, but in future articles, he states very clearly that the poor, too, have to make a preferential option for the poor.<sup>169</sup> They cannot selfishly turn their backs on the interests of their social class in the name of individual interests and successes. It seems to be most fair, at this point, to conclude that Gutiérrez reveals to his audience an insight that he has made by means of his experiences among the poor, but which he has not yet found the best words for articulating. Indeed, Gutiérrez seems to be suggesting that the hands of the poor are "full of history" because they are the people who have few options in life. In their misery, they turn to God instead of relying upon themselves. They know (perhaps "instinctively"?) that they need God. Such an analysis is supported by another article, "La Iglesia de los pobres: Perspectiva bíblica" (March 1980), which Gutiérrez wrote around the same time as "La violencia de un sistema." In "La Iglesia de los pobres: Perspectiva bíblica," he examines the assertion made in the Bible that God reveals things to the simplest and least educated people--the children--that he hides from those who are most sophisticated and learned, that is, the people who proudly think that they know how everything works.<sup>170</sup>

6. True Martyrdom: Giving the Poor Hope by Dying as Witnesses to the God of Life (writings from 1981 to 1982):

In "El Dios de la vida" (February 1981), Gutiérrez speaks of Christians who are killed on account of the poor as being among the disciples of Jesus Christ, whose father is the true God. He contrasts the true God and the god of idolaters. Indeed, he has stated on numerous occasions that the opposite of Christians is not atheists but, instead, the idolaters who serve a false god. For Gutiérrez, the true God is the one who, out of love for humanity, especially for the poor, brings them life with the coming of the Kingdom of God.

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<sup>169</sup>Concerning the preferential option for the poor: "When we speak about *option*, we are not referring to an arbitrary choice, but we are talking about a free decision. It is not just the issue of non-persons. Even poor people must make this option, that is to say, to be in solidarity with their own race, social class, culture, social group in general. Through this option we enter into the world of the poor." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Church of the Poor," The Month 22 (July 1989): 266.

<sup>170</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Iglesia de los pobres: Perspectiva bíblica," Pastoral Andina no. 30 (April 1980): 27-30. See also Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 185-186.

To be a disciple of Jesus Christ means developing one's spirituality and effecting justice in the interests of the poor. As was already noted, the resurrection of Jesus signifies that God wills life to triumph ultimately over death; it means that all people are invited to accept God's offer of salvation. By idolatry Gutiérrez means placing one's trust in something other than the true God, such as wealth or power, which is created by humans, and therefore is a fetish, and which causes the deaths of real human victims. Idolaters are not disciples of Jesus because, due to prioritizing their own self-interests rather than those of their poor neighbours, they create and maintain social systems that take away life, that systematically kill their neighbours. Some Christians are killed by idolaters because their activities reveal that they believe in the God of life, and because they denounce everything that is contrary to the will of this God.<sup>171</sup> Thus Gutiérrez observes that "to affirm life, to affirm the rights of the poor implies facing the risk of death, of being murdered. Many people give evidence of this in Latin America today."<sup>172</sup> Gutiérrez lists a number of ways that people can show their faith in the God of life. All ways represent the delivery of oneself over to the cause of the poor masses. The last way he enumerates is being killed because one has put oneself

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<sup>171</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida," Páginas 6, no. 40 (September 1981): 13-14; 19. Gutiérrez especially develops his analysis of the theme of idolatry in his studies of Bartolomé de Las Casas. Las Casas warns Spanish *conquistadores* and *encomenderos* that their salvation is in jeopardy because they worship gold rather than God. For example, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Bartolomé de Las Casas: Libertad y liberación," in Profecía y evangelización: Bartolomé de Las Casas-Medellín, 26-45; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo: Evangelización y teología en el siglo XVI," Páginas 6 (June 1981): 1-12. Gutiérrez also examines José María Arguedas's view of idolatry in his study of the author's writings: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Entre las calandrias," in Arguedas: Mito, historia y religión/Entre las calandrias, Pedro Trigo and Gustavo Gutiérrez (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1982), 269-270. Dussel makes a similar observation in 1982: "The National Security State (financial and multinational capitalism), which kills the Latin American martyrs for subverting (unjust) order and in the name of the values of Western civilization (which are the absence of values for the Gospel), thinks that things will thereby fall back in place, in accordance with the precepts of Christianity. This is even said by many Catholics. We have come to a time in which martyrs are killed in the name of God, even Christ—because this is what Christian murderers believe. By taking away the martyr's *life*, they believe that they are worshipping God. In fact, they are worshipping a 'god', but it is a Fetsch, an Idol, Money, Capital, but not the God of the poor, the God of those liberated from Egypt, the God of Israel." "El Estado de Seguridad nacional, el capitalismo financiero y transnacional, que mata a los mártires latinoamericanos por ser subversivos del orden (injusto) y en nombre de valores de la civilización occidental (que no son sino dis-valores para que cumple con los preceptos del cristianismo—ya que muchos se dicen aún católicos—. Hemos llegado al tiempo en que se mata a los mártires en nombre de Dios, aun de Cristo—porque se creen los asesinos cristianos—. Quitándole *la vida* al mártir creen recibir culto a Dios. En efecto, rinden culto a un 'dios', pero es al Fetiche, al Idolo, al Dinero, al Capital, pero no al Dios de los pobres, al Dios de los liberados de Egipto, al Dios de Isreal." Enrique Dussel, "Palabras Preliminares," my translation, in El martirio en América Latina, 7.

<sup>172</sup>"Afirmar la vida, afirmar los derechos del pobre implica enfrentar el riesgo de la muerte, de ser asesinado. Son muchos los que hoy dan testimonio de esto en América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida," my translation, Páginas 6, no. 40 (September 1981): 19.

in a situation that arouses a violent response from the powerful members of society.<sup>173</sup> By willingly giving their lives for the cause of the poor, they demonstrate their belief that resurrection is more powerful than the deaths caused by idolaters. Unlike in most articles from this period, Gutiérrez does not explicitly use the term "martyr" to refer to these people, though it is clearly implied. In fact, to support this point, Gutiérrez cites the example of Romero, whom he has already called a martyr, in the revised version of this article, which was published in June, 1982.<sup>174</sup>

During his presentation to the Fifth International Conference of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT), which met August 17-29, 1981, Gutiérrez shares with his audience how he has been "awestruck by the rich welter of Christian communities that have risen to bear witness to the Lord in Latin America, even to the point of martyrdom. I must confess that I had a tendency to shut myself up in those realities."<sup>175</sup> Gutiérrez goes on to say that he is pleased to meet in an ecumenical setting so as to learn about and grow from the painful experiences and sufferings of other peoples from around the world. These do not denigrate his own experiences, but instead provide him with new ways for comprehending them, as well as the experiences of others living in very different settings.

Contemporary Latin Americans are experiencing a time of solidarity, martyrdom, prayer, and salvation, according to Gutiérrez, in his article, "Beber en su propio pozo" (September 1982). Several features characterize this period: many Christians are now committed to the struggles of the poor masses; people who participate in basic ecclesial communities are learning how to pray in the midst of their sufferings; and they are developing a spirituality that expresses their hope (which he has often called a "hope against all hope") in the full realization of the Kingdom of God. Among these experiences, martyrdom is special because it is the "supreme act of faith." People who give "witness to the God of life in a continent where the powerful sow death in order to defend their privileges" are often killed, but "martyrial blood is what traditionally gives life to the ecclesial community, to the community of the

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<sup>173</sup>"...today, in Latin America and very concretely in our country, to give life to a people who die of hunger and who die because of bullets...is to give evidence of the Resurrection in history. [It is] To give life, all of [one's] life: to give bread to the poor, to help the organization of a people, to attend to the help of the marginalized, to preach the Gospel, to teach catechism, to celebrate the Eucharist, to pray, to deliver one's life." "...hoy en América Latina y muy concretamente en nuestro país, dar vida a un pueblo que muere de hambre y que muere por las balas, eso es dar testimonio de la Resurrección en la historia. Dar vida, toda la vida: dar pan al pobre, ayudar a la organización de un pueblo, atender a la salud de los marginados, predicar el Evangelio, enseñar a catecismo, celebrar la Eucarista, orar, entregar su propia vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida," my translation, Páginas 6, no. 40 (September 1981): 20. In the revised version of this article, Gutiérrez adds two other ways to the list: struggling for the rights of the poor and forgiving others. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida," Christus 47 (June 1982): 54.

<sup>174</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida," Christus 47 (June 1982): 55.

<sup>175</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding Our Way to Talk about God," trans. John Drury, in Irruption from the Third World, 230.

followers of Jesus Christ."<sup>176</sup> He considers the widescale delivery of lives for the cause of the poor to be a new event in Latin America. Of course, such deaths already date back at least fourteen years, but now they are even more common events than ever before, so their factuality is undeniable. According to Gutiérrez, these deaths cause the poor to rejoice because the martyrs testify to a vision of life sustained in just societies and to the end of suffering and injustice, which God promises will occur with the full realization of the Kingdom of God. While the poor's joy is real, Gutiérrez stresses that it "is not a superficial joy of ignorance or resignation, but one which is born from the hope that abuse and suffering will be overcome." Gutiérrez clearly employs an unusual scale for judging what is "real" and what is "superficial". For him, in the midst of his full recognition of the reality of pain and suffering associated with poverty, repression, and murder, the promise that the Kingdom of God is coming is nevertheless what is "most real". Thus he claims that the joy of the poor who have experienced the murder of Christians on their behalf is a "paschal joy which corresponds to a time of martyrdom."<sup>177</sup> Gutiérrez cites Romero in order to explain the notion that the blood of the martyrs conveys a message of consolation and hope to the poor because it is based on a faith that the Kingdom of God will overcome death. Furthermore, he cautions people that it is very difficult really to commit oneself fully to the poor--to live and to be friends with the poor in their world of values, and not just to work with them and then go to a secure home at night. He uses the image of an asymptotic line to describe the relations between the poor and those who are not poor: one who is not poor can become very intimate with and friendly with the poor, but a certain gap nonetheless always remains. People who are not poor always possess some type of freedom not enjoyed by the poor. For Gutiérrez, this is worth acknowledging so that people committed to the cause of the poor can be realistic. Then he shares an observation that is clearly derived from his own experiences. He claims that, contrary to the traditional view of death as a great equalizing event, non-poor martyrs, even in their deaths for the cause of the poor, do not bridge this gap between the poor and the non-poor. Their deaths are publicized, and they become well-known and celebrated over a large region, whereas poor martyrs always remain unknown, that is, "anonymous". To illustrate this point, Gutiérrez draws attention to the approximately forty poor people who were killed while attending Archbishop Romero's funeral, whose

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<sup>176</sup>"Por eso mismo estamos ante un *tiempo de martirio*, del testimonio supremo de la fe. El testimonio del Dios de la vida en un continente en que el poderoso siembra la muerte para defender sus privilegios lleva con frecuencia al asesinato del testigo. Y la sangre martirial es la que tradicionalmente da vida a la comunidad eclesial, a la comunidad de los seguidores de Jesucristo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 3.

<sup>177</sup>"No es la alegría superficial de la inconsciencia o la resignación, sino aquella que nace de la esperanza de que el maltrato y el sufrimiento serán vencidos. Una alegría pascual que corresponde a un tiempo de martirio." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 6.



names, of course, are unknown outside a very small group, mostly comprised of the poor themselves.<sup>178</sup> Gutiérrez emphasizes that he does not mean to denigrate or even to discourage the martyrdom of the non-poor; after all, the deaths of the non-poor, as well as those of the poor themselves, should be and, in fact, will be valued greatly by the poor and by sectors of the Church in Latin America. The fact that the non-poor martyrs become well-known, "of course...does not take away the courage and authenticity of their gesture, but, why do we not think about so many peasants, villagers, women of our people, workers who give their lives *anonymously* because of their love for the people or simply on account of knowing how to be there in the midst of them?"<sup>179</sup> It is unclear whether Gutiérrez means that poor and non-poor martyrs are distinguished only by living people (that point he makes clear), or also by God. Given Gutiérrez's belief that God loves all people, but the poor preferentially, the latter could very well be the case. On the other hand, he does not explicitly say that God distinguishes between the various martyrs, but instead he restricts himself to speaking of the value of martyrdom to the poor and to other members of the Church who are still living.

Martyrdom is the central theme of "Fidelidad a la vida" (December 1982). Gutiérrez's explains that numerous Christians have died as martyrs during the previous four years on account of their loyalty to the God of life. They died, according to Gutiérrez, in order to give witness, first, to the existence of the poor in Latin America and, second, to God's preference for them. He emphasizes that the spilling of martyrial blood still continues. Apparently, no end is in sight. He recalls once again that nobody anticipated the wave of contemporary martyrdoms when they began about fifteen years earlier, and that the persecutors at that time often even declared themselves to be Christians. This comment suggests that some people whom Gutiérrez designates as persecutors no longer maintain such a pretence or self-delusion, but he does not explicitly state this. Gutiérrez thinks that Latin American Christians are still probably much too close to the

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<sup>178</sup>"Not even the delivery of one's life achieves this [i.e., the convergence of the non-poor with the poor and their world], in spite of how supreme the witness is; because they are significant people in Latin American society or Church, their martyrdom will be known and they will be appreciated for it." "Ni siquiera la entrega de la propia vida lo logra, pese a lo supremo del testimonio; porque son personas de significación en la sociedad o en la Iglesia latinoamericana, se sabrá de su martirio y se les apreciará por ello." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7.

<sup>179</sup>"Eso no quita, claro está, coraje o autenticidad a su gesto, pero ¿cómo no pensar en tantos campesinos, pobladores, mujeres de nuestro pueblo, obreros que dan *anónimamente* sus vidas por amor a su pueblo o simplemente por saber estar ahí en medio de él?" Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7.

historical events of contemporary martyrdom in order to evaluate the profoundness of their significance.<sup>180</sup>

In fact, he wonders what the companions of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church, who witnessed their deaths, thought about the wave of martyrdom during their era. He suggests that some of them might not have really understood the significance of the deaths for different reasons: the complexity of every historical situation, the proximity of the event, and their own lack of courage to permit themselves to die alongside the martyrs. He states that it always seems to be more difficult to assess the significance of a current situation than to do so retrospectively because all the factors seem to be so jumbled. It is clear that Gutiérrez's motive is not simply some undefined curiosity about historical events when he ponders the perspectives of the contemporaries of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church. The fact that he does not explicitly state that he has perused the records of martyrdom is significant, given his evident knowledge of these martyrs. This knowledge was already demonstrated in two pre-theology of liberation writings ("Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador" and La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina), when Gutiérrez briefly analyzed examples of martyrdom in order to illustrate the relation between the concept of salvation and the understanding of religious liberty in the pre-Constantinian Church. Now, however, when confronted by contemporary martyrdom, including people he knew well, he does not cite any specific martyrs from the pre-Constantinian Church to situate his query about the martyrs' companions, in spite of the fact that some of the examples examined in chapter one of the present study (such as the documents relating the details of Polycarp's death in 167 and the execution of the Christians at Lyons in 177) are certainly reasonably reliable historical resources. Now, faced by contemporary martyrdom in Latin America, Gutiérrez approaches martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church differently than before. He wonders about the mental or spiritual state of the companions of the pre-Constantinian Church martyrs: how did the people left alive after the events cope with these deaths? He wonders how the members of the martyrs' communities made sense of the deaths because he is searching for tools to understand his own experience of witnessing the deaths of people he knew. Nevertheless, he does not answer his question by appealing directly to the resources available to him as if they provided models that he could simply apply mechanically to his own situation. Instead, he rereads history from his own historical circumstances. In fact, he has fresh insights into the obvious suffering experienced by people who lived nearly two thousand years ago because he suffers similarly today. Without really answering how the people in the past felt, he springs back into the present, the only situation that he really knows. He states that he is certain of only one thing: whenever one is confronted by the ambiguities of the current situation, a personal decision--in fact, a commitment one way or another--must be made in relation to it. Either one is complicit with the continuation of an existing social

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<sup>180</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fidelidad a la vida," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 17, 21. See also Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino," 201-202. A complete chapter of the collection Signos de vida y fidelidad, which collects Church documents from 1978 to 1982, is devoted to the theme of persecution and martyrdom in contemporary Latin America. See *Ibid.*, 427-491.

order that causes death or one breaks from it so as to try to subvert it. The decision to break from the system, however, must be characterized by solidarity, by sharp denunciation, and by committed prayer. This is what characterized the lives of those people who were willing to persevere up to the point of death in order to further the cause of the poor masses. Furthermore, Gutiérrez insists that the choice to side with the poor up to the point of death is valued by the poor. They recognize that it is based upon a very strong faith that gives testimony to a God of life, which runs contrary to everything else in a continent characterized by death. They understand that, when someone is a witness to the God of life in contemporary Latin America, the powerful will react harshly, killing this witness, if it is necessary, in order to preserve their privileges. The lives and deaths of the Christians who are killed on their behalf, however, feed the hopes of the poor. Gutiérrez emphasizes that, according to the oldest Christian tradition, martyrial blood gives life to the Church, which is comprised of the followers of Jesus Christ. Thus, Gutiérrez affirms that this ancient tradition also holds true in contemporary Latin America: "fidelity up to the point of death is a source of life."<sup>181</sup> He declares that martyrdom, along with solidarity and prayer are the foundation on which is being built a Church which is a sign of the God of life's "Kingdom of life". Such a Church, then, is an audacious sign of life in the midst of a continent marked by death because it nurtures the hope of the poor and the people who side with them that the promise of the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God is even more real than all the very real suffering experienced by the majority of Latin Americans today.

#### Summary:

Thus many Christians, including Gustavo Gutiérrez, have committed themselves to the process of liberation because of their conviction that the situation of poverty suffered by the overwhelming majority of Latin Americans is radically incompatible with the will of the biblical God, who, they believe, is above everything else, a God of life. Some have situated themselves in a certain position whereby their attempts to transform the historical circumstances have aroused the fury of some powerful members of society. Their choice to enter into the world of poverty demonstrates that they have put themselves on the path where they may approach their poor neighbours out of love for them, and perhaps they may even be converted to them. Many of these Christians, such as Archbishop Oscar Romero, recognize that their commitment to the poor and their activities in the interests of the poor come at a high price, yet they choose to continue being committed to the process of liberation, in spite of the obvious risk to their lives. In the end, some of them are killed, often because they are accused of being communists who destabilize the traditional order of things. Gutiérrez has noted that among these people are the well-known and celebrated martyrs taken from

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<sup>181</sup>"La fidelidad hasta la muerte es fuente de vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fidelidad a la vida," my translation, in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 22.

the ranks of the non-poor, but also the less widely recognized martyrs from the poor masses themselves, who remain just as "anonymous" in their deaths as they were in their lives. It is on the value of their deaths to the poor masses, to the Church in Latin America, and to the Church throughout the world that Gutiérrez reflects theologically in his theology of liberation writings from July, 1968 to 1982. He comes to the conclusion that their deaths are valuable to all of these parties precisely because their outstanding faith in the God of life, evidenced by their willingness to persevere up to the point of death, gives hope to the poor and to everyone who is committed to their liberation that the last word in history is life, not death--that is, a kingdom of life which will be fully realized with the return of Jesus Christ, rather than a reign of death, as all the pain and suffering in the world would suggest. In 1982, the repression of the sector of the Church committed to the process of liberation is clearly far from over. Many Christians continue to be killed for their endeavours to transform the historical circumstances on behalf of what they believe to be the best interests of the poor. The next chapter of the present study, chapter seven, is concerned with the continuing evolution of Gustavo Gutiérrez's concept of persecution and martyrdom in his writings from 1983 to 1995.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ'S CONCEPT OF PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM FROM 1983 TO 1995

As was seen in chapter five, the theme of contemporary persecution and martyrdom did not appear in Gustavo Gutiérrez's pre-theology of liberation writings. Whenever he spoke of persecution and martyrdom, he always referred to events that had occurred in other historical periods, most notably, in the pre-Constantinian Church. It was only in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July 1967) that Gutiérrez began to express his anticipation that Latin American Christians committed to the poor might be murdered because they posed a threat to the privileges traditionally enjoyed by the powerful members of society. The persecution of the Church in contemporary Latin America and the murder of some of its members emerged as a principal concern of theological reflection in Gutiérrez's writings between 1968 and 1982 (which were examined in chapter six) because he was endeavouring to make sense of the real sufferings experienced by some sectors of the Church in the continent during that period. In 1978, Gutiérrez started to employ the religious term "martyr" in his writings in order to refer to the Christians who had been killed on account of their commitment to the poor. Since then, he has consistently utilized this religious term.

The objective of chapter seven is to examine the further development of Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom in his writings between 1983 and 1995. Five themes emerge in this analysis: (1) the controversy about whether these Christians truly died as martyrs; (2) Gutiérrez's interpretation of certain New Testament passages which suggest that all followers of Jesus Christ should prepare themselves for the risk of persecution and even death on account of their faith; (3) the evolution of martyrdom as a major dimension of the spirituality of liberation; (4) the relationship between the famous martyrs and the anonymous martyrs; and (5) some of the effects which the experiences of persecution and martyrdom have had on the identity of the Church in Latin America. Approximately half of the chapter is devoted to various elements of the first theme because it is particularly important to ascertain exactly what Gutiérrez means by martyrdom and also what he does not mean by it.

#### A. The Controversy: True Martyrdom versus False Martyrdom

Starting very clearly in 1978, but with some awareness emerging already in 1969, Gutiérrez recognizes the widely held perspective that many of the Christians killed while participating in the process

of liberation truly represent examples of Christian martyrdom. They are truly examples of martyrdom because they died for primarily religious reasons, rather than for predominantly non-religious reasons. Many other Christians, including ecclesial authorities, dispute this interpretation. They contend that these people died for non-religious reasons, especially political reasons. Even in those cases where they truly showed themselves to be Christians from time to time, they did not die as Christian martyrs because they were not killed strictly on account of their Christian faith. According to this view, the Christians who died while endeavouring to further the process of liberation represent examples of false martyrdom.

There are thus two objectives in this section of chapter seven: first, to determine which characteristics Gutiérrez underscores as proof that specific Christians truly died as martyrs; and, second, to examine how he responds to the arguments that these deaths are not examples of martyrdom. Nine distinct themes are explored in the following subsections in order to achieve these two objectives: (1) the evolution in Gutiérrez's theological reflections from speaking about the persecution of the Church and the murder of its members to recognizing contemporary martyrdom; (2) Gutiérrez's motives for explaining what he means by martyrdom; (3) a review of Cardinal Lambertini's guidelines for true martyrdom in order to orientate the analysis; (4) the groups whose members are eligible to be designated as martyrs (Roman Catholics, other Christians, or non-Christians?); (5) martyrs as the Christians who are killed by idolatrous persecutors for demonstrating their faith in the biblical God of life; (6) martyrs in the general sense of the term in contrast with the papally canonized martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church; (7) martyrdom as a violent death which is encountered, rather than sought, because Christians are obliged to affirm life; (8) martyrs as Christians who are murdered for exhibiting a faith like Job in the biblical God of life; (9) the absence of an official recognition of the contemporary Latin American martyrs in the final document of the Santo Domingo Conference.

#### 1. The Evolution in Gutiérrez's Writings from Speaking about Persecution and Murder to Recognizing Contemporary Martyrdom (writings from 1969 to 1978):

As was seen in chapter six, in late 1969, Gutiérrez began to designate the repression of the Roman Catholic Church and of some of its members in contemporary Latin America as the persecution of the Church. This is recorded in "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)" (November 1969), a lecture which he addressed to an inter-denominational and international audience in Cartigny, Switzerland. In this lecture Gutiérrez also draws attention to the murder of his good friend, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, which was carried out by the authorities in Brazil on March 26, 1969 in reaction to his criticisms of how the government was mistreating the poor.<sup>1</sup> This is the first time that Gutiérrez mentions

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<sup>1</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development (Notes on Theology of Liberation)," in In Search of a Theology of Development, 152.

in his writings the name of a Christian who has been murdered due to an unwavering commitment to the poor. Before this time, he had only warned of the possibility that some Christians would be killed for their bold challenges to the traditional social order. This expectation was already noted in chapter five, when Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July 1967) was examined.<sup>2</sup> There are two reasons why it is significant that Gutiérrez cites a specific example when he introduces the theme of the persecution of the Church. First, this is significant for the individual case of Fr. Pereira Neto. The fact that Gutiérrez associates this murder with the persecution of the Church indicates his belief that the people responsible for the murder were predominantly motivated by anti-religious reasons, rather than political reasons alone. At the same time, as has already been noted, Gutiérrez believes that a Christian's commitment to the liberation of the poor may be properly motivated by his or her faith rather than by political reasons alone. It is how they demonstrate this faith that provokes the persecutors' hostile reactions. Because the murder of Fr. Pereira Neto occurs in an environment characterized by the persecution of the Church, it should be viewed as a particularly notable incident that nevertheless corresponds to this general context. The murder should not be understood as simply a lamentable event that transpired in isolation from this general environment of persecution because it is the context which gives it meaning. The occurrence of a murder is especially notable because someone, in fact, is killed instead of being repressed in less definitive ways, but it is nonetheless not particularly surprising because a violent death is simply an extreme manifestation of the more general persecution of the Church. The murder is one more episode in an environment characterized by a whole series of events, which are all induced by the persecutors' hatred of how some Christians demonstrate their faith. Therefore the murder remains simultaneously shocking to many of the Christians committed to the poor, but it is not entirely unforeseen by some of them, as is clearly evidenced, for example, by Gutiérrez's expectation, expressed in Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, that some Christians committed to the process of liberation would probably be killed. Even though Gutiérrez does not yet employ the religious term "martyrdom" in this lecture, the fact that he associates the death with the persecution of the Church implies that he probably considers Fr. Pereira Neto to be a martyr. It is nevertheless not possible to conclude with complete certainty, from the evidence available in this one lecture, that Gutiérrez believed, as early as 1969, that Fr. Pereira Neto was a Christian martyr. It continues to be the case in regard to Gutiérrez's writings between 1969 and 1977 that one can only speculate on whether any of his many other references to the Christians killed in an environment of persecution certainly imply that he views them as examples of contemporary martyrs, because he consistently refrains from explicitly employing the term "martyrdom" in his writings until 1978.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 17.

<sup>3</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11.

Gutiérrez's citation of a specific example of murder (the murder of Fr. Pereira Neto) when he introduces the theme of the persecution of the Church in his writings is also significant for a second reason. As was noted in chapter six, Gutiérrez expresses his anticipation in this lecture that the persecution of the Church will become more widespread in the continent. This implies that he also expects the murder of Fr. Pereira Neto to be simply an early example among many other murders, which will all be motivated by the persecutors' hatred of the faith. Fr. Pereira Neto is therefore a prototype for all other Christians who may be murdered in the contemporary persecution of the Church in Latin America. Furthermore, the fact that Gutiérrez speaks about the persecution of the Church and about one specific example of murder before an inter-denominational and international audience is also significant. It suggests, first, that Gutiérrez does not expect persecution to be restricted to Roman Catholics. Second, it implies that he is convinced of the relevance of the recent events in Latin America for all Christians, not just ones living in the continent. He may be willing to share his reflections with the international audience because it is likely that they are, at a minimum, not simply indifferent to the subject matter of his lecture. The topic of the conference itself (In Search of a Theology of Development) underscores the likelihood that the participants are concerned about events outside their own immediate settings. The content of Gutiérrez's lecture and the fact that he travelled to Europe to deliver it demonstrate he is convinced that the experiences of Latin American Christians are significant for Christians living outside Latin America. As was noted in chapter six, talk of liberation (including the formulation of a theology of liberation rather than a theology of development) arises from the perception that the oppression of the masses in Latin America is caused by the exploitive activities of powerful local minorities and foreign capitalists. Therefore both local people in Latin America as well as foreigners should concern themselves with how they may contribute to the process of liberation.

Throughout the 1970s Gutiérrez regularly makes references to the persecution of the Church and the murder of some of its members, but he does not employ the term "martyrdom" in his writings until 1978. During the period between 1969 and 1977, Gutiérrez customarily draws attention to the general occurrence of persecution and murder in the continent without identifying specific examples. From time to time, he does indicate the countries in which such incidents are taking place (e.g., Brazil, Argentina, El Salvador, Mexico). The occasions on which he cites specific cases of Christians killed are nevertheless exceptional, and they are limited to relatively famous members of the clergy (for example, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto in Brazil, Fr. Héctor Gallego in Panama).

Starting with the article, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla" (April 10, 1978), Gutiérrez henceforth consistently employs the religious terms "martyrdom" and "martyr" in place of such secular words as "murder" and "the Christian killed".<sup>4</sup> The substitution of secular words with religious terms reveals a change in how Gutiérrez makes sense of such deaths. What was once implied in his writings, he

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<sup>4</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," *Páginas* 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11.



now states explicitly. By using the terms "martyrdom" and "martyr", Gutiérrez emphasizes his conviction that many Christians have died as genuinely Christian martyrs rather than as false martyrs. On both a theoretical level and on a practical level, this is a reasonable development in Gutiérrez's theological reflections. On a theoretical level, this advancement in Gutiérrez's thinking is reasonable because the designation of specific deaths as instances of martyrdom presupposes that an environment in which the Church and some of its members are being repressed is viewed as the persecution of the Church. As was noted in chapter three, Cardinal Prospero Lorenzo Lambertini stressed this very point in his book, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione. According to Lambertini's guidelines for martyrdom, persecution is a basic element in every example of true martyrdom. Roman Catholics therefore should not speak of martyrdom without first identifying a situation of persecution. Gutiérrez in fact had already been writing about the persecution of the Church for nearly a decade. This evolution in Gutiérrez's thinking is also reasonable on a practical level because many other theologians, clergy, and laity, especially members of basic ecclesial communities, already customarily connected the religious terms "martyrdom" and "martyr" to the deaths of contemporary Latin American Christians. In the continent-wide community of believers in which Gutiérrez participates (and perhaps also in his local Peruvian community), these deaths were already commonly treated as if they were examples of true martyrdom. Some other prominent liberationists (for example, the historian Enrique Dussel and the theologian, Fr. Jon Sobrino) had already been commonly employing the terms for several years.<sup>5</sup> Gutiérrez was part of an intellectual community in which writers reinforced and challenged each other in regard to how they articulated their theological reflections on the theme of martyrdom.

Gutiérrez does not state the reasons for his relative tardiness in making contributions to the study of martyrdom, but several possibilities exist. He may have been cautious in the face of the perennial danger of using traditional concepts inappropriately. One way the theme of martyrdom could be used inappropriately is by assuming, prior to all critical reflection, that every death undergone in the name of the Christian faith automatically signifies martyrdom. The possibility of making such an error is traditionally recognized in the Church. Furthermore, the assumption that all people who allegedly died in the name of the Christian faith necessarily represent true examples of martyrdom contradicts the methodology employed by Gutiérrez in the theology of liberation. According to Gutiérrez, all actions—including deaths allegedly suffered on account of the faith—must be reflected on critically in light of the Word of God, accepted in

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<sup>5</sup>For example, see Enrique Dussel, Caminos de liberación latinoamericana: Interpretación histórica de nuestro continente latinoamericano (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Latinoamérica Libros, 1972), 113; Enrique Dussel, Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina: Colonaje y liberación (1492-1973), 3d ed. (Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Nova Terra, 1974), 7; Enrique Dussel, "Sobre la historia de la teología en América Latina," in Liberación y cautiverio: Debates en torno al método de la teología en América Latina (Mexico City: Encuentro Latinoamericano de Teología, 1976), 61-62; Jon Sobrino, Cristología desde América Latina. Esbozo a partir del seguimiento del Jesús histórico (Mexico City: CRT, 1976).

faith. The veracity of martyrdoms therefore should not be established prior to such critical reflections. Gutiérrez's delay in publishing his theological reflections on the theme of martyrdom may also simply correspond to his personal disposition about how and when it is appropriate to publicize his personal reflections on such a sensitive subject matter. After all, these people usually leave behind families and communities which could be endangered by specific references to these deaths in public. Therefore Gutiérrez's reticence probably reflects his sense of responsibility both to the proper use of a traditionally religious concept and to the potential dangers people associated with the victims may face. Moreover, while continent-wide events make an impression on writers like Gutiérrez, these do not enliven their theological reflections as much as the immediate encounters they have in their own local community of believers. It is likely that some writers felt compelled to publish books and articles about martyrdom before Gutiérrez because they were confronted by particularly harsh experiences in their own specific settings. The case of the Argentinian liberationist historian, Enrique Dussel, clearly illustrates this point. In a book published in 1972, he speaks of Fr. Héctor Gallego and of "hundreds, almost thousands" of other Christians who were murdered because of their commitment to the poor as examples of "martyrs...as clear in their martyrdom as those in the Roman circus."<sup>6</sup> His conviction appears to be further strengthened after the Argentine military unsuccessfully attempted to kill him in 1973 by firebombing his house. This is evidenced in a letter he sent to Orbis Books (the major publisher of books on liberation theology in the United States) in 1978, in which he insists that it is a serious issue whether the alleged martyrs of Latin America are considered to be true examples of martyrdom. Indeed, even the theology of liberation "is founded on the blood of those martyrs." He believes that the majority of the murdered Christians "are strictly martyrs in the meaning of the primitive Church....[They] have the same meaning as...the martyrs of Lyon or those who died in the persecutions by Diocletian."<sup>7</sup> Dussel is therefore not making a pronouncement on whether these martyrs should be recognized by means of papal canonization. He is simply stating that evidence is available which demonstrates that they truly died as martyrs, and their martyrdoms should therefore be clearly and publicly recognized in some way by the Church in Latin America. Thus different writers, including Gutiérrez, probably began to speak about martyrdom at different times due to the variations among each of their distinctly personal experiences within their own local communities. Furthermore, even though Gutiérrez does not speak explicitly about martyrdom in his writings before 1978, it is nevertheless likely that he sometimes

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<sup>6</sup>"...hay cientos de mártires, casi miles, y con claridad en su martirio como los del circo romano." Enrique Dussel, Caminos de liberación latinoamericana, my translation, 113.

<sup>7</sup>Christian Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology, 195. "Pienso que la mayoría de ellos son estrictamente mártires en el sentido de la Iglesia primitiva, y no puedo dejar de expresar mi opinión sobre una cuestión tan grave. Toda nuestra teología está fundada sobre la sangre de esos mártires...tienen el mismo significado que...los mártires de Lyon o los que murieron en las persecuciones de Dioclesiano." Enrique Dussel, quoted in El martirio en América Latina, my translation, 22.

implies the idea of martyrdom in his writings between 1969 and 1977. Finally, Gutiérrez seems to have held the conviction that these deaths were examples of genuine martyrdom several years before he ever decided to write articles which revealed that this was indeed his view. The considerable disappointment he expressed in 1978 when the consultation document for the Puebla Conference ignored the theme of martyrdom certainly implies that he had already reflected for some time on the theme.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Gutiérrez's Motives for Explaining What He Means by Martyrdom (writings from 1978 to 1982):

It is notable that, even though Gutiérrez clearly views the deaths of Christians on behalf of the poor as obvious examples of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America from 1978 onwards, instead of concentrating his theological reflections on the effects that martyrdom has on the identity of the Church, he also considers the issue of what distinguishes martyrdom from other deaths. Indeed, he clearly feels compelled to underscore some of the characteristics of these murders. Why does he attempt to prove that the alleged martyrs of contemporary Latin America are genuine examples of martyrdom? Several motives are discernible in the writings already examined in chapter six. First, in accordance with the methodology of the theology of liberation (theology as the critical reflection on experience in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith), Gutiérrez is responding to the widely held popular perception that many Christians killed while participating in the process of liberation, in fact, died as martyrs. This popular perception supposedly began spontaneously among people who had witnessed how the murdered Christians had manifested their faith. The existence of the popular perception nevertheless demands a critical reflection on it in light of the Word of God, accepted in faith, in order to evaluate whether a given violent death was truly an example of martyrdom. It is likely that Gutiérrez's writings are based on specific encounters with Peruvians or other Latin Americans who hold these views, especially some encounters with the surviving companions of the alleged martyrs. Some deceased Christians may even enjoy spontaneous and expanding popular reputations of martyrdom in the basic ecclesial communities where Gutiérrez does pastoral work. He has certainly met people who regard their deceased companions to be genuine martyrs. This is evidenced, for example, in his writings on the significance of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero for Christians in Latin America, when he recognizes that Romero possesses a popular reputation of martyrdom.<sup>9</sup> (It is worthwhile to recall that a spontaneous, growing, and enduring reputation of martyrdom is the absolutely crucial prerequisite for any possible causes of canonization. Whether the popular

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<sup>8</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11.

<sup>9</sup>"Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 7 (30 June 1980): 83, 104; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Poor: Present in Our History and in Our Church," in Seeds of a People's Church, 3; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 98-99.

reputations of the contemporary martyrs in Latin America will endure over time is another matter, though Gutiérrez's assertion that the assassination of Archbishop Romero is the dividing line in the history of the Church in the continent certainly suggests that he assumes Romero's reputation will grow. This assumption has been confirmed during the sixteen years subsequent to Romero's death.) Gutiérrez also demonstrates that he is aware of the theological reflections made by many other people.<sup>10</sup> He keeps abreast of many events throughout the continent, as well as the writings of other theologians, by means of the resources available at the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas, in Lima, where he works. He has likely assimilated some of these theological reflections. Gutiérrez's writings also evidence his reflections on his own personal experiences of the profoundly painful losses of friends committed to the poor. In fact, the few people whom Gutiérrez explicitly names as martyrs in his writings during the period from 1978 to 1982--Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, Bishop Enrique Angelelli, and Archbishop Oscar Romero--had all been his intimate friends. He obviously suffered a great deal on account of their murders. His writings on the theme therefore arise out of both his personal experiences and the experiences of others.

A second reason why Gutiérrez explains exactly what he means by martyrdom is also evident in the writings which were examined in chapter six. He feels that he ought to counter the argument that the murders of Christians committed to the process of liberation do not represent genuine examples of martyrdom. According to this perspective, these Christians died strictly, or at least predominantly, for political reasons, and they are therefore examples of political martyrdom. This view is evidenced by the notable absence of an official recognition of these martyrs in the Puebla Document as well as in the consultation document which preceded it;<sup>11</sup> this view is also apparently held by the Church officials who did not attend Archbishop Oscar Romero's funeral on March 30, 1980 (including most Salvadoran bishops and the authorities in CELAM).<sup>12</sup> Outside of these examples, Gutiérrez does not supply the names of specific people or groups who deny the veracity of the contemporary martyrdoms.

Third, by explaining what martyrdom is, Gutiérrez intends to verify that these deaths are meaningful and that the ways the martyrs had demonstrated their faith, both during their lives and how they

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<sup>10</sup>For example, as was seen in chapter six, he cites various reflections on the death of Fr. Pereira Neto; two articles by César Aguiar on the persecution of the Church in Latin America; articles concerning persecution and martyrdom, which were included in Signos de lucha y esperanza and Signos de vida y fidelidad; and the issue of Páginas 5, no. 29 (May 1980), which focuses on the significance of Romero's assassination for the Church.

<sup>11</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, 54-55; "Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11.

<sup>12</sup>"Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2.

died, provide models suitable for imitation. By explaining what martyrdom is, he feeds the hope expressed by Christians committed to the process of liberation that the deaths are worthwhile. By reinforcing such a system of values, Gutiérrez encourages these Christians to concern themselves, before anything else, with what the Bible says (according to a particular interpretation of it), rather than with the contrary judgments made by others. Furthermore, Gutiérrez is able to appeal to a long tradition of martyrdom in the Roman Catholic Church in order to support the idea that death on account of one's faith is indeed meaningful. His awareness of the pertinence of the long tradition of martyrdom for the specific experience of contemporary Latin America is evident in the article, "Fidelidad a la vida" (December 1982), when he ponders how the companions of the pre-Constantinian martyrs made sense of the deaths.<sup>13</sup> Despite his recognition of the novelty of every historical event, Gutiérrez believes that there are some parallels between the murder of Christians in contemporary Latin America and the violent deaths of Christians in other eras. Finally, Gutiérrez explains what he means by martyrdom in order to send out a message to the whole Roman Catholic Church (and probably also to all Christians) that these deaths should be cherished by the whole Church because, according to tradition, it is on the martyrs' blood that a Church is built which conforms more closely to the will of God.<sup>14</sup> The faith exhibited by the martyrs up to the point of death suggests that the martyrs should be used as exemplary models of how to act as Christians in the particular historical circumstances of contemporary Latin America.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. Orienting the Analysis: A Review of Cardinal Lambertini's Guidelines for True Martyrdom:

According to Gutiérrez, what are the characteristics, manifested in the alleged martyrdoms of contemporary Latin America, which support the assertion that these deaths are, in fact, examples of genuine martyrdom? A brief review of the guidelines provided by Cardinal Prospero Lorenzo Lambertini in his book, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, will orientate this analysis. Lambertini based his guidelines on a particular view of how Jesus of Nazareth confronted his own imminent execution, as well as on the deaths of the martyrs officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church up to his time.

According to Lambertini, every true martyrdom consists of four basic elements: the tyrant or persecutor, the death, the cause of or reason for the death, and the martyr. (1) The persecutor must either

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<sup>13</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fidelidad a la vida," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 21-22.

<sup>14</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," Revista de la Universidad Católica, 83; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 3; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fidelidad a la vida," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 22.

<sup>15</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 7 (30 June 1980): 83; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 3; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fidelidad a la vida," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 22.

be a person or a group of people who, acting freely and deliberately, causes the death directly or indirectly, out of hatred of the Christian faith. This persecutor must be a different person than the martyr and can either be a Christian or a non-Christian. (2) There must really be a death caused by the persecutor. The persecutor may be responsible for the death directly and immediately; indirectly and through other people; or both directly and immediately, and indirectly and through other people. In the first case, the persecutor is directly behind the action that kills the martyr. For example, the persecutor pulls the trigger of a gun or tortures a martyr to the point of death. In the second case, the persecutor is an authority who orders someone else to kill the person. In the third case, the persecutor orders tortures, which are then interrupted; thereafter the martyr dies from a blow that would not have been fatal without the previous tortures. (3) The persecutor and the martyr play roles in the cause of the martyrdom. The persecutor must be motivated either by the hatred of the Christian faith as it is espoused by the Roman Catholic Church or by the hatred of the virtues and the good works prescribed by it. This hatred of the faith is evidenced if the persecutor states the hatred publicly; if the persecutor expresses it during a dialogue with the martyr; if the persecutor or a representative of the persecutor offers the victim safety in exchange for renouncing the faith; if the victim is killed because he or she is a Christian or because he or she refuses to act in a way contrary to Christian morals. While the persecutor may also have non-religious motives for killing the person, the religious ones must be predominant. True martyrs must die willingly on account of their love of the faith. (4) The person who dies must display certain characteristics. The person must possess the Christian faith as it is expressed by the Roman Catholic Church. The victim must have consciously accepted the imminent death before dying, or it must at least be clear that the person had been habitually prepared for such a death. The latter situation is the operative case if the last moments of this person's life were not witnessed by anyone considered to be reliable. If a Christian was killed subsequent to fleeing, the person's motive must be examined in order to ensure that it was not a sign of weakness. Martyrdom should not normally be provoked because this would also make the martyr his or her own executioner. In all cases, the death must be accepted freely, willingly, patiently, courageously, and steadfastly up to the end. The person cannot die bearing weapons. The martyr must not die hating the persecutor.

Lambertini's guidelines can therefore be reformulated as a series of questions in order to direct the subsequent analysis: whom does Gutiérrez designate as martyrs?; how did they die? (this is examined in a systematic manner in chapter eight); what were their motives? (in other words, what faith did they display that distinguishes them from other people who were killed but who are not martyrs?); who are the persecutors?; what are their motives? (in other words, what lack of faith do they display that distinguishes them from everyone else?; or else: what is it about the faith of the future martyrs which motivated the persecutors to kill them?).

4. Roman Catholics, Other Christians, and Non-Christians: Which Are Eligible to be Martyrs? (writings from 1978 to 1982):

The question about whom Gutiérrez designates as martyrs in contemporary Latin America should be viewed in the wider context of the process of liberation, in which people are killed. Indeed, all the people whom Gutiérrez designates as contemporary Latin American martyrs in his writings (examined in chapter six) participated, in one way or another, in the process of liberation, and he claims that they were killed on account of their activities in relation to it. Gutiérrez never designates as martyrs any contemporary Latin American Christians who were murdered for reasons other than their commitment to the process of liberation. This does not necessarily mean that he denies the possibility of Christians being martyrs in the continent today on account of other reasons, but that he simply does not speak about these other scenarios. Indeed, the fact that he recognizes the martyrs from the pre-Constantinian Church, who often died for reasons other than their commitment to the poor, implies that he probably acknowledges the veracity of some popularly recognized martyrs who have died relatively recently for other reasons, but this issue cannot be settled satisfactorily from the evidence available in his writings. The only evidence, in this case, is the absence of evidence. For example, he has certainly never publicly questioned the papal canonization of martyrs who died for reasons other than their commitment to the poor.

While the environment in which contemporary Latin American martyrs died is the process of liberation, it is important to recognize that many people are committed to the process and make valuable contributions to it, including Roman Catholics, other Christians, and non-Christians (many of whom are Marxist atheists). As was seen in chapters five and six, Gutiérrez believes that all people contribute to the partial realization of the Kingdom of God in history by truly endeavouring to transform society in the interests of the poor so that it may be more just. Salvific activities therefore may be engaged in by Roman Catholics, by other Christians, and by non-Christians. People from all three groups are sometimes killed because they struggle persistently up to the point of death for the advancement of the poor. As early as Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta (July 1967), Gutiérrez expressed his equal respect for both Christians and non-Christians who are killed due to their commitment to the poor.<sup>16</sup> It is notable, however, that Gutiérrez nevertheless consistently reserves the term "martyrdom" for the deaths of Christians. Two questions therefore arise: first, why does he not speak of non-Christians as martyrs?; second, does he use the term "martyr" for both Roman Catholics and other Christians? Gutiérrez does not consider these questions explicitly in the writings examined in chapter six, but some evidence is available in them in order to answer the questions. First, it is important to recognize that, even though Gutiérrez never speaks of non-Christians as martyrs, and that he also does not designate as martyrdom what he considers to be the admirable sacrifice of their lives on behalf of the poor, such omissions do not mean that he intends to

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<sup>16</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta, 17.

denigrate either them or their deaths. In fact, Gutiérrez clearly believes that God will save these non-Christians if they were killed on account of actions done in the interests of people who suffer contrary to the will of God. The exclusion of non-Christians is therefore a matter of restricting the usage of religious terms to people belonging to a group which is traditionally recognized as being eligible for such designations. Otherwise the terms would assume quite different meanings than they have traditionally possessed.

The second question concerns whether Gutiérrez uses the religious term "martyr" for both Roman Catholics and other Christians, or whether he reserves it strictly for Roman Catholics. While Gutiérrez does not ponder explicitly whether the term should be applied solely to Roman Catholics in his writings up to 1982, there is nonetheless some evidence which supports a tentative answer to this question. It should be noted first of all that Gutiérrez customarily speaks of martyrs as being Christians, instead of specifying whether they are Roman Catholics. Nevertheless, the few specific examples of martyrs he cites (Fr. Henrique Periera Neto, Bishop Enrique Angelelli, and Archbishop Oscar Romero) verify that he definitely considers Roman Catholics to be eligible for genuine martyrdom. Much of the time, however, Gutiérrez speaks of martyrdom in a general manner, without providing names or details related to the deaths. He usually refers to either the widespread occurrence of martyrdom throughout the continent or, from time to time, the individual countries in which the occurrence of martyrdom is particularly commonplace. In both cases, he does not state whether the martyrs were Roman Catholics or a mixture of Roman Catholics and other Christians. While Roman Catholics are unquestionably among those whom he reckons to be martyrs, it is nevertheless likely that he sometimes also intends to include Christians of other denominations in these general references that he makes to martyrdom between 1978 and 1982. Three examples illustrate this possibility. First, in the article, "Beber en su propio pozo" (September 1982), he observes that "martyrial blood is what traditionally gives life to the ecclesial community, to the community of followers of Jesus Christ."<sup>17</sup> By referring to "the ecclesial community" and the "followers of Jesus Christ" he may not be restricting himself to Roman Catholics. A second example suggests that Gutiérrez sometimes probably intends to include Christians of other denominations, as well as Roman Catholics, in his general references to martyrdom. In his lecture at the Fifth International Conference of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT), which met August 17-29, 1981, he explicitly speaks of "the rich welter of Christian communities that have risen to bear witness to the Lord in Latin America, even to the point of

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<sup>17</sup>"Y la sangre es la que tradicionalmente da vida a la comunidad eclesial, a la comunidad de los seguidores de Jesucristo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 3.



martyrdom."<sup>18</sup> It is certainly significant that, before an ecumenical audience, he refers to martyrdom among the members of Christian *communities*. He may simply mean the Roman Catholic members of basic ecclesial communities, but it is more likely, given that he is speaking to an ecumenical audience, that he also intends to include Christians who are not Roman Catholics, at least in this case (and therefore probably also in some other cases), when he speaks in general about martyrdom. Indeed, while Gutiérrez is undeniably committed to the Roman Catholic Church and its traditions, the fact remains that he is also ecumenically-minded. He regularly interacts and collaborates with Christians who are not Roman Catholics in a manner which demonstrates that he believes they are fellow Christians. (For example, he never speaks of other Christians as "separated brethren".)<sup>19</sup> Gutiérrez's likely inclusion of Christians from other denominations in some of his general references to martyrdom, however, does not necessarily imply that he intends to call into question the long-standing institutional process of canonization by which popes have recognized certain Roman Catholics—and only Roman Catholics—as martyrs of the Church. It is important to recognize that papal canonization itself is not a mechanism for disputing whether any given popularly recognized Christian martyrs (whether they are Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, or Protestant) are true or false Christian martyrs. Instead, papal canonization is an instrument by which the Roman Catholic Church officially recognizes the validity of certain popular reputations of martyrdom which are present locally among many Roman Catholics, and then orders that these martyrs be venerated through a universal public ecclesiastical cult. Papal canonization is therefore a positive declaration in regard to which Roman Catholics truly died as Christian martyrs, in accordance with a system of evaluation recognized by the Roman Catholic Church; it is not a negative declaration about who did not die as Christian martyrs because, according to Roman Catholic tradition, only God knows who are all the genuine martyrs. The principal objectives of papal canonization are to distinguish those martyrs and nonmartyrs who provide exemplary models of how to be a Christian for the living members of the Roman Catholic Church and to declare that they have entered into heaven and are therefore eligible to receive prayers of invocation. The intended community for which papal canonization is supposed to be relevant is made up of Roman Catholics—not all other Christians, and certainly not non-Christians. Furthermore, only Roman Catholics are ever papally canonized. It would therefore be rather shocking, at least within the foreseeable future, if a pope were to recognize officially by means of canonization any specific, popularly acknowledged Christian martyrs who are not

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<sup>18</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Reflections from a Latin American Perspective: Finding Our Way to Talk about God," trans. John Drury, in *Irruption from the Third World*, 230.

<sup>19</sup>Gutiérrez regularly collaborates with many Christians who are not Roman Catholics, and he interacts with them as fellow followers of Jesus Christ. For example, he is a founding member of EATWOT, he has taught theology at religious institutes which are not Roman Catholic, his theology is profoundly influenced by some Protestant theologians, such as Jürgen Moltmann, Karl Barth, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and he corresponds with many Christians who are not Roman Catholic.

Roman Catholics (for example, Dietrich Bonhoeffer). This is strictly a matter of the Roman Catholic Church limiting the audience for which papal canonization should be pertinent to the community in which the pope possesses a certain, defined competence. It is notable, however, that the public announcements of beatifications and canonizations, especially of martyrs, sometimes make the secular press, and they are often treated as if they were controversial news.<sup>20</sup>

Gutiérrez's discussions of the poor and "anonymous" martyrs offer a third example in support of the argument that he sometimes probably intends to include Christians of other denominations in his general references to martyrdom. This is a particularly significant issue, on account of Gutiérrez's insistence that most martyrs are from this group.<sup>21</sup> The poor and anonymous martyrs are made up of martyrs who are generally viewed in the world as being just as insignificant in their deaths as they were while they lived, so their sole identity is as members of a collective group. This insignificance distinguishes them from the famous and individually recognized, "non-poor" martyrs. Whenever Gutiérrez refers to the poor and anonymous martyrs, he always emphasizes that they are Christians, but he does not clarify whether they are Roman Catholics alone. He never speaks of the poor martyrs as being non-Christians. The absence of a distinction between the poor martyrs who are Roman Catholics and the poor martyrs who are Christians

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<sup>20</sup>For example, the canonization of the forty English and Welsh martyrs on October 25, 1970 was controversial. Many people, both Roman Catholics and Anglicans, feared that their canonization would reopen old wounds. At the same time, Pope Paul VI stated that he hoped their canonization would help foster ecumenism. Many Roman Catholics and Anglicans shared the pope's view. See Dr. Ramsey, "Canonisation of the Forty Martyrs. The Archbishop of Canterbury's Memorandum," The Tablet 223 (29 November 1969): 1169; "From Our Notebook. The Message of Martyrdom," The Tablet 224 (23 May 1970): 502; Pope Paul VI, "Martyrs into Saints," *Ibid.*, 509-510; Pope Paul VI, "Consistory for Canonization of English Martyrs," L'Osservatore Romano (English edition) 3 (28 May 1970): 7; Cardinal Heenan, "Cardinal Heenan's Trinity Pastoral Letter," *Ibid.*, 510; Paul Molinari, "The Forty Martyrs of England and Wales: The History of Their Cause," The Clergy Review 55 (October 1970): 759-770; Thomas H. Clancy, "Are Martyrs Relevant?," America 123 (4 October 1970): 320; "Canonisation of the martyrs: The Arrangements in Rome," The Tablet 224 (17 October 1970): 1010-1011; Cardinal John Wright, "Some Reflections on the 'Romanità' of the Forty English Martyrs," L'Osservatore Romano (English edition) 3 (22 October 1970): 7. "The Word 'Romanità'," *Ibid.*, 7, 9; "Men for All Seasons," The Tablet 224 (24 October 1970): 1017-1018; Paolo Molinari, "Canonization of 40 English and Welsh Martyrs," L'Osservatore Romano (English edition) 3 (29 October 1970): 6-8; Bishop of Willesden, "An Anglican View of the Forty Martyrs. Why I Rejoice at the Canonization," *Ibid.*, 8; "Statement from the Archbishop of Canterbury, York and Wales," *Ibid.*, 8; Pope Paul VI, "Forty Martyrs and Christian Unity," *Ibid.*, 12; Peter Hebblethwaite, "St. Peter's: A Day to Remember," The Tablet 224 (31 October 1970): 1047-1048; Cardinal Heenan, "The Canonisation: Cardinal Heenan's Address," *Ibid.*, 1061; R.W. Southern, "A Meeting of the Ways in Oxford," *Ibid.*, 1062-1063; Pope Paul VI, "The Church in a Changing World," L'Osservatore Romano (English edition) 3 (5 November 1970): 1; Pope Paul VI, "Paul VI's Homily at Canonization of the Forty Martyrs," *Ibid.*, 6-8; Peter Hebblethwaite, "Forty More Saints," America 123 (14 November 1970): 399-400. Some other beatifications and canonizations of martyrs that have been controversial are those of Edith Stein, Maximilian Kolbe, and Miguel Pro.

<sup>21</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvii-xxviii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7.

other than Roman Catholics is consistent with the fact that, general speaking, Gutiérrez does not differentiate among the individuals who make up the poor masses in regard to whether they are Roman Catholics or other Christians. Indeed, without intending to denigrate the individuality of each poor person, Gutiérrez nevertheless customarily refers to the poor as a collective people which together constitute an oppressed and believing people. In the articles which were analyzed in chapter six, he elaborates what he means by the expression, a "believing people", by stating that, in fact, they are a Christian people. He makes this point in an exceptionally clear manner in the defense of his doctoral dissertation on May 29, 1985, so this particular explanation is worth examining. During the defense, Gutiérrez claims that his "contact with [his] people makes [him] see that it is a people simultaneously Christian and oppressed." He clarifies that he "does not mean that all [the poor] are very good Christians--although there are some of them also--but that they are religious and identify themselves as Christians." They are an oppressed people because they are denied the most basic human rights. How they demonstrate their Christian faith is marked by their experience of exploitation and oppression. At the same time, how they make sense of their experience as an oppressed people is conditioned by their faith. Gutiérrez insists that the two elements of the identity of the poor masses are always present among them, and they mutually affect each other.<sup>22</sup> Does Gutiérrez consider every single poor person in Latin America to be a Christian? While he does not answer this question explicitly, his regular contact with many people living throughout Latin America implies that he is clearly cognizant that not all poor people in the continent today identify themselves as Christians. This does not mean that they necessarily act contrary to the will of the biblical God. In fact, as was seen in chapters five and six, Gutiérrez believes that non-Christians, who clearly include those poor people who explicitly worship gods other than the biblical God, are eligible for salvation insofar as their actions create communion among people. (Some people who identify themselves as Christians may even worship other gods in addition to the biblical God.) As in the case of the non-Christians who are not poor, the willingness of the poor non-Christians to die on account of their commitment to the process of liberation is admirable, and these deaths contribute to the partial realization of the Kingdom of God in history, but they nevertheless do not qualify as examples of Christian martyrdom. It is therefore the poor, as a collective people, and not every single poor person, whom Gutiérrez considers to be Christian, and it is the specifically Christian members of this collectively Christian people who are eligible to be designated as members of the poor and anonymous group of martyrs. Furthermore, Gutiérrez's statement that not every single poor person is necessarily a good Christian is significant. This should not be viewed as an assertion that the condition of certain poor individuals as "bad Christians" automatically disqualifies them from being Christians. Their

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<sup>22</sup> "...el contacto con mi pueblo me hace ver que es un pueblo simultáneamente cristiano y oprimido. No quiero decir que todos sean muy buenos cristianos--aunque los hay también--sino que son religiosos y que se reconocen cristianos." "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez" ["Lyon: Debate on the Thesis of Gustavo Gutiérrez"], Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 10. See also *Ibid.*, 5, 11.

Christianity is part of their identity. How do the "bad Christians" among the poor differ from the "bad Christians" among the powerful members of society, who identify themselves as Christians, even as the defenders of a Western and Christian society? The major distinction between them seems to be that the powerful sometimes use their Christianity to serve their own selfish ends and, in doing so, they destroy life, especially the lives of the poorest and weakest members of society. They sometimes order the murder of Christians committed to the poor in order to preserve their personal or family privileges. The Christian identity of the poor, however, is often manifested in their attempts to survive, that is, in their endeavours to create life, not death. They try to survive in situations characterized by institutionalized violence, terroristic violence, and repressive violence. Of course, Gutiérrez is aware that some of the "bad Christians" among the poor also use their Christianity for destructive and life-denying ends, in ways contrary to the will of God. Nevertheless, his reminder that all people, including the oppressors, should be loved unconditionally and not hated underscores his belief that Christians should always forgive everyone for their actions that destroy communion among people.<sup>23</sup> They should always hope for conversions, whether these are the conversions of "bad Christians" who are powerful or the conversions of "bad Christians" who are members of the poor masses.<sup>24</sup> The argument that Gutiérrez probably includes both Roman Catholics and other Christians among the poor and anonymous martyrs, and thus also in some of his general references to martyrdom, is therefore clearly supported by his identification of the poor as an oppressed and Christian people--a people made up of many "good Christians", who may either be Roman Catholics or other Christians, as well as "bad Christians"--and by his consistent references to the poor and anonymous martyrs as being Christians rather than Roman Catholics alone. In a subsequent section of this chapter, the analysis is further developed in regard to how Gutiérrez employs the expression, "the poor and anonymous martyrs," in his writings between 1983 and 1995.

It may be concluded, then, that Gutiérrez uses the religious terms "martyrdom" and "martyr" unhesitatingly in his writings up to 1982 for Roman Catholics killed on account of their commitment to the poor (insofar as this is a true expression of faith). This deduction is supported by the fact that every martyr he specifically names is Roman Catholic. He sometimes probably also includes other Christians in his general references to martyrdom, including in his references to the poor and anonymous martyrs. He never uses the terms for non-Christians. This appears to hold true even in the case of the non-Christian members of the poor masses who die on behalf of their fellow members of the poor social class.

The word "Christian" rather than "Roman Catholic" is henceforth used throughout this chapter of the present study whenever this corresponds most accurately to how Gutiérrez refers to the given examples

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<sup>23</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 344.

<sup>24</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 254.

of martyrdom. This usage is nevertheless employed in full recognition that, by the expressions "martyr" and "Christians who are martyrs," Gutiérrez often specifically means martyrs who are Roman Catholics, yet he probably also implies other Christians in some of his general references to martyrdom. In fact, there is one exceptional case when Gutiérrez explicitly includes Christians who are not Roman Catholics in a general reference to martyrdom in his writings between 1983 and 1995. This example will be noted as the development of Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom during this period is examined.

5. Martyrs Are Christians Killed by Idolatrous Persecutors for Demonstrating Their Faith in the Biblical God of Life (writings from 1983 to 1995):

In his writings between 1983 and 1995, Gutiérrez concerns himself explicitly with the motive of the martyrs, that is, the specific faith they demonstrate--the faith which provokes a hostile reaction from the persecutors. In accordance with Cardinal Lambertini's guidelines for true martyrdom, the martyrs' motive is their faith, whereas the persecutors' motive is their hatred of this faith. Therefore it is important to ascertain what characterizes the martyrs' faith (or the virtues and the good works that correspond to it), according to Gutiérrez, because this motivates both the martyrs' willingness to die and the persecutors' desire to kill. Gutiérrez only designates as martyrs those people who possess the faith which, according to his interpretation, truly corresponds to the Christian faith. In the case of Roman Catholics, Gutiérrez does not believe that all baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics demonstrate the Christian faith which he contends all true martyrs possessed. Some Roman Catholics (like the martyrs) show themselves to be believers and will be saved by God, whereas others demonstrate that they are idolaters and will not be saved. (In the case of non-Christians, regardless of whether they are aware of it, some act in accordance with the will of God and will be saved, whereas others are idolaters because they act contrary to the will of God.)

Gutiérrez develops his theological reflections on the distinction between the biblical God and idols, and on the difference between believers and idolaters, in his lecture, Salvación y pobreza: Consecuencias eclesiológicas (February 7-18, 1983), which he presented at a congress organized by the Department of Theology of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.<sup>25</sup> According to Gutiérrez, people are Christians only if they have faith in the biblical God. An idol is anything other than the biblical God that people

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<sup>25</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza: Consecuencias eclesiológicas [Salvation and Poverty: Ecclesiological Consequences] (Lima, Peru: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Departamento de Teología, 1983). For a study of the images of God in Gutiérrez's writings, see Léandre Boisvert, "Les images de Dieu dans l'oeuvre de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Église et Théologie 19 (1988): 307-321.

worship as if it were God.<sup>26</sup> Some examples of idols are money, power, and social prestige. In a subsequent book, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job (January 1986), Gutiérrez notes that even the biblical God can be turned into an idol if believers act as if God were their personal servant.<sup>27</sup> Regardless of whether people call themselves Christians, they are idolaters rather than Christians if their god is an idol rather than the biblical God. Gutiérrez designates the biblical God as a "God of life" who wills, more than anything else, that all life may flourish. He does not will either the appallingly common human suffering related to widespread poverty or the premature death (i.e., "*morir antes de tiempo*") caused by hunger and repression, which characterize most of contemporary Latin America. In the Bible, the messianic prophets and, thereafter, Jesus Christ reveal God's promise that all suffering will end one day. Gutiérrez believes that the cessation of all suffering will occur with the complete realization of the Kingdom of God when Jesus Christ returns at the end of history. The Kingdom of God is characterized by love, life, peace, justice, freedom, compassion, forgiveness, and friendship. According to Gutiérrez, the biblical God cannot be isolated from his kingdom. Any attempt to separate God from this kingdom demonstrates that it is an idol, not the biblical God, in which one has faith. What people say they believe is significant, but their faith is verified only through their actions. Gutiérrez therefore emphasizes the need for "right words" (i.e., "orthodoxy") and "right actions" (i.e., "orthopraxis") to be consistent with each other. The utterance of supposedly right words alone does not prove that the people who identify themselves as Christians truly believe in the biblical God. In the end, God saves those people who fulfill God's will, regardless of whether they are aware that the biblical God exists and makes such demands. Right actions alone demonstrate that one has a right belief. Orthodoxy is therefore verified by orthopraxis.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Idolatry is a principal theme in Gutiérrez's many studies of Bartolomé de Las Casas. In one of the longer studies, Gutiérrez defines idolatry as either "placing one's trust in something or someone who is not God or simultaneously affirming God...[while] searching for other reasons to be secure." "La idolatría consiste en poner su confianza en algo en alguien que no es Dios, o jugar con la ambigüedad de afirmar a Dios pero buscar al mismo tiempo otras razones de seguridad." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Dios o el oro en las Indias: Siglo XVI [God or Gold in the Indies: Sixteenth Century], my translation, CEP, 95 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1989), 157.

<sup>27</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job [Talking about God from the Suffering of the Innocent: A Reflection on the Book of Job], CEP, 75 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1986), 57.

<sup>28</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, 12-14. Gutiérrez notes the risk of turning justice, the poor themselves, or even the theology of liberation into idols. This danger confronts the Christians who are committed to the process of liberation. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Juan de la Cruz desde América Latina" ["John of the Cross Starting from Latin America"], Páginas 17, no. 116 (July 1992): 31-33. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Reino está cerca" ["The Kingdom is Near"], Páginas 8, no. 52 (May 1983): 39; "Itinéraire d'un théologien de la libération: Interview du P. Gustavo Gutiérrez (1)" ["Itinerary of a Theologian of Liberation: Interview with Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez (1)"], an interview, La Documentation Catholique 81 (7 October 1984): 908 [This interview originally appeared in Italian in Il Regno Attualità (15 April 1984).];

Gutiérrez believes that idolaters, rather than atheists, are the opposite of believers. They are concerned inordinately with their own narrow interests, and they ignore the interests of the majority of humanity. They are motivated by their greed, rather than by the love of all other people, so their actions lead to the rupture of communion among people instead of the construction of communion among all people. As was seen in "La fuerza histórica de los pobres" (July 1978) and "El Dios de la vida" (September 1981), instead of supporting life, an idolatrous, false faith always eliminates life.<sup>29</sup> Every idol demands human victims; it "demands the spilling of human blood" in its name. The reality that someone worships an idol, instead of God, is particularly conspicuous when the people killed in order to secure greater personal wealth and power are the members of the poor masses. Killing the poor is always completely contrary to the will of the biblical God who prefers them. Therefore "to kill the poor is to reject the God of life."<sup>30</sup>

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Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 4; "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres [Evangelization and Option for the Poor], Colección Experiencias Cristianas (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Ediciones Paulinas, 1987), 45-48; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La verdad los hará libres," in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones [The Truth Shall Make You Free: Confrontations], CEP, 77 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1986), 140-147, 223-228; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Dios o el oro en las Indias, 20-21, 107-177; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida [The God of Life], CEP, 100 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1989), 45-51, 109-136, 244-246; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "How Can God be Discussed from the Perspective of Ayacucho?," John Angus Macdonald, Concilium (no. 1, February 1990):106-107; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Foreword. The Indian: Person and Poor. The Theological Perspective of Bartolomé de Las Casa," in Witness: Writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas, ed. and trans. George Sanderlin (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1992), xvii-xviii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology from the Experience of the Poor," in The Catholic Theological Society of America. Proceedings of the Forty-Seventh Annual Convention. Pittsburgh June 11-14, 1992, vol. 47, ed. Paul Crowley (Santa Clara, Calif.: Santa Clara University and Catholic Theological Society of America, 1992), 26-33; Gustavo Gutiérrez, En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo: El pensamiento de Bartolomé de Las Casas [In Search of the Poor of Jesus Christ: The Thought of Bartolomé de Las Casas], CEP, 124 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1992), 248-253, 497-630; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Bartolomé de Las Casas: Defender of the Indians," Pacifica 5 (October 1992): 271-272; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico [Sharing the Word: Throughout the Liturgical Year], CEP, 153 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1995), 88-89, 216, 221, 280-281, 322-323, 342-343.

<sup>29</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvi-xxvii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Dios de la vida," Páginas 6, no. 40 (September 1981): 13-19.

<sup>30</sup>Y como todo ídolo ella exige el derramamiento de sangre humana.... Matar al pobre es rechazar al Dios de la vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, my translation, 13. A major theme of Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente is the concern about whether one's faith is disinterested or, instead, based upon a merit system, that is, rewards and punishments from God. Self-centeredness is manifested in idolatry rather than in a true faith in God. The only true religion is one characterized by a disinterested faith and disinterested actions. "In a self-interested religion there is not a true encounter with God; there is really the construction of an idol." "En una religión interesada no se da un verdadero encuentro con Dios, hay más

Christians who truly believe in the biblical God believe in a God of life, a God who promises the triumph of salvation over all suffering and death, including the widespread poverty experienced by most Latin Americans. Really having this faith means trying to reduce the effects of poverty, endeavouring to uproot its causes, and engaging in some activities that nurture life in the people who suffer and that inspire them to hope in the full realization of the Kingdom of God. Gutiérrez identifies some activities that give life and hope to others, especially to the poor: "giving bread to whoever is starving, forgiving one's brother, helping organize a people which is struggling for its rights, preaching the Gospel, looking after the health of the dispossessed, celebrating the Eucharist, praying, [and] *delivering one's own life*."<sup>31</sup> These are the ways that many Christians demonstrate their faith in the biblical God who wills life and love. They all affirm the value of life by serving the physical and spiritual needs of human beings. Gutiérrez cautions against treating the listed activities as if they were interchangeable, or as if a given Christian could simply choose to do one of them while neglecting all the others. At the same time, he does not urge every Christian to do all the activities. Instead, Gutiérrez emphasizes that each of these activities necessarily demands a distinct responsibility on the part of the Christians who undertake it, and that through each of them people contribute to the partial manifestation of the Kingdom of God in history. Activities such as giving bread to whoever is starving and helping organize a people which is struggling for its rights, however, infuriates some powerful members of society because they perceive these activities as threats to their traditional privileges. They sometimes decide to punish these Christians because of their hatred of the ways how they demonstrate their faith in the God of life. Sometimes they even murder these Christians themselves or they order other people to kill them on their behalf. In doing so, they reveal themselves to be idolatrous

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bien construcción de un ídolo." Ibid., my translation, 39. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo: En el Itinerario espiritual de un pueblo [Drinking from One's Own Well: On the Spiritual Path of the Path], 2d rev. and expanded ed., CEP, 54 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1983), 91-96; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Si fuésemos indios" ["If We Were Indians"], Socialismo y Participación no. 40 (December 1987): 21-23; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Quién es el indio? La perspectiva de Bartolomé de Las Casas" ["Who is the Indian? The Perspective of Bartolomé de Las Casas"], Páginas 12, no. 88 (December 1987): 4-5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Cómo hablar de Dios desde Ayacucho?" ["How does One Talk about God from Ayacucho?"], Revista Latinoamericana de Teología 15 (September-October 1988): 235-236; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Dios o el oro en las Indias, 161; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 117-121.

<sup>31</sup>"Por ello ese testimonio implica dar vida y todo lo que ella implica: dar pan al hambriento, perdonar al hermano, ayudar a la organización de un pueblo que lucha por sus derechos, predicar el Evangelio, atender a la salud de los desposeídos, celebrar la Eucaristía, orar, *entregar su propia vida*." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, my translation, 14. The italics have been added. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana" ["Vatican II and the Latin American Church"], Páginas no. 70 (August 1985): 12; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 40.



persecutors.<sup>32</sup> Martyrs are therefore Christians who are murdered by idolatrous persecutors because they have demonstrated their faith in the biblical God of life by engaging in activities that bring life to other people, especially to the poor masses whose suffering is contrary to the will of God.

6. Martyrs in the General Sense of the Term Distinguished from Papally Canonized Martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church (writings from 1983 to 1995):

In a two-part interview Gutiérrez gave to the weekly Peruvian magazine, Noticias Aliadas, and its English version, Latinamerica Press (May 19 and May 26, 1983), Gutiérrez explicates what he means by the word "martyr", as well as whom he considers to be martyrs in contemporary Latin America.<sup>33</sup> He starts his explication with a precautionary statement aimed at ensuring that nobody misunderstand his intentions. He feels compelled to state unambiguously that, when he utilizes the word "martyr", he does not pretend to be declaring anyone an official martyr of the Roman Catholic Church. This function is outside his competence.<sup>34</sup> In doing so, he demonstrates, first, that he is certainly aware of the difference between the popularly recognized martyrs and the papally canonized--and thereby authenticated--martyrs and, second, that he approves of this distinction. Gutiérrez does not state his reasons for drawing this distinction explicitly, but the fact that he does it suggests that some Roman Catholics have charged him, other liberation theologians, or some Christians active in basic ecclesial communities, which often commemorate the anniversaries of these deaths, of attempting either to usurp or to circumvent the ecclesiastical power of canonization, which is only reserved to the pope. This precaution is also understandable given the frequency with which he, Jon Sobrino, Enrique Dussel, and other liberationists have written books and articles pointing to the prevalence of the persecution of the Church and the martyrdom of its members in contemporary Latin America. It is worthwhile to recall, however, that the persecution of the Church was already officially recognized by the majority of the bishops who gathered at the Puebla Conference when they included some

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<sup>32</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, 14-15. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 45.

<sup>33</sup>"Entrevista al teólogo Gustavo Gutiérrez, (Parte I): Teología: sistematizar la experiencia del pueblo," Noticias Aliadas 15 (no. 18, 19 May 1983): 5-6, 8; "Gutiérrez Reflects on Fifteen Years of Liberation Theology. LP Interview, Part I," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 18, 19 May 1983): 5-6, 8; "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'. LP Interview, Part II," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5-6, 8 [This was published in Noticias Aliadas 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5-6, 8.].

<sup>34</sup>"I'm not using the word martyr here in the strictest sense (I don't have the authority to bestow the church title of martyr)...." "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5. Gutiérrez thereafter repeats this same point: see Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174.

references to it in the final document.<sup>35</sup> While persecution is the environment in which martyrdom occurs, the bishops at Puebla did not mention, even in a general manner, whether any Christians had died as martyrs. Gutiérrez is probably also aware that the Roman Catholic Church disapproves of zealous public celebrations of any popularly proclaimed martyrdom, especially when the participants are led by members of the clergy, and that the Church forbids unauthorized public ecclesiastical cults outright. While a popular reputation of martyrdom is the required basis of any cause of canonization, it must be spontaneous, and it must grow and endure over time. The Church is thus always apprehensive about the possibility that the media may create popular hysteria by disseminating sensationalistic depictions of alleged martyrdoms that misconstrue the bare facts related to such deaths. Gutiérrez, however, does not expressly concern himself with such issues outside his competence, and he does not speculate on whether any future causes of canonization may arise from the experiences of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America.

In contrast with the theologico-canonical sense of "martyr"—the concept of martyrdom manifested in the process of canonization—Gutiérrez states very clearly that he uses the word "martyr" in "the general sense of the term". He believes that many Latin American Christians are martyrs "in the general sense of the term" because they have died "bearing witness to their ideas...for their faith in Christ."<sup>36</sup> If martyrs are people who are killed on account of their faith in Jesus Christ, it is worth examining what such a faith means to Gutiérrez. Having faith in Jesus Christ signifies that these alleged martyrs knew who Jesus Christ was and what his death and resurrection signify for Christians, that they believed God's promise of the full arrival of the Kingdom of God, and that they manifested in their actions the love that they had for all of humanity, especially for the poor. Having faith in Jesus Christ, however, does not necessarily mean that the martyrs have benefitted from extensive theological training. In fact, Gutiérrez undercuts sharply the allusion made by his interviewer that many alleged martyrs may not have possessed a true faith in Jesus Christ because they were likely ignorant concerning theological matters: for Gutiérrez, "they are Christian martyrs" precisely because they "die bearing witness...for their faith, not for a theology."<sup>37</sup> He contends that the question of whether they were learned in theology, including the theology of liberation, is not particularly relevant. Indeed, while acknowledging that theology has its own specific function in the Church, Gutiérrez

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<sup>35</sup>As was seen in chapter six, Gutiérrez has suggested that three of the references made to the persecution of the Church are possibly allusions to martyrdom. Final Document of the Third General Conference of the Latin American Episcopate no. 92, no. 160, no. 1138, in Puebla and Beyond, ed. John Eagleson and Philip Scharper, trans. John Drury, 135, 142, 264; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, 55.

<sup>36</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

<sup>37</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

claims that he has "been insisting since the outset" of his theological work, and he is "still convinced" of it, that theology "is a secondary activity, and that what counts much more is what happens on the primary level, in the life of people."<sup>38</sup> What is most important is that people demonstrate their faith by their actions. Martyrs are therefore people who "recognize the name of Christ, and die with his name on their lips."<sup>39</sup> Gutiérrez thereby reasserts the primacy of the gospel, as well as the gospel demands concerning the behaviour which corresponds to the will of God, over all specific theological perspectives and whichever behaviour they demand. In accordance with Gutiérrez's stated point of view, it may be inferred that he believes Christians are not necessarily martyrs if they are well-schooled in theological issues and then die on account of unwaveringly upholding a certain theological perspective. Adhering to a theological perspective up to the point of death could display one's ignorance concerning the proper limitations of each theological school or it could simply evidence the misguided arrogance of the person. Such a stance would reveal the error of confusing what is transitory (a particular theological viewpoint) with what is permanent (the gospel itself). Traditionally recognized theological interpretations of the gospel should always be considered, but the interpretation of the gospel itself should never be limited to, and thereby domesticated by, any specific theological school, including the theology of liberation. The gospel should be seen as remaining open to the fresh insights which are engendered by new questions posed by different people living in new historical circumstances. The deduction that Gutiérrez considers it risky to consider oneself right in defending a certain theological perspective up to the point of death rather than the gospel itself is supported by Gutiérrez's claim that Oscar Romero is a genuine martyr, "not because he defended the right of the church, but because he defended the rights of the poor."<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, not everyone concurs with

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<sup>38</sup>"Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5. See also "Gustavo Gutiérrez (Entrevista, Parte D) 'Alegría del pobre inquieta al poderoso'" ["Gustavo Gutiérrez (Interview, Part One) 'Joy of the Poor Disturbs the Powerful'"], interview with Mario Campos, Noticias Aliadas 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 4; "Gutiérrez Looks Toward 'A Theology from the Poor Themselves'," an interview, Latinamerica Press 17 (21 February 1985): 4. Christians should therefore believe in God, not a certain theology. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 86. Gutiérrez makes the same point about the relative value of every theology, including the theology of liberation, in relation to the gospel: "...in my parish in Rimac, I never mention liberation theology in my homilies. I was not taught in seminary to teach liberation theology but to preach the gospel. Many poor people have experienced liberation theology, but my interest is not that they know the term itself....Our interest is the content, the ideas, the goals of this theology, not the expression *liberation theology*." Quite clearly, he holds the same opinion of all other theologies. They contribute to the understanding of the gospel, but they are not the gospel. "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Opting for the Poor," an interview, The Other Side 23 (no. 9, November 1987): 11.

<sup>39</sup>"Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

<sup>40</sup>"Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2.

the view that these deaths are truly examples of martyrdom. Gutiérrez acknowledges this: "many people want to deny that those believers were martyred." For Gutiérrez, the motives of these naysayers are transparent. They dispute the widely held view that these contemporary Latin American are truly martyrs "because they refuse to accept what the martyrs stood for."<sup>41</sup> He does not identify any specific people or groups who dispute the veracity of the martyrdoms. At this point, he also does not clarify exactly what he thinks the "martyrs stood for," beyond a faith in Jesus Christ, confidence in God's promise of the Kingdom of God, and actions that are consistent with their faith. Gutiérrez then reinforces his earlier comment that the assassination of Romero divides the history of the Church in Latin America into a "before" and an "after". According to Gutiérrez, even though many people have contested the claims that the members of the Church are dying as martyrs throughout the continent, most people either willingly recognize or else concede that the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero is an example of genuine martyrdom. Gutiérrez believes that the critics (perhaps these include the majority of the bishops who met at the Puebla Conference and their theological advisors) now "had to accept him [i.e., Romero] as a martyr."<sup>42</sup> Because Romero's individual witness to the faith should not be viewed in isolation from the many more witnesses given to the faith by other alleged martyrs (including the poor and anonymous martyrs), the recognition of Romero's martyrdom should also signify the acknowledgement that many other Christians have also died as martyrs in contemporary Latin America.

Gutiérrez briefly considers the consequence of martyrdom for the martyrs themselves in his book, Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983). In this matter, Gutiérrez is traditional. He believes that the people who "lose their lives for the Lord and the good news" will not remain dead. Instead, they "will save" their lives by gaining "the definitive life," which is promised by the

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<sup>41</sup>"Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

<sup>42</sup>"Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5. At the same time as some Christians dispute the veracity of the Latin American martyrs, others expressly recognize it. For example, the Jesuit, Fr. Bernard Sesboué, who was the dean of the Theology Faculty at the Centre-Sèvres in Paris, tells Gutiérrez at the defense of his dissertation on May 29, 1985, that he humbly respects these martyrs. While he speaks of the martyrs in the plural, the one martyr he names is Archbishop Oscar Romero. He asserts that the assassination of Romero evokes his memory of Fr. Yves de Montcheuil, a famous French theologian who was executed on the firing range in Grenoble on August 10, 1944. He does not develop this comparison. He also observes that some people might hold the conviction that such martyrial deaths render the academic exercise of defending a dissertation relatively insignificant. He states that he does not share this view because the present occasion is an opportunity to nurture a dialogue between European theology and the Latin American theology of liberation. "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 14-15.

resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>43</sup> This means that, whoever dies in imitation of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, will likewise be saved in imitation of his resurrection. Gutiérrez thereby affirms the traditional Roman Catholic belief that God saves the true martyrs, but he does not speculate on whether they will enter heaven immediately where they would be able to receive prayers of invocation.

Gutiérrez speaks briefly about the experience of martyrdom in his address for the Dudleian Lecture series at Harvard University in 1984, before an ecumenical audience. He states that Latin America is presently experiencing "a time of *martyrdom*, true martyrdom. Many workers, peasants, lay persons, nuns, *ministers*, priests, even bishops, have been killed in these last times. It is true, many."<sup>44</sup> In this general reference to the widespread occurrence of martyrdom, he clearly includes many Christians other than Roman Catholics--most notably, the ministers--among the true martyrs. This is the first occasion on which he explicitly designates people who are not Roman Catholics as Christian martyrs, but he does not cite any specific examples. Before this time, his comments were always ambiguous on this point. For Gutiérrez, they are all truly martyrs because they died defending the right of all people to live, especially the poor masses, whose right to live is systematically taken away from them. Of course, he is not making declarations about who are the official martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, he is asserting that all of these Christians are martyrs "in the general sense of the term," even though he does not employ this expression in the lecture. He also suggests that some of the famous people who have been murdered might have even been known to the members of the audience, though he does not supply any examples to illustrate the point. (In Beber en su propio pozo [October 1983], Gutiérrez states that the article written by the recently retired Anglican bishop, Desmond Tutu, for an issue of Concilium is a valuable contribution to the theological study of the theme of martyrdom. Gutiérrez thereby demonstrates that he takes seriously the viewpoints of Christians who are not Roman Catholic concerning the concept of martyrdom.)<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, Gutiérrez emphasizes that, in addition to these well-known martyrs, "there are also many, many little people killed in these last years."<sup>46</sup> These "many, many little people" are the members of the masses who have been murdered on account of their commitment to the liberation of their fellow poor people and out of their love

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<sup>43</sup>"De esta manera, al perder su vida por el Señor y la buena nueva, la salvarán. La condición planteada al seguimiento del discípulo se coloca en el horizonte de la Resurrección, de la vida definitiva." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 82.

<sup>44</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 5. The italics have been added for "ministers", but not for "martyrdom".

<sup>45</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174; Desmond Tutu, "Persecution of Christians Under Apartheid," Concilium no. 163 (March 1983): 63-69.

<sup>46</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 5.

for all of them. They are the Christians whom Gutiérrez has designated as the poor and anonymous martyrs in other writings. He tells his audience that all of these deaths have been "very painful; but at the same time," they are "the source of a great joy, paschal joy, joy which is a going through death. We are experiencing this in Latin America."<sup>47</sup> The fact that Gutiérrez has grieved these deaths clearly demonstrates that he never hoped for any of them to transpire. Gutiérrez's discussion of whether Christians should ever seek or even provoke their own martyrdom is the subject matter of a subsequent sub-section.

At a seminar for Argentine laity, which met in Quilmes, Argentina, between March 2-9, 1986, Gutiérrez asserts that many Latin American Christians have been murdered, first, because they gave witness to the existence of widespread poverty in the continent, second, because they pointed to and denounced the premature deaths which regularly arise from such a situation of poverty, and, third, because they proclaimed that all people have a right to live. Thus "to give life" by rejecting the premature deaths of the poor majorities and by announcing their right to life "is paradoxically what makes [Christians] encounter death"; it is the "path towards death for so many Latin American martyrs."<sup>48</sup> When Gutiérrez elaborates that these Christians "are witnesses (that is the meaning of the word martyr)," this is another way of stating that he is employing the word "martyr" in the "general sense of the term," rather than making official pronouncements about who are the martyrs of the Church. Gutiérrez also emphasizes that "the Christian community sometimes does not want to accept" the many deaths as true examples of martyrdom, but that "the murder of Mons. Romero helps [Christians] understand the other witnesses in the continent."<sup>49</sup> He does not clarify, however, whether the Christians who dispute the veracity of these martyrdoms are Roman Catholics or Christians of various denominations (he does not supply any names), but once again he contends that, for many people, the assassination of Romero is the key event which helps them comprehend what is happening throughout the continent.

In "Mirar lejos" (February 1988), Gutiérrez speaks of the murder of Romero as an example of martyrdom in the "broad sense of the term." This expression is synonymous with martyrdom in the "general sense of the term." He clarifies his point by explaining that a particular death is an example of martyrdom

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<sup>47</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 5.

<sup>48</sup>"Paradójicamente, dar vida es lo que le hace encontrar la muerte....es el camino hacia la muerte para tantos mártires latinoamericanos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, my translation, 40. For a report on this conference, see Patricia Yung, Alturo Heil, and Eugenio Mohr, "Seminario 'Evangelización y Opción por los Pobres'," Servicio de Informaciones Religiosas 8, no. 79 (April 1986): 15-16.

<sup>49</sup>"Son testigos (es el significado de la palabra mártir) que la comunidad cristiana a veces no quiere aceptar. En este sentido el asesinato de monseñor Romero ayuda a comprender otros testimonios en el continente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, my translation, 40.

"in the broad sense of the term" if it "is the final work" in life done by a Christian on behalf of others and out of an unconditional love for them. In the particular case of Romero, martyrdom was a "concrete gesture towards the poor," and thus it was also a "gratuitous encounter with the Lord," because God is always met through loving encounters with the poor (Matthew 25:31-46).<sup>50</sup> According to Gutiérrez, as important as Romero may be, he is simply the most widely celebrated martyr of the many martyrs of contemporary Latin America, who together are all "witnesses...of the faith in the Resurrection of the Lord." As in "La violencia de un sistema" (December 1980), he also contends that these martyrs "prove that those who sow death will go away with empty hands and that only those who defend life have hands full of history." This means that God will not save those people who consider themselves to be Christians, but whose actions are inconsistent with and even contradict this self-identification.<sup>51</sup>

7. The Obligation of Christians to Affirm Life: Martyrdom Is Encountered, not Sought (writings from 1983 to 1995):

Gutiérrez approves of the respect and admiration which Christians have for their martyrs, but he cautions them against forgetting the barbarity of the murders themselves and the scandalous social situation which allows them to occur. As believers in God, Christians should do whatever they can to ensure that the lives of all people may flourish. This imperative is particularly applicable if they live in a social setting, like Latin America, which denies the right to life for most people. Christians should be scandalized by the premature death commonly inflicted by the widespread poverty that characterizes the continent. Similarly, they should never hope for the terroristic violence (e.g., Sendero Luminoso in Peru) and the repressive violence employed to murder Christians committed to the poor. Poverty and murder should not be desired because these contravene the will of God. Thus martyrdom should not be idealized because "Christians...cannot...desire that there be executioners." Indeed, for Gutiérrez, "martyrdom is something

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<sup>50</sup>"El martirio--en el sentido amplio del término--es la última obra de vida; en este caso [i.e., Romero], gesto concreto hacia el pobre y en él encuentro gratuito con el Señor." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," my translation, Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 94.

<sup>51</sup>"Ante el testimonio martirial, todos los juegos de poder, las acusaciones, los recelos aparecen en toda su mezquinidad y evidencian su alejamiento del Evangelio. Esos testigos--y son muchos hoy en América Latina--de la fe en la Resurrección del Señor prueban que los que siembran la muerte se irán con las manos vacías y que sólo los que defienden la vida tienen las manos llenas de historia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," my translation, Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 95. For the identical passage, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Evangelio de la liberación" ["The Gospel of Liberation"], in Signos de nueva evangelización: Testimonios de la Iglesia en América Latina 1983-1987, CEP, 92 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1988), xxiii. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 99.

which is encountered but it is not sought."<sup>52</sup> This conviction also rules out provoked martyrdom. In fact, in "El Señor Amigo de la vida" (October-November, 1986), Gutiérrez contends that the Roman Catholic Church has traditionally upheld the viewpoint that "it is not Christian to want to be a martyr." The Christian should "accept martyrdom, but to want to be a martyr is to accept that there are executioners." To seek the murder of oneself means to be complicit with the murder; to desire the murder of others is to approve of a social system which permits the common occurrence of murder. From the standpoint of a Christian, such views are unacceptable; murder "cannot be desired."<sup>53</sup> Gutiérrez, however, does not acknowledge the reality that, in fact, two traditions have existed in tension with each other in the Roman Catholic Church in regard to whether believers are permitted, and perhaps even compelled, to seek and sometimes even to provoke their own martyrdom. On the one hand, the Church traditionally recognizes and permits certain manifestations of sought and provoked martyrdom. For example, in the pre-Constantinian Church, Ignatius of Antioch clearly desired his martyrdom; Agathonice and Euplus boldly presented themselves before judges when, otherwise, they would not have been executed; and Eusebius of Caesarea praised two chaste women who had committed suicide in order to prevent the emperors, Maximin and Maxentius, respectively, from sexually abusing them. The ascetical practices of many monks and cloistered nuns sometimes have also approximated the idea of sought and provoked martyrdom. This "bloodless martyrdom" has often been portrayed as a substitute for a martyrdom which was desired, but not encountered (e.g., in the cases of Anthony of Egypt, according to his biographer, Athanasius; Martin of Tours, according to a letter written by Sulpicius Severus; Honoratus, as evaluated by his archepiscopal successor, Hilary of Arles; Basil of Caesarea, in the opinion of Gregory of Nazianzus). This tradition was even demonstrated by Francis of Assisi and by many of the early Franciscan missionaries, who sought their martyrdoms in Islamic lands. They placed themselves in situations where they hoped to be murdered on account of their faith. Without going into the matter at length, one may speculate whether some missionaries of various religious orders

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<sup>52</sup>"Como cristianos no podemos, en efecto, desear que haya verdugos." "El martirio es algo que se encuentra pero que no se busca." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 175. In support of these comment, he quotes a study of martyrdom in which the prioress chastizes some Carmelite nuns for seeking martyrdom. She asks them how they could pray that sinners be converted and repent their sins, and at the same time hope that someone would murder consecrated nuns. Georges Bernanos, Dialogues des Carmélites (Paris, France: Éditions du Seuil, 1949), 135. (Note that Gutiérrez's page reference--page 111--is incorrect.)

<sup>53</sup>"En efecto, me parece--y esto es tradicional en la Iglesia--que no es cristiano querer ser mártir, lo que es cristiano es aceptar el martirio, pero querer ser mártir es aceptar que hay verdugos y eso no se puede desear." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Señor amigo de la vida" ["The Lord Friend of Life"], my translation, Paz: Tarea de Todos 1, no. 1 (October-November 1986): 4. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero" ["Shepherd and Witness (John 10:1-18). Homily at the Mass on the 15th Anniversary of Mons. Oscar Romero"], Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 79.



did not seek martyrdom, even if only subconsciously, when they evangelized lands ruled by authorities hostile to Christianity. Indeed, for Christians profoundly (and perhaps inordinately?) aware of their personal sinfulness, the possibility of martyrdom as a way of expiating their sins was probably appealing, and may have even motivated their zeal for a bloody death. This view would certainly be reinforced by the traditional perspective that an eternal "after-life" in heaven is more enduring and more real than a transitory, and thereby somewhat illusory historical existence. Cardinal Lambertini even recognized the remote possibility that sought and provoked martyrdoms could qualify as examples of true martyrdom. They had to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, but such cases would likely be impossible to prove anyway in the process of canonization. On the other hand, the contrary view--that martyrdom should not normally be sought or provoked--has predominated in the Roman Catholic Church, especially at the official level of Church legislation. Cardinal Lambertini was very clear on this point in his guidelines for true martyrdom. Gutiérrez therefore underscores what has been the favoured perspective throughout most of the history of the Roman Catholic Church, but this has not been the only acceptable perspective.

Gutiérrez develops his argument that martyrdom should be encountered, but not sought, when he concurs with the view of martyrdom expressed by the Jesuit, Fr. Luis Espinal, in the article, "No queremos mártires" ["We do not want Martyrs"]. Espinal declares that Christians do not have a vocation to be martyrs. They should always aim, before anything else, to affirm life. Any desire to create a cult of death is therefore inappropriate. Furthermore, the transformation of society in the interests of the poor masses requires the efforts of realistic people who set their minds on creating life. Idealists, on the contrary, evade life. For Fr. Espinal, idealists apparently signify people who not only value the faith of the Christians killed on account of their willingness to commit themselves to the poor up to the point of death, but who also praise the occurrence of the violent deaths themselves. They want someone (usually Christians other than themselves) to die so that they can rally around their memory. Regardless of whether they are aware of it, they desire that death, rather than life, may be the last word of history. Such a hope completely contradicts the messianic promises and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which, according to Gutiérrez, indicate that God will ensure the ultimate victory of life over death. According to Espinal, if Christians one day find themselves confronted by a situation in which they feel compelled to deliver their lives so as not to betray their faith in the God of life who prefers the poor, then they should not do it melodramatically, but simply as if martyrdom were like any other task in which Christians routinely engage themselves.<sup>54</sup> Espinal's sentiments are particularly apt because he wrote the article while cognizant that he was being targeted for elimination. He did not complete the article before he was tortured and murdered in Bolivia on March 22,

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<sup>54</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 175. See Luis Espinal, "No queremos mártires," in Oraciones a Quemarropa (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1982), 12.

1980.<sup>55</sup>

Gutiérrez quotes another letter (dated January, 1981), this one from the basic ecclesial communities of El Quiché, Guatemala, which exhibits the same point of view. The members of these communities express their gratitude to the priests who have risked their lives by travelling across the countryside in order to visit them. Nevertheless, they urge the priests to refrain, henceforth, from visiting them. The priests should take care of themselves, instead of endangering their lives, so that they will then be able to continue serving the people when the persecution subsides.<sup>56</sup> Gutiérrez expresses his wholehearted agreement with the perspective of the communities of El Quiché: Christians should try to preserve their own lives because their first obligation as Christians is to affirm life, not death. Life should always be cherished because it is willed by God. Indeed, it is specifically because Christians regard life so highly that they rejoice on those occasions when certain Christians perceive that they have no other option but to serve the God of life by delivering their own lives to the persecutors. It is "precisely the affirmation of life [which] will allow [one] to appreciate what martyrdom means."<sup>57</sup> For Gutiérrez, this is a truth of which the communities of El Quiché reminds him and all other Christians in Latin America. At this point, however, Gutiérrez does not consider the issue of whether Christians should flee persecutions in order to preserve their lives. The idea that martyrdom should be encountered and not sought does not satisfactorily resolve the matter. Some of the specific examples of martyrdom which Gutiérrez has mentioned--such as, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, Bishop Enrique Angelelli, and Archbishop Oscar Romero--demonstrate that he designates as martyrs those people who placed themselves in risky situations and then chose to remain steadfastly in them, instead of fleeing at the first sign of personal danger. At the same time, Gutiérrez agrees with the communities of El Quiché that the local priests should not visit them until the situation is safer. The key to understanding the apparently contradictory views expressed by Gutiérrez may be his frequent affirmations that every historical circumstance is novel, at least to some degree. Perhaps Gutiérrez estimates that the situations of Fr. Pereira

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<sup>55</sup>For information about the murder of Luis Espinal, see the following: various authors, "Pronunciamientos ante el asesinato de Luis Espinal," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 458-459; La sangre por el pueblo, 70-73; El martirio en América Latina, 196-197; "Prudencia," Noticias Aliadas 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 3 [For an English translation, see "Prudence," Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 3.]; Testigos de Cristo hasta la muerte: Martirologio latinoamericano, 19; Michael O'Sullivan, "Tribute to a Latin American Martyr," America (14 January 1989): 8-11, 20-21; Xavier Albó, "El testimonio de Luis Espinal: 10 años después," Cuarto Intermedio (February 1990): 60-70; Ana Gispert-Sauch, "XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero y Luis Espinal," Páginas 20, no. 132 (April 1995): 83-86.

<sup>56</sup>"Carta abierta de las comunidades de El Quiché," in Morir y despertar en Guatemala, 144-146. This letter originally appeared in Páginas no. 36-37. It has also been reprinted as "Carta abierta de las comunidades de El Quiché," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 442-443.

<sup>57</sup>"Precisamente afirmar la vida permitirá apreciar lo que significa el martirio." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 177.

Neto, Bishop Angelelli, and Archbishop Romero are enduring ones, that is, they have a long time frame, whereas the experiences of El Quiché, painful as they may be, are more transitory. Priests should therefore stay away, rather than risk their lives, because the dangers will pass relatively soon.

In Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico (October 1995), Gutiérrez reaffirms his earlier assertions that contemporary Christians in Latin America should not seek their deaths. Jesus of Nazareth, whom they follow as Christians, did not seek his execution, so they too should not desire violent deaths. Jesus encountered his death humbly and out of love for all of humanity. Therefore "the delivery of [one's] life is not a heroic act," and it should not be done in order to achieve personal interests. Instead, "it is a humble and fraternal service" to others.<sup>58</sup>

#### 8. Latin American Martyrs: Murdered for Exhibiting a Faith like Job in the Biblical God of Life (1986):

Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job (January 1986) is an extended study of the Book of Job.<sup>59</sup> While the persecution of the Church and the martyrdom of its members do not constitute a principal theme of Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job, there are nevertheless two reasons why the book is important for analyzing the evolution in Gutiérrez's theological reflections on the theme. First, this book represents a major advancement in his theological reflections on what characterizes the faith of believers in the biblical God of life. According to Gutiérrez, all Christians today should nurture a faith that resembles the faith which Job exhibits when he is confronted by the experience of his own unmerited suffering and by his recognition that the poor, too, suffer undeservedly. The faith of Job provides a particularly suitable model of what should characterize the faith of believers living in contemporary Latin America because they are confronted by a reality in which the overwhelming majority of the population is destitute and suffers undeservedly--and thereby innocently--just like Job and the poor who are referred to in the Book of Job. Second, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job is significant for analyzing the development of Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom because he explicitly identifies the

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<sup>58</sup>"Juan ha querido recordar el sentido de la muerte y Resurrección del Señor. La entrega de la vida no es un acto heroico o de consumo personal, es un humilde y fraterno servicio." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, my translation, 113.

<sup>59</sup>Gutiérrez had reflected briefly on the Book of Job several times before he wrote Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, most notably in the first edition of El Dios de la vida (1982). (I have not been able to obtain a copy of the 1982 edition from any North American library, nor from the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas.) Thereafter he recapitulates many of the same ideas: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "But Why, Lord? On Job and the Suffering of the Innocent," The Other Side 23 (May 1987): 18-23; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Te han visto mis ojos," chap. in El Dios de la vida (1989), 279-307. For an analysis Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, see Juan G. Feliciano, "Gustavo Gutiérrez' Liberation Theology: Toward a Hispanic Epistemology and Theology of the Suffering of the Poor," Apuntes: Reflexiones Teológicas 13 (Summer 1993): 151-161.

faith displayed by the martyrs in contemporary Latin America as one which corresponded closely to the faith of Job. According to Gutiérrez, the martyrs, just like many other believers, demonstrated a "firm and stubborn will to be present wherever injustice mistreats an innocent person," despite the price they might have to pay. In the case of the martyrs, the price included the forfeit of their lives.<sup>60</sup> Their Job-like faith impelled them to demonstrate their commitment to the liberation of the poor up to the point of death, and in fact it was precisely the ways how they had manifested their faith which provoked the persecutors to react in a hostile manner, thereby leading to their violent deaths.<sup>61</sup> The martyrs assumed the great "risks of talking about God from the [perspective of the] suffering of the innocent," just as all Christians should. They were murdered because "like Job...[Christians] cannot hold [their] tongue" when confronted by such unjust suffering.<sup>62</sup> There are therefore two objectives in this sub-section: first, to ascertain what, according to Gutiérrez, characterizes the faith of Job because this is a model for the faith displayed by the Christian martyrs in contemporary Latin America up to the point of death; second, to suggest what Gutiérrez's interpretation of the Book of Job implies about his understanding of persecution and martyrdom.

Gutiérrez examines the process by which Job's faith in the biblical God is transformed from a faith marked, to a certain extent, by his prior acceptance of a "doctrine of retribution" to a thoroughly disinterested faith. According to the doctrine of retribution, people receive the rewards and the punishments they deserve during their lifetimes. Justice is based upon a particular value system, which allegedly corresponds with the will of God. Loyal believers live a prosperous life, whereas the wicked suffer from afflictions. (The concept that people will be rewarded or punished in an afterlife does not appear in the Book of Job.) A faith is disinterested if it is not conditioned by either the desire for rewards or the fear of punishments. It is "believing for the sake of nothing". The author of the Book of Job informs the readers that Job has always demonstrated an exceptional faith in God: he has steadfastly believed in and trusted in God; he has also customarily served the needs of his fellow human beings, especially the needs of the poorest. The satan, however, appears before God and contends that Job's faith is not truly disinterested, but that it is based upon his prosperity and his health. According to the satan, if Job were to lose these, he would renounce God immediately. God accepts the satan's wager and allows Job to suffer great misfortunes. He loses his riches, his worldly status, his family, and finally his health. God permits Job to suffer because he is confident that Job will eventually prove he has a disinterested faith.

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<sup>60</sup>"...la firme y testaruda voluntad de estar presente allí donde la injusticia matra a un inocente, pese a quien pesare." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 221.

<sup>61</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 223.

<sup>62</sup>"Los riesgos del hablar acerca de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente son grandes. Pero, como Job también, no podemos refrenar nuestra lengua...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 225.

Job undergoes a crisis in his faith because his reflections on the sufferings he is experiencing suggest that he does not merit them. The doctrine of retribution suggests that Job must be a particularly terrible sinner because he has suffered many misfortunes, but he knows that this is not true. He acknowledges that, as a human being, he of course has sinned, but nothing he has ever done deserves such severe punishments. In fact, Job's perception is correct: from the start of the Book of Job, and thereafter throughout it, God consistently affirms the innocence of Job in relation both to God and to all other people. Job also discovers that he is not alone: many other people in the world, especially the poor (e.g., the widows, the orphans, and the strangers), suffer innocently. For example, the poor suffer innocently when they are dispossessed of the fruits of their labour or when their sole means of subsistence—the tiny plot of land they farm or the small flock or herd of domesticated animals they tend—is taken away from them.<sup>63</sup> The doctrine of retribution cannot possibly explain their sufferings correctly because it implies that every single poor person in the world must be a great sinner, yet Job has observed that this is simply not the case. He realizes that the suffering of the poor is not willed by God but, rather, that it is the consequence of injustices perpetrated by wicked people. People are guilty or innocent in the eyes of God on the basis of how they treat the poor. God has consistently affirmed Job's innocence in relation with God and with his fellow human beings precisely because he has always made the interests of the poor his own.<sup>64</sup> The wicked, however, demonstrate that they reject the biblical God of life by exploiting the poor.<sup>65</sup> The doctrine of retribution also cannot explain why the wicked often live prosperously. The wicked seem to be living joyfully and free of all worry that they might one day suffer punishments on account of their heinous deeds. Job's inability to explain the suffering of the innocent prompts him to wonder whether God truly governs the world justly. No person has been able to answer his question satisfactorily, so he yearns to confront God directly.<sup>66</sup> According to Gutiérrez, it is traditional for "people who believe deeply," like Job, to "express [their] bitter questioning of how God governs this world."<sup>67</sup>

Gutiérrez claims that many Christians today similarly ask themselves whether God governs the world justly, especially Christians who live in Latin America, where they are confronted by the reality that

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<sup>63</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 90-103.

<sup>64</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 104-113.

<sup>65</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 90-91, 120-123.

<sup>66</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 35-41, 54-56, 77-78, 83, 101-102, 161-162, 168, 179-180, 187-188.

<sup>67</sup>"En varias oportunidades, profundos creyentes expresan un áspero cuestionamiento a la forma como Dios gobierna este mundo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 134. Gutiérrez provides two examples from Psalms 73:2-14 and Lamentations 3: 1-9. See *Ibid.*, 134-136.

the overwhelming majority of the population lives in poverty. This situation is particularly scandalous because it is supposedly a *Christian continent*. Gutiérrez believes that every Christian who has experienced the dehumanizing effects of poverty should recognize that it is simply not willed by God. The innocence of the poor should be obvious because "nothing can justify that a human being lack what is necessary in order to live with dignity," and nothing can justify a situation where the "most basic rights are not respected." Furthermore, Gutiérrez observes that "the suffering, and the destruction, which this [poverty] produces in people goes far beyond what is seen in a first contact with the world of poverty."<sup>68</sup> Poverty dehumanizes people who are poor because they are reduced to surviving rather than living, and the poverty inescapably conditions all their actions, whether they are heroic actions or despicable ones. No one, regardless of his or her personal sinfulness, could possibly deserve to live in such conditions. Poverty should therefore never be justified by any doctrines, such as the doctrine of retribution. For Gutiérrez, this is not a theoretical issue because this doctrine has been traditionally utilized in Latin America (as well as in other parts of the world) as a tool for religiously justifying the activities which the powerful have engaged in to further their own interests at the expense of the poor masses. Gutiérrez feels compelled to denounce what he perceives as the continued adherence of many powerful members of society in contemporary Latin America to this doctrine (for example, the self-proclaimed defenders of a Western and Christian society). He claims that they believe their wealth is "a reward from God to the honest and hard-working man...[whereas] poverty [is] a punishment to the sinner and the lazy." Gutiérrez rejects this doctrine outright because it is "comforting and tranquilizing...for those who possess great riches in this world, at the same time that it causes a guilty sense of resignation in those who lack them."<sup>69</sup> The theology of liberation should therefore be aimed at undercutting every attempt to justify innocent suffering theologically.<sup>70</sup>

For Gutiérrez, the attitude which Job maintains toward God, in spite of his misfortunes, provides a model of the relationship which the Christians committed to the process of liberation should nurture with God as they are confronted by the widespread sorrow suffered on account of systematic poverty, terroristic violence, and repressive violence. This is therefore the kind of relationship which Christians should develop

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<sup>68</sup>"No hay nada que pueda justificar que un ser humano carezca de lo necesario para vivir con dignidad y que sus derechos más elementales no sean respetados. El dolor, y la destrucción, que esto produce en las personas va más allá de lo que aparece en un primer contacto con el mundo de la pobreza." Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente*, my translation, 56-57. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Jesus Born Among the Massacred Innocents of History," *Latinamerica Press* 16 (20 December 1984): 3 [This originally appeared in the Lima newspaper, *El Diario Marka*, on December 26, 1982.].

<sup>69</sup>"...esta concepción ética que ve en la riqueza un premio de Dios al hombre honesto y trabajador, y en la pobreza un castigo al pecador y al ocioso." "Resulta cómoda y tranquilizadora...para quien posee grandes bienes en este mundo, al mismo tiempo que logra una resignación con sentido de culpa en quien carece de ellos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente*, my translation, 74.

<sup>70</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente*, 62-67.

with God in an environment in which the Church is being persecuted and some of its members are being murdered. Job deepens his relationship with God after he has lost his great wealth, his worldly status, and even his family. In the midst of his excruciating afflictions, he feels profoundly alone in the world--in fact, he feels abandoned by God, and he cries out, as Gutiérrez has observed, in a manner akin to Jesus of Nazareth on the cross (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34).<sup>71</sup> Job nevertheless stubbornly refuses to renounce his hope and trust in God. According to Gutiérrez, this evidences Job's "profound sense of the gratuitousness of God's love": in fact, Job affirms that "everything comes from [God] and is His gracious gift;" and that "there is therefore no right to demand anything" from God.<sup>72</sup> A true faith in the biblical God is characterized by the believer's recognition and acceptance of God's free will to give everything to humanity according to God's own reasons, and not because the recipients personally deserve them as rewards for their personally righteous behaviour. Gutiérrez contends that the poor masses in contemporary Latin America often demonstrate such a Job-like faith spontaneously. Their faith reveals "a strong sense of the lordship of God." They are "deeply convinced that everything belongs to the Lord, [and that] everything comes from Him."<sup>73</sup> Just like Job, in the midst of their acute suffering, the poor often feel abandoned by God, but they nevertheless remain hopeful and trust in God.<sup>74</sup> Gutiérrez warns, however, that even though the poor have a profound faith, they are nonetheless vulnerable to the manipulative arguments advanced by other believers whose interests deviate from those of the poorest. The faith of the poor may also founder into a sense of fatalism or resignation; they sometimes accept their poverty as being ordained by God because a deeper understanding of the true will of God requires fundamental changes in them--that is, a conversion among the poor.<sup>75</sup> A profound sense of the gratuitousness of God's love and a stubborn "hope

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<sup>71</sup>"And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, '*Eli, eli, lama sabachthani?*' that is, '*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*'" (Matthew 27:46). "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, '*Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani?*' which means '*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*'" (Mark 15:34).

<sup>72</sup>"...Job expresó un profundo sentido de la gratuidad del amor de Dios. Todo viene de El y todo es dado graciosamente por El, no hay en consecuencia derecho a reclamo alguno." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 128.

<sup>73</sup>"La fe popular denota un gran sentido del señorío de Dios.... La fe popular vive profundamente la convicción de que todo pertenece al Señor, todo viene de El." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 128-129.

<sup>74</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 47-51, 87-88, 212-220, 223-226. See also "Vamos a hablar de Vallejo" ["Let us Talk About Vallejo"], interview with Carmen Pérez and Eduardo Urdanivia, Páginas 17, no. 114-115 (April-June 1992): 118; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 109.

<sup>75</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 129-130.

against all hope" in God also characterize the ways how many Christians in Latin America confront the possibility--in some cases, the likelihood--that they will be murdered on account of their commitment to the poor. In fact, an important element of the spirituality of liberation (which will be examined in a subsequent section) is the believers' stubborn hope and trust in God, in spite of feeling utterly abandoned by God.

Gutiérrez contends that the perseverance of Job's firm hope in God is demonstrated by the two demands he makes of God: first, that God appear before him in order to answer his complaints concerning the undeserved suffering he and the poor have experienced; and, second, that God also provide an arbiter, who will mediate between Job and God so that he need not be fearful before the overwhelming mightiness of God, a witness who will defend Job's claim that he and the poor have suffered unjustly before God, and finally a liberator who will rescue him from the potential anger of this almighty God.<sup>76</sup> Job demonstrates that he continues to believe in and trust in this God by the ways he boldly addresses God: he complains to God, he accuses God of being the ultimate cause of his innocent suffering and of the suffering of the poor in the world, and, finally, he expresses his hope that God will defend him before God's own anger. Gutiérrez employs the religious term "persecuted" to describe the way how Job feels: first, he feels "persecuted and injured by 'the hand of God'," and, second, he feels persecuted by his friends (Eliphaz of Teman, Bildad of Shuah, and Zophar of Naamath), who have not relieved his suffering, but who have instead made him more acutely aware than ever before that he does not merit the profound suffering and loneliness which he is experiencing.<sup>77</sup> Gutiérrez uses the term "persecuted" in this example, not specifically in the sense of the persecution of the Church, but in order to underscore the idea that people do not deserve to suffer on account of their faith (in the case of Job, on account of his steadfast loyalty to God). Those people who are persecuted are therefore innocent of their sufferings. The doctrine of retribution does not properly explain their innocent sufferings. Although Gutiérrez does not speak about the martyrs of contemporary Latin America at this point, the idea that the persecuted do not deserve their suffering implies that the martyrs do not deserve to be killed on account of how they have demonstrated their faith. Furthermore, people who are truly martyrs must continue to believe in and trust in God up to the point of death, despite their recognition that they do not merit their great sufferings and loneliness. While they may boldly express their pain to God as they face their imminent deaths, even to the point of complaining to God and of questioning how God governs the world, this must be a sign of deep faith, not a sign that they have renounced their relationship with God.

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<sup>76</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 132-150.

<sup>77</sup>"...sentirse perseguido y herido por 'la mano de Dios'...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 141. "All that causes him to ask for mercy on his affliction and for the persecution to stop which God and his friends bring against him." "Todo eso lo lleva a pedir piedad para su dolor y que cese la persecución que llevan Dios y sus amigos contra él." Ibid., my translation, 143. See also Ibid., 146.



Job is granted his wish that he may personally meet God. He is also granted an arbiter, a witness, and a liberator before God: they are all God himself.<sup>78</sup> According to Gutiérrez, when Job appears before God, he represents all the people throughout the world and across time who suffer innocently. Job ultimately learns from God that the greatness of God rests in his freedom, in his tenderness, and in his gratuitous love—that is, in his freely given and unconditional love—rather than in his mighty power. God reveals to Job in two speeches (in chapters 38-40:2 and 40:7-41:26) that God truly wills justice, but that he also limits his own role in carrying out justice in history. By virtue of his divine freedom, God limits his role in history. In the first speech, God explains to Job that he created the world out of his gratuitous love of all his creatures, including humanity. God created the world because its beauty would please him. God is therefore delighted by all of creation. God reveals to Job that he created many creatures and many aspects of nature because their existence conforms to the will and unconditional love of God, and not because they are useful to human beings. For example, God wills that there be rain in deserts where no human beings live because this sustains life there in accordance with his will and love of life. God's revelation to Job therefore completely undermines the doctrine of retribution. This means that people should not believe in and trust in God because a system of rewards and punishments, based on a human value system, operates in the universe. They should instead believe disinterestedly. Their faith should be based on their acknowledgment of God's freely and unconditionally bestowed love of all human beings and of all creation.<sup>79</sup> God therefore demands that all human beings avoid making claims on the will of God according to their own humanly engendered systems of justice: "God will make [Job] see that nothing, not even the world of justice, can shackle him."<sup>80</sup> God reveals to Job that he has an overall plan for human history, but it is beyond human comprehension because his actions are based on his freely given and boundless love. Just as God has created nature out of love for it, rather than simply because it would be useful for human beings, so he also created every human being out of his love for all of them, and not because they would be useful to each other or to God.<sup>81</sup>

In the second speech, God reveals to Job how he governs the world justly. God explains that if he were to govern the world in accordance with human categories of justice, such as those of Job, he would cease to be divine. God therefore summons Job to choose between judging God according to his own value system of what is just and accepting God's freedom to govern according to his wisdom. In doing so, God

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<sup>78</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 148-150.

<sup>79</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 151-161.

<sup>80</sup>"Dios le hará percibir que nada, ni siquiera el mundo de la justicia es capaz de aprisionarlo..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 161.

<sup>81</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 161-167.

rejects all attempts to domesticate God according to the will of human beings. A domesticated god would not be the biblical God of life; it would be an idol fashioned by human beings for their own ends. This god would be a manifestation of the human pretension that people, rather than God, know what is truly just. Such an idol would ultimately signify the replacement of God with the human person who crafts the idol. God is God, however, precisely because he wills to limit himself in relation with the human freedom to act. According to Gutiérrez's interpretation, God "wants justice...but he cannot impose it, [due to his] respect for what he has created." God's "power has a limit: human freedom; without it justice would not be present in history."<sup>82</sup> This means that God's governance of the world only remains just because he allows humans to act according to their own free wills in history. Because human beings possess the freedom to act according to their own wills, their actions may either be in accordance with God's will or contrary to it. Human actions are truly just only if they conform with God's will, but they would cease to be just if God imposed his own will on people so that they had to do these actions. The human ability to be converted to the will of God nevertheless demonstrates that people are capable of renouncing their tendency to prioritize their own narrow interests. They are able to help transform society so that the needs of the poorest may be considered preferentially. This is how people collaborate with God in the just governance of the world. God also shows himself to be a merciful God. The decision by God to refrain from destroying those who act wickedly (that is, contrary to the will of God) demonstrates his willingness to provide these people with the opportunity to change, to cease being wicked by being converted, and thereafter to act justly. At the same time, God gives people who currently act justly the opportunity to choose to renounce this way and to act wickedly.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, according to Gutiérrez, the fact that God allows injustice to occur in the world means that God ultimately controls and limits the degree to which injustice operates in the world: "There is evil in the world, but the world is not evil. There are chaotic forces in the cosmos, but the cosmos is not a chaos."<sup>84</sup> People may therefore comprehend how God governs the world justly only if they first of all accept the prior freedom by which God loves all of humanity and all the rest of his creation, both freely and unconditionally.

Gutiérrez draws attention to three changes in how Job comprehends God, which are evidenced in his final speech (Book of Job 42:1-6). These are changes that all believers in the biblical God should undergo. First, Job acknowledges that God has overall plans which he is fulfilling freely and according to

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<sup>82</sup>"El quiere la justicia...pero no puede imponerlo, debe respeto a lo que ha creado. Su poder tiene un límite: la libertad humana; sin ella la justicia no se hará presente en la historia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 171.

<sup>83</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 171-178.

<sup>84</sup>"Hay mal en el mundo, pero el mundo no es malo. Hay fuerzas caóticas en el cosmos, pero el cosmos no es un caos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 176.

his own will, not the wills of individual human beings. Second, Job discovers that the foundation of God's plans is his free and gratuitous love of his whole creation, and that God's just governance of the world can only be perceived correctly when this is recognized. Job learns that this holds true even if he scarcely understands the relationship between God's love and his will for justice. Third, Job joyfully encounters God. While Job had previously only known about God through the rumours of other people, now he knows God by means of a direct and unmediated encounter with him.<sup>85</sup> According to Gutiérrez, subsequent to the direct encounter with God, Job no longer protests against how God governs the world. Instead, Job now "accepts and submits himself" before God; yet this is "not out of resignation, but out of contemplation and love."<sup>86</sup> In submitting himself to God, Job proves that he now believes and trusts in God in a thoroughly disinterested manner. His belief and trust in God are now substantially more profound than they were before his direct, contemplative encounter with God.

Gutiérrez contends that the principal message which the author of the Book of Job wishes to convey is that "nothing, no human work, however valuable it may be, is worthy of [God's] grace" because if this were the case then grace would no longer be grace.<sup>87</sup> God demands that human conduct correspond with the will of God that all life may flourish. These actions must be consistent with a true faith in the biblical God of life (i.e., orthopraxis and orthodoxy must be consistent with each other), and they must be done out of an unconditional love for all other people, especially for the poorest members of society. Nevertheless, even such acts do not justify anyone before God. Human works never justify a person before God, and they certainly do not force God to save the person. Only God saves, and he does this according to his will alone. Thus Gutiérrez asserts that even "the faith which saves is a grace from the Lord. Entrance into the Kingdom of God is not a right which is acquired, not even by the practice of justice; it is always a gratuitous gift" from God.<sup>88</sup> Gutiérrez's observation is certainly significant for the particular case of martyrs because martyrdom is a human work. Martyrdom is therefore simply one more way, albeit a particularly notable one, in which people demonstrate their free will by means of a human act. His claim

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<sup>85</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 179-187.

<sup>86</sup>"Job se había dirigido a Dios varias veces antes para protestar, ahora lo hace para aceptar y someterse no por resignación sino por contemplación y amor." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 187.

<sup>87</sup>"Nada, ninguna obra humana por valiosa que ella sea merece la gracia, si así fuese ésta dejaría de serlo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 195.

<sup>88</sup>"La fe que salva es una gracia del Señor. La entrada al Reino de Dios no es un derecho que se adquiere, ni siquiera con la práctica de la justicia; es siempre un don de gracia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 196. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 64-66; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La verdad los hará libres," in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones, 137-138.

that no human works merit the grace of God leading to salvation means that the martyrs, like everyone else, cannot make God save them, much less, can they save themselves. Even their willingness to act in accordance with the will of God up to the point of death does not mean that they merit salvation. At the same time, the act of martyrdom, just like other acts of justice, leads to the salvation of the Christian martyr because it is truly an act of faith, but, as Gutiérrez notes, the faith that lies behind this act is, itself, freely given by God. It is always God who does the saving; people, through their free will, either accept or reject God's offer of salvation.

Gutiérrez asserts that, by the end of the Book of Job, the key question for Job is no longer whether God governs the world justly, but instead how to speak of God in the midst of widespread innocent suffering. Gutiérrez adapts this question to his own situation, and asks: given the reality of innocent suffering, how should Christians speak of God to the people who suffer in this way? More specifically, Gutiérrez wonders how Christians should proclaim a biblical God of life to the poor masses who are barely surviving--rather than truly living--in the life-denying situation of contemporary Latin America. He wonders how Christians should speak about a God who loves all people unconditionally, but the poor preferentially, and who wishes to have an authentic relationship with everyone, to this particular, collective addressee: the poor masses of Latin America who, like Job, suffer in ways that their personal actions do not deserve, and who even die prematurely (i.e., "*morir antes de tiempo*") on account of no fault of their own. Gutiérrez therefore wonders how to talk about God to the poor, who suffer in ways that clearly run completely contrary to the demands of the Kingdom of God--in fact, in ways that deny the Kingdom of God.<sup>89</sup> Gutiérrez believes that Job provides him--and all other Latin American Christians--with the answer: Job has learned how to talk about God in the midst of innocent suffering by using two complementary languages. These are a prophetic language aimed at denouncing injustices that contravene the Kingdom of God and a mystical language of contemplating God's freely and unconditionally bestowed love of all creation. Contemplation is the central activity of the spirituality of liberation, as it should be of all other spiritualities.<sup>90</sup> Gutiérrez's explication of the spirituality of liberation and the place of martyrdom in it are the subject matter of a subsequent section in this chapter.

Some observations may therefore be made about what Gutiérrez's interpretation of the Book of Job implies about his understanding of persecution and martyrdom. These observations are made with the assumption that the martyrs under consideration are Christians killed in contemporary Latin America on account of their commitment to the poor--that is, for their commitment to the process of liberation--because these are precisely the Christians whom Gutiérrez designates as true martyrs. First, Gutiérrez clearly believes

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<sup>89</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 19, 56-58, 62, 222-226.

<sup>90</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 192-202.

that all Christians should have a faith in the biblical God which is akin to the faith of Job. This applies both to poor Christians and to Christians who are not poor. It also applies to Christians living in an environment in which the Church is being persecuted as well as to Christians living in safer circumstances. The obligation to nurture such a faith therefore does not depend on whether the given Christians anticipate that one day they may face the decision of whether to allow themselves to die on account of their faith. Because the faith of the future martyrs is really the same as the faith which all believers should have, this also means that all believers should possess the faith of martyrs. Such a view underscores the idea that martyrs are not heroes, but are, instead, simply Christians who do no more than all Christians should do when they are confronted by the unusual setting in which they must make a decision whether to renounce their faith. All Christians should therefore be "latent martyrs" in the sense that, without seeking martyrdom, they should always prepare themselves for the possibility of martyrdom. Gutiérrez makes this very point explicitly in his interpretation of various passages from the New Testament. This is the subject matter of a subsequent section in this chapter.

Second, as was already mentioned, Gutiérrez believes that all Christians, not just future martyrs, should demonstrate a "firm and stubborn will to be present wherever injustices mistreat an innocent person." In accordance with the methodology of the theology of liberation, the first tasks of all Christians are to act in the world so that the suffering of the innocent may be reduced, and to develop their spiritual activities (i.e., the ways how they follow Jesus in their lives), both alone and in a community of believers, including as participants in a community of poor believers. Thereafter they should "do theology" by talking about God from the perspective of the suffering of the innocent. They talk about God by using the two complementary languages of prophetic denunciation and of contemplation. They should speak in both languages--not simply in one or the other. In the first case, the language of prophetic denunciation, Christians should talk about the suffering of the innocent by unambiguously and publicly identifying the injustices in the world, as well as the ultimate causes of these injustices both in personal sin and in the societal structures that have arisen from, and are perpetuated by, the personal sins of many people. They recognize that every injustice is caused by wicked decisions that run contrary to the will of God. God never wills innocent suffering. Christians must therefore denounce any value system that is employed, like the doctrine of retribution, in order to justify the suffering of the innocent. This is particularly the case when the value system is supported by a theological perspective. Therefore, any claims made by the powerful in Latin America that they are simply trying to defend a Western and Christian society must be exposed as a false doctrine. This is a form of idolatry to the god of money or power, which demands human victims. It ultimately signifies the replacement of God with the person who crafts this idol; the powerful are worshipping themselves. In the second case, the language of contemplation, Christians should talk about God's unconditional love for everyone, especially for the poor. The precondition for talking about God's unconditional love is a conviction that such a divine love is true, rather than fictitious. As in the case of Job, it is insufficient for

Christians to hold this conviction on the basis of rumours heard from other people. According to Gutiérrez, Christians do not really know God unless they have encountered God. The experience of a personal conversion--that is, a dramatic shift--is the beginning of a personal encounter with God. This is nevertheless only the first moment of a relationship with God that, thereafter, must be nurtured, both as an individual believer and as a member of a community of believers. It is through this relationship with God that the Christians, just like Job, learn about God's unconditional love of every person and of all his creation. They demonstrate that they have experienced God's love by endeavouring to imitate God's love. They imitate God's love by loving all other people unconditionally, especially the poor. People therefore really only know about love by recognizing that God loves them, by loving themselves, and then by loving other people and God. After Christians have experienced God's love, and have tried to imitate it, they can then reflect on the experience of love and talk about it. Martyrs are the Christians who were killed because the two ways that they talked about the biblical God--the prophetic language of denunciation and the language of contemplation--infuriated the persecutors. Even though these Christians knew that they risked a violent death, they continued to employ both languages for talking about God. As Gutiérrez states, like all true believers in the biblical God, they were not able to "hold [their] tongue" when they were confronted by widespread unjust suffering. Because these Christians are murdered on account of their love of all people, especially of the poor, they die as committed members of a whole believing people, rather than strictly as exceptional individual believers.

Third, the Christians who truly die as martyrs display a thoroughly disinterested faith, and they are murdered because the persecutors hate this disinterested faith. Gutiérrez underscores a number of the characteristics of a disinterested faith in his interpretation of the Book of Job. Given that the martyrs should simply exhibit the same disinterested faith as all other true believers in the biblical God, but in their case up to the point of death, some observations may be made in regard to what characterizes the faith displayed by the martyrs as they face their imminent deaths. During the period leading up to their deaths, the Christians must accept, like Job, that they have received everything from God, and that they may therefore lose everything as well. Some of the losses on account of their faith are particularly painful, just like the losses suffered by Job. For example, Christians committed to the poor may lose their financial security, their status in the world, and their reputation among their friends, families, and colleagues; they may be suspected of being poor Christians by their fellow believers; members of their families may be killed in retaliation for the ways that they have demonstrated their faith; their physical and mental health may be worn down; and they may even have to face their imminent deaths all alone in a jail cell. They demonstrate that they have a strong sense of the lordship of God, without allowing themselves to accept facile explanations of their sufferings, and without resigning themselves to the idea that these sufferings and a violent death are somehow fated. They continue to recognize that their own suffering and the suffering of the poor around them are examples of innocent suffering. They demonstrate that they have decided to allow themselves to

be killed on account of their faith (for example, by choosing to place themselves in difficult situations, and then by remaining in them, despite the high price). Their only motive is their love of God and their love of all other people, especially of the poor. Dying out of love of everyone means that these Christians do not even hate their persecutors, nor do they desire them to be punished. They forgive the persecutors and hope that they, too, will be converted one day because they recognize that God is always merciful. They are not motivated to continue exhibiting their faith up to the point of death by the promise of a reward or by the fear of a punishment, including in some "afterlife". Christians who die as martyrs therefore do not die believing that they will somehow cause or merit their salvation, but nonetheless they may be confident that they will be saved, in imitation of Jesus Christ's resurrection, yet this is strictly because of God's love for them, which they have accepted. Because they recognize that God respects the freedom of human beings, they do not expect God to intervene in some miraculous way at the last moment in order to avert their imminent deaths. They face their deaths joyfully, and without sadness and despair. They may feel terribly alone as they face death, and they may even feel that God has abandoned them, but they nevertheless retain their trust in God and their hope in the promise of the full realization of the Kingdom of God. They believe that God has an overall plan for history, which also gives a profound meaning to the violent death, but they recognize that the full meaning of it is beyond human comprehension. At the same time, they die confident that God will not allow the whole world to become wicked like the persecutors because God ultimately controls the world. Until they die, they continue to nurture a spiritual relationship with God, and they welcome a deepening of their conversion. Martyrs are therefore Christians who continue to believe in, trust in, and hope in God up to the point of death, and they die believing God's promise that life, rather than death, will have the last word in history.

9. The Absence of an Official Recognition of the Contemporary Latin American Martyrs in the Final Document of the Santo Domingo Conference (writings from 1992 and 1993):

In an article written shortly before the Santo Domingo Conference (CELAM IV, which met October 12-28, 1992), "Hacia la IV Conferencia" (September 1992), Gutiérrez expresses his hope that the "harsh martyrial reality which is experienced in Latin America," and which "did not end up in the documents of Puebla--for various reasons," might now be officially recognized at this fourth episcopal conference.<sup>91</sup> His decision not to supply any of the specific reasons why the martyrs were not recognized in the documents from 1979 (i.e., it was "for various reasons") demonstrate that he would rather focus on the immediate future than talk about the past. He believes that the numerous Christians who have died as

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<sup>91</sup>"La dura realidad martirial que se vive en América Latina no llegó a entrar--por diversas razones--en los documentos de Puebla." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia" ["Leading up to the Fourth Conference"], my translation, Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29.

martyrs throughout the continent now constitute "a fact of such a magnitude that it will irrupt uncontrollably at Santo Domingo."<sup>92</sup> It is an undeniable reality which the bishops will have to recognize, and then they will have to reflect theologically on the significance of the martyrs for the Church. As Gutiérrez has already stated in several previous articles, the Church in Latin America is experiencing what is traditionally acknowledged as the effect of martyrs on the identity of the Church: the Church in the continent is rising up from the blood of its martyrs, and it is being built on this foundation. The testimonies which the martyrs have given to the faith are a painful wealth of the Church because they have profoundly marked the Church by their sufferings and by their hope in the final triumph of life over death. In this article, he does not explain more specifically what he means by the building of the Church, nor exactly how the Church has manifested this hope. A subsequent section of this chapter is devoted to some effects martyrdom has had on what it means to be a Christian and a Church in contemporary Latin America.

Gutiérrez also notes that he has personally known many of the martyrs: "among them [are] close and dear friends, companions on the [same] course with whom we have shared worries and misfortunes, joys and sorrows, plans and free time, [and] eucharists and moments of silence" during the past few years.<sup>93</sup> According to Gutiérrez, the witness to the faith borne by the martyrs through their authentic solidarity with the poor (that is, with the insignificant and dispossessed members of society) has not been accepted by two groups: neither by those powerful people who are willing to employ any means available to retain the personal privileges which the martyrs had denounced, nor by those groups which try to impose their solutions violently through the use of terror (e.g., Sendero Luminoso in Peru). Nevertheless, for those people who are willing to see and to understand the significance of the martyrs' testimonies, the delivery of these lives clearly demonstrates that many Christians have opted preferentially for the poor by earnestly committing themselves to the process of liberation over the previous twenty-five years.<sup>94</sup>

Gutiérrez analyzes the final document of the Santo Domingo Conference in the article, "Una

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<sup>92</sup>"Hoy es un hecho de tal magnitud que irrumpirá incontenible en Santo Domingo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," my translation, Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29.

<sup>93</sup>"No faltan entre ellos amigos cercanos y queridos, compañeros de ruta con quienes hemos compartido en estos años inquietudes y tropiezos, alegrías y penas, proyectos y momentos libres, eucaristías y silencios." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," my translation, Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "A los amigos del Encuentro de El Escorial," in Cambio social y pensamiento cristiano en América Latina, ed. José Comblin, José I. González Fau, and Jon Sobrino (Madrid, Spain: Editorial Trotta, 1993), 15.

<sup>94</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29.



agenda. La IV Conferencia de Santo Domingo" (February 1993).<sup>95</sup> He observes that the central place of the preferential option for the poor in the pastoral work of the Church is clearly acknowledged in the document.<sup>96</sup> For Gutiérrez, it is significant that the preferential option for the poor has been reaffirmed so clearly in the document because some bishops, strategically located in key positions of CELAM, had wanted to dislodge it from its central place in the identity of the Church of Latin America. Its meaning was deliberately obscured in the working document, when it was placed alongside various other options (for example, options for the young, the family, the laity, and the evangelization of modern and secular culture), as if these were all equally significant. In the final document these other, supposed, options were redesignated as the various pastoral themes which can only be understood in the context of the single, preferential option for the poor. If this clarification had not been made, some people might have misinterpreted such a list, thinking that it implied the freedom for Christians simply to choose an alternative option from the list instead of opting preferentially for the poor. Gutiérrez believes that the centrality of the preferential option for the poor was assured when Pope John Paul II reaffirmed it as being properly continuous with the Medellín and Puebla conferences in his opening speech for the Santo Domingo Conference.<sup>97</sup> Gutiérrez is pleased with this result because this option has been "the most important contribution which the ecclesial community...in Latin America has made to the universal Church," to which it belongs. Moreover, the option "has been sealed by the witness of martyrs," though Gutiérrez expresses his regret that the Santo Domingo document "had not been clearer on this painful--but also promising--

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<sup>95</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una agenda. La IV Conferencia de Santo Domingo" ["An Agenda. The Fourth Conference of Santo Domingo"], Páginas 18, no. 119 (February 1993): 11-19. The article has been translated into English: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "An Agenda," trans. Dinah Livingstone, in Santo Domingo and After: The Challenges for the Latin American Church, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Francis McDonagh, Cândido Padin, and Jon Sobrino (London, England: Catholic Institute for International Relations [CIIR], 1993), 50-59. It has also been translated into Portuguese. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Documento: Um corte transversal," trans. Jaime Clasen, in Santo Domingo: Ensaio teológicos-pastorais (Petrópolis, Brazil: Soter, Vozes, and Amerindia, 1993), 55-68.

<sup>96</sup>He draws attention to no. 50, 178-180, 275, 296, 302. See Fourth General Conference of Latin American Bishops. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, October 12-18, 1992. Conclusions: New Evangelization, Human Development, Christian Culture no. 50, 178-180, 275, 296, 302, in Santo Domingo and Beyond. Documents and Commentaries from the Historic Meeting of the Latin American Bishops' Conference, ed. Alfred T. Hennelly (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1993), 89, 122-124, 147, 153, 153-154.

<sup>97</sup>"In continuity with the Medellín and Puebla conferences, the church reaffirms the preferential option on behalf of the poor. That option is not exclusive or excluding, since that message of salvation is intended for all." Pope John Paul II, Opening Address of the Holy Father no. 16, in Santo Domingo and Beyond, 50. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una agenda. La IV Conferencia de Santo Domingo," Páginas 18, no. 119 (February 1993): 12-14. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Assessment and Implications," trans. Heidi Epstein, ARC, The Journal of the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill 22 (1994): 64-65.

wealth of the Latin American Church...the martyrdom of some" of its members.<sup>98</sup> Unlike the extended criticism concerning the absence of an official recognition of the martyrs in the final document of the Puebla Conference, which Gutiérrez expressed in Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla (June 1979),<sup>99</sup> he now simply states his regret about this glaring omission by means of a footnote. His previous article, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," clearly demonstrates that this omission disturbs him profoundly, but rather than speak about what the document does not include, he focuses on what it does reaffirm, contrary to the will of some bishops: the preferential option for the poor. As he has explained, the preferential option for the poor is extremely important because it represents the commitment and the conduct demanded by the gospel, especially in a continent characterized by widespread poverty. In fact, it is precisely this option which led to the witness to the faith borne by the martyrs.

B. Gutiérrez's Interpretation of the New Testament Perspective: The Causes of the Execution of Jesus of Nazareth and the Imperative for His Followers to Prepare Themselves for Persecution and a Violent Death

Gutiérrez frequently refers to passages from the New Testament which warn believers in the biblical God that they should anticipate hostile reactions to their endeavours to fulfill the tasks, proper to the followers of Jesus Christ, of denouncing injustices and of announcing the Kingdom of God. Gutiérrez sometimes supplies such biblical references without developing extended analyses of them. In a few writings, however, especially in Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983), he examines in greater detail some passages which explicitly identify the risks inherently related to being a follower of Jesus Christ. As followers of Jesus Christ, Christians should always prepare themselves

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<sup>98</sup>"Estamos, sin duda, ante el aporte más importante que la comunidad eclesial que vive en América Latina ha hecho a la Iglesia universal de la cual forma parte." "Ese enfoque...ha rubricado por el testimonio martirial." "Sentimos que *SD* no haya sido más neto sobre esa penosa--pero también esperanzadora--riqueza de la Iglesia latinoamericana que es el martirio de algunos de sus hijos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una agenda. La IV Conferencia de Santo Domingo," my translation, Páginas 18, no. 119 (February 1993): 14. After examining the consultation document, the Guatemalan bishops expressed their wish that the conference recognize "the heroism of the pastoral agents who have come to martyrdom because of [their] fidelity to the Gospel." "El heroísmo de agentes de pastoral que por fidelidad al Evangelio han llegado hasta el martirio." "Lo que deseábamos de Santo Domingo (Aporte de la Conferencia Episcopal de Guatemala)," my translation, Diakonía 17, no. 66 (April-June 1993): 66. The contemporary Latin American martyrs were recognized as witnesses of God in the *Secunda Relatio* (no. 34, 101, 112, 166-168) of the Santo Domingo Conference, but these sections were not included thereafter in the final document. Jacques van Nieuwenhove, "Santo Domingo: Exclusion or Inclusion of Liberation Theology?," Louvain Studies 18 (Fall 1993): 228. The *Secunda Relatio* was prepared from the reports of the various episcopal conferences in the continent. See Víctor Codina, "Dos visiones sobre Santo Domingo," Diakonía 18, no. 69 (March 1994): 20-23 [This article was originally published in El Mensajero de S. Antonio 10 (October 1993): 28-29.].

<sup>99</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, 54-55.

for the possibility of suffering personal hardships, and of even being murdered because of their faith. The path that led to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ may also lead to the execution of his followers. Gutiérrez therefore uses certain passages from the New Testament (Matthew 22:36-40; Mark 8:27-35; John 10:8; John 15:20; Acts of the Apostles 22:4-8; and the Book of Revelation 2-3 and 21) in order to help Christians comprehend the persecution of the Church and the murder of its members in contemporary Latin America. He also employs these passages in order to warn all Christians (both poor Christians and non-poor Christians) committed to the poor that they, too, should expect to suffer and possibly even to die on account of their faith. It is not surprising that Gutiérrez utilizes biblical passages to substantiate his discussions about the theme of persecution and martyrdom because all of his books are full of citations from both the New Testament and the Old Testament. For example, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente: Una reflexión sobre el libro de Job, which was already examined in a previous section, is an extended study of the Book of Job. He has also published numerous short biblical commentaries in the journal, Páginas, as well as in Signos, the biweekly newsletter of the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and the Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones. Gutiérrez's most recent book, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico (October 1995), collects many of these short commentaries. This book is a guide to the biblical passages which are read throughout the liturgical year in the Roman Catholic Church.

In Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983), Gutiérrez draws attention to four passages in the New Testament which suggest that contemporary Latin American Christians should not be surprised by their many painful experiences because, from the very beginning, Christians have faced the possibility of suffering and dying on account of their faith. First, he examines Jesus' statement to his disciples: "If they persecuted me, they will persecute you too." This is from John 15:20. He interprets this as a warning that the path of Christians who take their faith seriously is inevitably difficult. It is often characterized by persecution and it sometimes even leads to a martyr's death. At the same time, the suffering and the deaths endured by Christians are not in vain because Jesus promised his followers that life would ultimately triumph over death with the complete realization of the Kingdom of God at the end of history.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 64. Gutiérrez also draws attention to a warning Jesus gives to his disciples that his followers will be mistreated and persecuted in Luke 21:11-12. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 370-371. Without employing the term "martyrdom", Gutiérrez underscores a certain verse included in the Beatitudes according to the gospel of Matthew: "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:11) According to Gutiérrez's interpretation, "the practice of justice is a requirement for the disciple of Christ. Therefore [the disciple] is blessed if he [or she] desires...to establish it and is also [blessed]...when he [or she] is persecuted on account of it." "La práctica de la justicia es una exigencia para el discípulo de Cristo. Por eso es bienaventurado si desea...establecerla y lo es también cuando es perseguido por ello." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La verdad los hará libres," my translation, in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones, 231. Because doing justice means addressing first the needs of the poorest members of

Second, Gutiérrez interprets Jesus' comments in Mark 8:27-35 similarly.<sup>101</sup> In this passage, Peter steps forward to answer the question Jesus has just posed to his disciples concerning his identity. Peter states that Jesus is surely the Christ. Jesus orders his disciples not to tell anyone of this truth. Then he reveals to them the course of his imminent suffering and violent death: he will soon be rejected by the religious leaders (the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes), this will lead to his execution, and then he will rise after three days. Peter reacts to Jesus' prophecy by rebuking him. In response to Peter's reaction, Jesus orders Peter: "Get behind me, Satan! You are not thinking as God thinks, but as human beings do." Jesus then turns to all his disciples and the whole crowd around them, and he warns them that it is only possible to be his follower by denying oneself, taking up the cross, and imitating him. According to Gutiérrez, in this passage Peter expresses his refusal to accept the conflictual reality that corresponds to Jesus' role as the Messiah. Given the fact that Jesus has told the disciples that he will be resurrected three days after his death, "what shocks Peter is not the failure" of Jesus' mission, "but the conflict and suffering which it is necessary [for Jesus] to endure."<sup>102</sup> Jesus rejects Peter's unwillingness to allow him to suffer and die

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society out of one's love for them and the God who prefers them, this will frequently provoke harsh reactions from the people who habitually serve their own interests at the expense of the poor. In order to preserve their traditional privileges, the beneficiaries of the existing social system sometimes order the persecution and the murder of whoever is committed to the poor. By taking into account "the surprising identification" Matthew makes "in chapter 25 between the act done [out of] love for the poor" and the act done for Jesus Christ, Gutiérrez believes that "to give one's life for the sake of justice is to give it for Christ himself." "Mateo anuncia de este modo la sorprendente identidad que sostendrá en el cap. 25 entre el gesto de amor hecho al pobre y el gesto hacia el Hijo del hombre.... Dar su vida por la justicia es darla por Cristo mismo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), my translation, 250. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 55-57; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 387; James B. Nickoloff, "A Future for Peru? Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Reasons for His Hope," Horizons 19 (Spring 1992): 38.

<sup>101</sup>"Jesus and his disciple left for the villages round Caesarea Philippi. On the way he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say I am?' And they told him, 'John the Baptist, others Elijah, others again, one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he asked them, 'who do you say I am?' Peter spoke up and said to him, 'You are the Christ.' And he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him. Then he began to teach them that the Son of man was destined to suffer grievously, and to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again; and he said all this quite openly. Then, taking him aside, Peter tried to rebuke him. But, turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said to him, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are thinking not as God thinks, but as human beings do.' He called the people and his disciples to him and said, 'If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. Anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it..." (Mark 8:27-35).

<sup>102</sup>"Lo que choca a Pedro no es necesariamente el fracaso...sino la conflictividad y los sufrimientos por los que es necesario pasar." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 78. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presencia liberadora de la fe cristiana en América Latina" ["Liberating Presence of the Christian Faith in Latin America"], Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 158-159; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 314-315. See Gutiérrez's analysis of one parallel text

because he knows that these are the consequences of fulfilling his messianic tasks. At the same time, Jesus also rejects Peter's reluctance to accept the inevitable suffering and the possible death which the followers of the Messiah face because their actions in imitation of him will also engender similar consequences. When Jesus commands Peter to get behind him, Gutiérrez suggests, first, that Jesus is ordering Peter to stop being an obstacle to his messianic mission by following his own interests and, second, that he is summoning Peter to return to his position as Jesus' disciple because he is confident that Peter, in fact, will do so. This means that Jesus has forgiven Peter for his error. At this point, Gutiérrez also examines, once again, the causes of Jesus' death. He contends that Jesus was executed because the authorities rejected the Kingdom of God which he had proclaimed, as well as the requisite behaviour which corresponds to it. This means that, according to Gutiérrez, Jesus was not killed for strictly political reasons, but because his religious teachings had implications on the whole way that people live. His teachings demanded that all actions, including political activities, be in accordance with the characteristics of the Kingdom of God. People are therefore followers of Jesus insofar as their actions are consistent with the belief that societies must be transformed in order to make them more closely resemble the Kingdom of God. Like Jesus, Christians provoke hostile reactions from the powerful members of society whose privileges they challenge by the combination of their actions and their words, that is, by the consistency between them, rather than by their words alone.<sup>103</sup> In regard to Jesus' command to take up the cross, Gutiérrez acknowledges that many Christians understand it in a metaphorical sense. This may even be an appropriate interpretation in certain historical circumstances. (After all, the cross is not supposed to be sought, but it is also not to be avoided at the cost of renouncing one's faith in the biblical God of life.) Nevertheless, in the case of many Latin American Christians, Jesus' order to take up the cross pertains directly to the real risks which they face. They are cognizant of the real danger of dying in a manner akin to Jesus' crucifixion. In fact, "the martyrial experience which is lived in Latin America makes [them] perceive this significance of the text with a freshness and sharpness" unfamiliar to Christians living in less risky circumstances.<sup>104</sup> All Christians living in every historical circumstance, however, should prepare themselves for the real possibility of suffering and being killed on account of their faith, even though such preparation is never easy. Gutiérrez warns that Peter's reaction—the denial of the

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in Luke 9:18-24: *Ibid.*, 244; and another parallel text in Matthew 16:16-27: *Ibid.*, 300-301.

<sup>103</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Beber en su propio pozo*, 73-81. See also "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," *Páginas* 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 6-7; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente*, 212-220; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Evangelización y opción por los pobres*, 20-21, 39-40, 100-105; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," *Páginas* 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 94-95; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Evangelio de la liberación," in *Signos de nueva evangelización*, xxiii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *El Dios de la vida* (1989), 71; "Choose Life," *The Tablet* 246 (7 March 1992): 310.

<sup>104</sup>"La experiencia martirial que se vive en América Latina hace percibir nuevamente y con agudeza este alcance del texto." Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Beber en su propio pozo*, my translation, 82.

painful consequences of their faith--is a perennial danger against which Christians must guard themselves.<sup>105</sup> Gutiérrez's examination of this danger will be analyzed in greater depth in the subsequent section devoted to the dimension of martyrdom in the spirituality of liberation.

Third, Gutiérrez reflects on the theme of persecution in Acts of the Apostles 22:4-8. In this passage, Paul recounts his conversion.<sup>106</sup> Paul had been zealously persecuting Christians when the voice of the risen Jesus Christ suddenly confronted him. Jesus asked Paul why he was persecuting him. Gutiérrez thereby underscores the idea that Jesus was also being persecuted when Paul caused his followers to suffer.<sup>107</sup> This means that Jesus is also being persecuted today whenever Christians are repressed on account of their faith. In El Dios de la vida (December 1989), Gutiérrez emphasizes Paul's recognition that God was responsible for his conversion from being a persecutor of Christians to being a believer of this faith and, thereafter, even a preacher of the gospel among many peoples.<sup>108</sup> The conversion of Paul also indicates that God always presents people with the opportunity to be converted, but it remains their free decision whether to accept it.

Fourth, in Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo, Gutiérrez examines John 10:18 ("No one takes it [my life] from me; I lay it down of my own free will."). He underscores the point that Jesus is the one who allows his life to be taken away from him. Jesús "*freely* decides to deliver his life in *solidarity* with those who are victims of the power of death." He chooses to do this out of his love for whoever suffers, not because he is coerced into doing it by means of external pressure. According to Gutiérrez, Jesus' decision provides his followers with an example of the freedom with which they should serve other people out of an unconditional love for them, even to the point of delivering their lives.<sup>109</sup> The emphasis which Gutiérrez places on the obligation of Christians to express their unconditional love of others, especially of those who are poorest, by serving the needs of these others rather than their own

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<sup>105</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 82.

<sup>106</sup>"I even persecuted this Way to the death and sent women as well as men to prison in chains as the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify. I even sent letters from them to the brothers in Damascus, which I took with me when I set off to bring prisoners back from there to Jerusalem for punishment. It happened that I was on that journey and nearly at Damascus when in the middle of the day a bright light from heaven suddenly shone round me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' I answered, 'Who are you Lord?' and he said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'" (Acts of the Apostles 22:4-8)

<sup>107</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 122.

<sup>108</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 79-80.

<sup>109</sup>"Se trata de la *libre* determinación de entregar su vida por *solidaridad* con aquellos que son víctimas del poder de vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 140. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 100-101, 115, 141.

interests is intriguing. In fact, a truly free delivery of one's life seems to be possible only if it is motivated by the unconditional love of the others. This also implies that the persecutors are motivated by their hatred of how Christians serve the needs of others out of an unconditional love for them. These others are not necessarily Christians or even members of the poor masses, but the motive for service is still an unconditional love of them. Nevertheless, it is the poor who are especially the "victims of the power of death." It seems clear, then, that from Gutiérrez's perspective, the Christians who die out of an unconditional love for the poor masses (whether or not they are Christians) and the God who prefers them are truly martyrs. Dying for any other reasons than an unconditional love of others, as admirable as they may be, would not signify martyrdom.

In El Dios de la vida (December 1989), Gutiérrez examines Jesus' conversation with a Pharisee in Matthew 22:36-40.<sup>110</sup> In response to the question about which commandment is greatest, Jesus says, first, that people should love God with their whole heart, soul, and mind. Second, he tells the Pharisee that people should love their neighbour just as they love themselves. Therefore God demands both the unconditional love of God and the unconditional love of everyone else, that is, all of one's neighbours. This means that people, in fact, should also unconditionally love themselves. People should not manipulate this obligation to love themselves, however, in order to justify their selfish actions. At the same time, "we can ask ourselves whether mistreating ourselves under the pretext of serving others allows this commitment [to others] to be as it should be, joyful and friendly." The commitment to love one's neighbour as oneself by endeavouring to create a more just society for all people, especially for the poorest, should therefore be "carried out by someone who is not seeking compensations from it for the things that he [or she] denies himself [or herself]" because, at all times, "justice must be practiced joyfully."<sup>111</sup> This implies that Christians are truly martyrs if they died loving others unconditionally like they loved themselves, and this act must be done free from all desire for compensation. The requirement of not seeking compensation would also prohibit seeking "other-worldly" compensations as well. As was already mentioned, this means that Christians should not forfeit their lives believing that they merit salvation because only God may save; in all cases salvation is only granted according to the will of God. Furthermore, Gutiérrez's comment implies that the delivery of one's life, like all acts, must be done joyfully. Therefore the martyrs should not be sad

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<sup>110</sup>"Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?" Jesus said to him, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets too.'" (Matthew 22:36-40).

<sup>111</sup>"Pero podemos preguntarnos si el matratarnos con pretexto de servicio a los otros hace que este compromiso sea como debe ser, alegre y acogedor; realizado por alguien que no busca en él compensaciones a las cosas que se niega a sí mismo. La justicia debe ser practicada gozosamente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), my translation, 269-270.

as they confront their imminent deaths. They may feel abandoned or alone, but never sad, because sadness signifies despair, which is the absence of hope in the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Gutiérrez also briefly examines part of the Book of Revelation (chapters 2-3 and 21). According to Gutiérrez, the objective of the Book of Revelation is to reassure those Christians who were being persecuted and killed on account of their faith when the book was written that the resurrection of Jesus Christ subsequent to his crucifixion already guarantees the fulfillment of God's promise that life will ultimately triumph over death. Therefore, "what Christians suffer today is simply a consequence...of that battle" between those people who act in accordance with the demands of the gospel and the others who despoil the poorest and the weakest members of society. This consequence--persecution and even death--is not the last word of history because "in reality the victory of the Resurrection is definitive."<sup>112</sup>

### C. The Spirituality of Martyrdom: A Major Dimension of the Spirituality of Liberation

As was seen in chapter six, Gutiérrez is concerned with the spirituality developed by the Christians who are committed to the process of liberation (including the poor Christians themselves and the non-poor Christians who are committed to the poor), especially those Christians who are active in the basic ecclesial communities. He designates this spirituality as the "spirituality of liberation". The objective of this section is to continue analyzing Gutiérrez's articulation of the spirituality of liberation by focusing on the evolution of one particular dimension of it in his writings between 1983 and 1995: the spirituality of martyrdom. Given that numerous Christians committed to the poor in Latin America have been murdered since around 1968, it is understandable that martyrdom has become a major theme of the spirituality of liberation. Christians have had to learn how to pray, both as individuals and in community, and how to nurture all the other spiritual activities of their spiritual lives in an environment in which some sectors of the Church have been systematically repressed, either by authorities or by revolutionary forces. It has been necessary for these Christians to face the painful reality that many of their companions have died violently. They have also faced the agonizing decision whether they, too, should continue to commit themselves to the poor up to the point of death, despite the high price both to themselves and to their families and friends. It is important to recognize that, when Gutiérrez speaks about the spirituality of liberation, he is not simply providing an account of his own spiritual activities. Instead, he is reflecting on the collective spirituality of a whole people. He is articulating what poor Christians and other Christians committed to the poor experience in their spiritual lives. Therefore, it is sometimes inappropriate to charge Gutiérrez with not

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<sup>112</sup>"Lo que hoy padecen los cristianos no es sino una secuela--sin futuro--de ese combate; pero en verdad la victoria del Resucitado es definitiva." Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), my translation, 194. See also *Ibid.*, 210.



sufficiently developing his articulation of how certain, traditionally recognized spiritual activities may or may not be pertinent for his own historical circumstances. Gutiérrez obviously cannot discern all the characteristics of the spiritual experiences of other believers. He can only report, though in a systematic manner, what other people have shared with him. He has learned about the spirituality of a people involved in the process of liberation through his pastoral work in basic ecclesial communities and in his parish, through the contacts he has made in his extensive travels in Peru and in other parts of Latin America, by attending the conferences of the *Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT)*, and by reading about the spiritual experiences of many other people. He has clearly assimilated various impressions of what characterizes the spirituality of liberation from all of these sources. For Gutiérrez, the spirituality of liberation is therefore not a theoretical subject matter. He recognizes that it is always in the process of being developed and transformed. This means that any articulation of the spirituality is always incomplete and, in a certain sense, out of date. As Gutiérrez has stated on many occasions, the spirituality of liberation is still at an early stage of development, so he may only sketch some of its more notable characteristics. This section is concerned with Gutiérrez's theological reflections on one of the more striking characteristics of the spirituality of liberation: the dimension of martyrdom in it.

Gutiérrez continues to explicate the spirituality of liberation in Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983). Spiritual experience, as was already noted in chapter six, is one of the two elements of the first act in the methodology of the theology of liberation. It refers to the activity of contemplating God (for example, in prayer); it is the moment in which one encounters God, personally and in community, and experiences God's freely given and unconditional love of oneself and of all other people, especially of those who are poorest. The other element of the first act of the theology of liberation is the action aimed at transforming people (by encouraging conversion) and social structures so that the interests of the poorest members of society may become foremost. The second act in the methodology is theology. It is the critical reflection on contemplation and on action in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith. Gutiérrez often refers to contemplation and practice, together, as the moment of silence, whereas theology is the moment of speech, the "talking about God." Believers may therefore only talk about God in a theological manner if they already know God through their direct encounters with him (for example, in mystical experiences) and by means of their loving relationships with other people, especially with the poor, whom God prefers (a key biblical passage in the latter case is Matthew 25:31-46).<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 84-85, 203-204. "There is a way of speaking about God...which we call prophetic and it talks about God starting from his loving and gratuitous presence in history. Another [way] is mystical, [or] contemplative 'talk'. It is the language from the intimate experience of encounter with God which happens in personal and community prayer. By being Christians it is possible for us to speak of God in both ways." "Hay una manera de hablar de Dios...que llamamos profética y habla

Gutiérrez defines "spirituality" as the whole way of life by which believers follow Jesus Christ. It is subsequent to an initial spiritual encounter with Jesus Christ and a corresponding experience of conversion--a break with all past ways. Although conversion demands an initial experience of radical change, this should only be the first moment of a continuing process of conversion throughout the Christian's life. Indeed, there is always a risk of weakening and renouncing the conversion. At the same time, there are also opportunities for Christians to deepen their relation with Jesus. Because spirituality is the all-encompassing way in which Christians live after the initial conversion experience, it implies a manner of conduct by which they try to build communion among all other human beings and with God. Throughout the history of the Roman Catholic Church, many distinct models of spirituality have developed, each of which ideally would have arisen from an original, profound encounter with Jesus, that is, from a conversion experience. New spiritualities are always generated because no single spirituality can ever embrace all the possibilities of how Christians may follow Jesus Christ in every era. Nevertheless, some

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de Dios a partir de su presencia amorosa y gratuita en la historia. Otra es el 'hablar' místico, contemplativo. Es el lenguaje de la experiencia íntima del encuentro con Dios que se da en la oración personal y comunitaria. Por ser cristianos nos es posible hablar de Dios de las dos maneras." "Jorge Alvarez Calderón y Gustavo Gutiérrez: 25 años de sacerdocio" ["Jorge Alvarez Calderón and Gustavo Gutiérrez: 25 Years of Priesthood"], Páginas 9, no. 59 (February 1984): 18. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Speaking about God," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 171 (January, 1984): 28-31; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Haz más de lo que pido (La carta a Filemón)" ["Do More Than I Ask of You (The Letter to Philemon)"], Páginas no. 60 (April 1984): 43; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 4-5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "¿Qué es espiritualidad?" ["What is Spirituality?"], Diakonia 33 (March 1985): 2-10 [This was first published in Cuadernos de Espiritualidad (May 1984); all the ideas had already appeared in Beber en su propio pozo.]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Quehacer teológico y experiencia eclesial," Concilium no. 196 (1984): 401-405 [This was published in English as Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Task of Theology and Ecclesial Experience," trans. Dinah Livingstone, Concilium no. 176 (June 1984): 61-64]; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología y ciencias sociales" ["Theology and Social Sciences"], Páginas 11 (September 1984): 5-6; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina" ["Theology, Democracy, and Liberation in Latin America"], Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 149-151; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presencia liberadora de la fe cristiana en América Latina," Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 153-154; "La visita del Papa vista por Gustavo Gutiérrez" ["The Visit of the Pope as viewed by Gustavo Gutiérrez"], interview with Federico Velarde, et al., Quehacer 33 (February 1985): 20; "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 3-5, 8, 19; "Die Armen evangelisieren: Gustavo Gutiérrez im Gespräch mit Josef Sayer" ["The Poor Evangelize: Gustavo Gutiérrez in Conversation with Josef Sayer"], interview with Josef Sayer, in Theologie der Befreiung im Gespräch, ed. Peter Eicher (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1985), 39-40; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 16-18, 65-67, 201-212; "Gustavo Gutiérrez. Lima, enero de 1986" ["Gustavo Gutiérrez. January, 1986"], interview with Elsa Tamez, in Teólogos de la liberación hablan sobre la mujer (San José, Costa Rica: Editorial DEI-Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones, 1986), 58-59; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 22-25; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología de la liberación" ["Theology of Liberation"], in Reflexión sobre la teología de la liberación: Perspectivas desde el Perú, Gustavo Gutiérrez, José Luis Idígoras, et al. (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios Teológicos de la Amazonía, 1986), 15-18, 21-22; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 18-20, 282-284; Benedicta Serrano, Paulo Freire, and Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Nuevos horizontes de liberación" ["New Horizons of Liberation"], Páginas 17, no. 118 (November 1992): 69-70.

spiritualities do endure longer than others, and they seem to be renewed across time. According to Gutiérrez, every spirituality should have both personal and collective dimensions because people are both individuals and members of communities. Gutiérrez nevertheless prefers to focus his writings on the collective dimension of spirituality, that is, the spirituality of a whole people. The collective dimension therefore refers to how each person follows Jesus as a member of a community. It is the way each Christian contributes to the construction of communion among all people. In the case of the spirituality of liberation, it is the spirituality of a whole people on its way toward full liberation.<sup>14</sup>

The spirituality of liberation is the spirituality developed by poor Christians and by other Christians who, together, are committed to the liberation of the poor. As was already noted, Gutiérrez notes that the spirituality of liberation is still at a very early stage of development, so he is only able to sketch certain, particularly notable characteristics of it. According to Gutiérrez, the spirituality of liberation is precisely the methodology of the theology of liberation. In other words, the whole way of life by which many Christians committed to the liberation of the poor follow Jesus Christ is reflected in this methodology: talking about God--that is, theology--is a critical reflection on their contemplation (their spiritual encounters with God) and on their activities (which are aimed at transforming society so that it may be more just for the poorest), within their own historical circumstances. The spirituality of liberation arises from the loving encounters of these Christians with the poor and dispossessed, and it is an expression of these encounters. Such encounters with the poor are not easy, but they are nonetheless necessary if Christians have chosen to commit themselves to the process of liberation. In fact, Gutiérrez warns that people are not truly committed to the poor unless they give themselves fully over to the poor out of love for them. This means that all other

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<sup>14</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Beber en su propio pozo*, 69, 134-136, 144-146. A "true and full encounter with [our] brother requires...experiencing the gratuitousness of God's love....If the neighbour is the way to reach God, [then] the relation with God is the condition for [an] encounter [and] for [a] true communion with the other." "...el encuentro verdadero y pleno con el hermano requiere pasar por la experiencia de la gratuidad del amor de Dios....Si el prójimo es camino para llegar a Dios, la relación con Dios es la condición de encuentro, de verdadera comunión con el otro." *Ibid.*, my translation, 169. For studies of Gutiérrez's articulation of the spirituality of liberation, see the following: C. René Padilla, "¿Un nuevo Gustavo Gutiérrez?," *Misión: Revista Internacional de Orientación Cristiana* 2 (April-June 1983): 21; Henri Nouwen, "'We Drink from Our Own Wells'," *America* 149 (15 October 1983): 205-208; Pedro Trigo, "Beber en su propio pozo. Gustavo Gutiérrez," *Christus* 49, no. 573-574 (March-April 1984): 79-82; Gerard E. Hanlon, "A Spirituality for Our Times?," *Clergy Review* 69 (June 1984): 200-203; Jon Sobrino, "Espiritualidad y teología. A propósito del libro de Gustavo Gutiérrez 'Beber en su propio pozo'," *Revista Latinoamericana de Teología* 1 (no. 2, May-August 1984): 195-224; Robert McAfee Brown, "Spirituality and Liberation: The Case for Gustavo Gutiérrez," *Worship* 58 (September 1984): 395-404; J.C. Scannone, "Beber en su propio pozo. A propósito del libro de Gustavo Gutiérrez," *Stromata* 42 (no. 1-2, 1987): 211-216; Aníbal Edwards, *Seguimiento de Cristo en América Latina*, CEP, 88 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1987); Léo Laberge, "L'éthique des théologiens de la libération et ses fondements bibliques," *Église et Théologie* 19 (1988): 391-395; Oscar S. Suarez, "Theology and the Human Condition in the Work of Gustavo Gutiérrez," *Tugón* 10 (no. 1, 1990): 67-68; James B. Nickoloff, "A Future for Peru? Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Reasons for His Hope," *Horizons* 19 (Spring 1992): 37-38.

motives than the love of the poor, as admirable as they sometimes may be, nevertheless fall short of the mark. They do not signify a true encounter with the poor. It would be still worse if believers were to base their commitment to the poor on the compulsion to fulfill a religious imperative or to serve other personal interests, such as, attempting to secure fame and status in the world, to relieve a sense of guilt, or to satisfy their pride. Indeed, really loving the poor means unconditionally loving flesh-and-blood human beings as one's equals, rather than as abstractions, concerning oneself with their concrete needs, respecting their right to hold their own perspectives, becoming integrated into their complex world of values, and forming real friendships with them. It is very difficult to encounter the poor out of love for them because this requires entering into their world. The world of the poor, however, is a very complex world. Whoever intends to commit themselves to the poor must recognize that being poor signifies a certain "way of feeling, knowing, reasoning, making friends, loving, believing, suffering, celebrating, [and] praying," which differs from the way that the same activities are done by people who are not poor.<sup>115</sup> Gutiérrez is well aware of this reality from his extensive pastoral work with the poor in basic ecclesial communities and in his own parish. He believes that truly loving the poor requires humbly entering into this different world, and even choosing to live there instead of simply going there daily in order to work. Loving the poor is particularly difficult if one accepts a system of values based upon personal merit. Loving the poor, however, can never be based on the merits of the individual poor person because, among the poor, there are both courageous acts of kindness and terrible acts of predatory abuse. Therefore the only way to imitate God's gratuitous love for all of humanity is to love all the poor both preferentially and unconditionally.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>"Ser pobre es igualmente una manera de sentir, de conocer, de razonar, de hacer amigos, de amar, de creer, de sufrir, de festejar, de orar." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 186. See also "Gustavo Gutiérrez: (Entrevista, Parte I) 'Alegria del pobre inquieta al poderoso'," interview with Mario Campos, Noticias Aliadas 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 4-5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 143-146; "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 5-6; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La verdad los hará libres," in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones, 214; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 35-38; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología de la liberación," in Reflexión sobre la teología de la liberación: perspectivas desde el Perú, 19-21; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Congreso teológico. Aporte" ["Theological Conference. Report"], in Hambre de Dios. Hambre de pan. I Congreso Teológico Internacional (Lima, Peru: Diocesis de Chimbote, 1987), 90-93; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 68-73; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La evangelización de América Latina ante el año 2000" ["The Evangelization of Latin America in the Face of the Year 2000"], Ciencia Tomista 116 (May-August 1989): 368-370.

<sup>116</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 186. "You must be committed to concrete persons and to live among them. Then it is not so difficult to have friends....to share our lives with the poor, to have personal friendships is very important. It's not enough to see the social group--class, race, culture--though that's also important. It's the personal relations that are ultimately relevant. If we don't have friendships with actual persons, I don't think we are really committed to the poor. We must try to live with them." "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Opting for the Poor," an interview, The Other Side 23 (no. 9, November 1987): 13. See

Martyrdom has evolved into a major dimension of the spirituality of liberation because many Christians who participate in the process of liberation have suffered the consequences of harsh repressions, others are confronted by the possibility of suffering repression in the future, and some are even aware that it is likely that they, too, will be targeted for a violent death.<sup>117</sup> In some cases, after receiving numerous threats, the believers have had to reckon with the reality that their deaths are probably imminent. Gutiérrez draws attention to certain risks which are faced by Christians who decide to follow Jesus Christ by siding with the poor in their process of liberation. These risks are reflected in the spirituality of liberation. First, they must accept the inevitable fact that they will be treated as suspicious outsiders by various sectors of the Church and society because of their unusual behaviour.<sup>118</sup> They will often not be seen as followers of Jesus Christ, but instead as intruders who meddle in affairs which are not their own. Gutiérrez points to Archbishop Oscar Romero as a famous example of someone who was accused of not being a good Christian.<sup>119</sup> Indeed, "solidarity with the poor in present-day Latin America is a sure--and rapid--way to become alienated from privileges.... The prevailing social system does not forgive those who dare to embark

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also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 40-41; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Church of the Poor," The Month 22 (July 1989): 266-267.

<sup>117</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174. Jon Sobrino has analyzed Gutiérrez's explanation of the place of the dimension of martyrdom in the spirituality of liberation. Jon Sobrino, "Espiritualidad y teología. A propósito del libro de Gustavo Gutiérrez 'Beber en su propio pozo'," Revista Latinoamericana de Teología 1 (no. 1, May-August 1984): 212-213. For other studies of the role of martyrdom in the spirituality of liberation, see Pedro Casaldáliga and José-María Vigil, Political Holiness: A Spirituality of Liberation, trans. Paul Burns and Francis McDonagh, Theology and Liberation Series (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), 153-154 [This book was originally published in Spanish: Pedro Casaldáliga and José-María Vigil, Espiritualidad de la liberación (Managua, Nicaragua: Editorial Envío, 1993).]; M. López Fernández, "Mártires del Reino en América Latina," Thesis (Madrid, Spain: Instituto Superior de Pastoral, 1992) [I have not been able to obtain a copy of this thesis.].

<sup>118</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 24, 193. As an example of what it means to be treated as an outsider, he cites a letter written by Christians expelled from Olancho, Honduras to the family members of peasants, teachers, and priests who had been murdered there. In the letter they say that they are proud to have "shared the same persecution expressed in constant criticisms, false accusations, insults, arbitrary arrests, plunderings, pressures, and threats" as the relatives who had been killed. "...hemos compartidos la misma persecución expresada en críticas constantes, acusaciones falsas, insultos, detenciones arbitrarias, saqueos, presiones y amenazas." "Carta a familiares de las víctimas" 22-7-75, my translation, in Signos de lucha y esperanza, 242. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Juan de la Cruz desde América Latina," Páginas 17, no. 116 (July 1992): 29; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 89-90; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Epilogue: Destination Known," in Political Holiness, Pedro Casaldáliga and José-María Vigil, trans. Paul Burns and Francis McDonagh, 208-209.

<sup>119</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 25.

on that route authentically."<sup>120</sup> Many Christians committed to the liberation of the poor therefore often feel a profoundly painful sense of loneliness. This wells up because they are now isolated from their old communities, their actions are suspected, they often experience frustrating setbacks and failures, and they are sometimes imprisoned--which, at times, will even lead to their eventual murder. Their loneliness teaches them about their own limitations, and it encourages them to learn how to open themselves up to God's guidance, rather than to depend solely, or predominantly, on their own resources. Therefore the "commitment to the poor and oppressed leads [Christians] to rediscover a central gospel theme: *spiritual childhood*."<sup>121</sup> They discover that they must learn how to trust in God because "the situation of the poor is such that we can almost say that it surpasses the human possibilities for solidarity."<sup>122</sup> This spiritual childhood (i.e., spiritual poverty, which Gutiérrez examined as early as Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y protesta [July 1967]) is expressed by a joy which arises in the midst of sorrow from their recognition that God loves all people unconditionally. Another risk faced by Christians committed to the poor is the inevitable temptation to feel bitter, anguished, and discouraged because the project of transforming society

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<sup>120</sup>"La solidaridad con los pobres en la América Latina de hoy es camino seguro--y rápido--para el deapego de privilegios.... El sistema social imperante no perdona a quienes se atreven a emprender esa ruta con autenticidad...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 184. Whenever one speaks of making a commitment to the poor, it is necessary to recognize that there is always "a certain potential for social conflict." This is "not because one seeks it, but because it is inevitable." "No hay manera de hablar de compromiso con el pobre sin entrar en una cierta conflictividad social y no porque uno la busque, sino porque es inevitable." Such a commitment inevitably elicits hostile responses. This is particularly the case when one underscores what are perceived as the structural causes of widespread poverty. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangélica y opción por los pobres, my translation, 68. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 94; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 89-90.

<sup>121</sup>"La pobreza 'inhumana' y 'antievangélica' es una realidad masiva entre nosotros, pero comprometerse con los pobres y oprimidos conduce a redescubrir un tema evangélico central: la *infancia espiritual*." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 143. See also *Ibid.*, 183-191.

<sup>122</sup>"...la situación del pobre es tal que casi podemos decir que supera las posibilidades humana de solidaridad." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 187-188. The situation of the poor "seems to have no end." Many people committed to the liberation of the poor "find themselves...halfway through a tunnel." "Situación que parece no terminar nunca, y hallarse más bien a mitad de un túnel." *Ibid.*, my translation, 193. Gutiérrez cites an example of profound suffering and loneliness expressed in a letter written by Fr. Juan Alsina during the evening of March 31, 1978. He was found murdered the next day. Fr. Alsina compared his experience with that of Jesus of Nazareth in the Garden of Gethsemane. Juan Alsina, Carta de 31-3-1978, in Nicaragua. A un año de la victoria (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1980), 109, cited in Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 195. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangélica y opción por los pobres, 38; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 80; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 106. Gutiérrez has also examined the profound loneliness Job senses when he feels abandoned by God, yet without losing his faith in God. Job suffers to such a degree that he wishes he were dead, or even more desperately expressed, he wishes that he had never been born. This means that he wishes that God had never willed his life. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 47.

in the interests of the poor is so daunting. It is a project that runs completely contrary to the established order of things. These feelings are especially likely to arise when the Christians are confronted by the repressive violence employed by the traditional beneficiaries of the existing social order, who will often use any means available in order to stave off changes that imperil their interests. Furthermore, setbacks and failures take a toll on the continued commitment of many Christians to the process of liberation. They begin to feel tired, weak, and despairing. They start to think of their own personal interests, or they consider less costly commitments. They begin to ponder how much easier it would be to live quietly, and to enjoy the opportunities of relaxing and of developing their skills, isolated from the real risks to their own safety and to the security of their families and friends.<sup>123</sup> Without citing examples, he observes that many Christians in Latin America have demonstrated, in various subtle and hidden ways, their loss of courage and resolve at crucial moments. Such fear and a vacillating faith, while understandable, are nevertheless "sins of omission." They are particularly evidenced by "cowardly silence in the face of the sufferings of the poor," and whenever people "try to offer a thousand tenuous justifications" for their weaknesses.<sup>124</sup> When faced by the possibility that their activities will endanger their own lives (and the lives of their families and friends), many Christians are tempted to withdraw their commitment or they start to regret some decisions they have made or certain words that they have said. Indeed, Gutiérrez stresses that, together with the enormous fears of falling to temptations such as growing weary or considering one's self-interests inordinately, the "fear...of dying itself...is no small matter" either.<sup>125</sup>

Gutiérrez observes that the evolution of martyrdom into a major theme of the spirituality of liberation hardly makes it exceptional among Christian spiritualities. In fact, martyrdom has been a major dimension of spiritualities throughout the history of the Church.<sup>126</sup> Monastic spirituality itself arose as an

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<sup>123</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 178-182.

<sup>124</sup>"El silencio cobarde ante los sufrimientos sutiles, es hoy una falta particularmente grave para el cristiano latinoamericano." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 147. See also *Ibid.*, 159. Gutiérrez supports his comment by quoting a letter from January 20, 1973 written by a number of Bolivian priests, religious, and pastoral workers, who confessed their sinfulness for cowardly remaining silent in the face of the repression, arrests, poverty, expulsion, torture, and murder suffered by so many of their fellow citizens. This letter is published in Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy, 125-126.

<sup>125</sup>"El miedo ¿por qué no? No sólo de morir, lo que no es poco decir; sino también de flaquear, de pensar en uno mismo más de lo debido." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 194.

<sup>126</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174. Jon Sobrino clarifies Gutiérrez's observation that martyrdom is always a major dimension of spirituality. He notes that this is true because it is always necessary to reflect on the significance of the deaths suffered on account of the faith which really do occur in one's own historical circumstances; it is not because Christians are compelled to develop this dimension in their spirituality in an *a priori* manner, that is, divorced from all experience of such a reality. Jon Sobrino, "Espiritualidad y teología. A propósito del libro de Gustavo Gutiérrez 'Beber en su propio pozo'."

extension of the spirituality of martyrdom. As was seen in chapters one and two, monks already began to be venerated in the fourth century (sometimes during their lives, but especially subsequent to their deaths) for enduring a rigorously ascetical lifetime of "bloodless martyrdom". Gutiérrez wonders whether "the time of martyrdom which is experienced in Latin America today" might "not establish—in a different context—a new link between the spiritual experience which is born among us, and which is lived by many members of the laity, and the martyrial experience of the first centuries, [which was] the source of monastic spirituality."<sup>127</sup> Gutiérrez, in fact, makes such a comparison when he speculates on how the companions of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church made sense of the violent deaths. (He had already made this same comparison in "Fidelidad a la vida," which was examined in chapter six.) Gutiérrez recommends that Christians, wondering how they should respond to the experience of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America, should look to the experiences of these early Christians for guidance because the present-day situation is not entirely novel.<sup>128</sup> After all, "one of the greatest sources of all spirituality" has been "the bloody experience of the primitive Christian community, [who were] weak in the face of the Imperial power of the era."<sup>129</sup> Gutiérrez clearly does not treat the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church as if they were unapproachable heroes of a bygone golden age. Instead, like the Christians of contemporary Latin America, they were weak before the threats of violent death. They, too, vacillated in their faith, but they ultimately remained hopeful and trusted in God's promise of the full realization of the Kingdom of God. Gutiérrez approves of Louis Bouyer's evaluation that "after the elements of the New Testament, certainly no other factor has had more influence in constituting Christian spirituality" than the experience of martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church. According to Bouyer, this has been true throughout the history of the Church, even though "the majority of martyrdoms took place" before the time of Constantine.

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Revista Latinoamericana de Teología 1 (no. 2, May-August 1984): 212.

<sup>127</sup>"Podemos preguntarnos entonces si el tiempo de martirio que se vive en América Latina...no establece hoy--en un contexto diferente--un nuevo vínculo entre la experiencia espiritual que nace entre nosotros, y que es vivida por muchos laicos, y aquella martirial de los primeros siglos, fuente de la espiritualidad monacal." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 27. To support his suggestion, Gutiérrez cites C. Leonardi, "De la santidad monástica a la santidad política," Concilium no. 149 (November 1979): 378 [For an English translation, see C. Leonardi, "From 'Monastic' Holiness to 'Political' Holiness," Concilium no. 149 (1979): 46.]; Louis Bouyer, "Le martyre," chap. in La Spiritualité du Nouveau Testament et des pères, rev. and expanded ed., vol. 1 of Histoire de la spiritualité chrétienne (Paris, Farnace: Aubier, 1966), 238-261. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August 1984): 5.

<sup>128</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 39-44.

<sup>129</sup>"La realidad martirial que se vive en América Latina nos devuelve a todos a una de las grandes fuentes de toda espiritualidad: la experiencia sangrienta de la primitiva comunidad cristiana, débil frente al poder imperial de la época." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 42.



Bouyer's last comment--that most martyrdoms occurred in the pre-Constantinian Church--is debatable, but it is true that the contemporaries of the martyrs of the pre-Constantinian Church were particularly conscious of the risks that they faced. They incorporated the risk of martyrdom into their spiritualities.<sup>130</sup>

In an interview with the Maryknoll lay missionary, Mike De Mott, which was published in Maryknoll magazine (November 1986), Gutiérrez reflects on the effects that the contemporary martyrs have had on him. He states that the witness of "those we call the 'martyrs of Latin America,' those who have given their lives...[have] had a huge influence on my manner of living the Christian life and, consequently, on my spirituality."<sup>131</sup> He reveals that he has been particularly influenced by the martyrs whom he knew well, such as Archbishop Oscar Romero, Bishop Angelelli, and Fr. Vicente Hondarza, but he does not clarify exactly how their lives and deaths have helped shape his spirituality.

#### D. The Dichotomy and the Unity between the Famous Martyrs and the Poor and Anonymous Martyrs in Contemporary Latin America

As was already noted, Gutiérrez often speaks about the persecution of the Church and the murder of its members in his writings between 1969 and 1977, but he does not begin to employ the religious terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" in his writings until the article, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla" (April 10, 1978), in which he criticizes the consultation document of the Puebla Conference for not recognizing the many martyrs of contemporary Latin America. Thereafter, Gutiérrez consistently uses the religious terms. Gutiérrez makes many general references to the occurrence of martyrdom in his writings between 1978 and 1982, which were analyzed in chapter six, but he only occasionally supplies the names of specific people whom he designates as martyrs. These people include Archbishop Oscar Romero, Bishop Enrique Angelelli, and Fr. Enrique Pereira Neto. All three were famous members of the clergy whom Gutiérrez knew personally. By virtue of the fact that they were members of the clergy, they were generally recognized as being significant people in Latin American society during their lives. Their violent deaths were widely publicized. At the same time, Gutiérrez emphasizes in his writings between 1978 and 1982 that the vast majority of the contemporary martyrs were poor and insignificant people. They now remain just as anonymous in their deaths as they were during their lives. Among all of these martyrs--both famous and anonymous ones--Gutiérrez believes that Archbishop Oscar Romero is exceptional. Indeed, even though many Christians have disputed the veracity of the numerous popularly recognized martyrdoms throughout Latin America, the only claim which seems to be beyond dispute for many people is the martyrdom of

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<sup>130</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 42-43; Louis Bouyer, La Spiritualité du Nouveau Testament et des pères, 238.

<sup>131</sup>"I am a Christian First," interview with Mike De Mott, Maryknoll no. 80 (November 1986): 17-18.

Romero. As Gutiérrez has already suggested, the assassination of Romero represents a dividing line in the history of the Church in Latin America. For Gutiérrez, this means that many of the violent deaths which preceded the murder of Romero may now be properly understood as true examples of martyrdom, and that, henceforth, there should be no question that many Christians committed to the poor have continued to be killed on account of their faith. While many Christians are only able to comprehend the meaning of these numerous deaths in the light of the martyrdom of Oscar Romero, Gutiérrez also claims that the assassination of Romero may only be fully understood by recognizing that his life and his death should never be viewed in isolation from the poor whom he served or from the witnesses given to the faith by the many other Christians who died on account of their commitment to the poor. There is therefore, simultaneously, a notable dichotomy between the many martyrs of Latin America, and a seamless unity among all of them. On the one hand, in the eyes of the world, the martyrs are divided into two distinct groups: those who are famous and significant martyrs, and those who are poor, anonymous, and insignificant martyrs. Even among the famous martyrs, there is a clear division commonly made between Archbishop Oscar Romero and all the others. On the other hand, there is a unity among all the martyrs, whether they are famous or insignificant. They are all viewed by many people as the true martyrs of contemporary Latin America; at the same time, some other people simply deny outright that any of them, in fact, are martyrs at all.

Even though Gutiérrez recognizes that the murder of Romero represents a dividing line in the history of the Church, it would clearly be inappropriate for him to ignore the many other examples of martyrdom that have transpired since Romero's death in 1980. Indeed, since that time, Gutiérrez has continued to develop his theological reflections on the meaning of the martyrdom of many other Christians, both famous believers and poor and anonymous believers. He has also further developed his reflections on the meaning of the martyrdom of Romero. The purpose of this section is therefore to examine Gutiérrez's writings from 1983 to 1995 in order to ascertain what he considers to be the significance of the assassination of Romero, the significance of some other famous martyrs, and the simultaneously significant and insignificant deaths of the poor and anonymous martyrs.

### 1. The Significance of the Assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero:

Gutiérrez continues to develop his analysis of the significance of the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero in the lecture, Salvación y pobreza: Consecuencias eclesiológicas (February 7-18, 1983), and in an interview published on May 26, 1983. For Gutiérrez, the famous example of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero (March 24, 1980) is significant because it draws attention to so many other similar, but much

less widely celebrated, instances of martyrdom.<sup>132</sup> Romero's death should therefore not be viewed as an isolated event, but instead he should be recognized as simply the most famous one among many contemporary martyrs. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of the martyrs are "poor and simple people [who were] unknown to the rest of the world."<sup>133</sup> Thus Gutiérrez has clearly returned to the observation he already made in "La fuerza histórica de los pobres" (July 1978) and "Beber en su propio pozo" (September 1982), that most martyrs are just as anonymous in death as they were in life, but he does not advance his theological reflections beyond his earlier comments.<sup>134</sup> In Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983), however, Gutiérrez quotes a homily given by Bishop Sérgio Méndez Arceo of Cuernavaca, Mexico on March 24, 1981, concerning the significance of the assassination of Archbishop Romero, and he apparently approves of the sentiments expressed in it. In this homily, the bishop judges that Oscar Romero died for the poor and in behalf of them, and in doing so, he also died for and in behalf of God. Because these are proper reasons for dying, he should not be forgotten, and the true nature of his faith must not be obscured by trying to set him apart from his people.<sup>135</sup> Romero therefore did not die as a hero, but as a humble man of the people. He was motivated to deliver his life by his unconditional love of these people and the God who prefers them.

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<sup>132</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, 14; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Por el camino de la pobreza," Páginas no. 58 (December 1983), 13. See also "Gustavo Gutiérrez: (Entrevista, Parte I) 'Alegria del pobre inquieta al poderoso'," interview with Mario Campos, Noticias Aliadas 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 3 [This is an abridged version of an interview which originally appeared in the Lima daily newspaper, La República, on April 20, 1984. There is also an English translation of the interview: "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Powerful Confounds the Powerful'," interview with Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 3-6, 8]; "Lyon: Debate de la tesis de Gustavo Gutiérrez," Páginas 10, no. 71-72 (October 1985): 8.

<sup>133</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología y ciencias sociales," Páginas 11 (September 1984): 13-14. In a subsequent interview, Gutiérrez stresses the point that Romero's fame distinguishes him from the poor masses. Because he was well known, he was also significant in the eyes of the world. The poor, on the other hand, are neither known, nor considered to be significant. Nevertheless, "he was also very committed to the poor of his country. That's what's most important." Similarly, Gutiérrez, explains that he, too, is not poor because he is considered to be significant both in the Church and in Peru. "Gustavo Gutiérrez: Opting for the Poor," an interview, The Other Side 23 (no. 9, November 1987): 12.

<sup>134</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvii-xxviii; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7.

<sup>135</sup>Bishop Sergio Méndez Arceo, Homilía del 24-3-1981, CRIE (Mexico City) (24 March 1981): 2, cited in Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 197. Gutiérrez notes that Romero was a famous martyr who died like other famous martyrs (such as Bishop Enrique Angelelli and Ignacio Ellacuría), as well as so many "anonymous" martyrs—people who were considered insignificant during their lives, because of the preferential option he made for the poor. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Assessment and Implications," trans. Heidi Epstein, ARC, The Journal of the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill 22 (1994): 70.

In a short article written during Holy Week, "El Reino está cerca" (May 1983), Gutiérrez draws attention to a parallel between the events that led to the deaths of John the Baptist, of Jesus of Nazareth, and of some of Jesus' disciples and the reasons why Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated. The first group was repressed and executed by the powerful and privileged people of the world because they had borne witness to the coming of the Kingdom of God and to the conduct which corresponds to it. Romero, too, was killed on account of the faith he had demonstrated in the biblical God. He was murdered precisely because his words and actions were consistent with each other, and because he had shown that he believed in the ultimate victory of salvation over suffering, injustice, and death. Thus Gutiérrez judges it is fitting that many Christians in Latin America remember the anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero during Holy Week while they celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>136</sup> (In this case, it is the third anniversary.) They integrate reflections on the significance of Romero's death into their other activities during Holy Week. Gutiérrez does not identify who celebrates the anniversary, he does not supply any evidence of exactly how they mark it, nor does he mention whether they do so privately or while gathered in groups, though his comment implies that some form of commemoration takes place among communities of believers. Otherwise, he probably would not be aware of such celebrations. Gutiérrez repeats many of these comments in El Dios de la vida (December 1989), but he also adds what, he believes, all Christians should learn from Romero's willingness to denounce injustices and to proclaim the Kingdom of God, even up to the point of death: Romero's "testimony helps [Christians] to understand that it is necessary to look for and proclaim life and liberation in Christ by walking along the stony and muddy, narrow paths travelled by the marginalized and oppressed of Latin America."<sup>137</sup> It is there among the poor, according to Gutiérrez, where Christians will encounter Jesus Christ because he is always present among the poor and suffering of the world.

Gutiérrez was interviewed in 1983 by the Jesuit, Fr. James Brockman, who has written many books and articles on Archbishop Oscar Romero, including on the meaning of his assassination.<sup>138</sup> One of the major topics they talk about in the interview is the significance of Romero's murder for the Church in

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<sup>136</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Reino está cerca," Páginas 8, no. 52 (May 1983): 2. "Celebrations of the anniversary of the assassination El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero in March and of the murder of the four North American churchwomen in December provide examples" of Latin Americans remembering and celebrating the anniversaries of the deaths of Christians killed in the cause of justice. James B. Nickoloff, "A Future for Peru? Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Reasons for His Hope," Horizons 19 (Spring 1992): 39.

<sup>137</sup>"Ese testimonio nos ayuda a entender que es necesario buscar y proclamar la vida y la liberación en Cristo avanzando por las trochas de piedras y lodo por las que transitan los marginados y oprimidos de América Latina." Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), my translation, 199.

<sup>138</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 931-935.

contemporary Latin America, especially when it is viewed alongside the violent deaths of many other Christians. Gutiérrez judges that the assassination of Romero has been the most important event of the Church in Latin America during the four years since the Puebla Conference. He designates Romero as a martyr, and again he clarifies that he employs the term "martyrdom", not in a theologico-canonical sense, but rather "in a broad sense." While Romero is the clearest example of martyrdom for most people, Gutiérrez contends that it is a "fact that many Christians are giving their lives, witnessing unto death to the gospel, to the God of love and the God of the poor." Romero's death is particularly significant because "some people refuse to recognize" these many other deaths. He nonetheless does not supply any examples of people who deny what he considers to be observable facts. The obvious martyrdom of Romero is therefore notable for the role it plays in "illuminating other instances, deaths of laypeople, of nuns, and of priests, that have occurred recently in Latin America. It gives [these other martyrdoms] value. It makes plain their meaning."<sup>139</sup> This comment implies that, for many Christians, the murder of a famous person who held an important position in the hierarchy of the institutional Church was necessary before they began to acknowledge the other martyrdoms. Furthermore, Gutiérrez draws attention to the fact that these martyrdoms are occurring in countries which are traditionally viewed as being Christian. Even most of the national rulers, who are often ultimately responsible for the persecution of some sectors of the Church and the martyrdom of so many of its members, "profess to be Christians." Gutiérrez believes that, indeed, "it's remarkable, then, that the church of this continent is furnishing cases of such martyrdom," and, moreover, that "this has become so common that we aren't even surprised any more."<sup>140</sup> He does not identify exactly who is not surprised by these deaths, but it seems clear that, by "we", he means the Christians who are committed to the process of liberation--perhaps even signifying that he, too, is no longer surprised by the common incidence of them, though he has often stated that Christians should never become complacent about premature deaths (whether they are caused by poverty or by violent means). According to Gutiérrez, there are so many martyrdoms simply because "people are being killed just for being Christians," and therefore not on account of predominantly political reasons. When even an archbishop like Romero could be "assassinated for preaching the gospel," the reality of the situation becomes transparent: "After that, it has been clear what is happening in the church in Latin America."<sup>141</sup> At this point, he does not develop his comment about exactly what is happening so clearly in the Church, but from the context of the

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<sup>139</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 931.

<sup>140</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 931.

<sup>141</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 931-932.

interview, his meaning is obvious: Christians are being murdered for their commitment to the liberation of the poor masses. These are truly examples of martyrdom because such a commitment is a proper activity for believers in the biblical God, especially for those who live in a continent where the social system is structured in such a way that it perpetuates the life-denying poverty characterizing the existence of most of the population. In this interview, Gutiérrez also draws attention, once again, to a parallel that probably exists between how, on the one side, the survivors of the persecutions of the pre-Constantinian Church made sense of the violent deaths of their friends and relatives and how, on the other side, contemporary survivors comprehend the murders of the people they knew. He wonders whether most of the companions of the Christians who died violently nearly two thousand years ago considered them to be martyrs. He speculates that they may have underestimated the deep motives of the martyrs as well as the value of what was transpiring in front of them because of their proximity to the events: "They may have thought they were people a bit naïve, who had let the Praetorian Guard grab them too easily, whereas others got away." He wonders whether it could not be possible that "something like that isn't happening these days with these friends of ours."<sup>142</sup> Gutiérrez's comment implies that some Christians nowadays may sympathize with the objectives of their companions who allegedly died as martyrs on account of their commitment to the poor; they may even applaud their efforts to change an obviously unjust system--but they nevertheless question the degree of this commitment. After all, how could believers, like Romero, make a commitment up to the point of death, when the injustices will continue, just like before, as if they had never lived and died? Gutiérrez seems to suggest that, what is considered by some Christians to be a foolish decision made by the future martyrs not to evade the risks to their lives, is nonetheless recognizable to others, including himself, as the manifestation of a truly Christian faith, which the believers were not willing to renounce in a situation when the demonstration of this faith really mattered. The martyrs knew what they were doing and why they were doing it. They believed it was necessary to continue placing themselves in dangerous positions because this was the only way to maintain their commitment to building a more just society. Gutiérrez can personally evaluate and affirm the veracity of many of these alleged martyrdoms because "many of these martyrs, especially the priests, [he] knew very well."<sup>143</sup> Fr. Brockman introduces the topic of the popular veneration of Romero into the interview. After he informs Gutiérrez that "many poor people now visit Romero's tomb and are making it a center of popular devotion, adorning it with plaques that thank the martyred archbishop for miracles," Gutiérrez responds to the news of this spontaneous, popular

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<sup>142</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 932.

<sup>143</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 932.

reputation of martyrdom enjoyed by Romero among the poor masses by simply stating: "I'm not surprised."<sup>144</sup> He does not elaborate his comment, but it is nevertheless significant. He clearly expects and approves of the popular veneration of Romero. The fact that he considers Romero to be the most famous one among numerous martyrs suggests that he also expects and approves of the popular veneration of all of them, at least insofar as they demonstrated that they were willing to die on account of a truly Christian faith.

In "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina" (December 1984), Gutiérrez reflects on the cause of Oscar Romero's death. He contends that Romero's life could not have ended in any other way than it did--in murder: "If there ever was a death that was foreseeable, it was the death of Monseñor Romero."<sup>145</sup> His death is therefore only understandable if his life is considered. Gutiérrez does not develop his comment in this article, but he makes the same judgment in his preface to Fr. James Brockman's book, Tiene que vencer el amor. Textos de Monseñor Oscar Romero (October 1988).<sup>146</sup> According to Gutiérrez, Romero provoked the animosity of the people who were subsequently responsible for his assassination by boldly and publicly making demands that were consistent with the gospel, in the midst of a violent situation. He was killed because he denounced all justifications, especially the religious justifications, which the powerful members of society used in order to maintain their privileges and to keep the majority of the population destitute. Gutiérrez is particularly impressed by Romero's ability to stand fearlessly before every group in society--whether the government, political parties, business people, popular organizations, or subversives groups--and then to confront each of them with the demands of the gospel. He consistently proclaimed to all Salvadorans that God loves everyone unconditionally. According to Gutiérrez, Romero did not intend to provoke opposition, but he was willing to accept personal difficulties before he would refrain from proclaiming the Kingdom of God. He chose to situate himself before the problems of the Salvadoran people who lived around him instead of avoiding their real needs. (For example, he could have

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<sup>144</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 935. Fr. Pedro Serrano García, a diocesan priest in El Salvador, wrote a letter to Pope John Paul II in November, 1995, before the pope was to visit the country. In the letter, the priest suggested to the pope, "you might surprise us with the news of the beatification of our beloved pastor, Mgr Romero. You do not know how much good was done by the photo of you on your knees praying before the tomb of the Monsignor!" The Tablet (3 February 1996): 153.

<sup>145</sup>"Si alguna vez hubo una muerte que era previsible, era la de Monseñor Romero." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," my translation, Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 148.

<sup>146</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida" ["Introduction. A Witness to Life"], in Tiene que vencer el amor. Textos de Monseñor Romero, James Brockman, CEP, 94 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1988), 5.

done this, as Gutiérrez notes, by nurturing a personal spirituality completely divorced from this scandalous reality of institutionalized violence, counter-violence, and repressive violence.)<sup>147</sup>

Gutiérrez confesses that he has always been deeply impressed by Romero's capacity to listen and to change. He provides a specific example to illustrate this point: the ambush and murder of Romero's intimate friend, Fr. Rutilio Grande, S.J., while he was driving to the town of El Paisnal, along with two other people (Manuel Solórzano and Nelson Lemus), in order to say mass there. This occurred on March 12, 1977, soon after Romero became the archbishop of San Salvador.<sup>148</sup> While Romero was already deeply concerned about the poor people around him before this event, the murders awakened him to the complexity of the profound problems of the Salvadoran people. He felt that it was important that he listen closely to what the poor had to say about the problems of their lives. He tried to learn from the poor how the Holy Spirit works in their lives. Gutiérrez observes that Romero loved the poor unconditionally, and they loved him in return because they could see that his actions were consistent with his beliefs.<sup>149</sup> Then Gutiérrez offers the same observation he has already made about evaluating the effects of martyrdom on the identity of the Church, but this time he expressly states it in the case of Romero: "Perhaps we still lack the historical perspective in order to assess what the days [around] Romero's death and his funeral mean for the Church in Latin America."<sup>150</sup> Indeed, Gutiérrez believes that it is completely understandable if some time must pass before Christians can properly evaluate how Romero's death sheds light on the tragedy and the hope which is contained in the many witnesses to the faith that have been borne, both before and after Romero's death.<sup>151</sup> Gutiérrez apparently means the Christians who died as witnesses to the faith prior to and

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<sup>147</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 5-7.

<sup>148</sup>For studies of Fr. Rutilio Grande, see the following: Edmundo Moran "A Witness to Justice," America 136 (7 May 1977): 410-414; Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy, 33-34; G. Rulli, "El Salvador: Explosión de la violencia," La Civiltà Cattolica 128 (no. 4, 1977): 292-295; "El Salvador. Rutilio Grande," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, 256-261; Pablo Richard and Guillermo Meléndez, eds., La Iglesia de los pobres en América Central: Una análisis socio-político y teológico de la Iglesia centroamericana (1960-1982), Colección Centroamérica Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones (San José, Costa Rica: DEI-Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones, 1982), 93-96; La sangre por el pueblo, 65; El martirio en América Latina, 124-126.

<sup>149</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 7-8.

<sup>150</sup>"Tal vez nos falta todavía perspectiva histórica para apreciar lo que significan para la Iglesia de América Latina los días de la muerte y del funeral de Mons. Romero." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," my translation, in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 8.

<sup>151</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 8.



subsequent to the murder of Romero, that is, the many Latin American martyrs. For Gutiérrez, the long line of people who approached Romero's body at his funeral clearly demonstrated that the poor considered Romero to be their spokesperson against the people who worship money as an idol. It was these people--all of them idolaters--who were responsible for the assassination of Romero. Gutiérrez also draws attention, once again, to the murder of approximately forty attendees at Romero's funeral, which was boldly carried out before numerous foreign eyewitnesses. According to Gutiérrez, they were killed by the same people who were responsible for Romero's death.<sup>152</sup>

Gutiérrez does not believe that the public will ever know the names of all the people behind the assassination of Romero and the murder of the forty others because they are simply too powerful to be identified. Gutiérrez nevertheless contends that Romero had already forgiven them beforehand, and he would have wished that they repent and ask for forgiveness because this is how he spoke about the murderers of Fr. Rutilio Grande and Fr. Alfonso Navarro Oviedo (killed on May 12, 1977).<sup>153</sup> According to Gutiérrez, the "definitive witness, the martyrdom, of Mons. Romero is the consequence of his option for the God of Jesus Christ and for his people, [which is] not desired but neither [is it] avoided at any price."<sup>154</sup> For Gutiérrez, that which is tragic about Romero's assassination should impel people to recognize his hope that all people would one day be treated as if they were children of the same God and each other's brothers and sisters. Romero had hoped that everyone would commit themselves to building a just society in the interests of all Salvadorans because this is the only way that the country would ever experience peace. Gutiérrez then expresses his belief that "like the Lord, one must not look for him among the dead, because he is living."<sup>155</sup> This reference to the empty tomb of Jesus clearly demonstrates Gutiérrez's conviction that Romero has already been resurrected. This means that all other true martyrs, similarly, have already been resurrected, as have all the nonmartyr saints as well. Of course, this is the traditionally recognized view in the Roman Catholic Church.

The ways how Romero displayed his faith, both during his life and in his death, have clearly

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<sup>152</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 8-9.

<sup>153</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10. For information about the murder of Fr. Navarro, see Praxis del martirio ayer y hoy, 59; La sangre por el pueblo, 108; El martirio en América Latina, 126-130.

<sup>154</sup>"El testimonio definitivo, el martirio, de Mons. Romero es el resultado, no deseado pero tampoco evitado a toda costa, de su opción por el Dios de Jesucristo y por su pueblo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," my translation, in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10.

<sup>155</sup>"Por todo ello, a Mons. Romero, como al Señor, no hay que buscarlo entre los muertos, porque está vivo (cf. Lc. 24,5)." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," my translation, in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10.

influenced Gutiérrez deeply. On July 17, 1988, Jon Sobrino gave a homily in honour of Gutiérrez's sixtieth birthday in Maryknoll, New York. In the homily, he noted that Gutiérrez had attended Romero's funeral, not as an important person in the Church, but as a Christian and as a Latin American: "He was simply there, at the foot of the cross of the Salvadorans, [which was a] significant symbol of his bearing of the cross on a daily basis with his Peruvian people." According to Sobrino, after the mass, Gutiérrez remarked to him concerning the homily: "You are right. The martyrdom of Monseñor Romero has been something very important in my life."<sup>156</sup>

Gutiérrez dedicates his book, El Dios de la vida (December 1989), to "Mons. Oscar A. Romero, and in him to everyone in Latin America who has given witness (martyrdom), through their death, to the God of life."<sup>157</sup> In the English translation (1991), he adds the names of two nuns, Maria Augustine<sup>158</sup> and Irene McCormack, to his dedication. They were murdered in Peru.<sup>159</sup> Gutiérrez reflects on the significance of Sister McCormack's life and death in Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico (October 1995). She was born in Australia, a country where her life was safe, but she chose to go to Peru in order to give life to the poor there. According to Gutiérrez, she did not seek death, but she was nevertheless murdered on account of the preferential option she had made for the poor. As a woman and as nun, she was insignificant like a "mustard seed" compared to the men and the priests in Peruvian society, but "the Lord has converted her humility into a tree full of leaves which now gives [Latin American Christians] shade and

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<sup>156</sup>"Simplemente estuvo allí, al pie de la cruz de los salvadoreños, signo elocuente de su llevar la cruz de su pueblo peruano." "Tienes razón. El martirio de Monseñor Romero ha sido algo transcendental en mi vida." Jon Sobrino, "60 años de Gustavo Gutiérrez. Universalidad de la teología de la liberación," Christus 53, no. 620 (1988): 15.

<sup>157</sup>"A Mons. Oscar A. Romero, y en él a todos los que en América Latina han dado, con su muerte, testimonio (martirio) del Dios de la vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), my translation, 5

<sup>158</sup>In two articles, Gutiérrez talks about the violent death of Sister María Agustina Rivas (nicknamed "Aguchita"). She was a Good Shepherd nun who was murdered when she was seventy years old because of her work with the poor in "la Florida", Peru. In these articles, he does not explicitly designate her as a martyr. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Juan de la Cruz desde América Latina," Páginas 17, no. 116 (July 1992): 37; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Epilogue: Destination Known," in Political Holiness, Pedro Casaldáliga and José-María Vigil, trans. Paul Burns and Francis McDonagh, 218.

<sup>159</sup>"To Bishop Oscar A. Romero, to sisters Maria Augustine and Irene McCormack, assassinated in Peru, and in their persons, to all those in Latin America who have by their death borne witness (martyrdom) to the God of life." Gustavo Gutiérrez, The God of Life, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991), iii.

the preferential option for the poor makes its nest" in this tree.<sup>160</sup> This is poetic way of saying that the Church is built on the foundation of its martyrs.

On March 24, 1995, Gutiérrez delivered the homily at the special mass held in recognition of the fifteenth anniversary of the assassination of Romero. The mass was concelebrated by Bishop Samuel Ruíz of Chiapas, Mexico and Bishop Pedro Casaldáliga of São Félix de Araguaia, Brazil at the chapel of the Universidad Centroamericana in San Salvador. In the homily, Gutiérrez emphasizes that, just like Jesus, Romero did not have his life taken away from him; he freely delivered it. Gutiérrez notes that Romero remained surrounded by friends up to the end, yet he also confronted his own death alone because it is ultimately a personal decision to allow oneself to die on account of one's faith. At the same time, this personal decision corresponded to the commitment he had already made to be in solidarity with the poorest members of society. For example, he manifested his decision to persevere up to the point of death in his last homily when he boldly asked the military to obey the law of God, who wills that all life may flourish, instead of continuing to obey human laws by killing the masses.<sup>161</sup> According to Gutiérrez, Romero certainly did not seek his martyrdom because to do so is inappropriate for Christians. It would mean wishing that there be murderers, and the violent deaths which they cause. Instead, Romero encountered his martyrdom. The path he followed up to his martyrdom was characterized by events similar to the ones leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth: Jesus had not sought his execution, but he was well aware that his preaching and his announcement of the Kingdom of God disturbed the powerful members of society. Because Romero had a deep and unwavering faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he said that he did not believe that death was the final word of history. He was confident that subsequent to his imminent death he would rise again in the Salvadoran people. Gutiérrez observes that everyone who has gathered for this fifteenth anniversary shares Romero's hope. They believe that, in fact, Romero has been resurrected alongside Jesus in the Salvadoran people. Gutiérrez does not explain exactly what this means, but clearly this reflects the ideas, first, that the poor and the Christians committed to them will be inspired by Romero's demonstration of faith up to the point of death, second, that God has already saved Romero, and, third, that the deceased Romero is still part of the community of believers in El Salvador--perhaps as a heavenly intercessor praying on their behalf. Gutiérrez also again stresses that Romero's death should never be viewed in isolation from so many other martyrdoms. All the martyrs--Romero, the six Jesuits in

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<sup>160</sup>"Su condición de mujer y de religiosa, siempre marginadas, representa bien el insignificante grano de mostaza. Pero el Señor ha convertido su humildad en un árbol frondoso que hoy nos da sombra y en el que la opción preferencial por el pobre hace su nido." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, my translation, 237.

<sup>161</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero," Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 78-79. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 137.

El Salvador (who were murdered in 1989), and the many other martyrs in El Salvador and in the rest of Latin America--together provide numerous testimonies of the gospel message that God loves all people unconditionally. While every single one of these deaths was a terrible event, Christians should nevertheless be thankful for all of them because the martyrs died bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus, which signals the ultimate triumph of life over death. For Gutiérrez, the objective of gathering in order to remember Romero, therefore, is to celebrate life, not to commemorate death. Christians should celebrate the resurrection of Romero and of so many other martyrs, which has transpired in imitation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, whom they had followed. It is particularly important to celebrate the resurrection of the martyrs in Latin America because this is a continent where death is so pervasive. Furthermore, the memories of these martyrs are particularly compelling for the poor of the continent, and they cherish all of them. While the powerful members of society may be able to murder the people who are committed to the liberation of the poor, according to Gutiérrez, they cannot extinguish the paschal joy which the poor masses feel as they hope for the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.<sup>162</sup>

## 2. The Significance of Other Famous Martyrs:

Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto (murdered on May 26, 1969), was the first person whom Gutiérrez explicitly identified as a Christian murdered on account of his commitment to the poor. This death clearly made a profound impression on Gutiérrez. Since 1969, Gutiérrez has named a number of other Christians whose lives and violent deaths have also had an impact on him. He has explicitly designated many of them as martyrs, ever since he first began to utilize the religious terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" in his writings in 1978. Most of the people whom he identifies as martyrs in his writings between 1983 and 1995 were members of the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church (Bishop Enrique Angelelli, Fr. Vicente Hondarza, Fr. Héctor Gallego, Fr. Joaquín López y López, Fr. Ignacio Ellacuría, Fr. Segundo Montes, Fr. Juan Ramón Moreno, Fr. Amando López, Fr. Ignacio Martín-Baró, Fr. Michael Tomaszek, and Fr. Zbigniew Strzalkowski), a few were members of female religious orders (Mother Juanita, Sister Maria Augustine, and Sister Irene McCormack), and only a couple were humble Christians from among the poor masses (Sra. Julia Elba Ramos and her daughter, Celina Ramos). In all cases, Gutiérrez reflects theologically on the meaning of the martyrdoms of people whom he knew personally. Many were very close friends, so he suffered profoundly from their deaths. Most of the people whom he explicitly names as martyrs in his writings were also significant people in Latin American society on account of their status in the Church. The only exception to this phenomenon is Gutiérrez's reflection on the meaning of the murders of Sra. Julia

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<sup>162</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero," Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 79-80. See also "Tributes to a Martyred Archbishop," The Tablet (25 March 1995): 400.

Elba Ramos and her daughter, Celina, who died alongside the six Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador. It is likely, however, that he would not have mentioned their names if they had not been killed along with the Jesuits. Thus his comments on their deaths should be viewed in the context of the meaning of the poor and anonymous martyrs, who are the subject matter of the subsequent subsection. The objective of this subsection is therefore to examine the theological reflections that Gutiérrez has made on the significance of the deaths of these other famous martyrs who, like Archbishop Oscar Romero, have had an influence on his life.

In an interview published on May 26, 1983, Gutiérrez claims that martyrdom is a new experience of the Church in Latin America, only dating back about fifteen years. One of the earliest martyrs was his close friend, Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto (murdered in May 26, 1969), to whom he dedicated Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (December 31, 1971). Reflecting on the matter from a vantage point twelve years subsequent to the publication of the book, Gutiérrez supplies three reasons why he dedicated the book to Fr. Pereira Neto: first, because "he died bearing witness to his faith"; second, because, as a black Brazilian, "he also bore witness for poor blacks despised for their race"; third, because Gutiérrez was trying to write the book when this good friend died on account of the aforementioned reasons.<sup>163</sup> According to Gutiérrez, the poor Latin Americans of African heritage, like the poor women and the poor Aborigines, are part of a sector of society which is doubly oppressed.<sup>164</sup> As was already noted, Fr. Pereira Neto was the very first Christian whom Gutiérrez explicitly identified as having died in an environment of the persecution of the Church. His comment in the present interview implies that, sometime between 1969 and 1971, he already linked the idea of dying for one's faith--that is, martyrdom--and dying for the poor (in this case, a particular sector of the poor: the poor of African heritage). Whether this explanation from 1983 thoroughly proves that Gutiérrez already considered the murder of Christians committed to the poor, such as Fr. Pereira Neto, to be examples of genuine martyrdom by 1971, and possibly even sooner, is a debatable point because memories are sometimes faulty. It is nevertheless likely that his explanation reflects the view he held in 1971 to some extent. If he had viewed Fr. Pereira Neto's death as simply the result of a political cause (which is unlikely given his portrayal of the murder in the context of the persecution of the Church in the lecture, "The Meaning of Development [Notes on a Theology of Liberation], which he delivered in 1969), he probably would have been hesitant to dedicate the book to him, rather than to another person (such as his good friend, Fr. Camilo Torres Restrepo, who was killed as a member of the Colombian guerillas in

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<sup>163</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: "Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5. See also "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview with Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 8.

<sup>164</sup>See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 21; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Speaking about God," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 171 (January 1984): 29.

1966).

In Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983), Gutiérrez cites two examples of priests whose commitment to the poor was evidenced by their profound love of the poor. Both of them, Fr. Héctor Gallego and the Spanish priest, Fr. Vicente Hondarza, of Huacho, Peru, demonstrated their love of the poor by remaining committed to them up to the point of death. Fr. Gallego was already examined in chapter six of the present study. Fr. Hondarza was a Spanish priest who worked with the poor in rural Peru for fourteen years. He died at the age of forty-seven under mysterious circumstances which had not been resolved when Gutiérrez wrote this book.<sup>165</sup> In a subsequent interview, Gutiérrez names Fr. Hondarza as one of the "witnesses to the God of life...who have deeply marked my life," along with Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, José María Arguedas, Bishop Enrique Angelelli, Archbishop Oscar Romero, and Hugo Echegaray (a Peruvian priest who worked with Gutiérrez until his death in 1979).<sup>166</sup> Four of these six were murdered on account of their commitment to the poor. Gutiérrez also cites Bishop Pedro Casaldáliga's assessment that the murder of Fr. João-Bosco Penido Burnier, who had "died for justice and charity [in] Amazonia [Brazil]...[during] an especially critical or martyrial time," should be viewed by Christians as an occasion for rejoicing because he and so many others were willing to give witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to demonstrate their hope for it, even at the cost of their lives. Fr. Burnier was murdered after he had gone to the police station, along with Bishop Casaldáliga, in order to protest the mistreatment of two women there.<sup>167</sup>

In "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina" (December 1984), Gutiérrez continues to develop his reflections on the significance of the death of Fr. Vicente Hondarza. This article records a lecture which he delivered over a year after the mysterious death of Fr. Hondarza. By this time, it was well known that he had been murdered. Gutiérrez describes this good friend of his as a common man, a man of the people, who liked to joke around. He lived close to the poor. In his daily life, he did not seem to be an extraordinary man, simply a common parish priest who cared about the people, yet his solidarity with the poor was enough to provoke hostile reactions from the powerful. This led to his death. According to

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<sup>165</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 157, 161-168. In regard to Fr. Hondarza, Gutiérrez cites "Testimonio en el entierro del P. Vicente Hondarza," Páginas no. 54 (August 1983): 31.

<sup>166</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Gutiérrez: 'Joy of the Poor Confounds the Powerful'," interview with Mario Campos, Latinamerica Press 16 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 8. Note that in the Spanish version, the last question of the interview is deleted. It is in Gutiérrez's answer to it that he names these certain friends who have profoundly marked his life. In the previous answer, he simply alludes to them. See "Gustavo Gutiérrez: (Entrevista, Parte I) 'Alegria del pobre inquieta al poderoso'," interview with Mario Campos, Noticias Aliadas 17 (no. 17, 10 May 1984): 6.

<sup>167</sup>"Murió por la justicia y la caridad. En la Amazonía. En una hora particularmente crítica o martirial...." "Carta de Don Pedro Casaldáliga, dirigida a sus amigos españoles. 19 octubre 76," in Signos de liberación y esperanza, my translation, 254. Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 177.

Gutiérrez, his simple life can now be reread in the light of his death. From his recollection of Fr. Hondarza's life and death, he concludes that "to be a Christian is not to be a hero, but [to be] holy."<sup>168</sup> Thus he observes that, in contemporary Latin America, whoever defends life, says that poor people exist, and then draws attention to the structural causes of poverty as well as its ultimate cause (sin), will inevitably suffer a violent death. These activities characterize a path leading to martyrdom.<sup>169</sup> Whenever Christians are true to their faith in the biblical God, they are situating themselves in a position where the occurrence of martyrdom is a real possibility. Gutiérrez also dedicates a study of Bartolomé de Las Casas, entitled Dios o el oro en las Indias: Siglo XVI (February 1989), to "Vicente Hondarza, and in him to all those born in Spain who have come to live, and to die, in the Indies out of solidarity with the poor."<sup>170</sup>

In an interview published in February, 1985, concerning the recent visit of Pope John Paul II to Peru, Gutiérrez observes that the poor feel very close to the pastoral workers because they have seen the faith of people like Mother Juanita, who was murdered in Lurigancho on account of her daily work with the poor.<sup>171</sup> He does not develop this comment.

Gutiérrez reflects on the murder of six Jesuit priests--Joaquín López y López, Ignacio Ellacuría, Segundo Montes, Juan Ramón Moreno, Amando López, and Ignacio Martín-Baró--who were his intimate friends, as well as Sra. Julia Elba Ramos (their cook and housekeeper) and her sixteen-year-old daughter, Celina, in "Noticias de cruz y resurrección" (December 1989). They were murdered by about thirty men in

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<sup>168</sup>"Y es, que ser cristiano no es ser héroe, sino santo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," my translation, Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 148.

<sup>169</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 148.

<sup>170</sup>"A Vicente Hondarza, y en él a todos los que nacidos en España han venido a vivir, y a morir, en las Indias por solidaridad con los pobres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Dios o el oro en las Indias: Siglo XVI, my translation, 3.

<sup>171</sup>"La visita del Papa vista por Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Federico Velarde, et al., Quehacer 33 (February 1985): 17-18. See also Gutiérrez's prayer at the burial of the layperson, María Elena Moyano, who was murdered by members of Sendero Luminoso on February 15, 1992 because her programs to help the poor in Villa El Salvador, Peru conflicted with their plans. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Oración de gracias en el sepelio de María Elena" ["Prayer of Thanks at the Burial of María Elena"], Páginas 17, no. 114-115 (April-June 1992): 13-14. While Gutiérrez, of course, does not designate her as martyr at her burial, the representative of the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos explicitly calls her death an example of martyrdom in his public speech before conferring Gutiérrez with an honorary doctorate on March 19, 1992. This signifies that Sra. Moyano was beginning to enjoy a spontaneously engendered popular reputation of martyrdom. Washington Delgado, "Discurso de orden," Páginas 17, no. 114-115 (April-June 1992): 162. In his acceptance speech, Gutiérrez affirms that Sra. Moyano was a great woman who was killed because she had loved justice. "Palabras de agradecimiento del padre Gustavo Gutiérrez (Extractos)," Páginas 17, no. 114-115 (April-June 1992): 164. For more information about María Elena Moyano, see also Joe Nangle, "'She Lives in Us'," Sojourners 21 (December 1992): 16.

uniform on November 16, 1989 at their residence in San Salvador, El Salvador.<sup>172</sup> Gutiérrez claims that the people who ordered the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero are also responsible for these recent deaths. As in the case of Romero, Gutiérrez stresses that the Jesuits did not seek their deaths but they also did not avoid it at any price. They were cognizant of the possibility that they would be killed for demanding a peace based on justice for all. Gutiérrez notes that most of them travelled from a great distance (Spain), leaving behind the options to do other--surely safer--ministerial activities, in order to commit themselves to the poor masses of a "martyrized people" (i.e., a "*pueblo martirizado*"), whose lives and deaths they shared. The commitment they had made to help bring about a peace based on justice by means of proclaiming the gospel to everyone, however, ultimately provoked their deaths.<sup>173</sup>

Gutiérrez also reflects on the meaning of the deaths of the Sra. Elba Ramos and her daughter, Celina, who were murdered alongside the six Jesuits. For Gutiérrez, Sra. Elba Ramos was "simple like all the women" of the Latin American people; "she used to talk about how she had lost different relatives in

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<sup>172</sup>See the following studies of the murders of the Jesuits and the two women, as well as of the significance of their deaths: Víctor Codina, "Ignacio Ellacuría, teólogo y mártir," Revista Latinoamericana de Teología 7 (1990): 263-269 [This article was originally published in Cuarto Intermedio no. 14 (February 1990).]; various authors, "Dieron testimonio de la verdad," Diakonia no. 53 (March 1990): 1-96; Jon Sobrino, "The Ecumenism of Blood and Love," Sojourners 19 (February-March 1990): 5-6; "The Greatest Love. El Salvador's Sacrament of Salvation: An Interview with Jon Sobrino," interview with Jim Wallis, Sojourners (April 1990): 16-24; José María Guerrero, "Los seis jesuitas masacrados," Mensaje 39, no. 388 (May 1990): 113-116; "Editorial. La resurrección de los mártires de la UCA," Estudios Centroamericanos 45, no. 505-506 (November-December 1990): 949-957; Stan Granot Duncan, "Intercessors for Central America. The Roses of Obdulio," ESA Advocate. Evangelicals for Social Action 13 (no. 2, March 1991): 9-10; Carlos Bravo, "A los tres años de los mártires de la UCA," Christus 57 (November-December 1992): 72-74; Joe Nangle, "A Truth Commission for El Norte," Sojourners 22 (June 1993): 7-8; various authors, Estudios Centroamericanos 49, no. 553-554 (November-December 1994): 1171-1278; Pamela Hussey, "El Salvador Needs Realism and Hope," The Month (April 1995): 133-136; Robert Lassalle-Klein, "A Spirituality of Christian Solidarity: The Jesuit Martyrs of El Salvador," The Way 36 (January 1996): 49-60. Many other sources on these murders are listed in the bibliography of the present study.

<sup>173</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Noticias de cruz y resurrección" ["News of the Cross and Resurrection"], Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 6; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 353. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Assessment and Implications," trans. Heidi Epstein, ARC, The Journal of the faculty of Religious Studies, McGill 22 (1994): 70; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 25. James B. Nickoloff, who has collaborated with Gutiérrez at the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas, explains very clearly why the Jesuits (as well as so many other people--both Christians and non-Christians--who have tried to establish their vision of justice for all people) were killed: "Let us be clear: Jesuits in El Salvador and women militants in Chile, like civil rights workers in Mississippi, labor leaders in Chicago, and gay activists in San Francisco, have been killed not because they had a special love for the poor but because they used their gifts to promote the radical social transformation of their countries in favor of powerless people and in opposition to historical privileges defended to the death by élites." James B. Nickoloff, "Church of the Poor: The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez," Theological Studies 54 (September 1993): 529. See also James B. Nickoloff, "Liberation Theology and the Church," Religious Studies Review 18 (January 1992): 10.



the bloody Salvadoran situation." She also showed herself to be a very brave person because she was certainly aware of the death threats which had been issued against the priests. She worked for the priests, but she also "shared the same faith" as them. "She and her daughter form part of those anonymous but resolute people who know how to give...witness to the God of life without [making] a great fuss."<sup>174</sup> This is apparently the first time that Gutiérrez explicitly names any of the poor people who, he claims, make up the majority of the martyrs in contemporary Latin America. He may very well habitually refrain from naming them because of the risk of further endangering their families and the communities in which they participated. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the names of the poor and anonymous martyrs would mean much to most of Gutiérrez's readers. Their names would probably be forgotten soon after having been read.<sup>175</sup>

Gutiérrez judges that, in accordance with Matthew 5:10 ("Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of uprightness: the kingdom of Heaven is theirs"), the six Jesuits and the two women were threatened and killed because they had tried to bring about justice for all people. He acknowledges that some people will dispute that they had truly given witness to the faith in the biblical God, but these naysayers "have clean [i.e., unadulterated] hands because in reality they have no hands."<sup>176</sup> They cannot recognize genuine martyrs because they themselves have never made the personal commitment to the poor which ultimately led to these deaths. Finally, Gutiérrez recommends that, in the midst of their pain at

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<sup>174</sup> "...Sra. Elba y su hija Celina; sencilla como todas las mujeres de nuestro pueblo, contaba cómo había perdido varios familiares en la cruenta situación salvadoreña. Valiente, también, porque ella no ignoraba las amenazas de muerte que se cernían sobre los sacerdotes para quienes trabajaba y con quienes compartía la misma fe. Ella y su hija forman parte de esas personas anónimas pero firmes que saben dar sin aspavientos un estremecedor testimonio del Dios de la vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Noticias de cruz y resurrección," my translation, Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 6-7. See Gutiérrez's major study of the major role of women, including poor women, as disciples of Jesus Christ, ever since Mary: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Santo es su nombre," chap. in El Dios de la vida (1989), 309-349. "Elba once commented that, though she was poor and could not do much to serve her Lord, through her cooking and cleaning skills she gave the priests the gift of free time so that their skills could be used in the peace talks and national movements for Salvadoran reconciliation. In that way, she said, she knew that she was serving God's will. 'Of course everything is messed up here,' she once said about El Salvador. 'But we will never give up. With God's help we cannot give up.'" Stan Granot Duncan, "Intercessors for Central America. The Roses of Obdulio," ESA Advocate. Evangelicals for Social Action 13 (no. 2, March 1991): 9.

<sup>175</sup> Sra. Elba Ramos's husband, Obdulio, who was the guard and groundskeeper at the Jesuit theological centre, planted roses in the garden for all the people who were murdered that night. He explains why he planted roses of a different colour--yellow roses--in the middle: "I wanted them to be different....I wanted people to remember my family." Stan Granot Duncan, "Intercessors for Central America. The Roses of Obdulio," ESA Advocate. Evangelicals for Social Action 13 (no. 2, March 1991): 10. According to Sobrino, numerous people visited the garden before Sr. Obdulio Ramos died on June 25, 1994. Pamel Hussey, "El Salvador Needs Realism and Hope," The Month (April 1995): 133.

<sup>176</sup> "...como decía Peguy, tienen las manos puras porque en realidad no tienen manos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Noticias de cruz y resurrección," my translation, Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 7.

receiving the news of these deaths, Christians should also thank the victims because they have demonstrated what it truly means to be a follower of Jesus Christ in contemporary Latin America: a witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>177</sup>

In El Dios de la vida (December 1989), Gutiérrez states that the witness which these Salvadoran and Spanish martyrs, as well as so many other martyrs, have given by dying on account of their faith "makes the Master's teachings concrete for us," and it "inspires [Christians] to make" these teachings their own, in both a "free and responsible manner."<sup>178</sup> According to the summary of a homily which Gutiérrez delivered at Westminster Cathedral in late February, 1992, he declared that the six Jesuits were murdered because, unlike the hypocrites denounced by Jesus, their words and actions were consistent with each other.<sup>179</sup> Gutiérrez dedicates the book, En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo: El pensamiento de Bartolomé de Las Casas (August 1992), which is a lengthy study of Bartolomé de Las Casas, "to Vicente Hondarza, to Ignacio Ellacuría and his companions, and in them to all those, born in Spain, who have come to live and to die in the Indies, in search of the poor of Jesus Christ."<sup>180</sup> In Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico (October 1995), Gutiérrez compares the Jesuit martyrs and all the other Latin American martyrs with John the Baptist: they are, "in a certain way, precursors of Jesus; like John the Baptist, they summon all [Christians] to be converted and to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord."<sup>181</sup> In other words, all Christians should imitate the faith of the martyrs by living in a manner which is consistent with the belief that Jesus will soon come again, and that he will thereby end history and completely realize the Kingdom of God.

Gutiérrez delivered a lecture on St. John of the Cross at the Congreso Internacional Sanjuanista, which met September 23-28, 1991 in recognition of the fourth centenary of the saint. In the lecture, he notes that more than one hundred bishops, priests, and religious have been murdered in Latin America because of their commitment to the poor. Hundreds more lay persons, catechists, and members of basic ecclesial

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<sup>177</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Noticias de cruz y resurrección," Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 7.

<sup>178</sup>"El testimonio de estos amigos, como el de tantos otros, nos han hecho tangibles las enseñanzas del Maestro. El nos anima para que libre y responsablemente las hagamos nuestras." Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), my translation, 353.

<sup>179</sup>"Choose Life," The Tablet 246 (7 March 1992): 310.

<sup>180</sup>A Vicente Hondarza, a Ignacio Ellacuría y sus compañeros, y en ellos a todos los que, nacidos en España, han venido a vivir y a morir en las Indias, en busca de los pobres de Jesucristo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo: El pensamiento de Bartolomé de Las Casas, my translation, 1.

<sup>181</sup>"Aquellos que han dado su vida son también, en cierto modo, precursores de Jesús; como Juan Bautista, nos llaman a todos a convertirnos y a preparar los caminos para el advenimiento del Señor." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, my translation, 25.

communities have also died similarly. In fact, eight priests and religious who worked among the poor in Peru were murdered in recent weeks, but he does not supply any names or details of the events.<sup>182</sup> In Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico (October 1995), Gutiérrez also reflects briefly on the lives of three other priests--Miguel Company, Michael Tomaszek, and Zbigniew Strzalkowski--and the deaths of the latter two. They worked with the poor in Chimbote and Pariacoto, Peru. In August, 1991, the forces of Sendero Luminoso, a group whom Gutiérrez unambiguously designates as terrorists, tried unsuccessfully to murder Fr. Company, but they did kill the Fr. Tomaszek, and Fr. Strzalkowski (probably two of the eight murdered priests Gutiérrez referred to in the aforementioned lecture). These priests were Gutiérrez's friends and their deaths clearly hurt him deeply. For Gutiérrez, these violent deaths undercut any tendencies Christians committed to the poor may have of being triumphalistic.<sup>183</sup>

### 3. The Significance and the Insignificance of the Poor and Anonymous Martyrs:

In Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983), Gutiérrez again observes that, even in death, the non-poor martyr is not completely a part of the world of the poor because the poor martyr always remains anonymous.<sup>184</sup> He cites two examples to support this observation. First, he states that he agrees with the assessment made by Fr. Jorge Alvarez Calderón that the vast majority of the Latin American martyrs are from the poor themselves. According to Fr. Alvarez Calderón, the poor remain "anonymous...because the situation is such that in our countries the lowly still cannot be known by their names--nevertheless, when they are called, they are not able to set limits on their human love."<sup>185</sup> Like Jesus, they do not have their lives taken away from them; instead, they are the ones who choose to deliver them. Second, Gutiérrez again cites the example of the forty Salvadorans who died at Romero's

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<sup>182</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Juan de la Cruz desde América Latina," Páginas 17, no. 116 (July 1992): 29. According to Otto Maduro, between 1968 and 1986, "we have known of the assassination of near 100 Catholic clergy people (bishops, priests, nuns and religious brothers...several of them from the U.S.) and around 1,000 lay leaders; the imprisonment, torture, rape and/or exile of several thousand clergy people and lay leaders; the murder of not less than 100,000 simple poor lay people; and the forced displacement of more than a million others--near half of them looking for sanctuary in the U.S." Otto Maduro, "North- and Latin American Catholicism: From Oppressive Solitude Toward Liberating Solidarity," Review of Latin American Studies 1 (no. 1, 1988): 6.

<sup>183</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 303.

<sup>184</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 188.

<sup>185</sup>"Anónimos en su mayoría--porque la situación es tal que en nuestros países que aún no se puede conocer al pequeño por su nombre---, sin embargo, al ser convocados, no ponen límites a su amor humano." Jorge Alvarez Calderón, "Descubrir la espiritualidad del pueblo," in Acompañado a la comunidad (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1982), 179, quoted in Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 188.

funeral on March 30, 1980.<sup>186</sup>

Gutiérrez returns to his reflections on the difference between the poor and anonymous martyrs and the well-known martyrs, in "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina" (December 1984). He notes that a principal difference between them is that the poor, who make up the majority of the world's population, are always viewed as being insignificant. Gutiérrez recognizes that, even though he was born in a poor Peruvian family, he is now part of the significant minority because he has a position in the Church. The same is true of all the priests and bishops who have been murdered, such as Archbishop Oscar Romero, Fr. Luis Espinal, Fr. Rutilio Grande, and Fr. Carlos Mújica: they are all quite famous. He then suggests that some people in his audience may even recall the names of a few female religious, though they are already perceived as being less significant than the men. The remote possibility even exists that some members of his audience may know the name of a prominent member of the laity who has died, but this is highly unlikely. Then he asks whether anyone remembers the names of the two catechists who were murdered alongside Fr. Rutilio Grande. He admits that he, too, does not recall their names. This is "because the peasants die anonymously, just as they lived. Not [even] dead are they equal. The poor are cannon-fodder. They are anonymous in history. The deaths do not count. We neither know who they are nor how many of them there are."<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>186</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 188. "Gutiérrez was present at Romero's funeral and witnessed the gunfire and panic that interrupted it. Borne by the crowd into the cathedral from the entryway where the altar was, he feared being trampled because he is short and lame. Others were trampled, mostly women; he saw five bodies and attended one woman before she died." Gutiérrez commented that "'it's very sad to see them--young women, 30 or 40 years old, and each would be leaving four or five children behind. That's the way it is with our people here in Peru. The faces were like those of our people--poor people's faces. I found it very moving.'" "The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 935. In a subsequent article he notes that no one knows for certain how many people were killed during Romero's funeral, but that he personally saw thirteen corpses. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La evangelización de América Latina ante el año 2000," Ciencia Tomista 116 (May-August 1989): 370. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Option for the Poor: Assessment and Implications," trans. Heidi Epstein, ARC, The Journal of the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill 22 (1994): 66-67.

<sup>187</sup>"Porque los campesinos mueren anónimamente, como vivieren. Ni muertos son iguales. Los pobres son carne de cañón. Son anónimos en la historia. Ni muertos cuentan. No sabemos quiénes son ni cuántos son." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," my translation, Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 144. Many laity of the dioceses of Neuquén, Quilmes, and Viedma, among other laypersons, met in Quilmes, Argentina between March 2 and 9, 1986 for the seminar, "Evangelización y opción por los pobres." Gutiérrez delivered a series of lectures in which he makes a similar observation on the poor, anonymous martyrs: "Something which really draws my attention is that we know the names of those who have given their life because of their Christian witness but who belong to the episcopacy or [who] are priests or religious. Nevertheless, the poor never appear with their own names. No one knows who they are. Those who live anonymously also die anonymously. Even dead they are not known. This tells us the extent to which the poor person is an insignificant being. [The poor person] does not count. The poor person is the one who waits in line for three days in a hospital in order to have

In "La verdad los hará libres" (July 1986), Gutiérrez draws attention to the reality that the "the process of liberation is watered by the blood of humble peasants and settlers who tried to give witness to their Christian faith [through their] solidarity with their poorer brothers."<sup>188</sup> While he does not explicitly designate these poor Christians as martyrs, he observes that their demonstrations of Christian faith resemble the witness of faith given by more famous people such as Archbishop Oscar Romero and Bishop Enrique Angelelli, whom he has previously called genuine martyrs.

Gutiérrez delivered the closing lecture at a conference entitled, "Los dominicos y el nuevo mundo" ["The Dominicans and the New World"], which met April 1, 1989 at the Theological Faculty of San Esteban in Salamanca, Spain. In this lecture, Gutiérrez observes that the many poor Christians who are killed on account of their faith are known by a number representing their collectivity, and not by their individual names. He provides two examples to illustrate this point. First, he notes that, in the late 1970s, ten peasant catechists were killed alongside two well-known priests (whom he does not name) in Honduras. These catechists are now simply known by a number, as "the ten". They continue to remain insignificant in their deaths on account of the faith.<sup>189</sup> Second, he once again cites the example of the approximately forty Salvadorans who were murdered at Romero's funeral. They are now known as "the forty," and not as individually significant people. It is not completely clear whether Gutiérrez believes that these forty people died as martyrs, but this is likely. As was seen in chapter six, Gutiérrez asked, in "Beber en su propio pozo" (September 1982), "why do we not think about so many peasants, villagers, women of our people, workers who give their lives *anonymously* because of their love for the people or simply on account of knowing how to be there in the midst of them?"<sup>190</sup> The forty poor people attended Romero's funeral

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a tooth taken out." "Algo que a mí me llama mucho la atención, es que los nombres de aquellos que han dado su vida por su testimonio cristiano pero que pertenecen al episcopado o son sacerdotes o religiosas, los conocemos. Sin embargo, los pobres nunca figuran con nombres propios. Nadie sabe cómo se llaman. Aquellos que viven anónimamente mueren anónimamente también. Ni muertos son conocidos. Esto nos dice hasta qué punto el pobre es un ser insignificante. No cuenta. El pobre es aquel que hace cola tres días en un hospital para que le saquen un diente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangélicación y opción por los pobres, my translation, 37.

<sup>188</sup>"El proceso de liberación está regado con la sangre de humildes campesinos y pobladores que buscaban dar testimonio de su fe cristiana en la solidaridad con sus hermanos más pobres." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La verdad los hará libres," my translation, in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones, 164. For a general reference to Christians who have died on account of their commitment to the liberation of the poor masses, see *Ibid.*, 201.

<sup>189</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La evangelización de América Latina ante el año 2000," Ciencia Tomista 116 (May-August 1989): 370.

<sup>190</sup>"¿Cómo no pensar en tantos campesinos, pobladores, mujeres de nuestro pueblo, obreros que dan *anónimamente* sus vidas o simplemente por saber estar ahí en medio de él?" Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7.

as an expression of their faith. They simply wanted to be where it counted, despite the risk to their lives. Many people, of course, would dispute designating them as martyrs. For example, while the slaughter at Romero's funeral may have been motivated by the hatred of the faith, one issue is whether these poor people could be designated as true martyrs if they were simply randomly killed. Furthermore, it may be asked whether they had truly prepared themselves for such deaths, and thereby accepted them beforehand. Perhaps these questions would not even arise among many believers because they concern a group which is largely considered to be insignificant.

#### E. The Effects of Martyrdom on What it Means to be a Church in Contemporary Latin America: Building the Church of the Poor

Many Christians are deeply impressed by the reality that a number of their fellow believers--both well-known members of the clergy and some poor and insignificant laypeople--have chosen to commit themselves to the poor up to the point of death. They view the faith of all the martyrs as models of how to live--and if necessary, how to die--as a Christian in Latin America today. They judge the martyrs' willingness to die for the full liberation of everyone as evidence that this is truly an objective worth seeking. The various ways how the martyrs have demonstrated their faith therefore inspire many other Christians--both poor Christians and other Christians who are not poor--to make the same decision to commit themselves to the liberation of everyone, especially of the poorest. These Christians endeavour to construct a new way of being a Church in Latin America which runs completely contrary to a Church that is connected to the powerful and that especially serves their interests. Instead of maintaining the Church's traditionally preferential option for the powerful in the continent, they desire to construct a Church which opts preferentially for the poor. They try to build a "Church of the poor." The objective of this section is to examine Gutiérrez's writings between 1983 and 1995 in order to examine his theological reflections on the effects of so many examples of martyrdom on what it means to be a Church in contemporary Latin America.

In the lecture, Salvación y pobreza: Consecuencias eclesiológicas (February 7-18, 1983), Gutiérrez claims that the many occurrences of martyrdom have had ramifications on what it means to be a Church in contemporary Latin America: "from the blood of the martyrs, [who are] the witnesses of the Father's will for life and [his] love for the poor, the church of the poor which John XXIII sought is arising" nowadays in Latin America.<sup>191</sup> Martyrdom therefore contributes to the construction of a Church that is a "Church

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<sup>191</sup>"De la sangre de los mártires, testigos de la voluntad de vida y del amor del Padre por los pobres, está surgienda la iglesia de los pobres que postulaba Juan XXIII." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, my translation, 14. In an endnote (no. 65), Gutiérrez draws attention to an article by Jon Sobrino on the occurrence of martyrdom in Latin America. Ibid., Notas, p. 5. See Jon Sobrino, "The Witness of the Church

of the poor". As was seen in chapter five, Gutiérrez began to analyze Pope John XXIII's desire that the Roman Catholic Church become a Church for everybody, but especially a "Church of the poor," in the essay, Pobreza evangélica: Solidaridad y pobreza (July 1967). The Church of the poor envisioned by Pope John XXIII was not considered at length by the bishops and cardinals who gathered at the Second Vatican Council, but it is the model of the Church which has been adopted subsequently by many Latin American Christians, especially starting with the Medellín Conference in 1968 (as was seen in chapter six). The Church of the poor was thereafter reaffirmed as the appropriate model of the Church for Latin America at many national episcopal conferences, and then at the Puebla Conference. For Gutiérrez, the Church of the poor means, first, a Church in which believers commit themselves to the liberation of everybody, but especially of the poor masses, and, second, a Church in which the poor, too, assume principal roles as the bearers of the gospel to each other and to the Church as a whole. As was seen in chapter six, Gutiérrez believes that the Church fulfills its mission in the world insofar as the poor themselves become the Church, that is, when the poor themselves occupy a central place in it. As Gutiérrez has stated on many occasions, the partial realization of the Church of the poor demonstrates that the poor have begun to "irrupt" onto the historical stage as an oppressed and believing people. They can no longer be simply ignored. They are now demanding that they become principal actors in society, including in the Church. In fact, they have begun to assume greater roles in the Church, at least in some locations in the continent, particularly in the basic ecclesial communities. In many other locations, however, the poor are still not major actors in the Church.

Building the Church of the poor is nonetheless not an easy task for two reasons. First, it demands that Christians and, in fact, the whole Church change radically, be transformed, and thereby be converted.

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in Latin America," in The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities, 161-188. "It has become traditional to say that the church is born from the blood of the martyrs, and I think that is what's happening today in Latin America. It's a difficult moment, but a productive one." "The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 934. "The blood of those who give evidence of their love for God by means of solidarity with the poor, is proof of that encounter with death and the cross. But the 'blood of the Christians is the seed' of a new life and hope in accordance with *Ad Gentes* (n. 5; cf. also n. 24). The blood of the martyrs always gives new life to the Church. The Latin American Christian community experiences this nowadays; and [this] prepares it to welcome the gift of God's gratuitous love, at the same time as it impels [the Church] to assume its task with the poorest. It is a painful and joyful, paschal part which no one will be able to take away from [the poor]." "La sangre de los que atestiguan de su amor por Dios a través de la solidaridad con el pobre, es una prueba de ese encuentro con la muerte y la cruz. Pero la 'sangre de los cristianos es como semilla' de una nueva vida y esperanza de acuerdo con *Ad Gentes* (n. 5; cf. también n. 24). La sangre de los mártires da siempre nueva vida a la Iglesia. Esto lo experimenta en nuestros días la comunidad cristiana latinoamericana; y la dispone a acoger el don del amor gratuito de Dios, al mismo tiempo que la impulsa a asumir su tarea con los más pobres. Es una dolorosa y alegre, pasqual, parte que nadie podrá quitarle." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana," my translation, Páginas no. 70 (August 1985): 12. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Por el camino de la pobreza," Páginas no. 58 (December 1983): 13; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 237.

Conversion requires a radical departure from a whole attitude, a whole way of life, a long acknowledged way of doing things, so that the interests of the poorest may become foremost.<sup>192</sup> Second, constructing the Church of the poor also implies recognizing that a certain sector of the Church and society will become enraged and react violently against this project. This is, in fact, what has happened on a wide scale in Latin America since the late 1960s. The commitment to manifest a Church of the poor has exacted, and it continues to demand, a very high price on the committed Christians' "personal freedom, reputation, physical and mental wellbeing, presence in [their] own country, and in some cases of [their] own life."<sup>193</sup> The decision made by many poor and "non-poor" Christians to commit themselves to the liberation of the poor, which is a decision made in full recognition of the inevitable price to themselves and to their families, is nevertheless precisely the way that they have demonstrated their faith in the biblical God. As was already mentioned, for Gutiérrez, the lives lost giving witness to this God are never wasted because it is on the foundation of the martyrs' blood that the Church (which truly acts as a Church only when it is the Church of the poor) is built. This "is a traditional question in the life of the church but one which perhaps we had slightly forgotten."<sup>194</sup> According to Gutiérrez, this perennial truth has disconcerted some people. He does not identify who these people are, nor how they express their discomfort with the changes in the Church. He is apparently pointing to people who become uneasy when they observe that some Christians continue to commit themselves to the poor in spite of, and, in fact, precisely due to the fact that others have already been murdered in the past for making the same decision to demonstrate their faith up to the point of death. These people may very well think that further violence will quash the obstinateness of the Christians who continue to work with the poor. While the common occurrence of repression and martyrdom do not

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<sup>192</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, 10; "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15, no. 19 (26 May 1983): 6. For studies of Gutiérrez's ecclesiology, see also James B. Nickoloff, "Liberation Theology and the Church," Religious Studies Review 18 (January 1992): 8-12; Robert Leroy Breckenridge, "The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino"; James B. Nickoloff, "Church of the Poor: The Ecclesiology of Gustavo Gutiérrez," Theological Studies 54 (September 1993): 512-535.

<sup>193</sup>"Pero es verdad que debe pagarse un precio para ser una iglesia de los pobres. No el precio del ser y hacer auténticos de la iglesia, sino el de la libertad personal, la reputación, la integridad física y mental, la presencia en su propio país y algunos casos la propia vida." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, my translation, 15. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La verdad los hará libres," in La verdad los hará libres: Confrontaciones, 246.

<sup>194</sup>"En el fondo, es una cuestión tradicional en la vida de la iglesia pero que tal vez habíamos olvidado un poco." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, my translation, 14. "Traditionally we say that the Church is enriched by the blood of the martyrs; the present vitality of the People of God in Latin America comes to a large extent from that experience." "Tradicionalmente decimos que la Iglesia se enriquece con la sangre de los mártires; la vitalidad presente del Pueblo de Dios en América Latina viene en gran parte de esa experiencia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Evangelio de la liberación," my translation, in Signos de nueva evangelización, xxiii. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 95.



necessarily dissuade some Christians from continuing to be resolute in the face of personal risks, according to Gutiérrez, they nonetheless do have a sobering effect. The experiences of martyrdom, in fact, help to safeguard against any temptation to become triumphalistic.<sup>195</sup> A triumphalistic attitude may be exhibited, for example, by Christians who are proud of the fact that their commitment to the poor is dangerous. Gutiérrez believes that it is particularly disgusting that some believers are proud of their commitment to the poor because, in reality, their commitment always falls far short of what it should be.<sup>196</sup>

In Beber en su propio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo (October 1983), Gutiérrez identifies some of the effects which the persecution of the Church and the martyrdom of its members have had on the identity of the Church in contemporary Latin America. These are all effects which he has witnessed in his pastoral work. First, the experience of suffering repression and of knowing companions who have been killed due to their commitment to the process of liberation nourishes new life in the Church. It encourages other believers to cherish the memories of these martyrs, and to look upon the faith of the martyrs as models worth imitating. He quotes a letter written by Bishop Luis María Estrada on July 23, 1981, and sent to the basic ecclesial communities of Izabal, Guatemala, in order to supply one example of how the martyrs are viewed by many Christians: "Let us remain in communion with the martyrs. They build the most durable foundations for this divine city which is rising up towards eternity."<sup>197</sup> For those

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<sup>195</sup>"The church of the poor disturbs and hurts the interests of the great people of this world. It therefore finds the cross of the Lord on its path. If there is a church which cannot be triumphalistic, as was said during the time of the [Vatican] Council, this is the one. The blood of people who demonstrate their love for God in solidarity with the poor shows this." "La iglesia de los pobres inquieta y hiere los intereses de los grandes de este mundo. Ella encuentra, por eso, la cruz del Señor en su camino. Si hay una iglesia que no puede ser triunfalista, como se decía en la época del Concilio, es ésta. La sangre de los que testimonian su amor por Dios en la solidaridad con el pobre así lo está probando." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Salvación y pobreza, my translation, 17. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 188-189; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado y alcance de Medellín" ["Meaning and Importance of Medellín"], in Irupción y caminar de la Iglesia de los pobres: presencia de Medellín, CEP, 98 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1989), 71.

<sup>196</sup>"...one of the things that I find most sacrilegious is to be proud of being committed to the poor. It is the type of thing that most outrages me, because there is no such thing. That commitment is hardly the first step into an enormous, complex, at times--humanly speaking--mysterious world." "Estoy simplemente diciendo que una de las cosas que yo encuentro más sacrilegas es ser orgulloso por estar comprometido con el pobre. Es de las cosas que más me violentan, porque no hay tal cosa. Ese compromiso es apenas los primeros pasos de entrada en un mundo enorme, complejo, por momentos--humanamente hablando--misterioso." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," my translation, Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 145.

<sup>197</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 175. "Permanezcamos en comunión con los mártires....Ellos construyen los fundamentos más consistentes de esta ciudad divina que se eleva hacia la eternidad." Mons. Luis María Estrada P., "Carta a las comunidades cristianas de Izabal," my translation, in Morir y despertar en Guatemala, 157. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado y alcance de Medellín," in Irupción y caminar de la Iglesia de los pobres, 71.

Christians who have already committed themselves to the poor, these agonizing experiences can encourage them to purify their faith. They must decide whether to strengthen their commitment to the process of liberation, or to fall to the temptation of seeking easier commitments.<sup>198</sup> The martyrs of today also encourage new commitments to the poor. To illustrate this point, Gutiérrez cites a letter written by the Guatemalan bishops on August 6, 1981. In the letter, the bishops express their belief that many new Christians in the future will be inspired by the blood which the Guatemalan martyrs are spilling nowadays.<sup>199</sup> Second, Gutiérrez observes that the painful experience of widespread persecution and martyrdom uncovers previously unknown paths of how to be a Christian and a Church. For example, as was seen in a previous section, the evolution of the spirituality of liberation has been profoundly influenced by the experience of persecution and martyrdom. Third, an environment characterized by persecution and martyrdom provides believers with an appropriate occasion for expressing their deep joy because they have seen that these martyrs died out of a unconditional love for both God and for all their fellow human beings, especially for those who are poorest. The deep faith of the martyrs and their demonstration of love for the poor feeds the hope of the poor in the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. The poor, encouraged by the examples of the martyrs, demand the conversion of the whole Church. A converted Church is one which truly accepts God's will that everyone has the right to life (which includes the right to think and to do theology, as was seen in chapter six).<sup>200</sup> According to Gutiérrez, Jesus summons all Christians and the Church itself, through the poor, to change so that they may follow him more closely: "in the faces and hands of the dispossessed the Lord is knocking on the door [of the Church], and [he does it] persistently." Furthermore, Gutiérrez designates the present era as a "rich moment in the history" of the Church. It is a propitious moment which is full of promise because there is a great opportunity for the Church to be converted. The whole Church, not just a sector of it, is therefore at a crossroads where it must decide either to serve the poor preferentially or to continue to defend the interests of the traditional beneficiaries of the

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<sup>198</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174. In an interview, Gutiérrez observes that the delivery of one's life "in defense of human rights, for justice, and for the Gospel message...nourishes the resistance of other people under a dictatorial regime and [it] will also enrich the following stage," that is, the period subsequent to a dictatorship. "Peru: An Interview with Gustavo Gutiérrez," LADOC 19 (September-October 1988): 26 [This is an abridged translation of an interview which was originally published in Spanish in Pastoral Popular (March 1988).].

<sup>199</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174. "Comunicado de la Conferencia Episcopal de Guatemala, 6 de agosto 1981," in "Comunicado de la conferencia episcopal de Guatemala," in Morir y despertar en Guatemala, 118.

<sup>200</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 44-45.

established order.<sup>201</sup>

Gutiérrez develops his observation that martyrdom raises the hope of the poor in the coming of the Kingdom of God in Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente (January 1986). According to Gutiérrez, the hope of the poor in God has "its point of departure...in a painful situation"; they have seen that some of their fellow Christians were killed--and they were willing to die--because of how they had manifested in concrete actions their profound love for both the poor and the God who prefers them. This hope of the poor, which Gutiérrez has often described as a "hope against all hope," clearly "is not intelligible" outside the context of a deep faith.<sup>202</sup> In other words, when the acute suffering experienced by the poor is considered alone, divorced from their faith in God, their hope makes no sense whatsoever. In the midst of all their suffering, they should despair. Nevertheless, according to Gutiérrez, this hope exists all the same. Furthermore, the poor manifest this hope in a profound rejoicing, in a celebration of life. One particularly striking way how they express this joy is in their celebrations of the anniversaries of the

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<sup>201</sup>"La generosidad derrochada...coloca a la comunidad eclesial en un exigente...pero al mismo tiempo rico momento de su historia. En los rostros y manos de los desposeídos el Señor toca a su puerta, y con insistencia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 44.

<sup>202</sup>"...[La] esperanza en Dios [tiene] su punto de partida...en una situación cuya razón no se entiende...." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, my translation, 50.

martyrs.<sup>203</sup> Gutiérrez emphasizes, however, that this joy expressed by the poor is "not an easy joy, but [it is] real." It is a joy "born from the conviction that mistreatment and unjust suffering will be overcome" one day, and it is therefore a "paschal joy which corresponds to a time of martyrdom." Gutiérrez shares an insight which he learned from a peasant woman in his parish. He learned that, contrary to what many people may assume, when the poor express their joy, this does not run contrary to the reality of their suffering. It is not a naive evasion of their reality. Instead, their joy is the opposite of sadness, despair, and hopelessness. They express their joy at not having been completely defeated and dehumanized by their suffering; they refuse to accept the inevitability of a premature death, but instead they affirm their right to life. It is a right which they struggle to manifest now, and which they believe will be fully met one day with the complete manifestation of the Kingdom of God. It is therefore possible for the poor to rejoice while suffering, but they are not able to rejoice if they are sad.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup>"Latin American Christians (and their counterparts in the U.S. Hispanic church) insist upon remembering those who have been killed in the cause of justice and celebrate their witness with a joy which non-Latins may find astonishing. How does one account for a hope, even joy, which thousands of deaths fail to extinguish--indeed seem to fortify?" James B. Nickoloff, "A Future for Peru? Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Reasons for His Hope," *Horizons* 19 (Spring 1992): 38-39. Nickoloff, who worked with Gutiérrez at the Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas from 1986 to 1988, observes what some of the effects of martyrdom have been on the members of the basic ecclesial communities in Peru: "Gutiérrez's threefold approach to theological questions allows him to grasp the meaning of an apparently paradoxical hope which springs from martyrdom. First, empirical inquiry demonstrates that in actual fact members of basic Christian communities in Peru have begun to refuse to allow repression--from the Left or the Right--to intimidate them. Instead, utopian 'eyes' perceive among the poor of Peru signs of a new self-possession expressed in the creation of popular organizations, an allegiance to more human values, and the adoption of new ways of behavior. Finally, faith itself discerns the work of God's Spirit in the renewed conviction and willingness of the poor and those allied with them to struggle for a just world, even at the price of death. The joy that accompanies suffering in celebrations of the lives of contemporary Peruvian martyrs is born, then, in the knowledge that 'something new is germinating in this universe of unmerited afflictions.' What is new is the increasing number of people, often humble, who are willing to risk their lives in the struggle for justice despite real threats to their safety. Such hope and such joy, always susceptible to frustration and confusion, are capable of subverting even a death-dealing social order even though 'the price has not been--and is not--low which the poor have had to pay for having their dignity as human beings recognized.' 'The opposite of joy is not suffering, but sadness,' claims Gutiérrez, sharing an insight offered by a humble woman of the parish in Lima where he is pastor. If the blood of martyrs failed to provoke a deeper commitment to justice in fellow believers, that would be cause for genuine sadness. Instead, in Peru Christians sing songs of praise and thanksgiving for the *imitatio Christi* being lived among them today." *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>204</sup>"Una alegría no fácil pero real. No es el gozo superficial de la inconsciencia o la resignación, sino aquella que nace de la convicción de que el maltrato y el sufrimiento injusto serán vencidos. Se trata de una alegría pascual que corresponde a un tiempo de martirio." Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Beber en su propio pozo*, my translation, 172. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "A Spirituality for Liberation," *The Other Side* 21 (April-May 1985): 43; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Nuestra fe: La mayor razón de esperanza," *Signos* 9 (no. 24, July 1989): 9; "Gustavo Gutiérrez Woos the Scots," *The Tablet* (18 March 1995): 371; Jon Sobrino, "Espiritualidad y teología. A propósito del libro de Gustavo Gutiérrez 'Beber en su propio pozo,'" *Revista Latinoamericana de Teología* 1 (no. 1, May-August 1984): 212. Gutiérrez has been deeply impressed by the reality that many

In an interview from May 26, 1983, Gutiérrez observes that martyrdom is a "living part of the experience of the church in Latin America" today. This observation illustrates Gutiérrez's judgment that persecution and martyrdom are widespread in the continent, and that they are unlikely to diminish soon. Because this reality is undeniable, Christians "cannot avoid reflecting on so many martyred bishops, peasants, religious and priests."<sup>205</sup> His observation also suggests that, as a "living part of the experience of the Church," martyrdom has a profound effect on the identity of the Church, and it compels Christians to reconsider what it means to be a Christian and a Church. For Gutiérrez, the Vatican II document, *Lumen Gentium*, provides some guidance concerning how martyrdom should be viewed. He believes that, in fact, the Church in Latin America is experiencing exactly what *Lumen Gentium* no. 8 recommended about how to be a Church today: it "declared that, like its founder, the church should live in poverty and be persecuted." According to Gutiérrez, the Church in the continent clearly possesses these signs of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, regardless of whether everyone is aware of it, "something is happening on this continent today, and while it may appear insignificant, it is bringing the church closer to the Lord."<sup>206</sup> In fact, as was seen in a previous section, many Christians, as participants in a community of believers committed to the poor, have learned how to deepen their spirituality in the midst of suffering. They have begun to learn--and they are still continuing to learn--how to pray while confronted by "suffering...abuse, suspicion, calumny, imprisonment, torture, and death." This is why Gutiérrez judges that, in spite of the great suffering experienced by many Christians in contemporary Latin America, "I believe the pain is bearing fruit. And that is cause for great hope."<sup>207</sup>

Gutiérrez also briefly examines some of the same effects of martyrdom on the identity of the Church in "Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana" (August 1985). He now adds his judgment that, even though it is probably still too early to evaluate the full effect of this experience of widespread martyrdom

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Christians have been willing to commit themselves to the poor during the twenty years subsequent to the Medellín Conference, often even up to the point of death. He wishes these deaths had not taken place, but they have made him more optimistic than he was before the conference because they demonstrate the conversion of the Church in Latin America on behalf of the poor which has transpired during that time. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Church of the Poor," in *Boor of the Poor: The Latin American Church Since Medellín*, ed. Edward L. Cleary (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 21.

<sup>205</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', *Latinamerica Press* 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

<sup>206</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', *Latinamerica Press* 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5-6. See also James B. Nickoloff, "A Future for Peru? Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Reasons for His Hope," *Horizons* 19 (Spring 1992): 39.

<sup>207</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', *Latinamerica Press* 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 8.

on the Church in Latin America, it is nevertheless "clear that [the Church] will not be the same after this witness of so many of its children."<sup>208</sup> While Gutiérrez is not suggesting that the end of persecution and martyrdom is imminent, he nevertheless predicts (on the basis of the immense effects of martyrdom on many sectors of the Church nowadays) that, in such a hypothetical future, the painful experiences since the 1960s will continue to influence the ways how many Christians act in the world, how they nurture their contemplative activities, and how they talk about these two acts--that is, how they do theology. The widespread experiences of persecution and martyrdom will not be quickly forgotten, but instead they will continue to mark the identity of the Church in Latin America, just as the experiences of martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church have continued to mark the identity of the whole Church today.

### Summary:

It is clear that the persecution of the Church in contemporary Latin America and the martyrdom of some of its members constitute a major theme of theological reflection in Gustavo Gutiérrez's writings between 1983 and 1995. Even though he is convinced that many Christians have died as martyrs on account of their commitment to the poor, he does not simply examine what some of the effects of these violent deaths have been on the identity of the Church in the continent. Instead, Gutiérrez has also reflected extensively on what he believes are some of the characteristics of all true examples of martyrdom. The most important assertion he makes is that the martyrs are not heroes; instead, they are humble Christians whose faith corresponds to what should characterize the faith of all true believers in the biblical God. Gutiérrez employs several sources in order to find evidence of what should characterize the faith of all true believers: he examines the Old Testament (especially, the Book of Job); the New Testament; the experiences of the pre-Constantinian martyrs and of their surviving companions; and, finally, he reflects on the experiences and the faith of the many poor and non-poor Christians (including on the experiences and the faith of the poor and insignificant martyrs and the famous and non-poor martyrs) who are committed to the liberation of everyone in contemporary Latin America, especially of the poor who, they believe, are preferred by God. For Gutiérrez, the most important characteristic of the faith of all true believers is what motivates their actions in the world, in their spiritual lives as individuals and as members of a community of believers, and in their theological reflections on their actions and contemplations--that is, their talking about God. The central motive of all true believers is to respond to God's unconditional love of everyone and of his whole

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<sup>208</sup>Tal vez nos falta todavía perspectiva para examinar esta realidad martirial de la Iglesia latinoamericana; pero es claro que ésta no será la misma después de ese testimonio de tantos de sus hijos." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Vaticano II y la Iglesia latinoamericana," my translation, Páginas no. 70 (August 1985): 12. This passage has been fully reprinted. See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Significado y alcance de Medellín," in Irrupción y caminar de la Iglesia de los pobres, 71.

creation. According to Gutiérrez, they respond to this love by trying, as well as they possibly can, to express their own unconditional love of God, of themselves, and of all other people, especially of the poor. Of course, this is a lofty goal, but it should be their goal nonetheless. They demonstrate their attempts to love everyone unconditionally by acting in ways that are consistent with such a love. It is precisely by means of these loving actions that they endeavour to build a more just society, one in which the needs of the poorest are foremost, thereby contributing to the construction of communion among all people and between all people and God. At all times, they recognize that the full communion--the Kingdom of God--is ultimately realized only by the will of God at the end of history. The martyrs are therefore Christians who are murdered because of the ways how they have demonstrated (just as all true believers should) their love of all other people, particularly of the poor, and their belief in, trust in, hope in, and love of God. They are killed because their persecutors hate the ways how they have demonstrated this love. They hate the attempts made by these Christians to build a society in which the needs of the poorest are considered first. These persecutors have interests other than the love of all other people and of God, and in fact they order these deaths because they perceive--correctly--that their narrow, personal interests are threatened by how such a love is manifested concretely in the bold endeavours to construct a society which is more just for all people, not simply for a dominant minority. As Gutiérrez has stated on numerous occasions, the martyrs do not seek their violent deaths, but by placing themselves in situations where they denounce injustices and announce the Kingdom of God, and then by choosing to remain in these situations, in spite of the dangers they inevitably face, they sometimes end up being murdered. Gutiérrez displays this understanding of the cause of martyrdom in his analyses of some specific examples of martyrdom (e.g., the murders of Archbishop Oscar Romero, of the six Jesuits and the two women who died alongside them, and of the other famous martyrs and anonymous martyrs). Rather than seek their own deaths--or the deaths of anyone else--the Christians who truly end up dying as martyrs desire the conversion of all people, including their persecutors. They die loving and forgiving the persecutors. Therefore the Christians whom Gutiérrez designates as truly Christian martyrs die due to the ways how they have manifested their love of God and of all people, especially of the poor.

Gutiérrez also counters the argument that these are not true martyrs, but he does this without identifying any specific naysayers. (The only possible exception to his customary reticence in supplying such names is when he states very clearly that, with the exception of one bishop, all other Salvadoran bishops and all the officials of CELAM did not attend the funeral of Romero. At the same time, many other bishops from throughout the rest of Latin America did attend it, despite the personal danger they faced.) It is nonetheless obvious that Gutiérrez is not simply imagining opponents on the issue of martyrdom. Indeed, it seems that the opponents include some powerful people in the Church in Latin America. For example, many of the Latin American bishops have demonstrated that they reject all or, at least, most of the popular proclamations of martyrdom. This is evidenced by the notable omission of any mention of the contemporary

martyrs in the final document of the Santo Domingo Conference (and the final document of the Puebla Conference before it). It would have been possible for the document to acknowledge the general reality of martyrdom without supplying any specific names, and then it could have included some theological reflections on the significance of the martyrs as a group for the identity of the Church in Latin America. It is notable that this omission of the martyrs occurred in spite of Gutiérrez's claim (which is shared by other people) that many Christians are willing to recognize the veracity of the martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero, even if they question all other popular proclamations of martyrdom. On the many occasions when Gutiérrez points to the unnamed people who refuse to recognize the martyrs, he does not appear to be suggesting that Christians are not entitled to have differing opinions on the matter. Gutiérrez does not seem to be upset by Christians who have honestly reflected theologically on these deaths in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith, and who then have arrived at a different conclusion than he has. Instead, he seems to be concerned by people who systematically oppose the process of liberation outright, and who manifest this opposition in many ways, including through their denial of the veracity of the contemporary martyrs. As Gutiérrez has stated, they "refuse to accept what [the martyrs] stood for." These are people who, Gutiérrez believes, are motivated by objectives other than the love of God and the love of all other people, particularly of the poor. They are motivated by their self-interests, even if they are not aware of this. In other words, their actions and their stated beliefs are frequently not consistent with each other. They may even be idolators.

At the same time that many Christians deny some or all of the popularly recognized martyrs, many other Christians cherish the memories of the martyrs. It is clear that a number of the Christians who have died violently on account of their commitment to the process of liberation now enjoy widespread, popular reputations of martyrdom, which have supposedly arisen spontaneously. These include the famous and significant martyrs and sometimes also the poor and anonymous martyrs. (For example, thousands of people have visited the garden where the six Jesuits and two poor Salvadoran women died in order to pay tribute to all of them.) According to Gutiérrez, many Christians who are committed to the poor (including both poor Christians and non-poor Christians) have been inspired by the ways how the martyrs demonstrated their faith during their lives and in their deaths. They now try to imitate the faith of the martyrs. One particularly notable effect of persecution and martyrdom on the Church has been the emergence of martyrdom as a principal dimension of the spirituality of liberation. Finally, Gutiérrez emphasizes that the willingness of the martyrs to die on account of their love of all people, but especially of the poor, and also on account of their love of the God who prefers the poor, has inspired many Christians, particularly the poor themselves, to believe in God and to hope, in the midst of their sufferings (i.e., to "hope against all hope"), in the full realization of the Kingdom of God at the end of history. They sometimes manifest their hope by means of a spontaneous joy. According to Gutiérrez, they rejoice because they believe that the resurrection of Jesus Christ--as well as the salvation of the martyrs who have died in imitation of him--prove that God's promise



is true: that the last word of history is not death, but is instead life.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION: EVALUATION OF GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ'S CONCEPT OF PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM

The evolution of the concept of Christian martyrdom from the pre-Constantinian Church up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II was examined in chapters one to four. The objective of these chapter was to ascertain what martyrdom has signified and how it has been authenticated in the Church over a period of nearly two thousand years. The development of Gustavo Gutiérrez's understanding of persecution and martyrdom in his pre-theology of liberation writings (before July, 1968) and in his theology of liberation writings (July, 1968 to 1995) was analyzed in chapters five to seven. The objective of chapter eight is to examine how Gutiérrez's understanding of what characterizes true martyrdom resembles and differs from the concept of authenticated martyrdom reported in chapters one to four. The longest section is devoted to the similarities and the differences between Gutiérrez's view and the concept which evolved in the pre-Constantinian Church because many of the same issues that have arisen concerning what constitutes martyrdom in contemporary Latin America first emerged nearly two thousand years ago.

#### A. Evaluation of Gutiérrez's Concept of Martyrdom Based on the Findings Reported in Chapter One

The objective of this section is to examine the significant similarities and differences between Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom and the various ideas which, together, comprise the concept of martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church, based on the findings reported in chapter one. Because the concept of martyrdom that evolved in the pre-Constantinian Church has provided much of the foundation for the concept of martyrdom which has prevailed in the Church ever since that time--in fact, it is a major basis of Cardinal Lambertini's schema of the four basic elements of every true example of martyrdom, which continues to be an essential part of the legislation on the causes of saints--it is not surprising that Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom has much in common with the concept formulated nearly two thousand years ago. It is unlikely that Gutiérrez would employ the traditionally religious terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" if he were speaking about Christians dying for reasons which differed vastly from the reasons recognized during the period customarily designated as the "classical age of martyrs" in the Church. Indeed, the body of ideas which developed in the Early Church concerning what characterizes truly Christian martyrdom represents a major resource available to every Christian, including Gutiérrez, for trying to comprehend the significance of the violent deaths allegedly suffered on account of the faith in their own

historical circumstances. The reality that many Christians committed to the poor in contemporary Latin America have been murdered, including some of Gutiérrez's intimate friends, prompts him to wonder exactly how the surviving companions of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church made sense of their similarly violent deaths.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, contemporary Latin America is clearly not completely identical to the situation confronting the Christians in the Early Church, so Gutiérrez must appeal to other resources as well, particularly to the Bible, in order to comprehend the significance of the violent deaths of so many Christians today. Gutiérrez draws attention to Jesus Christ's warning that all his followers should prepare themselves to suffer, and even to die, just like him.<sup>2</sup> Some of the differences between Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom and the concept of martyrdom in the pre-Constantinian Church arise from the notable variations across time and place in regard to what are perceived as the major issues faced by Christians and by the whole Church or, at least, by some sectors of it. These variations demonstrate that Christians are often asking new questions about what it means to be a Christian and a Church or that they are posing old questions in new ways. The responses that they give to these questions are sometimes manifested in a normative behaviour pattern which they prescribe concerning exactly how Christians ought to act and how the Church should be present in the world during that specific era. Certain activities are required in order to identify oneself as a person with a genuinely Christian faith, whereas other activities are prohibited absolutely. For example, under no condition were Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church supposed to sacrifice to the gods of the Romans, even if this would lead to their deaths; for some sectors of the Church in contemporary Latin America, a similarly serious concern is whether Christians participate in the process of liberation, even if such a commitment means risking death. Sometimes the principal issues from one historical situation may even be perceived, in general, as enduring problems for the Church, but they are often given considerably less attention or they are understood differently than they were previously. For example, idolatry is an important theme in Gutiérrez's writings, just as it was for the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church. By idolatry, however, he means freely choosing to worship anything other than or in addition to the biblical God, rather than the specific act of making public sacrifices to other gods, when ordered to do so by the authorities of the state.

Gutiérrez examines some distinct ways how the Church has been present and acted in the world (i.e., the *pastorales*) over the past two thousand years, in his earliest writings. In La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina (January 1967), he contends that the diverse ways how the Church has been present in

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<sup>1</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Fidelidad a la vida," in Signos de vida y fidelidad, 21-22; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 27, 39-44.

<sup>2</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 64; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 370-371.

the world provide evidence of the inexhaustibility of the gospel.<sup>3</sup> Gutiérrez's assertion implies that, if the full meaning of the gospel always remains inexhaustible, then the possible ways how to articulate what it means to be a Christian and a Church in accordance with the gospel, and therefore also what it means to die on account of the faith, are also inexhaustible. The possible variations are not unlimited because they must correspond to the gospel, but they are inexhaustible because Christians can always pose new questions concerning what the gospel demands of them. Gutiérrez has continued to evidence this perspective by insisting that Christians ought to remain cognizant of the primacy of the gospel over every theological school, including the theology of liberation. He claims that he tried to live as a good Christian during the forty years before he formulated the methodology of the theology of liberation in 1968, and he hopes to live as a good Christian after the theology of liberation passes from the centre of the historical stage, just like all theologies--good or bad--eventually do. No theology ever embraces the whole gospel.<sup>4</sup> Gutiérrez's view on the inexhaustibility of the gospel offers one explanation of why there have been some notable variations, as well as some important similarities, across time and place in regard to what is popularly perceived as Christian martyrdom. Some people are popularly recognized as martyrs in one historical circumstance whom the populace probably would have evaluated differently in another. From a theological perspective, this means that the people do not discern every last example of Christian martyrdom in their midst because they are not God. Roman Catholics traditionally believe that only God knows who are all the true martyrs. Sometimes the populace attributes martyrdom to Christians who died violently, but whose entitlement to the designation of martyr is contested vigorously by the authorities involved in the authentication process. The local bishop where a popularly venerated martyr died only introduces the cause of canonization, according to the 1983 legislation on the causes of saints, if he tentatively shares the opinion of the populace. The populace sometimes also discerns novel examples of Christian martyrdom which are nevertheless eventually authenticated by means of papal canonization. It should therefore be acknowledged that some of the Christians who are popularly perceived as martyrs in contemporary Latin America probably would

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<sup>3</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, La pastoral de la Iglesia en América Latina, 10.

<sup>4</sup>"The danger in certain circles is to believe that the discussion on the Theology of Liberation is the great problem for the believer in Peru. Of course, I feel very closely linked to the Theology of Liberation but, please, let us not exaggerate, nor overestimate...For me theology is the awareness that a Christian community has of its faith at a given moment in its history. But it is an awareness. The faith is something much more profound. The Christian faith must never be identified with a certain theology." "El peligro de ciertos ambientes es creer que la discusión sobre Teología de la Liberación es el gran problema del creyente en el Perú. Desde luego, yo me siento muy ligado a Teología de la Liberación pero, por favor, no exageremos, ni sobreestimemos...La teología es para mí la conciencia que una comunidad cristiana toma de su fe en un momento dado de su historia. Pero es una conciencia la fe [sic.] es algo mucho más profundo. Jamás la fe cristiana puede identificarse con una determinada teología." "La visita del Papa vista por Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Federico Velarde, et al., my translation, Quehacer 33 (February 1985): 24.

not have been recognized as martyrs nearly two thousand years ago (and they definitely are not by some Christians living in Latin America today), and, that the same also holds true when the vantage points are reversed.

A series of questions guides the analysis of the similarities and the differences between Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom and the concept of martyrdom which evolved in the pre-Constantinian Church: in both cases, who are the martyrs?; what was their motive for demonstrating their faith up to the point of death?; how did they die?; who are the persecutors?; what was their motive for killing the martyrs or for ordering their deaths?; how are the alleged martyrs authenticated as Christian martyrs?

### 1. Who Are the Martyrs:

In the pre-Constantinian Church, only the Christians who held orthodox beliefs and the catechumens were supposed to be designated as martyrs. Some Christian writers, like Cyprian of Carthage, claimed that it was even possible for apostates to regain their standing as Christians by means of dying on account of a truly Christian confession of faith.<sup>5</sup> Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Cyprian of Carthage stated very clearly that whoever was designated as a heretic (such as the Docetists, Gnostics in general, and the Montanists) was ineligible for Christian martyrdom.<sup>6</sup> Aside from the catechumens, all other non-Christians were not eligible. Even though Christians regarded the Maccabean Jews highly as models of how to die on account of a genuine faith in the biblical God, they were generally not viewed as Christian martyrs. Christians even expressed their great appreciation of the Maccabean martyrs by including them in the Carthaginian and Syrian lists of martyrs, but not specifically as Christian martyrs.<sup>7</sup>

Gustavo Gutiérrez lives in an era when the Roman Catholic Church considers many people who are not Roman Catholics to be fellow Christians. He has demonstrated, over the years, that he customarily thinks in terms of the whole of Christianity rather than strictly the Roman Catholic Church. For example, he has been an active contributor to the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT)

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<sup>5</sup>For example, see Cyprian, Letters 19.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 53.

<sup>6</sup>See Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Smyrnaeans 2-7, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 253-259; Irenaeus, Against Heresies 4.33.9, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, 508; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.16, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 314-319; Cyprian, The Unity of the Church 14, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 109; W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 10-11, 153, 425; Edelhart L. Hummel, The Concept of Martyrdom According to St. Cyprian of Carthage, 119-122.

<sup>7</sup>The Martyrs of Lyons 55, The Martyrdom of Marian and James 13.1, The Martyrdom of Montanus and Lucius 16.4, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 79, 213, 231; Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 22, 23-27, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 162-167; Cyprian, Letters 58.6, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 167; Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus 11, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 334-339; W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 19.

since its inception in 1976, and he regularly collaborates as a fellow Christian with people from other denominations. He usually speaks about how people should act as *Christians*, a group comprised of *all the followers* of Jesus Christ, rather than specifically as Roman Catholics. When he discusses martyrdom, he normally refers to *Christian* martyrs, rather than *Roman Catholic* martyrs. Even though virtually all the people whom Gutiérrez designates as Christian martyrs, in fact, are Roman Catholics (the only definite exception is his reference to ministers in a lecture he delivered at Harvard University in 1984), it is nevertheless likely that he sometimes also includes other Christians, including poor Christians who are not Roman Catholics, in his general references to martyrdom.<sup>8</sup> Gutiérrez does not cite any examples of catechumens who have died as martyrs, but it would be surprising if he did not consider some of them to be eligible for martyrdom because this is the official view in the Roman Catholic Church. Catechumens can be papally canonized. Gutiérrez does not employ the term "apostate" to refer to the Latin American Christians who have renounced their faith. For example, he uses the word "atheist" if this corresponds to how people now identify themselves. He does not focus on the reality that many Latin American atheists (including Marxist atheists) are people who have effectively renounced the baptism and the confirmation which they had received some years previously in the Roman Catholic Church. In the pre-Constantinian Church, the apostates were the Christians who somehow demonstrated the weakness of their faith when they faced the clear choice between either surviving by publicly renouncing their faith or dying by steadfastly reaffirming it. Whenever they chose to sacrifice to the gods of the Romans instead of dying, they were also regarded as idolaters. The weakness of their faith, however, does not correspond with the modern concept of atheism. Some Christians in contemporary Latin America, nonetheless, have acted in similar ways as the apostates of the Early Church. For example, Gutiérrez observes that some Christians have weakened and lost their resolve to continue to participate in the process of liberation when they have realized that their lives are in danger. Some Christians, while under torture, have denied their commitment to the poor or they have implicated other Christians who have not yet been accused of subversive activities. Gutiérrez regards these lapses as "sins of omission", but while the sins are significant, they are nonetheless forgivable.<sup>9</sup> Gutiérrez never speaks about any unforgivable sins in his writings. He does not expressly designate the people who are guilty of "sins of omission" as "apostates", much less as idolaters. They are Christians who have sinned, just as all people have sinned, and they should now humbly seek God's forgiveness. It seems clear that these Christians could still die as martyrs if they ever faced such a possibility once again, but martyrdom is not a condition for their forgiveness. Furthermore, Gutiérrez argues that many people who

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<sup>8</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Theology and Spirituality in a Latin American Context," Harvard Divinity Bulletin 14 (no. 5, July-August, 1984): 5. See the subsection in chapter seven concerning the people whom Gutiérrez designates as martyrs: Roman Catholics, sometimes other Christians, but never non-Christians.

<sup>9</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 147.

identify themselves as Christians, in fact, are idolaters. Their sins of idolatry, too, can always be forgiven. Although Gutiérrez never states whether idolatrous Christians are ever eligible for martyrdom, it can be inferred from his writings that, insofar as they died expressing an idolatrous faith, they would not be martyrs, but if they died manifesting a truly Christian faith, God would forgive them, and they should be eligible for the designation of martyrdom. Moreover, it is notable that Gutiérrez never speaks about modern heretics, but it is safe to surmise that, if he believed any specific people were heretics, he would not consider them eligible to be designated as Christian martyrs unless they clearly expressed an orthodox faith in their last act. Orthodoxy as well as orthopraxis have to be present at the same time. Gutiérrez does not examine the issue of whether the non-Christians who are not catechumens are ever eligible for Christian martyrdom. He never designates any non-Christians committed to the poor as martyrs, even though he values all their actions—including their deaths—that contribute to the partial realization of the Kingdom of God in history. Gutiérrez does not even designate as martyrs the non-Christians committed to the process of liberation who died alongside the Christians whom he calls martyrs. This is probably a matter of restricting the usage of religious terms to the people who are traditionally recognized as being eligible for Christian martyrdom. Gutiérrez only designates as martyrs the people who clearly identified themselves as Christians and who also demonstrated a truly Christian faith. This means that he would not designate as Christian martyrs the people who called themselves Christians, yet whose articulation of the faith contradicts what is evident in the gospel and in the doctrines which are traditionally recognized as orthodox interpretations of the gospel. It is nevertheless important to bear in mind that the only definite evidence available in Gutiérrez's writings concerning whether he believes that catechumens, apostates, idolaters, heretics, and non-Christians are ever eligible for Christian martyrdom is a notable absence of unambiguous evidence.

## 2. The Motive of the Martyrs:

The second major issue is how Gutiérrez's explanation of what motivates the contemporary Latin American martyrs to allow themselves to die resembles and differs from the commonly recognized motive of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church. In both cases, the motive of the martyrs must be predominantly an expression of their faith rather than something other than their faith (e.g., political motives, the desire to be famous, or dying while protecting their personal wealth). This means that Christians can only die as martyrs if they demonstrate that they have a genuine faith in the God whom Christians worship, and if they die on account of it. An important similarity between Gutiérrez and the Christians of the Early Church is their common insistence that the martyrs clearly proved that they had the Christian faith which they had heretofore always claimed to possess. In other words, martyrdom is an expression of the consistency between the Christians' "right words" and their "right actions". Stated according to Gutiérrez's terminology, their orthodoxy is verified by their orthopraxis. In contrast with the

martyrs, the apostates in the Early Church were the people whose lack of Christian actions or whose idolatrous actions--for example, their sacrifices to the gods, their feigned sacrifices to the gods, or even their tricks and bribes in order to avoid making the clear choice between the biblical God and the gods of the Romans--at the precise moment when it counted most, revealed that they really did not have the profound faith which God supposedly demands of all Christians.

According to both the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church and Gutiérrez, people act as Christians insofar as they follow the demands of the gospel throughout their lives. These are the demands to act in accordance with what characterizes the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ is the specific model which all Christians should imitate in order to fulfill the demands of the gospel. Furthermore, both the Christians of the Early Church and Gutiérrez advise Christians to prepare themselves for the possibility of having to imitate the suffering and the death of Jesus Christ because the ways how they follow him in life often provoke a similar hatred, which sometimes leads to their own deaths on account of the faith.<sup>10</sup> The Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church were sometimes repressed by the Roman authorities on account of the actions that apparently set them apart from other people or even their perceived actions, which were evidenced in such charges as cannibalism, incest, and black magic.<sup>11</sup> It should be emphasized, however, that the idea apparently did not exist as such in the pre-Constantinian Church that Christians could die as martyrs due to their commitment to the poor. It was certainly not a predominant element of the concept of martyrdom at the time. Moreover, some Christian writers contended that it was not even the actions of Christians which elicited the hatred of the persecutors. For example, according to Tertullian, it was surely the name "Christian", itself, which ultimately provoked the hatred in the persecutors because their stated accusations definitely did not correspond with the ways how Christians acted in reality. There was no attempt in the trials even to prove that they had engaged in these perceived activities. Tertullian therefore argued that the persecutors killed Christians primarily because they hated the faith itself, rather than the

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<sup>10</sup>For example, see Polycarp, Epistle to the Philippians, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 293; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 166. Gutiérrez insists that it is particularly the responsibility of the ecclesiastical authorities to prepare themselves and the people under their charge, including the clergy and the laypersons, for the possibility of suffering and of dying on account of their faith. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 387, and the section in chapter seven concerning Gutiérrez's analysis of the warning given by Jesus that his followers must always prepare themselves to suffer and even to die violently.

<sup>11</sup>For some of the popular impressions of Christians during the pre-Constantinian era, as well as some of the charges that were commonly brought against Christians by means of private prosecutions, see Tertullian, Apology 2.1, 2.5, 7.1, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 10, 10, 11, 25; Herbert B. Workman, Persecutions in the Early Church, 50; W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 83.



various ways how the Christians had manifested their faith in their actions.<sup>12</sup> Both motives for the persecutors' actions were subsequently recognized officially in the process of canonization: Christians could be designated as martyrs if they were killed either on account of the persecutors' hatred of the faith or their hatred of particular virtues and good works prescribed by it. Evidence of either motive is sufficient for the canonization of martyrs, according to the 1983 legislation on the causes of saints. Rather than a consciously and publicly expressed hatred of the faith itself, Gutiérrez clearly emphasizes the persecutors' hatred of how Christians manifest their faith in certain activities, aimed at creating a more just society for all people, particularly for the poorest. In fact, many of the people whom Gutiérrez identifies as the persecutors consider themselves to be good Christians, not the despisers of the Christian faith. They believe that their actions help to protect or to purify the Christian faith against activities that, from their perspective, reflect transparently anti-Christian influences--especially Marxist influences--on some people who call themselves Christians. Both the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church and Gutiérrez also recommend that a highly moral life and an intimate spiritual relationship with God are the best ways for Christians to prepare themselves for the possibility of facing such a death. For example, in The Stromata, Clement of Alexandria recommends a sinless life as the best preparation for enduring a martyr's death.<sup>13</sup> Gutiérrez similarly insists that the decision made by Christians to allow themselves to die on account of their faith should not be viewed as a singularly heroic action, but simply as a particularly notable manifestation of the unconditional love of God and of all other people, especially of the poor, which all Christians should be expressing throughout their lives. For example, when Gutiérrez reflects on the significance of the life and of the murder of his good friend, Fr. Vicente Hondarza in Peru, he asserts that "to be a Christian is not to be a hero, but [to be] holy."<sup>14</sup> The death of the martyrs is simply one more way how they act in accordance with the demands of the gospel throughout their lives.

The Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church and Gutiérrez explicitly underscore the similarity

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<sup>12</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Libertad religiosa y diálogo salvador," Salvación y construcción del mundo, 18. "Even the Egyptians were allowed the right--vain superstition that it was--to deify birds and beasts and to condemn to death anyone who killed a god of this sort." "We are the only ones kept from having our own religion. We offend the Romans and are not considered Romans because we do not worship the god of the Romans." Tertullian, Apology 24.7, 24.9, trans. Sister Emily Joseph Daly, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 10, 76-77. See Tertullian's claim that Christians are tried, tortured, and executed simply for "the name" of being Christians: Tertullian, Apology 1.4, 2.10-11, 2.18-20, trans. Sister Emily Joseph Daly, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 10, 8, 12, 14-15.

<sup>13</sup>Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata 4.9, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, 422.

<sup>14</sup>"...ser cristiano ne es ser héroe, sino santo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," my translation, Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 148. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 113, 386-387.

of the events leading up to the martyrs' death with the Passion of Jesus Christ.<sup>15</sup> This comparison is significant because it represents the idea that the Christians never deserve to be persecuted and killed on account of their faith. For example, Ignatius of Antioch claimed that he, like Jesus Christ, was about to die as an innocent victim, and that his death would similarly expiate the sins of the community of believers.<sup>16</sup> Gutiérrez argues that the martyrs never deserve to suffer and to die. Like Job, like Jesus Christ, and like the poor throughout history, the martyrs always suffer--and ultimately die--innocently, regardless of what the people who employ a doctrine of retribution might insinuate and even attempt to justify religiously. God is not punishing them with death for their sins. Instead, God does not intervene to prevent their innocent deaths because he respects the freedom of all people, including the persecutors, to act according to their own free wills. The deaths of the martyrs are therefore engendered by the sins of other people who are acting contrary to the will of God. From a very early time, Christians expressed their conviction that the martyrs, as the imitators of Jesus Christ's Passion, would also be rewarded in imitation of his resurrection. The Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church were highly motivated to endure a violent death on account of their faith because they believed all their sins would be expiated by means of this "baptism of blood," and that God would reward them with their salvation.<sup>17</sup> They customarily thought that only the salvation of the martyrs was absolutely certain. The martyrs were even supposed to sit beside Jesus Christ in heaven and help him with the final judgment.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, the Christians of the Early Church were also motivated by their fear of the punishment that God would surely inflict on the apostates due to their decision to avoid a martyr's death by making sacrifices to the gods of the Romans. They believed that this act of idolatry and of apostasy would lead to their eternal death. According to Origen, however, besides martyrdom, there are various other good acts throughout life which will ultimately lead to salvation, including giving alms to the poor, but he nonetheless emphasized that martyrdom is a particularly desirable

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<sup>15</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Romans 6.3, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 235; Polycarp, Epistle to the Philippians 8.2, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 293; The Martyrdom of Polycarp 8.1-8.2, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 323; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.1, 282; The Martyrs of Lyons 1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 75; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 64, 73-81; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 370-371.

<sup>16</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Ephesians 21.1, Epistle to the Smyrnaeans 10.2, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 195, 263; W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution, 152-153.

<sup>17</sup>Visions 3.1.9-3.2.1 and Similitudes 9.28, in The Shepherd of Hermas, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 29-31, 285-287; Origen, Homily on Leviticus 2.4.5, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 83, 47-48; Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 30, Ancient Christian Martyrs, no. 19, 171; Tertullian, Apology 50.15, 227; Tertullian, A Treatise on the Soul 55, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 231.

<sup>18</sup>Visions 3.1.9-3.2.1 and Similitudes 9.28, in The Shepherd of Hermas, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 29-31, 285-287; Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 28, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 168; Cyprian, Exhortation to Martyrdom, to Fortunatus 13, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 344.

act for Christians because the martyrs perfectly imitate the death, as well as the life, of Jesus Christ.<sup>19</sup> Gutiérrez, too, believes that God will save all the martyrs, but he does not speak about their sins being expiated through this last act.<sup>20</sup> He does not expressly deny the idea of expiation; he simply does not utilize it in his writings. According to Gutiérrez, salvation is always an unmerited gift, which God freely offers to every person out of his unconditional love for all of them.<sup>21</sup> God will save all the Christian martyrs—just like he will save many Christians who did not die as martyrs, as well as many non-Christians—precisely because they demonstrated, at least in this last act, that they had accepted God's freely given offer of salvation. Therefore Gutiérrez does not state that salvation is a reward bestowed by God in response to a specific action. Instead, salvation is a standing offer which God presents to all people until they die, and they decide freely whether to accept it or to reject it. Their acceptance is manifested in actions done out of love for God and for other people, which are really the same thing because, according to Gutiérrez, there is no way to love God without loving other people, especially the poorest. One way how Christians can express their decision to accept salvation is by dying out of love for God and for other people.<sup>22</sup> Although Gutiérrez does not refer to the issue, from the evidence in his writings, it seems that people who have heretofore accepted the offer of salvation are also free to reject the gift of salvation in their last act. (Gutiérrez does not speak about whether God continues to offer the gift of salvation to people subsequent to their deaths, if they had rejected it during their lives, most notably if they had only rejected it in their last act.) It is notable that Gutiérrez also does not speculate on whether children under a certain age possess the rational capacity to manifest a freely made decision concerning their salvation in the act of dying on account of their faith. In fact, the only people whom he explicitly designates as martyrs are teenagers (e.g., Celina, the sixteen-year-old daughter of Sra. Julia Elba Ramos, who was killed alongside her mother and the six Jesuits in El Salvador) and adults. This does not necessarily mean that he believes children are unable to be martyrs. The only evidence, however, is an absence of unambiguous evidence in his writings.

Gutiérrez also believes that God will not save the persecutors responsible for the deaths of the martyrs, just as he will not save any other idolaters, if they avoid confronting their own profound sinfulness. They will not be saved if they do not seek forgiveness and conversion. Gutiérrez judges that "those who

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<sup>19</sup>Origen, Homily on Leviticus 2.4.5, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 83, 47-48.

<sup>20</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "En busca de los pobres de Jesucristo," Revista de la Universidad Católica no. 7 (30 June 1980): 83; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 82; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10.

<sup>21</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Hablar de Dios desde el sufrimiento del inocente, 195.

<sup>22</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 82.; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10.

sow death will go away with empty hands and...only those who defend life have hands full of history."<sup>23</sup> Gutiérrez does not say that the persecutors--or anyone else for that matter--will be damned to hell. They are simply not saved. The persecutors' lack of salvation, however, is not a punishment specifically inflicted by God, just as the martyrs' salvation is not a reward. Instead, the persecutors will not be saved because they demonstrated through their actions that they had rejected, explicitly or implicitly, God's invitation to salvation. Even if they habitually identified themselves as Christians, according to Gutiérrez, a certain, undeniable reality proves that they were not truly worshippers of the biblical God, but idolaters: in order to serve their self-interests, they caused the premature deaths of the people whom God prefers, the poor, by creating and maintaining a system of poverty and by employing repressive violence. They sometimes also ordered the murder of Christians, as well as non-Christians, who had committed themselves to the liberation of the poor. If the persecutors truly sought their forgiveness subsequent to ordering the deaths of the martyrs, and if they were converted (for example, in accordance with a model already provided by Paul of Tarsus), which means that their actions would thereafter evidence this radical change, then God would save them. They would be saved because they had accepted God's invitation to salvation. Gutiérrez does not discuss how non-Christian persecutors (or non-Christians, in general) can ask God for their forgiveness, nor whether and how they can be converted without explicitly becoming Christians, but it seems that they would demonstrate such a new, right relation with God, regardless of whether they are cognizant of it, through their loving relations with other people, especially with the poor.

Gutiérrez clearly believes that Christians should not allow themselves to die on account of the faith either because they expect God will reward them or because they fear that God will punish them if they act otherwise. Their only motive should be to manifest in this last act, just as they should have been endeavouring to do in all their other acts up to this time, their unconditional love of God and of all other people. It is notable that Gutiérrez emphasizes the martyrs' motive of dying out of an unconditional love of all other human beings to a considerably greater extent than the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church. It is also notable that the Early Christians did not claim that Christians especially evidence their love of God and of all other human beings by dying on account of their particular love for the poor. Furthermore, Gutiérrez does not employ the image of the "baptism of blood," which was so common in the pre-Constantinian Church, in order to describe how the martyrs' sins are expiated. Perhaps this is because he believes that the salvation of the martyrs is no more likely than the salvation of any other person whose actions demonstrate that he or she has accepted the offer of salvation, which is presented to everyone by the biblical God. Moreover, unlike the Christians of the Early Church, Gutiérrez does not speak of the

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<sup>23</sup> "...los que siembran la muerte se irán con las manos vacías y...sólo los que defienden la vida tienen las manos llenas de historia." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," my translation, *Páginas* 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 95. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, *Concilium* no. 140 (December 1980): 99.

martyrs as assisting Jesus Christ at the final judgment. This is not surprising because Gutiérrez has not developed a systematic model of exactly what, he believes, happens to people from the moment they die up to the time of the final judgment. For example, he does not speculate on whether some people must be purified in purgatory before they are saved. In the case of the martyrs, Gutiérrez simply expresses his belief that God has already saved them; the persecutors and the other idolaters will not be saved if they have not asked for God's forgiveness and if they have clearly demonstrated that they really have not changed radically.

An intriguing question arises from the common imperative that all Christians should prepare themselves for martyrdom, and that the best way to do this is by living a highly moral life: in the cases of both Gutiérrez and the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church, should Christians develop their faith because they are motivated by the risk of facing a martyr's death, or should they nurture a strong faith regardless of whether they might face a martyr's death, in full recognition that this faith would nevertheless prepare them for such a situation if it were to occur? It appears that, in the pre-Constantinian Church, this distinction was not usually made because they were viewed as two ways of posing the same question. Christians were supposed to develop a strong faith regardless of whether they expected to face a martyr's death, but they were particularly motivated to develop their faith by their belief that only the Christians who properly prepared themselves for such a test, in fact, would persevere up to the point of death, and thereafter be rewarded with salvation, rather than weaken and be punished with eternal death. Some Christians, such as Origen, even expressed their ardent desire to be put to this test so that they could die in perfect imitation of Jesus Christ, and thereby join him in heaven. They clearly sought a martyr's death.<sup>24</sup> Gutiérrez advises Christians to try to nurture a disinterested faith. This signifies believing "for no reason". It is a faith which is not specifically motivated by an expectation that they will soon face a violent death. At the same time, the Christians who anticipate such a death should especially nurture an attitude of spiritual childhood (i.e., spiritual poverty) because they will experience many challenges that are likely to be too much for them to bear unless they humbly trust in God and allow him to embolden them. For example, they may feel profoundly alone in the world, and even completely abandoned by God.<sup>25</sup> Another great challenge they face is their "fear...of dying itself...which is no small matter."<sup>26</sup> Gutiérrez observes that many Christians who live in environments where the Church is being persecuted are now learning new ways for praying, both as individuals and in communities, and for celebrating the eucharist. They develop a spiritual

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<sup>24</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.1-6.2, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 29, 4-7.

<sup>25</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 143, 183-191.

<sup>26</sup>"El miedo ¿por qué no? No sólo de morir, lo que no es poco decir; sino también de flaquear, de pensar en uno mismo más de lo debido." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 194.

relationship with God which prepares them to remain steadfastly committed to the process of liberation up to the point of death. Contrary to the attitude of Christians like Origen, Gutiérrez explicitly cautions Christians against ever desiring such a confrontation with the persecutors that could lead to their violent deaths.

Cyprian of Carthage's explanation of the ultimate cause for the widespread apostasy during the Decian persecution (249 to 251) is also intriguing. Cyprian claimed that so many Christians had apostatized because they were attached to the riches of the world, when they should have been focusing on a treasure in heaven.<sup>27</sup> In other words, when they were put to the test, they demonstrated that they had a stronger faith in the things of the world than in the Kingdom of God. This view draws a sharp contrast between a transitory, and thereby somewhat illusory, life on earth and an eternal and substantially more real life in heaven. Gutiérrez, too, advises Christians not to trust in the things of the world, but his reasons are different than those of Cyprian because they are founded on his distinct understanding of what is the relation between human activities in history and the completely realized Kingdom of God (for Gutiérrez, the full communion among people and between people and God, which is entered into by whoever is saved). Gutiérrez thinks that everything (all of nature) and everyone (all of humanity) are good and valuable precisely because they are expressions of God's unconditional love. Nothing and no one exists which is not a manifestation of God's love. Gutiérrez emphasizes, however, that God did not create everything and everyone because they are useful for humanity. He also believes that God bestowed all people with a free will by which they can choose to act either according to the will of God or contrary to it. Just actions correspond to the will of God; they create communion among all people and between people and God; and they give life to other people, particularly to people who are suffering the effects of poverty. Unjust actions contradict the will of God; they are sinful because they destroy communion among people and between people and God; and they deny the right to life for many people. The individual and collective free wills of many people created and now maintain the widespread poverty that is present in the world. Specific people freely decide to serve their self-interests rather than the interests of all people. The fact that Gutiérrez takes seriously the sufferings that correspond to this widespread poverty evidences his deep concern with life on earth. He is especially scandalized by the existence of poverty in Latin America, where most people identify themselves as

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<sup>27</sup>"Blind love of one's personal property has deceived many; nor could they have been prepared or ready for departing, when their possessions bound them like fetters. Those fetters were for those who remained, those chains by which virtue was retarded, and faith hard pressed, and mind bound, and the soul imprisoned, so that they who clung to earthly things became as booty and food for the serpent who, according to the words of God, devours the earth. Therefore, the Lord...says: 'If thou wilt be perfect, sell all thy possessions and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.' If the rich did this, they would not now have an enemy and a domestic conqueror; their heart and mind and feeling would be in heaven, if their treasure were in heaven...He would follow the Lord, loosed and free, as the Apostles and many in apostolic times, and some others often did, who, abandoning their possessions and their parents, clung to the undivided ties of Christ." Cyprian, The Lapsed 11, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 66-67.

believers in the biblical God. According to Gutiérrez, this widespread poverty should impel all people, especially Christians, to commit themselves to create greater communion among all people on earth by constructing more just societies, where the needs of the poorest are considered preferentially. The actions that further the construction of communion are partial manifestations of the Kingdom of God on earth. At the same time, Gutiérrez's profound hope in the full realization of the Kingdom of God with the return of Jesus Christ at the end of history clearly shows that he is not completely satisfied with what has transpired among people on this world, nor with anything that could ever possibly transpire among them. He does not believe that people could ever create the full Kingdom of God on earth. Gutiérrez envisions the complete realization of the Kingdom of God as the radical perfection of the communion among people and between people and God which is already manifested in history, rather than as a communion which has nothing at all or little in common with historical existence. Salvation relativizes everything on earth precisely because it represents the radical perfection of historical communion. Although Gutiérrez does not specifically analyze the aforementioned explanation which Cyprian of Carthage gave for the widespread apostasy during the Decian persecution, the perspective evidenced in his writings suggests that, whenever people are attached to the things of the world, they are inappropriately putting their faith in God's creations rather than in the God who created them. The things of the world can be utilized in various way by human beings, but their usage only corresponds with the will of God when they are shared with everyone, especially with those who are poorest. From Gutiérrez's perspective, whenever people create and maintain social systems that systematically concentrate the goods of the earth in their few hands and at the expense of the majority, their faith in idols, rather than solely in the biblical God, is transparent. This is true regardless of the claims they make about their intentions. Even though Gutiérrez employs the term "idolater" rather than the term "apostate" to refer to the people who show themselves to be the worshippers of things other than or in addition to the biblical God (e.g., wealth, power, and prestige), the implication from his writings is that, if they were ever presented with the choice between the things of the world and God, they would probably choose the earthly things. In fact, by deciding not to commit themselves to the construction of communion among all people and between people and God, they have already chosen the earthly things over a treasure in heaven. From Gutiérrez's perspective, they have opted not to be saved. As was suggested in chapter seven, many Christians committed to the poor in Latin America are really "latent martyrs"; they have already nurtured the faith which would help them to remain steadfast up to the point of death. This implies that many idolaters, who identify themselves as Christians, are really "latent apostates"; they have already prepared the way to reject the faith unambiguously. According to Gutiérrez, however, everyone always has the opportunity to beg God's forgiveness and to be converted. Because of the free will God has given to humanity, today's idolaters--and therefore also, today's apostates and persecutors--could therefore become tomorrow's believers. Similarly, today's believers could become tomorrow's idolaters, apostates, and persecutors. (The terms, "latent martyrs" and "latent apostates", are not Gutiérrez's, and there is no intention

in this analysis to imply that he would ever employ them. They are simply used to convey the ideas that martyrs have the same faith that all true believers in the biblical God should have, and that idolaters act contrary to this faith.)

### 3. How the Martyrs Died:

Three questions arise concerning the actual deaths of the people designated as martyrs by the Christians of the pre-Constantinian Church and by Gutiérrez: first, must the Christians die in order to be called martyrs?; second, what types of death do the martyrs undergo?; third, what characterizes the martyrs' attitude as they face their imminent deaths?

In the pre-Constantinian Church, the passion account of Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, in Asia Minor, is the first known case when the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" were used explicitly in order to signify the deaths suffered on account of the faith. Polycarp probably died on February 23, 167. Subsequently, the dissemination of this exclusive usage of the terms to the places outside Asia Minor where Christians were living was slow, and it was clearly not complete by the end of the pre-Constantinian era. The terms continued to be used, from time to time, for people who had suffered, but who had not died on account of the faith. In the Early Church, the terms were sometimes employed for the living Christians who were expected to die soon as martyrs, for Christians who died some time later from the injuries they had sustained during the tortures, and even for other Christians who died in prison while awaiting the tortures that would have caused their martyrdom.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, the terms were progressively used more exclusively to refer to the deaths suffered by Christians for their faith. As early as 177, the future martyrs of Lyons and Vienne adamantly refused to be designated as martyrs because they had not yet died.<sup>29</sup> Gutiérrez never speaks of Christians as martyrs if they have not died for the faith. This is understandable because it is the conventional usage in the Roman Catholic Church in the twentieth century. He does not even usually refer to martyrdom in a metaphorical sense for the sufferings of Christians, or of any other people, who have not died. The only likely exception is his reference to the poor masses as a "martyrized people" (i.e., "*pueblo martirizado*"). He probably uses this term metaphorically for a whole people, comprised of many poor and anonymous martyrs, as well as of others who have suffered, but who have not died on account of their faith.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>For example, see Cyprian, Letters 12.1, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 51, 34-35.

<sup>29</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 5.1, 5.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 282, 288; The Martyrs of Lyons 1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 75.

<sup>30</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Noticias de cruz y resurrección," Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 6; Gustavo Gutiérrez, El Dios de la vida (1989), 353.



The second question--how the martyrs died--concerns three specific issues: whether martyrdom can be sought, provoked, or even self-inflicted (e.g., by means of suicide); whether it is ever acceptable to flee from a persecution and from the possibility of dying as a martyr; and what is the typical type of death suffered by the Christians who are designated as martyrs.

Because the concept of martyrdom was scarcely settled in the pre-Constantinian Church, it is understandable that, even when the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" referred to deaths on account of the faith, they were used inconsistently in regard to the roles which the Christians could properly play in the actual causation of their deaths. The martyrs were, nevertheless, typically depicted as innocent victims who, subsequent to being apprehended by the mobs or by the authorities, only helped engender their own deaths by refusing to comply with whatever conditions for survival the persecutors might have offered them, if any were offered at all. They usually perceived these conditions as the persecutors' demands that they engage in idolatrous acts, which would ultimately lead to their eternal deaths. They did not normally seek a martyr's death, but when they faced it, they believed that they had to choose unambiguously between two options: either physical survival and eternal death, or physical death and eternal life. From very early in the Church, however, some of the most celebrated martyrs (e.g., Ignatius of Antioch) were portrayed as desiring their violent deaths once they were apprehended. Furthermore, some Christians who did not die as martyrs (such as Origen) yearned desperately for a martyr's death.<sup>31</sup> Some Christians who were conventionally designated as martyrs had actually provoked their own deaths by presenting themselves to the persecutors. They believed that God had summoned them to step forward so that they could share the fate of the other martyrs (e.g., Agathonicê and Euplus).<sup>32</sup> These bold actions, however, were not praised universally. For example, Clement of Alexandria strongly opposed voluntary martyrdom because he believed that the people who so casually discarded their lives did not know the true God. They were complicit with their own deaths, and, like Quintus, the Phrygian, they unnecessarily put themselves at the risk of weakening and of apostatizing when they finally stood before the persecutors. This was an unfortunate outcome which probably would

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<sup>31</sup>For example, see Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Ephesians 1.2, 3.1, Epistle to the Romans 4.1-4.3, 6.3, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 173, 177, 231, 235; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.1-6.2, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 4-7.

<sup>32</sup>"There was a woman named Agathonicê standing there who saw the glory of the Lord, as Carpus said he had seen it; realizing that this was a call from heaven, she raised her voice at once: 'Here is a meal that has been prepared for me. I must partake and eat of this glorious repast!' The mob shouted out: 'Have pity on your son!' And the blessed Agathonicê said: 'He has God who can take pity on him; for he has providence over all. Let me do what I've come for!' And taking off her cloak, she threw herself joyfully upon the stake." The Acts of Carpus, Papyrus, and Agathonicê, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 27-29. "It was the twenty-ninth day of April in the ninth consulate of Diocletian and the eighth of Maximian, our lords, in the most illustrious city of Catania. Outside the veil in front of the prefect's council-chamber, a man named Euplus shouted out to them and said: 'I want to die; I am a Christian!'" The Acts of Euplus 1, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, 311.

ultimately lead to their eternal deaths.<sup>33</sup> The tendency of some Montanists to provoke their own martyrdom was also a notably common criticism of the religious group. There are a few cases of Christian women (e.g., Dorothea and Sophronia) who were designated as martyrs because they had committed suicide rather than be sexually abused by their persecutors (in these examples, by the emperors, Maximin and Maxentius).<sup>34</sup> They, as well as Eusebius, who recounts their deaths, apparently believed that God looked more favourably upon suicide for such a noble reason than upon a continued existence with a sullied body. On a number of occasions, Gutiérrez argues vigorously against Christians ever desiring martyrdom, seeking it out, provoking it, or even being eager for it once such a death is imminent. According to Gutiérrez, "it is not Christian to want to be a martyr" because this would signify endorsing the reality that there already are executioners, and also desiring that there be even more executioners in the future. Therefore "martyrdom is something which is encountered but it is not sought." Even when a martyr's death is finally encountered, it should not be desired. Gutiérrez contends that, in fact, this is the traditional teaching in the Roman Catholic Church. He does not acknowledge, however, any of the aforementioned few, but nonetheless notable, cases in the pre-Constantinian Church which suggest otherwise.<sup>35</sup> Although Gutiérrez does not mention Quintus, his example of foolishly presenting himself to the persecutor, as well as forcing "some others to give themselves up voluntarily," is nevertheless intriguing when the situation of the Christians committed to the poor in contemporary Latin America is considered. Because Quintus had developed an immature understanding of his faith, he immediately apostatized, and perhaps suffered an eternal death thereafter. Gutiérrez's severe criticisms of the Christians who boast about their commitment to the poor implies that they, too, would probably weaken if they faced their deaths, perhaps even by denouncing other Christians who have a more

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<sup>33</sup>"There was a Phrygian named Quintus who had only recently come from Phrygia, and when he saw the wild animals he turned cowardly. Now he was the one who had given himself up and had forced some others to give themselves up voluntarily. With him the governor used many arguments and persuaded him to swear by the gods and offer sacrifice. This is the reason, brothers, that we do not approve of those who come forward of themselves: this is not the teaching of the Gospel." The Martyrdom of Polycarp 4, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 317. See also W.H.C. Frend, Persecution and Martyrdom, 276; Clement of Alexandria, The Stromata 4.4, 4.9-4.10, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, 411-412, 422-423.

<sup>34</sup>Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 8.14, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 29, 196-198.

<sup>35</sup>"Como cristianos no podemos, en efecto, desear que haya verdugos." "El martirio es algo se encuentra pero no se busca." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, my translation, 175. "En efecto, me parece--y esto es tradicional en la Iglesia--que no es cristiano querer ser mártir, lo que es cristiano es aceptar el martirio, pero querer ser mártir es aceptar que hay verdugos y eso no se puede desear." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Señor de la vida," my translation, Paz: Tarea de Todos 1, no. 1 (October-November 1986): 4. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero," Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 79.

solid commitment to the poor.<sup>36</sup>

A major issue in the pre-Constantinian Church was whether fleeing from a persecution and an imminent martyr's death was ever appropriate. Many Christian writers expressed their preference for fleeing, under specific conditions. For example, Ignatius of Antioch urged Polycarp to flee so that, subsequently, he could help his church in Smyrna protect itself against the temptations of falling to heretical ideas and to immoral sexual practices.<sup>37</sup> A number of other authors advocated fleeing whenever the Christians did not face the requirement of choosing clearly between expressing their faith and renouncing it. For example, Polycarp explained that he had originally fled the persecution that would ultimately lead to his martyrdom because the gospel did not advocate voluntary martyrdom. Tertullian also recommended fleeing before he became a Montanist; thereafter he became more rigorous in his views. Cyprian of Carthage, defending his own decision to flee during the Decian persecution, contended that Christians should flee rather than risk apostatizing. At the same time, the fact that the bishop, Germanus, drew a great deal of attention when he accused Cyprian of cowardly fleeing implies that some other Christians thought that fleeing was always unacceptable.<sup>38</sup> Gutiérrez does not state his view clearly on whether, and when, Christians should flee their persecution and potential death. On the one hand, he agrees with the basic ecclesial communities of El Quiché, Guatemala, that the clergy should not endanger their lives by visiting them at present. By surviving this risky period, they will then be able to continue serving the people in the future. It is important to recognize, however, that this is a matter of not visiting, rather than of fleeing, so it does not exactly answer the question. Gutiérrez's view is nevertheless similar to Ignatius's advice to Polycarp. On the other hand, Gutiérrez always praises the people whom he designates as martyrs for committing themselves to the poor in dangerous situations and, then, for *remaining* in them, despite the risks to themselves. In fact, concerning Archbishop Oscar Romero's decision to remain committed to the poor when he knew that he was being targeted for death, Gutiérrez judges that "martyrdom...is...not desired but neither [is it] avoided at any price."<sup>39</sup> In other words, sometimes the most appropriate option is neither fleeing nor choosing not to visit.

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<sup>36</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," Misión Abierta (no. 5-6, December 1984): 145.

<sup>37</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to Polycarp 2-5, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 269-273.

<sup>38</sup>Polycarp, Epistle to the Philipppians 9.1, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 295; W.H.C. Frend, Persecution and Martyrdom, 276; Cyprian of Carthage, The Lapsed 10, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 36, 66.

<sup>39</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 177. "El testimonio definitivo, el martirio, de Mons. Romero es el resultado, no deseado pero tampoco evitado a toda costa, de su opción por el Dios de Jesucristo y por su pueblo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," my translation, in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 98.

Instead, like Romero, whose death, according to Gutiérrez, was foreseeable, Christians should choose to confront this likely, but nonetheless always uncertain, death.<sup>40</sup> Gutiérrez does not clarify exactly what the conditions are for remaining, but it seems that, in the case of Romero, a great deal of damage would have been done for the advancement of the poor in El Salvador if he had evaded his impending death. From Gutiérrez's point of view, the poor would have paid too high of a price.

The accounts of the deaths suffered by many martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church suggest that these typically, but definitely not always, transpired by means of a certain process. Before the third century the Christians who were subsequently designated as martyrs were often put on trial as a result of privately initiated accusations that they had engaged in some immoral activities (e.g., cannibalism, incest, black magic) which were perceived as threats to the social order. From the third century onwards, they were sometimes rounded-up and put on trial because they had contravened specific edicts by virtue of the fact that they were Christians or because they held high positions in the Church. Then they were often given the choice between surviving by denying their Christian faith, sometimes through a sacrifice to the gods of the Romans, and dying by steadfastly maintaining their status as Christians. Finally, the Christians who stubbornly avowed their faith were executed, sometimes after many gruesome tortures. The authors of the passion accounts clearly believed that it was important to provide the gory details about how these tortures were applied. The authors sometimes even underscored the ability of the martyrs to endure these terrible tortures, though the authors in the subsequent centuries would emphasize this dimension to a substantially greater degree, especially in the legendary accounts of martyrdom. (These are the accounts that did not originate with the witnesses of the deaths.) Their objectives were to demonstrate, first, that these martyrs had such a firm faith in God that they were willing to endure any suffering, and, second, that God especially favoured them by granting them with the ability to persevere up to the point of death. They were able to persevere because they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

In contrast with the authors of the martyrdom accounts in the pre-Constantinian Church, Gutiérrez customarily refrains from supplying specific details of the techniques used by the persecutors to kill the contemporary martyrs. He normally only makes general references to the martyrs or to the countries where they died. In these cases, he usually does not enumerate the techniques used for killing the martyrs. He does not emphasize the ways how the poor and anonymous martyrs died either. For example, when he discusses the murder of the forty laypersons who were murdered during Romero's funeral, he mentions that they were brutally shot by gunmen who were aiming into the whole crowd, but he does not dramatize the moment

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<sup>40</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Teología, democracia y liberación en América Latina," *Misión Abierta* (no. 5-6, December 1984): 148; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in *Tiene que vencer el amor*, James Brockman, 10.

beyond the bare facts of the event.<sup>41</sup> Even in the few cases when he names the contemporary martyrs, he does not particularly draw attention to the ways how they were killed. Since 1969, when Fr. Pereira Neto was murdered, Gutiérrez has only supplied the names of approximately twenty people whom he designates as martyrs. (Eight are from the Salvadoran incident on November 16, 1989.) These include the following people, with the year listed in parentheses when he first mentions their deaths in his writings: Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto (1969; the first certain mention of him as a martyr was in 1978); Fr. Héctor Gallego (1973; the first certain claim that he is a martyr was in 1983); Bishop Enrique Ángel Angelelli (1978); Archbishop Oscar Romero (1980); Fr. Vicente Hondarza (1983); Mother Juanita (1985); probably Fr. Rutilio Grande and Fr. Alfonso Navarro Oviedo (1988; he never explicitly designates them as martyrs, but the context implies that this is his view); Fr. Joaquín López y López, Fr. Ignacio Ellacuría, Fr. Segundo Montes, Fr. Juan Ramón Moreno, Fr. Amando López, Fr. Ignacio Martín-Baró, Sra. Julia Elba Ramos and her daughter, Celina (1989); Sister Maria Agustine and Sister Irene McCormack (1991); Fr. Michael Tomaszek and Fr. Zbigniew Strzalkowski (1995). Even in these few cases, he certainly does not emphasize the ways how they were killed. They were simply murdered or assassinated. The major exception is his examination of what the disappearance of Bishop Angelelli on August 4, 1976 signifies. As was noted in chapter six, Gutiérrez argues that this disappearance reveals the unfamiliarity of the powerful persecutors with Jesus' empty tomb. For the poor Christians and for the other Christians who are committed to the poor, the absence of Angelelli's body prompts them to focus on his resurrection in imitation of Jesus Christ. Gutiérrez therefore emphasizes the triumph of the life that follows Angelelli's death, rather than the death itself.<sup>42</sup> Gutiérrez's usual omission of the gory details concerning how the martyrs died, in sharp contrast with some of the passion accounts in the pre-Constantinian Church, and virtually all the legends that followed this period, suggests that he does not believe these are particularly relevant for fulfilling his objective of reflecting theologically on the significance of these deaths. Of course, these deaths are not abstract events for him; the people who were murdered were his often intimate friends. He clearly does not wish to sensationalize any elements of their deaths. After all, anyone who desires to know exactly how these people died could easily obtain this information from other sources, including books, articles, and newspaper reports. Gutiérrez's reticence to describe how they died is also consistent with his claim that the martyrs are not heroes, but humble Christians. Whether they faced the excruciating suffering in a superhuman manner is not particularly important.

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<sup>41</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," *Páginas* 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La evangelización de América Latina ante el año 2000," *Ciencia Tomista* 116 (May-August 1989): 370.

<sup>42</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in *Signos de lucha y esperanza*, xxvii-xxviii.

The third question--the attitude of the Christians as they face their imminent martyrdom--is comprised of four specific issues: how the Christians confront the death itself; how they interact with their persecutors; whether the last moments are depicted as a spiritual struggle; and the role of God in the final moments.

Because the Christians who were designated as martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church usually had time to anticipate their imminent death, they developed a certain attitude in the face of it. They were normally depicted as suffering their deaths patiently, humbly, courageously, and joyfully. Their willingness to die was seen as an expression of their love of God. They died loving their persecutors, rather than hating them. They also forgave their persecutors, and they prayed for their conversion. The martyrs were often depicted as athletes or soldiers who engaged in lengthy spiritual struggles to the death with some opponent. Their opponent was frequently the Devil. The Christians either combatted the Devil directly or through the persecutors, who were the associates of the Devil.<sup>43</sup> They were able to remain steadfast up to the point of death because they received encouragement from their fellow Christians and because they were granted spiritual assistance. Their communities sometimes sent them letters exhorting them to be courageous in the face of death. They reminded the future martyrs of their reward in heaven. According to some authors of the passion accounts, these Christians also felt the presence of either Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit, who helped them to endure the tortures prior to their deaths. For example, according to the account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna was only able to persevere up to the end because Jesus Christ was present in him as he suffered the tortures.<sup>44</sup> Sometimes the Christians who were about to die as martyrs saw visions which told them exactly how they would die, and, more importantly, they revealed to them that they would successfully enter into heaven (e.g., Polycarp and Perpetua).<sup>45</sup> The Christians who were about to die as martyrs sometimes received divine miracles, which evidenced the presence of the Holy Spirit. For example, Blandina was able to resist ferocious tortures applied by her persecutors, and Perpetua remained unharmed after being trampled over by a mad heifer. Perpetua's persecutors could not kill her

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<sup>43</sup>Ignatius of Antioch, Epistle to the Ephesians 11.1, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 1, 185; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 4.15, 5.1, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 19, 241, 273; The Martyrdom of Carpus, Papyrus, and Agathonice 4, The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 20, The Martyrdom of Marian and James 5, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 33, 66-68, 201.

<sup>44</sup>The Martyrdom of Polycarp 8.1-8.2, in The Apostolic Fathers, vol. 2, 323; Charles Pietri, "L'évolution du culte des saints aux premiers siècles chrétiens: du témoin à l'intercesseur," in Les fonctions des saints dans le monde occidental, 20; Hippolyte Delehay, Les origines du culte des martyrs, 9-10.

<sup>45</sup>Martyrdom of Polycarp 5, 9; The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 10, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 7, 9; 117-119.

until she permitted her death.<sup>46</sup> Polcarp was protected from a fire, and his body exuded a perfumy smell, rather than a fetid odour. He only died after a dagger was thrust into him.<sup>47</sup>

Unlike many of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church, the contemporary martyrs are not usually tried and executed by means of a formal judicial process. Sometimes they are tortured before they are killed, but on many other occasions, they are assassinated from a distance. This means that they do not always have an opportunity to ponder their deaths immediately before they happen. Nevertheless, according to Gutiérrez, they have often been cognizant of the reality that they are being targeted for elimination. When this is the case, they have tried to prepare themselves for their deaths by nurturing their spiritual activities. The contemporary martyrs face their deaths humbly, courageously, and joyfully, just like the martyrs of the Early Church. It is notable, however, that they do not imitate the model of patience exhibited by the martyrs of the pre-Constantinian Church. For example, Archbishop Oscar Romero responded to the news that he was on a hit list by warning the military not to use violence in order to silence all their critics. He even challenged the military to be converted and to obey the law of God rather than the human laws that compel them to massacre the poor.<sup>48</sup> He clearly did not simply accept the necessity of his death. As Gutiérrez explains, it is not Christian to accept an imminent death because this would mean to accept that there are executioners. Because the martyrs reject all innocent suffering, they also reject the necessity of their own deaths. Instead, the people whom Gutiérrez designates as martyrs continue to carry out the activities through which they have always served the poor, the activities which bring life to the poor, right up to the end, even though they know that these could lead to their violent deaths. This determination to continue serving whoever is in need corresponds with Gutiérrez's insistence that all Christians, including the future martyrs, should always affirm life rather than accept death. Therefore they confront death actively, rather than passively. At the same time, they do face death patiently insofar as they recognize its likelihood and yet do not flee. Therefore they choose to allow themselves to die; they deliver their lives freely.<sup>49</sup> Gutiérrez also emphasizes that the martyrs' motive is their unconditional love of God and their unconditional love of all people, particularly of the poor. They die loving their persecutors, rather than hating them. They forgive

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<sup>46</sup>The Martyrs of Lyons 1, The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 20, 21, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 67; 129, 131.

<sup>47</sup>The Martyrdom of Polycarp 15-16, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 15.

<sup>48</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Violence of a System," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 140 (December 1980): 98; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero," Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 78-79.

<sup>49</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 140; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero," Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 78-79; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 100-101, 115, 137, 141.

their persecutors and they pray for their conversion.<sup>50</sup> Gutiérrez does not depict the martyrs as athletes or as soldiers who struggle with the Devil, and he does not describe the persecutors as the Devil's henchmen. They are able to remain steadfast up to the point of death because they are members of a community of fellow believers who encourage them to persevere, though they ultimately must decide on their own whether to continue engaging in the activities which could result in their deaths. They nurture a sense of spiritual childhood—that is, they open themselves up to God—because this is the only way they can resist the temptation to withdraw their commitment to the poor. Gutiérrez does not mention any visions, miracles, or perfumy odours that would suggest the saintliness of the Christians.

#### 4. Who Are the Persecutors:

Christian writers in the pre-Constantinian Church customarily identified Jewish and Roman mobs and authorities as the persecutors of Christians. Fellow Christians were notably absent among the people whom they named as their persecutors. Gutiérrez designates people from two distinct groups as the persecutors who repress and kill the Christians committed to the poor in contemporary Latin America: some of the powerful people who are the traditional beneficiaries of the existing social order, and the members of some subversive groups which employ terroristic violence. The people who benefit from the existing system are the high government officials, who have often been military officers, and their powerful allies in society, including some landowners and industrialists. Gutiérrez customarily refrains from supplying the names of these people in his writings, especially while they are still in power. Nevertheless, he sometimes implicates them by identifying the countries where the persecution of the Church is particularly common. (In 1971, he mentions Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic; in 1977 and in 1978, he adds Argentina, Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico to this list).<sup>51</sup> Gutiérrez notes that many people who identify themselves as Christians are among the persecutors, the oppressors, the torturers, and the murderers who kill out of a hatred for the faith.<sup>52</sup> They do not usually declare themselves hostile towards the Church, but, instead, they often believe that they are the defenders of the Church, and a Western and Christian

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<sup>50</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 10.

<sup>51</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Contestation in Latin America," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 68 (1971): 48; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología desde el reverso de la historia, 137; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvi-xxvii.

<sup>52</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 140-144, 171-173; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la Iglesia colonial a Medellín," Víspera 4, no. 16 (1970): 6; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 166, 171.



civilization. (This is a particular concept of Christendom.)<sup>53</sup> Therefore, Gutiérrez, writing in 1970, observes that only a few years earlier no one in this "traditionally Catholic continent" could have ever anticipated that Christians, especially members of the clergy, would be repressed and murdered by other people who consider themselves to be good Christians.<sup>54</sup> They see their violent actions as expressions of their Christian faith.

The second group of persecutors is comprised of people who employ terroristic violence in order to achieve their own interests.<sup>55</sup> By speaking of these terrorist groups in the plural, he clearly believes that a number of subversive groups act contrary to the process of liberation, in spite of their claims that they are serving the poor. Their actions reveal that they really are not committed to creating a society which is more just for everyone, especially for the poorest. Sendero Luminoso, a Peruvian guerrilla movement, is nevertheless the only group which Gutiérrez explicitly identifies as the persecutors of Christians. (He never designates Túpac Amaru, the other major Peruvian guerrilla group, as persecutors.) For example, they murdered his intimate friends, Fr. Michael Tomaszek and Fr. Zbigniew Strzalkowski, who were working with the poor in Pariacoto, Peru in August, 1991. Gutiérrez designates them both as Christian martyrs.<sup>56</sup> It is notable that Gutiérrez does not examine whether the Church has ever been persecuted in Cuba since Fidel Castro has been in power, and he does not cite any examples of Christians who have died as martyrs there. He also never speaks of persecution and martyrdom in Allende Chile or in Sandinista Nicaragua. These observations could imply that Gutiérrez does not employ the same standard in socialist and communist countries as he does in capitalist countries and national security states for evaluating whether the Church is being persecuted. His very clear references to Sendero Luminoso, however, suggest that this is probably not the case. In fact, the notable absence of any explicit statements about persecution and martyrdom in Cuba, in Allende Chile, and in Sandinista Nicaragua does not necessarily mean that he thinks

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<sup>53</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Prólogo," in Signos de renovación, 8; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana/Praxis of Liberation and Christian Faith. Notes on a Course Given at M.A.C.C., 54; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Praxis de liberación y fe cristiana, 51; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Faith as Freedom: Solidarity with the Alienated and Confidence in the Future," in Living with Change, Experience, Faith, 50; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvi-xxvii.

<sup>54</sup>"Está empezando a tomar forma una situación (no sin ambivalencias) que nadie habría imaginado pocos años atrás: importantes sectores de la Iglesia son perseguidos en un continente tradicionalmente católico." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "De la Iglesia colonial a Medellín," my translation, Vispera 4, no. 16 (1970): 5. See also Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 136-137, 160, 171.

<sup>55</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 175; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 303.

<sup>56</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 303.

they have never occurred there. The only people whom Gutiérrez ever designates as martyrs in contemporary Latin America are the Christians who were allegedly killed for their commitment to the poor. They probably represent a subset of all the people whom he personally judges to be true martyrs; this means that there are probably Christians whom he believes are martyrs, yet he does not designate as such in his writings. Two pieces of evidence substantiate such a claim: first, Gutiérrez clearly recognizes the martyrs of the pre-Constantinian Church, who did not usually die on account of their commitment to the poor; second, he acknowledges and approves of the distinction between the popularly proclaimed Christian martyrs and the papally canonized martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church; the latter were not normally killed primarily on account of a commitment to the poor. Therefore it is possible that he believes some Christians have died as martyrs in contemporary Latin America--for example, in Cuba--but these were for reasons other than their commitment to the poor. They could have been killed for their love of everyone, but not specifically of the poor. The absence of an unambiguous statement one way or another nevertheless leaves the issue unsettled. It should also be recognized that, even though Gutiérrez identifies two distinct categories of persecutors--the beneficiaries of the traditional social order and the perpetrators of terroristic violence--the overwhelming majority of the people and the groups whom he designates as the persecutors are from the established order, and these are people who frequently identify themselves as good Christians. This emphasis is consistent with his assertion that the most serious form of violence, the one which causes the greatest suffering, is the institutionalized violence of the existing social order. The second most serious form is the repressive violence employed in order to maintain it. He does not dismiss or excuse counterviolence or terroristic violence, but he contends that it is necessary to recognize that the violence utilized in order to subvert the system is a response to the original system of violence that already exists.

##### 5. The Motive of the Persecutors:

There are similarities between the motive which lay behind the persecutors' actions against the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church and the motive which Gutiérrez attributes to the authorities who repress and kill the Christians committed to the process of liberation in contemporary Latin America. The Christians of the Early Church were accused of various unsavory acts, such as incest, cannibalism, magic, and causing natural disasters. These alleged acts were viewed as threats to the maintenance of the established social order in the Roman Empire. As members of an illegitimate religion, Christians were also not supposed to have their own sense of religious identity. Instead, they were expected to be indistinguishable members of the Roman society, who demonstrated their allegiance to the Roman Empire religiously by worshipping its gods. These Christians possessed freedom in religious matters, insofar as they accepted the religion of the state. Their perception that they did not enjoy freedom in religious matters only arose because they insisted on deviating from the religion of the state. According to Gutiérrez, many Christians are repressed and killed in contemporary Latin America because they are perceived as

communists who engage in activities that threaten an existing social order. For example, in a lecture that Gutiérrez delivered at Cartigny, Switzerland in November, 1969, he informs his international and inter-denominational audience that government officials and people in powerful positions in society, especially in Brazil, have recently defamed a number of bishops who have publicly expressed their support of changes in the interests of the poor masses. They have accused them of interfering in the political realm, which is supposedly outside their competence, and of being influenced by Marxism. In Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas (1971), he adds that the bishops are sometimes even threatened with death because of their supposedly anti-Christian sympathies.<sup>57</sup> In "El fenómeno de la contestación en América Latina" (1971), he observes that "it is common today for priests--and religious--to be regarded as 'subversive' elements. Many are watched and wanted by the police; others are imprisoned, tortured, expatriated...or assassinated by terrorist anti-communist gangs."<sup>58</sup> He observes that bishops and other clergy are accused of interfering in politics only when they denounce the social injustices suffered by the poor masses, yet not when they legitimize the traditionally intimate Church-state relation of Christendom. The government officials and the powerful members of society often truly believe that these bishops and clergy are acting in ways contrary to Christianity. From their perspective, the traditional Church-state relation is long established, and therefore legitimate. Christendom--that is, a Western and Christian society--is Christianity. Therefore it is not Christian to act in ways other than, and even contrary to, the normative conduct prescribed by the Christendom model. The process of liberation is clearly illegitimate because it does not have a similarly long heritage.

#### 6. The Authentication of the Alleged Martyrdoms:

Before the early third century, martyrdom was authenticated by a popular decision. In other words, some deceased Christians enjoyed a spontaneously generated, popular reputation of martyrdom among their surviving companions if the steadfastness of their faith in the face of certain death had particularly impressed them. Any reported occurrence of miracles before the deaths of these Christians also stimulated the development of their reputations of martyrdom. They were the popularly authenticated martyrs of the local church. Such a reputation of martyrdom was evidenced whenever the local people gathered at the burial site of the deceased Christian in order to celebrate his or her "birthday into heaven" on the anniversary of the violent death. Some martyrs became more widely known (e.g., the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne) when the accounts of their deaths were circulated by letters or when they were recorded in the

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<sup>57</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Meaning of Development (Notes on a Theology of Liberation)," trans. CELAM, in In Search of a Theology of Development, 152; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 138.

<sup>58</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Contestation in Latin America," trans. Paul Burns, Concilium no. 68 (1971): 48.

writings of theologians, which were then subsequently distributed. Whenever the Christians who had already died violently appeared in visions of heaven, this was viewed as compelling evidence that they had died as martyrs. God had already saved them, and they were now in the immediate presence of Jesus Christ.<sup>59</sup> Further evidence that certain Christians were already in heaven as true martyrs was their ability to intercede on behalf of living Christians.<sup>60</sup> Starting in the early third century, bishops sometimes authenticated certain popular reputations of martyrdom by officiating at the anniversary celebrations, but this form of authentication by a Church official became considerably more common in the fourth century. The episcopal authentication of martyrs is examined in a subsequent section of this chapter.

For Gutiérrez, the Christians who were killed for their commitment to the poor in contemporary Latin America are authenticated as true martyrs in two ways: first, individual Christians authenticate them when they judge that these people clearly demonstrated their faith in their actions throughout their lives and in the way how they died; and second, they are authenticated by a group of Christians or by a number of groups when they enjoy popular reputations of martyrdom among them, particularly when this popular reputation develops among the poor masses. Gutiérrez clearly wishes that the martyrs, at least as a collective entity, were authenticated in a third way: since 1978, he has continued to express his hope that the bishops of Latin America might one day officially recognize the general reality of the martyrs and reflect theologically on their significance for the Church in a CELAM document. It is also likely that Gutiérrez desires the eventual papal canonization of, at least, some of the contemporary martyrs, but he does not state this in any of his writings. Gutiérrez sometimes utilizes the expressions "martyrs in the general sense of the term", "witnesses (that is the meaning of the word martyr)," or "martyrs in the broad sense of the term," to refer to the martyrs who have been authenticated in the first two ways.<sup>61</sup> These are the martyrs who lack a more formal, general recognition by the bishops of Latin America, and who cannot be called martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church (i.e., martyrs who have a universal public ecclesiastical cult) until they are authenticated by means of papal canonization. The first two forms of authentication are examined in this section because they correspond to the ways how the martyrs were usually authenticated in the pre-

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<sup>59</sup>The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas 11, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 121; Tertullian, A Treatise on the Soul 55, in The Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, 231.

<sup>60</sup>The Martyrdom of Marian and James 6, 11, in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, Herbert Musurillo, 203, 209; Hippolyte, Commentaire sur Daniel 2.30, 122; Origen, Contra Celsum 8.64, 448-449; Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom 37, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 19, 180-181.

<sup>61</sup>"Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5; "The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America: A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 931; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 174; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Evangelización y opción por los pobres, 40; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Mirar lejos," Páginas 13, no. 93 (October 1988): 94.

Constantinian Church. The third and fourth ways are analyzed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Like the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church, Gutiérrez designates specific people as martyrs because of the ways how they expressed their faith during their lives and how they confronted their deaths. It is significant that the martyrs of the Early Church were first remembered locally. This means that their demonstration of faith was evaluated by the surviving members of their communities--that is, by people who knew them intimately, probably throughout their whole lives--and they then judged them to have lived and died in imitation of Jesus Christ. Gutiérrez often employs the terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" in order to make general references to the widespread occurrence of persecution and martyrdom either in contemporary Latin America or in a number of specific countries in the continent. In these cases, he does not provide any names. He simply speaks in general about the persecution and the martyrdom of bishops, priests, religious, and laity. Sometimes, without supplying any names, he contrasts the significant martyrs--the ones who are well known in death, like they were in life, such as the bishops, priests, and some important religious and laity--with the poor and anonymous martyrs, who remain just as insignificant in death as they were in life. He also identifies approximately twenty martyrs by name. In all of these cases, Gutiérrez knew these people personally. Most of them were his very close friends. This means that, like the surviving companions of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church, Gutiérrez could ascertain whether they exhibited a genuinely Christian faith throughout their lives. In accordance with the methodology of the theology of liberation, he personally observed some of the ways how they manifested their commitment to the poor in their actions aimed at contributing to the process of liberation, and he also witnessed some of their spiritual activities in communities of believers. These represent the two elements of the first act in his theological methodology. Because Gutiérrez also knew these people intimately, it is likely that they told him about some of their other actions and contemplative activities which he had not personally observed. It is also likely that he has learned more about them from other people and through published writings. The second act of the methodology of the theology of liberation is speaking about the first act. It is speaking about the ways how these deceased people demonstrated what it means to be a Christian and a member of the Church in contemporary Latin America. Therefore Gutiérrez has critically examined their actions and their contemplative activities in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith, and he has judged that, in fact, they died as Christian martyrs. They died, in imitation of Jesus Christ, on account of the ways how they manifested their love of God and their love of all other people, particularly of the poor. They were killed because their actions and their words were consistent with each other, and therefore they represented a threat to the people who intended either to maintain their traditional privileges or to acquire new privileges, sometimes at any price. These Christians denounced everything that they judged to be contrary to the will of God, especially the injustices perpetrated against the poorest, and they announced the Kingdom of God. Their demand that all people, both the poor and the non-poor, act out of love for everyone, in accordance with the characteristics of the Kingdom of God, elicited the hostile reactions of their persecutors (usually

the traditional beneficiaries of the existing social order, but sometimes also the members of subversive groups, such as Sendero Luminoso), thereby leading to their violent deaths. For example, Gutiérrez claims that the most compelling evidence that Archbishop Oscar Romero truly died as a Christian martyr is the reality that "he was killed not because he defended the right of the Church, but because he defended the rights of the poor."<sup>62</sup> It is therefore significant that Gutiérrez does not provide the names of any martyrs whom he did not know well. This suggests that he does not believe that he can evaluate and judge their demonstration of faith personally. One unusual case is his reference to the forty "anonymous" people who died at Romero's funeral. As an attendee of Romero's funeral, Gutiérrez saw many of them die. He personally witnessed many of their demonstrations of faith: according to Gutiérrez, by attending Romero's funeral, despite the obvious personal risk involved, they knew how to be present where it mattered most. As Gutiérrez observes in general about the poor and anonymous martyrs, they were willing to "give their lives *anonymously* because of their love for the people or simply" because they knew "how to be there in the midst of them."<sup>63</sup> He probably does not provide their names because he did not know them personally. It is also possible that he fears the reprisals their families could suffer if their names were publicized.

The fact that Gutiérrez also designates other people, whom he did not know personally and whose deaths he did not witness, as martyrs in his general references to martyrdom demonstrates that he recognizes the ability of other people to evaluate and to judge these demonstrations of faith up to the point of death. This is consistent with his recognition that he is an individual Christian, who has the right to think, to read the Bible, and to do theology, but he is also a member of a community of believers, that is, a Church, comprised of many people. Every single member of the Church--whether they are rich or poor, and whether they have extensive theological training--has the right to think, to read the Bible, and to do theology.<sup>64</sup> They probably will not do theology in the same rigorous manner as the trained, professional theologians (who always have an important function in the Church, according to Gutiérrez), but they nonetheless are capable of reflecting critically on their faith. Gutiérrez judges that many poor Christians who have received little formal theological training, in fact, are truly Christian martyrs because they died "bearing witness to

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<sup>62</sup>Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered', interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2.

<sup>63</sup>"...dan *anónimamente* sus vidas por amor a su pueblo o simplemente por saber estar ahí en medio de él..." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Beber en su propio pozo," my translation, Páginas 7, no. 47 (September 1982): 7.

<sup>64</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Revelación y anuncio de Dios en la historia, 22, 25-26; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Freedom and Salvation: A Political Problem," trans. Alvin Gutterriez, in Liberation and Change, 93-94; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Los pobres en la Iglesia," Concilium no. 104 (no. 2, 1977): 108; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Voice of the Poor in the Church," in The Catholic Theological Society of America. Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Annual Convention, 30-31.

their ideas...for their faith in Christ." For Gutiérrez, martyrs are people who "recognize the name of Christ, and die with his name on their lips."<sup>65</sup> If the poor and anonymous Christians can be martyrs, insofar as they recognized Jesus Christ and died bearing witness to their faith in him, then the other, poor and anonymous Christians, who are living, can effectively evaluate and judge whether particular Christians died in imitation of Jesus Christ, insofar as they know who he was, how and why he died, and what his resurrection signifies. Both poor and non-poor Christians have the right to evaluate and to judge whether any specific Christians were killed because they had demonstrated, through their actions, their love of God and their love of the poor. They have the right to evaluate and to judge whether these people should be designated as Christian martyrs.

The development of popular reputations of martyrdom represents the decisions made by many people in regard to whether particular Christians died as martyrs. Popular reputations of martyrdom are therefore the second way how the martyrs of contemporary Latin America are authenticated, according to the evidence in Gutiérrez's writings. These collective decisions are founded on the individual judgments made by many poor and non-poor Christians. For Gutiérrez, however, the evolution of these popular reputations of martyrdom among the poor themselves are particularly compelling evidence that these Christians died as martyrs. If the poor have recognized that these Christians died on account of their love of God and their love of everyone, but especially of the poor, then it is likely that, in fact, they did die precisely for these reasons. Gutiérrez contends that the blood which the martyrs have spilt substantiates the claim that many Christians have really opted for the poor, and "it is also proof that it will not be easy to erase their memory from the heart of the poor in the continent."<sup>66</sup> The popular reputations of martyrdom develop because the poor value every Christian who died out of love for them and on account of their commitment to their liberation.<sup>67</sup> Gutiérrez draws particular attention to how the popular reputation of martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero is manifested among many poor and non-poor Christians in contemporary Latin America. Like in the pre-Constantinian Church, many Christians nowadays gather to celebrate the anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, though Gutiérrez does not

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<sup>65</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

<sup>66</sup>"La sangre de estos mártires es prueba de que Medellín no fue palabra vana y es prueba también de que no será fácil borrar su memoria del corazón de los pobres del continente." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," my translation, Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11.

<sup>67</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Siglos de lucha y esperanza, xxvii-xxviii.

specifically call it a "birthday into heaven".<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, even though Gutiérrez does not refer to any alleged occurrences of posthumous miracles or visions of heaven as evidence which helps authenticate the claims of martyrdom in Latin America, it is notable that he is not surprised when Fr. James Brockman informs him in an interview that "many poor people now visit Romero's tomb and are making it a center of popular devotion, adorning it with plaques that thank the martyred archbishop for miracles."<sup>69</sup> Gutiérrez does not express any skepticism whatsoever in regard to the claims made by the poor that they have received miracles through Romero's prayers of intercession. Although Gutiérrez does not introduce the topic of the saints' posthumous miracles, he has reflected on the significance of Jesus Christ's miracles. It is significant that he never doubts they really occurred.<sup>70</sup> He claims that their purpose is "not...to surprise people, but to give life." For example, when Jesus gives the man born blind the ability to see in the gospel of John (9:1-41), "the healing...is a sign to indicate something more....Jesus is giving life and...he liberates this man (and us, too) from some ways of understanding that are wrong." He liberates the man from the poverty that corresponded to the life of a disabled man, who was an outcast of society; by working the miracle on the Sabbath, he liberates people from a legalistic view of religion; and "Jesus liberates not only the blind man but all persons around, including ourselves, from a false and arrogant notion of religious knowledge." People should not assume that someone deserves his or her personal suffering.<sup>71</sup> This implies that the poor can discern miracles because they already believe in God and because they are already convinced about Romero's martyrdom. The posthumous miracles stimulate their faith, not because they witness wonders contrary to nature, but because they rejoice at the new life enjoyed by the recipients. Therefore the poor have already authenticated the martyrdoms whenever popular reputations arise among them, but the miracles provide further evidence that God ensures the ultimate victory of life over death. Because Gutiérrez never introduces the topic of posthumous miracles, he clearly does not believe that the popular authentication of martyrdom by the poor depends upon their occurrence, but it is reinforced by them. The popular reputations of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America spread by word of mouth, by the celebration of their anniversaries, and through various media, including Gutiérrez's books and articles.

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<sup>68</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Reino está cerca." Páginas 8, no. 52 (May 1983): 2; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Pastor y testigo (Juan 10, 1-18). Homilía en la misa del XV aniversario de Mons. Oscar Romero," Páginas 20, no. 133 (June 1995): 78-80.

<sup>69</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 935.

<sup>70</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Paz: Tarea de Todos 1 (no. 1, October-November 1986): 3; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sermon. Gutiérrez on the Liberating of Man Born Blind," New Blackfriars 70 (April 1989): 158-160.

<sup>71</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sermon. Gutiérrez on the Liberating of Man Born Blind," New Blackfriars 70 (April 1989): 158-159.



## B. Evaluation of Gutiérrez's Concept of Martyrdom Based on the Findings Reported in Chapter Two

The objective of this section is to evaluate the similarities and the differences between Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom and the concept of authenticated martyrdom that evolved in the Church from the reign of Constantine up to the fifteenth century, based on the findings reported in chapter two.

### 1. "Bloodless Martyrs":

Starting in the late fourth century, Christians customarily designated ascetics and virgins as "bloodless martyrs," whose daily acts of self-renunciation expiated their sins, just like the last act of the blood martyrs. A number of biographers claimed that the ascetics yearned to deliver their lives as blood martyrs, but that they now had insufficient opportunities to imitate the Passion of Jesus Christ. For example, Hilary of Arles (403-409) praised his deceased archepiscopal predecessor, Honoratus (c.350-429), for enduring the "martyrdom [he] always bore in [his] thoughts, as though persecution had been raised against [his] faith...No one denies that [he] lacked the executioner, for martyrdom, not the desire."<sup>72</sup> Athanasius (c.296-373) interpreted the miracles which God had apparently effected through Anthony of Egypt (c.251-356) as clear evidence that God approves of ascetical self-discipline. Jerome (c.360-435) believed that God would certainly save the Christians who had adopted a poor lifestyle because this was an act of self-renunciation; the poor, however, might not be saved because they often sought the goods of the world that they lacked. Jerome also apparently endorsed the threat made by the monk, Malchus, to preserve his vow of chastity by committing suicide. Malchus thought that he would be a martyr even if he were his own persecutor. Asceticism and virginity therefore joined martyrdom in the fourth century as other sure routes to salvation.<sup>73</sup> The bloodless martyrs expressed the zealous desire for martyrdom which Gutiérrez criticizes severely. At the same time, either they or their biographers were confident that God would save them for the ascetical conduct throughout their lives. They did not have to die violently on account of their faith in order to be certain of their salvation. Gutiérrez, too, believes that God will save the people who manifest their faith in their actions throughout their lives, but he is particularly concerned about how people bring about justice in the world. He neither praises nor chastizes ascetics and virgins, and he never designates them as martyrs. He does not utilize the expressions "bloodless martyr" or "unbloody martyr". He respects

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<sup>72</sup>Hilary of Arles, A Sermon on the Life of St. Honoratus 37-38, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 15, 392-394.

<sup>73</sup>Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony 14, 47, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 15, 148-149, 178; Sulpicius Severus, The Letter to the Deacon Aurelius, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 7, 149-151; Hilary of Arles, A Sermon on the Life of St. Honoratus 37-38, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 15, 392-394; Gregory Nazianzen, On St. Basil the Great 57, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 22, 75; Isidore of Seville, Etymologies 7.11.4, in An Encyclopedist of the Dark Ages, Ernest Brehaut, 195; Jerome, Life of Malchus 6, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 15, 292; Jerome, Homilies 86, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 57, 211.

the vow of celibacy made by Roman Catholic priests, but he does not portray this as a controversial subject matter, deserving great attention at the moment. In an interview (November 1987), Gutiérrez states that the potential option of marriage for priests "is not the primary question for us--not because it's not a human question. We really have other concerns, like the hunger of our people." He then reveals that he does favour the option, "but the fact is that in the church right now, that is not possible, and I try to be the servant of my people in the present condition of the church. I think it's a real issue, but we have many, many other more important concerns."<sup>74</sup> Gutiérrez extols Romero for choosing not to evade the problems of the poor by means of an other-worldly spirituality, and he applauds St. Rosa de Lima's decision to work daily with the poor rather than to remain locked away in a monastery, yet he also approves of St. John of the Cross's spiritual path.<sup>75</sup> Gutiérrez recommends that Christians develop the different dimensions of their spirituality as individuals and as members of groups, but he also always advises them to contribute to the process of liberation because this is exactly how they express their love of God. The bloodless martyrs also revealed a prevailing attitude that God surely rewards some behaviour and punishes other. Although they did not claim that Christians could save themselves, they believed that some acts engaged in by Christians merited salvation. Gutiérrez denounces such a perspective vigorously. Moreover, Gutiérrez's censure of the Latin American Christians who are proud of their commitment to the poor, an attitude which he calls sacrilegious, clearly demonstrates that he would never adopt Jerome's view that the Christians who are committed to the poor are more likely to be saved than the poor themselves. According to Gutiérrez, the commitment of the non-poor who adopt the poverty of the poor always falls far short of what it should be. This does not mean that Gutiérrez idolizes the poor. Like all other people, they do not merit salvation. Even though God favours the poor, their salvation is never guaranteed. They, too, must endeavour to create greater communion among all people and between people and God. Of course, Gutiérrez does not urge Christians to commit suicide in order to preserve their chastity. Without intending to violate Gutiérrez's right to privacy, it is simply worth noting that he manifests a complex attitude concerning suicide as well as the sources which can be employed for nurturing one's spirituality. One of his close friends, the Peruvian author, José María Arguedas, committed a long-premeditated suicide in 1969. Gutiérrez dedicated Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas to Arguedas, as well as to Fr. Henrique Pereira Neto, one of the first martyrs of contemporary Latin America. Gutiérrez states that Arguedas, who did not identify himself as a Christian, has influenced his spirituality tremendously, particularly when he was formulating the methodology of the theology of

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<sup>74</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: "Opting for the Poor," interview with Kathleen Hayes, The Other Side 23 (no. 9, November 1987): 13.

<sup>75</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 5-7; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 384-385; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Juan de la Cruz desde América Latina," Páginas 17, no. 116 (July 1992): 27-38.

liberation.<sup>76</sup>

## 2. The Invocation of the Martyrs and the Veneration of Their Relics:

In the second half of the fourth century, Christians began to pray directly to the martyrs. They would ask them to intercede on their behalf with God, in whose immediate presence they were now situated in heaven. The living Christians, conscious of their great distance from God, hoped that God would attend more closely to the martyrs' intercessory prayers, and grant a special favour, such as the forgiveness of their sins, miracles of healing, the exorcism of evil spirits, and other, somewhat more mundane, assistance. The martyrs were supposed to be sympathetic to the weaknesses and the plights of their propitiators because they had once shared the same earthly existence.<sup>77</sup> Augustine of Hippo admonished Christians of the profound danger of worshipping the martyrs as if they were gods. It was God alone who worked the miracles of healing. He advised them to focus on using the martyrs as suitable models for imitation in life and, if necessary, in death as well.<sup>78</sup> Gutiérrez does not speak about the practice of invoking the martyrs and asking them to pray to God on their behalf for miracles. The only evidence of his attitude toward this common practice is his simple response that he is not surprised by the miracles, which the poor have attributed to Romero.<sup>79</sup> He clearly approves of this popular devotion, and he believes that some of these miracles, if not all of them, are real. Nevertheless, the fact that he does not enumerate miracles as one of the effects of martyrdom on the Church implies that he, like Augustine, advises Christians to focus on imitating the faith of the martyrs, yet without denying the miracles which God can effect in response to the prayers of invocation.

Christians began to venerate the martyrs' relics late in the fourth century. They touched the relics

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<sup>76</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Teología de la liberación: Perspectivas, 5. See the following studies of Arguedas: Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Entre las calandrias," Páginas 7, no. 49-50 (November-December 1981): 1-12; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Entre las calandrias," Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 91-122; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Entre las calandrias: Un ensayo sobre José María Arguedas, CEP, 108 (Lima, Peru: Instituto Bartolomé de Las Casas and Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1990).

<sup>77</sup>Ambrose, Concerning Widows 9.55, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, vol. 10, 400; Ambrose, Funeral Oration on the Death of Emperor Theodosius 10, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 22, 311; Ambrose, On the Death of His Brother Satyrus I 17-18, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 22, 169; Sulpicius Severus, Letter to Aurelius, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 7, 152; Valerian, Homilies 15-16, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 17, 401, 405.

<sup>78</sup>Augustine, The City of God 8.27, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 7, 74-76; Augustine, The City of God 22.10, The Fathers of the Church, 452-453.

<sup>79</sup>"The Prophetic Role of the Church in Latin America. A Conversation with Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with James R. Brockman, The Christian Century 100 (19 October 1983): 935.

believing that God would effect miracles similar to the ones resulting from the prayers of invocation.<sup>80</sup> This was a practice initiated by the populace, not by the Church authorities. Henceforth, a trade in relics flourished, at first, most commonly in the eastern part of the Church, and then, around the beginning of the eighth century, in the western part of the Church as well. The relics were often divided so that the same power could be shared among many Christians.<sup>81</sup> The local bishops sometimes attempted to control the popular practice by insisting on their prerogative to investigate the veracity of the relics and to decide whether to authenticate them officially. For Ambrose of Milan (and apparently also for Paulinus, his biographer, as well as for Augustine), the appearance of the martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, in a vision was sufficient evidence of the genuineness of their relics.<sup>82</sup> Gutiérrez does not speak at all about relics in his writings. The fact that he is a priest who celebrates mass over an altar in which authenticated relics are enclosed suggests that he probably does not reject the veneration of relics outright, but there is simply no evidence to make a definitive judgment from his writings. Because he is always critical of idolatry, it is likely that he would censure an overly superstitious veneration of the relics, especially if Christians were to replace the worship of the biblical God with the worship of relics. At the same time, Gutiérrez respects the various expressions of popular religiosity, insofar as these are ways how people manifest their belief in, trust in, and hope in God. Gutiérrez is critical, however, of any popular beliefs that reinforce a sense of fatalism among the poor, that is, if they impel the poor to accept their poverty as being ordained by God. Woodward has observed that many Salvadoran Christians visit Romero's tomb in order to venerate his relics privately.<sup>83</sup> If Romero's relics are venerated, not exclusively, but especially by the poor, it is likely that the relics of some other contemporary Latin American martyrs are also venerated. Gutiérrez is probably cognizant of this reality. It is therefore notable that Gutiérrez does not mention the practice of venerating relics among the important effects of contemporary martyrdom on the Church in Latin America.

### 3. The Authentication of the Alleged Martyrdoms:

In the fourth and fifth centuries, the local bishops began to play a direct and significant role in officially authenticating the martyrs who were already popularly venerated, especially in the urban centers. The cults of individual martyrs, as well as of nonmartyrs, always arose among the people living within a

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<sup>80</sup>Hippolyte Delehaye, Les origines du culte des martyrs, 116-124; Peter Brown, The Cult of Saints, 1-3.

<sup>81</sup>Jean Chélini and Henry Branthomme, Les chemins de Dieu, 130; Paulinus of Nola, Poems 27.441-442, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 40, 286.

<sup>82</sup>Paulinus, Life of St. Ambrose 5.14, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 15, 41; Augustine, Confessions 9.7, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 21, 242.

<sup>83</sup>Kenneth L. Woodward, Making Saints, 36-49.

limited geographical region. The bishops authenticated certain existing cults by including the names and the anniversaries of the martyrs in the local calendars (the Roman Calendar was first published in 354), and by participating in the commemorations. They helped spread the veneration of certain local martyrs by inviting other bishops to participate in the anniversary celebrations and by sending letters to their colleagues that informed them of the existence of these cults.<sup>84</sup> Bishops occasionally prohibited what they considered to be questionable cults: for example, ones that arose around newly unearthed relics; when the bishops suspected that the deceased persons being venerated had been pagans, heretics, or criminals; if the veracity of the miracles purportedly resulting from the invocation of these martyrs was doubtful. God would supposedly provide responses to these suspicious bishops by granting divine visions in which the true or false martyrs would appear before them and clarify the matter.<sup>85</sup> By the eighth century, the bishops customarily authenticated the martyrs by deciding, either individually or while gathered in synods, to allow the local communities to translate (i.e., to transport) the relics from their original resting places to more exalted locations, often in or under an altar. After suffering a violent death, the Christians who especially enjoyed popular reputations of martyrdom were the ones allegedly responsible for numerous posthumous miracles.<sup>86</sup>

As was noted in the previous section, Gutiérrez verifies that particular Christians died as martyrs in two ways. First, he designates as martyrs the Christians who were killed on account of their commitment to the poor. He critically examines the ways how they demonstrated their faith up to the point of death, in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith. Second, he examines the effects of these deaths on other Latin American Christians, particularly on the poor. The development of spontaneously generated popular reputations of martyrdom, which are sometimes evidenced by posthumous miracles, further substantiates his judgments and the judgments of other people concerning specific examples of martyrdom. While these supply sufficient evidence for Gutiérrez, it is significant that he had hoped for the official recognition of the contemporary martyrs, as well as some theological reflections on the meaning of their deaths, in the final

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<sup>84</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 21; Charles Pietri, Roma Christiana, vol. 1, 617-624.

<sup>85</sup>Charles Joseph Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, vol. 2, 426; Michael Freze, The Making of Saints, 75; André Vauchez, La sainteté en occident, 16-17; Hippolyte Delehaye, Les origines du culte des martyrs, 70-71; Sulpicius Severus, Life of St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor 11, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 7, 118-119; Gregory of Tours, Glorify of the Martyrs 50 and 62, trans. Raymond van Dam, 70-75, 86-87; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 81.

<sup>86</sup>Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority, 29-35, 38-39; Nicole Herrmann-Mascard, Les reliques des saints, 82-85; André Vauchez, La sainteté en occident, 22-24; Pierrez Delooz, Sociologie et canonisations, 30; Jean Chélini, L'Aube du moyen âge, 319-320.

documents of the Puebla and Santo Domingo conferences.<sup>87</sup> He does not offer any reasons why it could be inadvisable to recognize the martyrs at this time (i.e., any peremptory obstacles), such as the danger of provoking persecutors still in power or infuriating potential persecutors. It is unlikely that Gutiérrez expected the official recognition of specific individuals, since this would represent the circumvention of the process of canonization by people who do not have such an authority. He probably sought statements and theological reflections on what the martyrs as a group contribute to the identity of the Church in contemporary Latin America. The severe disappointment Gutiérrez expressed when these did not appear in the documents is not surprising because he has always demonstrated that he highly values the official statement of theological perspectives in high level Church documents, especially in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and in papal encyclicals.<sup>88</sup> Gutiérrez sees himself as a man at the service of the whole Church, rather than as a lone individual who would stubbornly continue to hold radical opinions, even if it meant leaving the Church in order to preserve them. He highly respects the Church hierarchy, and he tries to be obedient to his ecclesiastical superiors.<sup>89</sup> Gutiérrez sought the recognition of the martyrs in the documents because he earnestly believed that this would benefit the whole Church, especially the Church in Latin America, and not because this would aid a personal cause, such as advancing the status of the theology of liberation. He is more concerned about how Christians can better understand and live the demands of the gospel, than he is about promoting a particular school of theology. For example, Gutiérrez expressed his pleasure and relief when the preferential option for the poor was included in the Santo Domingo document, not because this represented an official endorsement of the theology of liberation, but because he believes that this concept truly reflects the demands of the gospel. For Gutiérrez, this option is "the most important contribution which the ecclesial community...in Latin America has made to the

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<sup>87</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Sobre el documento de consulta de Puebla," Páginas 3, no. 16-17 (June 1978): 11; Gustavo Gutiérrez, Los pobres y la liberación en Puebla, 54-55; "Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia la IV Conferencia," Páginas 17, no. 117 (September 1992): 29; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una agenda. La IV Conferencia de Santo Domingo," Páginas 18, no. 119 (February 1993): 14.

<sup>88</sup>For example, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Aspectos teológicos de la encíclica 'Laborem Exercens'," in Significación y aportes de la encíclica Laborem Exercens, Oscar Alzamora, Rolando Ames, and Gustavo Gutiérrez, Cuadernos de Teología, 2 (Lima, Peru: Departamento de Teología, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1981), 1-16; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Evangelio del trabajo," in Sobre el trabajo humano: Comentarios a la encíclica "Laborem Exercens", Gustavo Gutiérrez, Rolando Ames, Javier Iguñiz, and Carlos Chipoco, CEP, 44 (Lima, Peru: Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1982), 9-63; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "El Concilio: una pauta espiritual," Páginas 20, no. 136 (December 1995): 17-28.

<sup>89</sup>"La visita del Papa vista por Gustavo Gutiérrez," interview with Federico Velarde, et al., Quehacer 33 (February 1985): 25.

universal Church.<sup>90</sup> It is also notable that Gutiérrez was bitterly disappointed when only one of the six Salvadoran bishops and no CELAM officials attended the funeral of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Their absence signified their judgment that he had not died on account of the faith, but instead for political reasons. Their act represented the view, held by a number of Church authorities, that Romero should not be authenticated as a martyr, and, therefore, neither should any other Christians who have died on account of their commitment to the poor.<sup>91</sup>

Gutiérrez helps disseminate information about the contemporary Latin American martyrs in his writings. He attended the funeral of Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 30, 1980, but, as Jon Sobrino observed, this was as a humble fellow Christian, not as a significant theologian in the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>92</sup> He has also participated in various anniversary celebrations of the martyrs, mostly notably some for Archbishop Romero. Gutiérrez does not identify any false or questionable martyrs, but he does explain what, he believes, are the conditions of false martyrdom. He thinks that people are not necessarily martyrs if they die on account of a certain theological understanding or in order to defend the right of the Church.<sup>93</sup> Sometimes they are true martyrs for these reasons (a view which he expresses when he shows his respect for papal canonization), but often they are not. They are certainly martyrs, however, if they die out of their love for the poor and the God who favours them. This means that he does not consider the preferential option for the poor to be simply the view of a particular theological school, but, instead, it reflects the will of God, evidenced in the Bible. He does not estimate whether it is likely that anyone will ever receive divine visions that authenticate alleged martyrs. He simply observes the alleged martyrs' actions and spirituality activities; he examines these in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith; and he tries to detect whether they now enjoy a popular reputation of martyrdom among the poor.

The first known example of papal canonization was when Pope John XV officially designated the nonmartyr, Ulric of Augsburg, as a saint in 993. The papal affirmation of saints already approved episcopally became more frequent during the pontificate of Pope Alexander III (pope 1159-1181). In 1199,

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<sup>90</sup>"Estamos, sin duda, ante el aporte más importante que la comunidad eclesial que vive en América Latina ha hecho a la Iglesia universal de lo que forma parte." Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Una agenda. La IV Conferencia de Santo Domingo," my translation, Páginas 18, no. 119 (February 1993): 14.

<sup>91</sup>"Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2.

<sup>92</sup>Jon Sobrino, "60 años de Gustavo Gutiérrez. Universalidad de la teología de la liberación," Christus 53, no. 620 (1988): 15.

<sup>93</sup>"Gutiérrez: 'Assassination of Romero was Cheered'," interview with Peter Hebblethwaite, National Catholic Reporter (25 April 1980): 2; "Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La fuerza histórica de los pobres," in Signos de lucha y esperanza, xxvi.

Pope Innocent III established the two conditions that, henceforth, would have to be fulfilled before Christians could be papally canonized: the alleged martyrs had allowed themselves to be killed on account of the faith and they had to be responsible for posthumous miracles, effected by their heavenly prayers of intercessions in response to the invocations of some living members of the Church. Of course, the miracles were ultimately caused by God, not the alleged saint. The miracles were viewed as the divine affirmation that the martyrs, in fact, had already entered into heaven, which many Christians had heretofore claimed. In 1234, Pope Gregory IX declared in his Decretals that, henceforth, only the popes possessed the right and the power to authenticate all martyrs and nonmartyr saints who enjoyed popular reputations of martyrdom and sanctity, respectively. Alleged martyrs and nonmartyrs were not supposed to be canonized if they did not have such reputations in the communities where they had died. In fact, it was unlikely that any posthumous miracles would be attributed to them if they did not enjoy a popular reputation locally. Starting around the same time, a written account of the martyr's life, death, and attributed miracles had to be supplied before the alleged martyr could be canonized.

Gutiérrez insists that he does not pretend to be making any pronouncements on who are the official martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church because he fully acknowledges and approves of the authentication of popularly venerated martyrs by means of papal canonization.<sup>94</sup> He judges the veracity of specific examples of alleged martyrdom by critically reflecting on them in the light of the Word of God, accepted in faith. This suggests that Gutiérrez does not seek divine affirmation by means of posthumous miracles because the Bible already constitutes an insupplantable revelation from God. Miracles would therefore simply be additional, corroborating evidence. It is notable that Gutiérrez never advocates the initiation of causes of canonization for any of the contemporary martyrs. He respects the process, but it is not essential for their authentication. At the same time, the fact that he wishes CELAM, a major ecclesial authority, had recognized the martyrs implies that he would be even more pleased if any of them were ever officially authenticated by means of papal canonization. Moreover, it is likely that the individual Latin American bishops would be more inclined to initiate causes of canonization, in response to the local popular cults that have arisen in their dioceses, if CELAM officially recognized contemporary martyrdom as a general phenomenon.

While the process of canonization was becoming more rigorous, expensive, and Vatican-centered between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, a number of Christians began to enjoy popular reputations of martyrdom because they had died what the local people considered to be unjustly violent deaths. In some of these cases, they clearly did not die for predominantly religious reasons. For example, they were killed in domestic and labour disputes, in political conflicts, while on pilgrimages, and some children were

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<sup>94</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit', *Latinamerica Press* 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5; Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Beber en su propio pozo*, 174.



allegedly murdered by Jews so that they could be used in rituals. Their reputations grew because many people claimed that they had received miracles in response to their invocations. Posthumous miracles often provided more compelling evidence of sanctity for the people than the ways how the alleged martyrs had lived or died. Gutiérrez does not discuss any similarly false popular reputations of martyrdom in contemporary Latin America.

### C. Evaluation of Gutiérrez's Concept of Martyrdom Based on the Findings Reported in Chapter Three

Cardinal Prospero Lambertini (the future Pope Benedict XIV) established the four basic elements of every true example of martyrdom in his book, De Servorum Dei Beatificatione et Beatorum Canonizatione, which was published between 1734 and 1738. These same four elements were employed thereafter, including in the process of beatification and canonization outlined in the 1917 Code of Canon Law, and they continue to be in effect with the promulgation of the 1983 legislation on the causes of saints. The objective of this section is to compare and to contrast Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom with Lambertini's explanation of these elements.

#### 1. The Four Basic Elements of True Martyrdom:

The four basic elements of every true example of martyrdom are the tyrant or the persecutor, the death, the cause of the martyrdom or the reason for it, and the martyr. First, the deaths of the martyrs must be caused by people who persecute Christians precisely because they are Christians. A persecutor can either be a single person or a collective entity (e.g., a government). The persecutors must act freely and deliberately, and they must cause the deaths either directly or indirectly. The persecutors must be different people than the martyrs themselves. The persecutors can be pagans, heretics, or Roman Catholics. (Although Lambertini does not enumerate anyone else, it is obvious that he intends to list everyone as eligible persecutors, including Roman Catholics, who represent the limit situation.)<sup>95</sup> As was already noted, Gutiérrez identifies two groups of persecutors: the substantially more common case of some beneficiaries of the established social order (either from the government or from their powerful allies in society), and the members of some groups which employ terroristic violence as they endeavour to overturn the existing system. In both cases, they hate the Christians whom they murder because the ways how they act as Christians and as a Church impede their ability to achieve their self-interests. While an individual person can carry out a given murder, Gutiérrez normally speaks of a collective persecutor (e.g., the government), comprised of individual persecutors (i.e., certain members of the government who actually order the death).

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<sup>95</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 41-48, 149-150; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 109.

The persecutors freely choose to kill the Christians, and they either do the deed themselves or they have it carried out for them by underlings or by hired assassins. If the persecutors are from the beneficiaries of the existing social system, they are often Roman Catholics who are the self-proclaimed protectors of a Western and Christian (i.e., Roman Catholic) civilization, but they could also be other Christians, atheists, agnostics, or possibly from some other group. Gutiérrez does not explicitly identify any other religious affiliation than the first one. If the persecutors are from groups employing terroristic violence, they sometimes identify themselves as Maoists (e.g., the members of Sendero Luminoso in Peru), but they could also be any other communist atheists, and even Roman Catholics, other Christians, agnostics, or the members of most other religious groups. They are not the defenders of the same Western and Christian society often envisioned by the members of the first group of persecutors. They are probably endeavouring to subvert that system. Gutiérrez, however, never explicitly identifies the religious affiliation or the absence of one for the persecutors employing terroristic violence.

The second element of every true example of martyrdom is the death itself. There must always be a death, and it must be caused by the persecutors, never by the martyr. The persecutors can cause the deaths of the martyrs in any one of three ways: (1) directly and immediately; (2) indirectly and through other people; (3) both directly and immediately, and indirectly and through other people. In the first case, the persecutors are the people using the weapons that kill. The deaths happen either immediately or within a few days, but always as a direct result of the persecutors' actions. In the second case, the persecutors order other people to torture the Christians physically, and they eventually die from the tortures. In the third case, the persecutors order the torture of the Christians, which would normally lead to their deaths, but they order the tortures to cease prematurely. Then the victims are struck with blows that only kill them because the previous tortures have already weakened them.<sup>96</sup> Gutiérrez only utilizes the religious terms "martyr" and "martyrdom" when he refers to a Christian who has really been killed by persecutors. He does not draw special attention to the techniques employed by the persecutors to kill their victims. Most of the Christians whom Gutiérrez explicitly names as martyrs were shot, and either died immediately or shortly afterwards from the injuries. He does not emphasize whether any of them were tortured. He does claim, however, that Romero and the Salvadoran martyrs were murdered under the orders of very powerful people, whose identity the public will probably never know.<sup>97</sup> Unlike Lambertini, Gutiérrez apparently does not consider the specific one of the three ways how these people died as a particularly relevant issue for theological

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<sup>96</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 49-56; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 110.

<sup>97</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 9-10; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Noticias de cruz y resurrección," Páginas 14, no. 100 (December 1989): 6.

reflection. It certainly does not affect whether they should be designated as martyrs.

The third element of every true example of martyrdom is the reason why it happened or the cause that engendered it. Both the persecutors and the martyrs play a distinct role in this third element. The persecutors must be motivated either by their hatred of the Christian faith itself or by their hatred of the virtues and the good works that correspond to it. There are a number of ways how the persecutors' hatred of the Christian faith can be substantiated: if the persecutors state it expressly and publicly; if it is clearly manifested in their dialogue with the victims before they kill them; if the judge in a trial, who is either a persecutor or a delegate, offers the victims the opportunity to survive on condition that they renounce their faith (Lambertini obviously uses the models of Jesus Christ and of the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church); and if the victims are killed specifically because they are Christians or because they refuse to act in ways contrary to Christian morals. The persecutors' principal motive must be anti-Christian, but this is not necessarily the only motive. Any political motives, for example, must be secondary. The martyrs must allow themselves to die on account of their love of the Christian faith. They cannot be fanatics, heroic stoics, formal schismatics, seekers of human acclaim either for themselves or for their families, and they cannot die only in order to preserve their human dignity.<sup>98</sup> Gutiérrez contends that the persecutors are motivated by their hatred of the Christian faith, but he has a particular view of what this means in the historical situation of contemporary Latin America, which nevertheless should not be unique to it. This view is founded on his contention that the widespread existence of poverty in the continent, as well as in the whole world, is not solely a social issue. It has ramifications on every aspect of what it means to be a human being, most notably, on the spiritual dimension, that is, on the various ways how Christians follow Jesus Christ. Stated from the opposite vantage point, the spiritual dimension pertains to everything that the believers do or experience, so poverty should not be viewed in isolation from what it means to be a Christian. According to Gutiérrez, Christians worship the biblical God of life, who loves every human being freely and unconditionally, but who also favours the victims of injustice. Such injustice arises from individual decisions to sin, as well as from the social structures which are created and maintained as a result of the sinful decisions (or the lack of decisions, in the case of the sins of omission) made by many people who benefit from the system. The characteristics of such an unjust social system sharply contradict those which correspond to the Kingdom of God. Many Christians in Latin America, motivated by their love of the biblical God and their love of their fellow human beings, have chosen to commit themselves to create more just societies, which represent the partial realization of the Kingdom of God in history. The persecutors are motivated by their self-interests, and not by their love of all other people, particularly not those who are poorest. Their activities show that they worship things other than or in addition to the biblical

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<sup>98</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 59-68; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 110-111.

God; they are idolaters. They hate anyone who threatens their long established privileges, and they are willing to do whatever is necessary in order to maintain them, including murder, or order the murder of, whoever tries to create a social system that benefits everyone, especially those who have the greatest needs. The Christians who are committed to the poor are killed because their actions correspond with what they say they believe. These actions are based on their love of God and their love of everyone. Therefore, the persecutors kill them on account of the ways how they demonstrate their faith. These ways, however, are not simply specific virtues or good works, as if some Christians could simply opt to do some of them at certain times and other ones at other times. For Gutiérrez, the ways how these Christians act correspond completely to what it means to be a Christian and a Church. They are exactly, and really the only way, how Christians can manifest their faith. Either they show that they love God by loving the poor or they demonstrate that they do not love God by neglecting or by injuring the poor. Love is the foundation of all the actions. Therefore they are killed because of the ways how they manifest their love of the poor. From Gutiérrez's perspective, it is not particularly relevant whether the persecutors state publicly or in a dialogue with the future martyrs that they hate the Christian faith. After all, they often believe that they are the defenders of a Western and Christian society. It is highly unlikely that such persecutors would insist, in the setting of a trial, that Christians renounce their faith because they often think that the people whom Gutiérrez designates as martyrs are communists, rather than Christians. People demonstrate that they are persecutors whenever they kill the poor and the Christians who are committed to them. Gutiérrez never states that any of the Christians whom he designates as martyrs are fanatics, heroic stoics, formal schismatics, and seekers of human acclaim. They are often killed as they attempt to protect the human dignity of the poor. They believe that this dignity corresponds with the will of God.

The fourth element of every true example of martyrdom is the martyr. Lambertini enumerates a number of characteristics which every martyr must exhibit. The person must have a Christian faith, as it is espoused in the Roman Catholic Church; heretics and formal schismatics are thereby excluded. Only Roman Catholics or catechumens who clearly demonstrate that they already possess this faith can fulfill this requirement sufficiently for papal canonization. They must have either consciously accepted their imminent deaths or prepared themselves for it freely and willingly. Christians who flee a persecution, and then are captured and killed, can only be martyrs if they did not flee contrary to their consciences, against the orders of Church authorities, or as an expression of weakness. Christians can only present themselves spontaneously and voluntarily to the persecutors if they are inspired by the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, these voluntary actions are prohibited. Provoked martyrdom is generally prohibited. The only exception is when the Christians are inspired by the Holy Spirit, and they are able to strengthen the wavering faith of other Christians through their actions. Proving the presence of the Holy Spirit in such scenarios is very difficult, so these motives are unlikely to result in canonization. Christians die as martyrs if they face their end patiently, courageously, and steadfastly, persevering up to the point of death, even if they are tortured. If

the Christians die far away from any reliable witnesses, they must have consistently displayed the aforementioned characteristics up to the point when they were separated from the other Christians. They cannot die bearing arms, like soldiers. They must die loving and forgiving the persecutors.<sup>99</sup>

Gutiérrez only utilizes the term "martyr", in the historical situation of contemporary Latin America, to refer to Roman Catholics and other Christians, such as ministers, killed on account of their commitment to the poor. Cardinal Lambertini's fourth element of every true example of martyrdom could mean that he believed all Christians other than Roman Catholics were incapable of dying on account of the Christian faith. Nowadays, this requirement of the fourth element means that other Christians are ineligible for papal canonization, but it does not suggest that they are unable to be Christian martyrs. Only God can recognize all the martyrs. Because many Christians are killed instantly nowadays, it is difficult to determine whether they had accepted their death the moment before it happened, but the reality that many of them were already cognizant of the danger, yet remained in it anyway, demonstrates that, without seeking death, they had freely and willingly accepted it, and that they had properly prepared themselves for it. Gutiérrez's view of fleeing has already been examined. He always disagrees with sought or voluntary martyrdom. He never speaks of Christians fleeing or provoking martyrdom because they are inspired by the Holy Spirit. He never designates as martyrs the Christians who died in combat (e.g., Camilo Torres or Néstor Paz Zamora).

## 2. Difficulties that Arise Concerning the Four Elements of True Martyrdom:

Salvatore Indelicato presents some of the difficulties which often arise when the evidence is scrutinized in order to ascertain whether all four basic elements are present in a given cause of canonization. These are the insufficiency of the proofs, the verification of the death, the anti-religious (actually, anti-Christian) character of the persecution or death, and the martyr's ultimate motive. First, if there are no eyewitnesses, doubts arise concerning the full names of the alleged martyrs, as well as the location and the circumstances in which the deaths occurred. Furthermore, it is important to determine how, when, and where specific reputations of martyrdom began and grew.<sup>100</sup> Gutiérrez knew all the people whom he names as examples of martyrdom, but he did not usually witness their deaths. The only exception is some of the poor people whom he saw murdered at Romero's funeral. Because Gutiérrez was generally not an eyewitness of the deaths of the people whom he designates as martyrs, he is obviously depending upon the accounts of other people. He does not reveal who are his sources. It seems, however, that Gutiérrez is more interested in the various ways how these Christians had served the poor in the period prior to their deaths, and how their actions had enraged the persecutors, than in the specific details of how they faced their last moment.

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<sup>99</sup>Ernesto Piacentini, Il martirio nelle cause dei santi, 75-100, 150-151; Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 111-119.

<sup>100</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 303-305, 314-316.

Second, Indelicato notes that sometimes it is difficult to prove that all the deaths really occurred. Some alleged martyrs could have survived and fled a persecution. Different eyewitnesses and documents can supply contradictory evidence about how people were killed and who killed them. It is sometimes difficult to assemble a final list of everyone who died.<sup>101</sup> Fr. Vicente Hondarza is the only person whom Gutiérrez designates as a martyr before he is absolutely sure of the circumstances of his death, but he realized that powerful interests were behind it.<sup>102</sup> Gutiérrez recognizes that no one has ever successfully counted the number of poor and anonymous martyrs. Even in the example of the forty killed at Romero's funeral, this is an estimate.<sup>103</sup> Gutiérrez does not reveal how he weighs and evaluates the relative value of the different sources he uses for securing the pertinent details related to a given example of martyrdom.

Third, according to Indelicato, it is often difficult to prove the anti-religious character of the persecution or the death when the persecutors have more than one motive. Sometimes the persecutors even claim to be the protectors of the Church against subversive threats to the traditional ways how the faith has been practised. If a government is the persecutor, it often implements legislation that legitimizes its violent activities. Therefore, Indelicato contends that Christians are not martyrs if they are simply the victims of an unjust system. It is frequently necessary to prove that the persecutors have a hidden anti-religious motive, which can only be uncovered by investigating their earlier statements and behaviour, dating from a time when they were less careful to hide their true motive. It is even more difficult to prove their hatred of specific virtues or good works.<sup>104</sup> In fact, Fabijan Veraja observes that, even though there have been more incidents of true martyrdom in the twentieth century than ever before, these are often very difficult to prove because modern persecutors are wary about "creating martyrs." They try to hide the fact that their real motive is the hatred of the Christian faith. Modern martyrs often also die in situations where there are no surviving witnesses.<sup>105</sup> The Christians whom Gutiérrez designates as martyrs were usually killed under the circumstances which Indelicato and Veraja consider to be problematic for proving the principal motive of the persecutors. For Gutiérrez, however, the major issue is how the persecutors, including the members of governments, manifest their Christian faith, or their lack of it, in their actions. He does not look for a hidden motive because the inconsistency between the persecutors' words and their actions clearly shows that

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<sup>101</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 305-307, 317-318.

<sup>102</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, Beber en su propio pozo, 157-168.

<sup>103</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Juan de la Cruz desde América Latina," Páginas 17, no. 116 (July 1992): 29; Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Presentación. Un testigo de la vida," in Tiene que vencer el amor, James Brockman, 9.

<sup>104</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 307-309, 319-323.

<sup>105</sup>Fabijan Veraja, Le cause di canonizzazione dei santi, 68.

they are acting contrary to the demands of the gospel, especially when their victims are the poor.

Fourth, Indelicato stresses that the ultimate motive of the martyrs must be to remain faithful to Jesus Christ up to the end. They demonstrate this by allowing themselves to die in defense of the Christian faith (as it is espoused by the Roman Catholic Church) or in order to avoid renouncing or betraying the faith. They cannot die while protecting their own private opinions of the faith, even if they think that these are the corollaries of the doctrines. They cannot die with a sectarian spirit or in order to cover over past crimes. They cannot intend to achieve personal, familial, or national interests through their deaths. They should seek the sacrament of penance and the eucharist before dying. Because it is difficult to prove the martyrs' attitude after they are separated from their religious community, eyewitnesses of the final moments should be sought, even if they are not Roman Catholic. Any divine signs or miracles while the future martyrs are suffering suggest the presence of the Holy Spirit, and they should be seen as compelling evidence of the veracity of these martyrdoms.<sup>106</sup> Gutiérrez never speaks about Christians dying for the advancement of the theology of liberation. He does not view the preferential option for the poor as an option made by sectarians, but as an appropriate interpretation of the gospel. He never notes the occurrence of divine signs or miracles before the deaths, yet he does not deny them either.

#### D. Evaluation of Gutiérrez's Concept of Martyrdom Based on the Findings Reported in Chapter Four

There are two objectives in this section: first, to ascertain what the similarities and the differences are between Gutiérrez's concept of martyrdom and the understanding of martyrdom exhibited by John Wyclif (c.1329-1384), by John Hus (c.1369-1415), by Desiderius Erasmus (c.1466-1536), by Martin Luther (1483-1546), and by John Calvin (1509-1564), in their criticisms of the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and of their relics; second, to compare and to contrast Gutiérrez's concept with the ways how the traditional beliefs and the practices have been consistently reaffirmed in the Roman Catholic Church from the Council of Trent up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

##### 1. The Criticisms Made by John Wyclif, John Hus, Desiderius Erasmus, Martin Luther, and John Calvin:

The criticisms levelled by Wyclif, Hus, Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin between the fourteenth century and the sixteenth century included the unscriptural nature of the papal powers of issuing bulls of canonization and of authenticating relics (a criticism made by Wyclif, Luther, and Calvin) and the unbiblical origin of the veneration of the saints and of their relics (a criticism made by Luther and Calvin); the impertinence of all claims that the pope or anyone else other than God could possibly know who is in heaven (a criticism made by Wyclif, Hus, and Luther); the impropriety of requesting certain earthly benefits

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<sup>106</sup>Salvatore Indelicato, Il processo apostolico di beatificazione, 309-314, 323-330.

from specific saints (a criticism made by Hus, Luther, and Calvin); worshipping the saints and their relics in place of God, that is, committing idolatry, which ultimately leads to damnation (a criticism made by Hus, Luther, and Calvin); and displacing Jesus Christ as the unique intermediary between human beings and God (a criticism made by Luther and Calvin). Furthermore, Wyclif and Hus recommended that the money often lavished on the shrines of the saints and the trafficking in the relics would be better spent by distributing it to the poor to the honour of the saints. Luther stressed that the saints, even the martyrs, suffered no more doing works than God expected of all Christians. In fact, they did far less than they should have done. By no means were they justified before God by their activities. They did not merit their salvation. They, like all Christians, were sinners, and they would only be saved if they had trusted in Jesus Christ as their mediator at the final judgment. They would be damned if they had trusted in their works. Erasmus reaffirmed the traditional beliefs that the saints are suitable models for imitation and that they are effective heavenly intermediaries who can be invoked for prayers of intercession on behalf of the living members of the Church, but he was harshly critical of what he judged to be unduly superstitious conduct. He particularly mocked people if they bargained with certain saints when they were in danger, if they feared incurring the wrath of the saints by neglecting their cults, if they venerated dubious relics, and if they asked for benefits from the saints that they would not otherwise request from any respectable man. He believed that Christians should focus on venerating the saints by imitating the activities they had engaged in during their lives because these were what had pleased Jesus Christ in the first place. Luther, too, believed that Christians ought to imitate the faith of whomever they think are models of saintly life, but these were not necessarily the Christians who had been papally canonized. They should only imitate the saints' actions which were in accordance with the demands made in the Bible.

Gutiérrez does not explicitly consider most of these issues, but his likely perspective in regard to them can be inferred from his writings, as well as from the fact that he has been Roman Catholic priest ever since 1959. It is important to recognize that, even though the Bible is the ultimate source which Gutiérrez employs to evaluate activities critically, he usually respects and adheres to traditionally Roman Catholic views and practices, even if they did not originate in the Bible. In fact, there are certain official views and practices, not evidenced in the Bible, which he should not deny as a member of the Roman Catholic Church, much less as a Roman Catholic priest. For example, it is likely that he recognizes the intercession of the saints when he says the eucharistic prayer in the mass. He invokes the martyrs and the nonmartyr saints in the Litany of the Saints whenever he celebrates the Easter Vigil.<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, a definitive statement cannot be made about his view from the evidence available in his writings because he has never revealed it in them. He never mentions the private veneration of unauthorized relics or the public veneration of authenticated relics, but he also does not disparage them. Gutiérrez is nevertheless severely critical of any

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<sup>107</sup>E.J. Gratsch, "Litany, Liturgical Use of," in New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 8, 790.



unbiblical innovations which he believes sharply contradict the demands of the gospel. For example, he denounces any attempts to justify religiously the enormous disparity of wealth in Latin America by people who claim that God rewards the rich because they are industrious and punishes the poor because they are lazy. Moreover, according to Gutiérrez, there are even certain novelties that arise and help Christians during a specific period, but which become dangerous when they are artificially maintained beyond their usefulness. This view is evidenced, for example, in Gutiérrez's criticisms of the inappropriate persistence of the *pastoral* of Christendom in contemporary Latin America. Even though Gutiérrez never specifically responds to any accusations that the papal power of canonization and the veneration of the martyrs and the nonmartyr saints and of their relics are unbiblical innovations, he certainly does not believe that these run contrary to the demands of the gospel. He acknowledges his incompetence for declaring who are the official martyrs of the Roman Catholic Church. He is neither surprised by, nor does he disapprove of the popular veneration of Archbishop Oscar Romero. In fact, he cherishes the models provided by some saints. For example, in Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico (October 1995), he reflects on the biblical texts which are used to celebrate the feast day of St. Rosa de Lima, a nonmartyr saint who was canonized by Pope Clement IX in 1671.<sup>108</sup> He also reflects on the texts for All Saints' Day, a feast day when the saints officially recognized in the Roman Catholic Church are commemorated, including the martyrs and the nonmartyrs who have been papally canonized. He does not speak about any specific saint in his reflections on the significance of this second feast.<sup>109</sup> Gutiérrez begins his theological reflections on the texts for the feast of St. Rosa by declaring that "to have a saint as a neighbour is an exceptional experience. It points to the devotion of Saint Rosa among us." He lauds St. Rosa's decision to serve the poor in Lima humbly out of her love for all of them and her love for God, rather than to remain in a large monastery as a spiritual recluse, divorced from the poor living and dying all around her. He clearly sees her as a particularly apt model for imitation because she was a resident of Lima, who walked the same streets as the inhabitants of the city today, most of whom are poor like the people whom she served. He claims that "the presence of Rosa--and of Martín de Porras--in the history of this city, her love and her delivery [of herself] to [her] neighbour, are manifestations of that act of leavening which should make our world more human and fraternal."<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, even though Gutiérrez does not speculate on whether the popes

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<sup>108</sup>Pierre Deloos, Sociologie et Canonisations, 466.

<sup>109</sup>Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Santa Rosa. Ecco. 3,17-24; Fil. 3,8-14; Mt. 13,31-35. Una vecina de Lima," and "Todos los Santos. Apoc. 7,2-4,9-14; 1 Jn. 3,1-3; Mt. 5,1-12. Las actitudes del discípulo," in Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, 384-385, 386-387.

<sup>110</sup>"Tener a una santa como vecina es una experiencia singular. Ella marca la devoción a santa Rosa entre nosotros." "La presencia de Rosa--y de Martín de Porras--en la historia de esta ciudad, su amor y entrega al prójimo, son manifestaciones de esa levadura que debe hacer más humano y fraterno nuestro

really know who has already successfully entered into heaven, he does not dispute this traditional view. Gutiérrez would probably discourage inappropriate requests for earthly benefits from the saints, though his comments concerning the miracles allegedly effected through Romero show that he recognizes the occurrence of posthumous miracles. He does not think that the veneration of saints necessarily leads to the idolatrous worship of them. The fact that his writings are clearly Christ-centered suggests that he would censure any attempts to displace the intermediary function of Jesus Christ. Like Wyclif and Hus, he probably prefers that the inordinate amounts of money sometimes spent on the shrines of the saints, instead be utilized to improve the everyday situation of the poor masses. Nevertheless, he knows that, often enough, it is the poor themselves who are particularly enthusiastic about publicly venerating some of the martyrs and nonmartyr saints or about privately venerating alleged ones. For example, Romero's popular reputation of martyrdom has especially developed among the poor. Gutiérrez nowhere discourages modest shrines where all Christians, especially the poor, could nurture their faith in the biblical God by venerating the saints. Gutiérrez shares Luther's contention that the saints, including the martyrs, do not suffer any more than God expects of all Christians. In fact, from Gutiérrez's perspective, God does not demand any innocent suffering at all, yet when Christians are confronted by the choice between suffering and renouncing their love of God and of all other people, especially of the poor, they should allow themselves to suffer. The act of suffering, itself, should never be praised, and it certainly does not merit salvation. The martyrs do no more than what all other believers in God should prepare themselves to do. At the same time, according to Gutiérrez, Christians do not accept God's invitation to salvation through their utterance of orthodox words alone, but by the consistency between their right actions and their right words. This is how they manifest their faith in God. Gutiérrez believes, however, that even people who do not have an explicit faith in God can be saved when their right actions are consistent with the demands of the gospel. In all cases, however, it is God who saves. This means that, for all people, Jesus Christ is their mediator at the final judgment, even if they are not aware of it.

## 2. The Consistent Reaffirmation of the Cult of Martyrs and Nonmartyr Saints and Their Relics from the Council of Trent to the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II:

The second half of chapter four concerns the consistent reaffirmation of the cult of martyrs and nonmartyr saints and of their relics in the Roman Catholic Church from the Council of Trent up to the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. In some encyclicals during the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, the popes made general references to persecution and martyrdom in various countries. For example, Pope Gregory XVI compared the martyrs of Tonkin and Cochin, China with the martyrs in the pre-Constantinian Church, in Probe Nostis (September 18, 1840); Pope Pius IX praised the same martyrs in

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\_\_\_\_\_ mundo." Gustavo Gutiérrez, Compartir la palabra: A lo largo del Año Litúrgico, my translation, 384, 385.

Quanto Conficiamur Moerore (August 10, 1863); Pope Pius XI designated the priests and the laity who were killed during the 1920s in Mexico as modern examples of martyrdom, in Acerba Animi (September 29, 1932); and Pope Pius XII referred to the missionary martyrs in Korea and China, in Evangelii Praecones (June 2, 1951). These popes reflected theologically on the significance of the events for the Church in these specific countries as well as for the whole Roman Catholic Church. In the first three examples, the Roman Catholics killed during these persecutions had yet been papally beatified or canonized when the encyclicals were published. The general references to the martyrs of China and Mexico, and the theological reflections on the significance of their lives and their deaths seem to be exactly what Gutiérrez sought for the final documents of the Puebla and Santo Domingo conferences. As general references to the occurrence of martyrdom, these would not have represented attempts to bypass the process of canonization. It is notable that the relatively brief persecution of the Church in Mexico was reflected on in a papal encyclical, whereas, Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II have not reflected on the relatively common persecutions and martyrdoms in different regions of contemporary Latin America over the past three decades in any of their encyclicals. Since Gutiérrez yearned for the official recognition of the martyrs at Puebla and Santo Domingo, he would obviously be even more pleased if they were ever reflected on in papal encyclicals.

The traditional practice of venerating the martyrs and the nonmartyr saints is reaffirmed in the dogmatic constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, of the Second Vatican Council precisely because they are models suitable for imitation, and because they are heavenly intercessors concerned with the living members of the Church (Lumen Gentium 5 and 7). Christians, together with the saints who are already in heaven, should worship God alone (Lumen Gentium 7). The document also declares that all Christians should prepare themselves for the possibility of dying on account of their faith, and they should be willing to accept such a death whenever they face it (Lumen Gentium 5). Gutiérrez utilizes this document in order to comprehend the significance of the painful experiences of the Church in contemporary Latin America. According to Gutiérrez, the Church is achieving exactly what is prescribed in Lumen Gentium 8: like Jesus Christ, whom Christians follow, the Church "should live in poverty and be persecuted."<sup>111</sup> Therefore, Gutiérrez thinks that the Christians committed to the poor in contemporary Latin America are manifesting the type of Church envisioned at the Second Vatican Council. Gutiérrez also states that all Christians should prepare themselves for the possibility of following Jesus Christ to a violent death.

Pope John Paul II examines various issues related to moral theology in the papal encyclical, Veritatis Splendor (August 6, 1993). He enumerates a number of acts which always contravene the inviolable, moral norms based in natural law (i.e., norms which human reason may discern): homicide, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, voluntary suicide, mutilations, physical and mental torture, attempts to coerce

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<sup>111</sup>"Gutsvao Gutiérrez: 'Latin America's Pain is Bearing Fruit'," Latinamerica Press 15 (no. 19, 26 May 1983): 5.

the spirit, subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, trafficking in women and in children, and degrading conditions of work. These are activities that no one is ever obliged to do. The encyclical declares that Christians should be prepared to "obey God rather than man...and accept even martyrdom as a consequence...rather than perform this or that particular act contrary to faith or virtue."<sup>112</sup> Gutiérrez has not analyzed this encyclical at length, but quite clearly many, if not all, of these acts are precisely what, he claims, characterize the existing social order in much of contemporary Latin America. Furthermore, John Paul II states that "the church proposes the example of numerous saints who bore witness to and defended moral truth even to the point of enduring martyrdom or who preferred death to a single mortal sin."<sup>113</sup> This encyclical clearly supports the idea that Christians truly die on account of the faith, whenever they are killed for refusing to do one of these terrible acts. This perspective corresponds with the aforementioned, four elements of every true martyrdom. While the prohibited acts in this list pertain to the situation of Latin America, there is nevertheless a notable divergence between the concept of martyrdom evident in Veritatis Splendor (and therefore also the four basic elements of martyrdom) and Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom. The encyclical depicts these as acts which individual believers should refuse to do. If necessary, they should allow themselves to die rather than to do the acts, that is, they should passively reject them. Gutiérrez designates as martyrs the Christians who not only refused to do these prohibited acts, but who actually endeavoured to change the social systems that, they believed, caused them in the first place. Unlike Pope John Paul II, Gutiérrez does not specifically encourage individual Christians to keep themselves pure by avoiding engaging themselves in the mortal sins that would lead to their damnation. Instead, he urges them to endeavour to create progressively more just systems so that these acts could never happen again. They should try to prevent other people, as well as themselves, from sinning in these ways. When Pope John Paul II states that, in fact, relatively few Christians ever face the choice between dying as martyrs and obeying the orders given by authorities to commit these morally evil acts, he does not seem to be cognizant of the ways how many Latin Americans appraise their situation and the decisions they feel compelled to make, even if these lead to their deaths.<sup>114</sup> Pope John Paul II contends that "the most dangerous crisis which can affect man...[is] the confusion between good and evil, which makes it impossible to build up and to preserve the moral order of individuals and communities."<sup>115</sup> In other words, the most dangerous situation for Christians is to believe that they are doing good when, in fact,

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<sup>112</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 76, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 118.

<sup>113</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 90, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 137.

<sup>114</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 93-94, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 141-142.

<sup>115</sup>Pope John Paul II, Veritatis Splendor 93, in Encyclical Letter Veritatis Splendor, 141.

they are doing evil. This judgment corresponds with Gutiérrez's charges against the defenders of the Western and Christian society, who believe that they are acting as good Christians when they kill their fellow believers.

Summary:

Gustavo Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom clearly has much in common with the traditional concept of authenticated martyrdom that has evolved in the Church over the past two thousand years. Gutiérrez only designates as martyrs the people who have demonstrated their Christian faith in their lives and in their deaths. These are people whose "right actions" have been consistent with their "right words". The martyrs are really no different than any other Christians because they should all prepare themselves for the possibility of having to follow Jesus Christ in death, as well as in life. Gutiérrez rejects the view, which especially developed in the legends of the martyrs, in the period subsequent to the pre-Constantinian Church, that martyrs are unusual, almost superhuman, Christian heroes, rather than fellow believers who are similarly liable to sin. Like the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church, Gutiérrez knew many of the martyrs personally. Because they are recognizable as fellow believers, he can present them as suitable models of how to live and, if necessary, how to die as Christians in contemporary Latin America. His depiction of the martyrs' attitude in the face of death is traditional, even though it is based upon his critical analyses of real experiences, rather than upon the application of a conventional image. According to Gutiérrez, the contemporary martyrs die humbly, courageously, and joyfully. They forgive their persecutors and pray for their conversion. When they decide to continue doing activities in the interests of the poor in an obviously dangerous situation, they are not seeking their own deaths, but, instead, they are affirming that all life should flourish. When they remain in these risky circumstances, they are confronting their own deaths actively, rather than passively. Like the Christians in the pre-Constantinian Church, Gutiérrez authenticates the martyrs, first, through his personal judgment of the faith they exhibited in life, as well as in death, and, second, by means of the collective judgments evidenced whenever popular reputations of martyrdom emerge. It is notable that, even when the bishops and the popes assumed the tasks of judging whether specific Christians had died as martyrs, these first two ways of authenticating martyrdom continued to represent the necessary initial step in the institutional process. Nowadays, causes of canonization cannot be introduced unless the martyrs first enjoy popular reputations of martyrdom in the dioceses where they died. Although Gutiérrez believes that the martyrs are clearly authenticated by these first two ways, he does seek an episcopal recognition of them, as well as theological reflections on their significance, in the documents of CELAM. It is also likely that he would be pleased if any of the martyrs were ever papally canonized.

There are also some important differences between Gutiérrez's understanding of martyrdom and the concept of authenticated martyrdom that has developed in the Church over the past two thousand years.

These differences arise from his particular view of how Christians should manifest their disinterested faith in God. According to Gutiérrez, people only act as Christians if they commit themselves to the process of liberation out of their love of all people, but especially their love of the poor, because these are the people whom God favours. For Gutiérrez, the martyrs are the Christians who are killed on account of the ways how they have demonstrated their love of God and of the poor. Sometimes even the Christians who die for the right of the Church are not true martyrs. This represents an innovation in the concept of martyrdom in the Church that is founded on the emphasis that many Latin American Christians place on the need to make a preferential option for the poor. Gutiérrez does not view this option as one which is only applicable to the adherents of a particular theological school, but, instead, it is an appropriate interpretation of the will of the biblical God. Like the traditional view of martyrdom, Gutiérrez believes that the martyrs and the nonmartyr saints are already in heaven, but he does not speculate on exactly what happens to all other people immediately after they die. According to Gutiérrez, God will save some of them, and he will not save some others. He does not speak about whether there is some form of existence between death and the final judgment. Because Gutiérrez insists that God never wills innocent suffering, including the suffering and the deaths of the martyrs, he believes that Christians should never yearn martyrdom, even when they have been apprehended and almost certainly face such an imminent end. Gutiérrez does not provide gory details of how the martyrs had persevered before they died, nor does he focus on the techniques used to kill them. He apparently does not consider this information to be particularly relevant for comprehending the significance of the deaths. The persecutors are either the beneficiaries of the existing social order or the subversive perpetrators of terroristic violence. Both hate how the Christians manifest their love of God and of the poor. The first group of persecutors even think that they are the defenders of a Western and Christian civilization against the infiltration of communists into the Church. From their perspective, the people whom they kill really are not Christians. Gutiérrez does not look for the persecutors' hidden anti-Christian motive because the inconsistency between their actions and their words, especially when their victims are the poor masses, show that they are idolaters, rather than Christians. Gutiérrez does not emphasize the occurrence of divine wonders during the martyrs' last moments of suffering; he does not focus on the occurrence of posthumous miracles; and he does not speak about the veneration of relics at all. This does not mean that he disputes their existence. They simply do not represent the most important evidence for the authentication of the contemporary martyrs.

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