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PROTESTANT INFLUENCES ON CATHOLIC MISSION THINKING¹

*The author traces Catholic thinking about mission back to its very modern origins and shows its indebtedness to Protestant mission movements and reflections since Gustav Warneck. The World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 and its ecumenical perspective was highly influential for Catholic missiology, as were the reflections about God at the centre of mission—in the *missio Dei*. This view together with the emphasis on eschatology and scripture was taken up in the documents of Vatican II. This helped also to clarify the relationship between church and God's kingdom. Thus, there are many shared convictions and theological insights which make mission and missiology a common enterprise of the churches.*

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Protestantism saw the beginnings of what would become its great missionary movement. As early as 1706, for example, Danish and German missionaries were working in Tranquebar, India, followed by William Carey and his associates a century later. The year 1799 saw the foundation of the Church Mission Society in England and in 1830 Adoniram Judson began his missionary work in Burma.² In the same period, however, Catholic missionary activity was suffering—in the

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¹ This article is published simultaneously in *Spiritus* in French and Spanish (*Spiritus* 227, June 2017).

² See, for example, David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1991, 274-281.

words of Kenneth Scott Latourette—“grave embarrassment.”³ The suppression of the Jesuits in 1773, the chaos caused by the French Revolution after 1789 and the rule of Napoleon in its aftermath until his final defeat in 1815, and decline of the nations of Portugal and Spain all conspired to throw the Catholic church’s missionary activity into almost complete disarray. Few missionaries were sent abroad from Europe between 1789 and 1815, and the world situation made it difficult to aid those foreign missionaries who were already serving in mission lands. In 1798 the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith was driven out of Rome and from 1810 to 1814 Napoleon tried to use it for his own political purposes. Missionary work in India, China, and Latin America suffered significantly.⁴ Some historians estimate that only about three hundred Catholic foreign missionaries were working in all parts of the world at that time.⁵

When, after 1815, Catholic missionary activity slowly began to recover and then burst into a full-blown revival, there was only rivalry between Catholics and Protestants in mission lands. Any idea of influence of Protestant ideas of mission theology and mission practice on Catholic thinking and activity was simply out of the question. Catholics remained “papists” to Protestants, and Protestants remained “heretics” to Catholics. Gradually, however, Protestants began to influence Catholic missiological thinking and practice in some very significant ways. This article will trace some of those influences.

Beginnings: Warneck and Schmidlin

While both Protestant and Catholic missionary activity flourished in the nineteenth century, little if any scholarly writing on mission was produced. Friedrich Schleiermacher famously placed “the theory of missions” under the heading of “practical theology” in his *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology* (1810, revised 1830). In one small paragraph between catechetics and pastoral care, he noted that such a theory “is as good as lacking up to the present time.”⁶ Even though Charles Breckenridge began to teach about mission at Princeton in

³ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity, Volume II, Reformation to the Present, AD 1500—AD 1975*, Revised Edition, New York: Harper and Row 1975, 1012.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Stephen B. Bevans/Roger P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2004, 194.

⁶ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology*, trans. Terrence N. Tice, Atlanta: John Knox Press 1977, §298, 102.

the USA in 1836, he was also professor of pastoral theology. And, in 1867, when Alexander Duff taught “evangelistic theology” at Edinburgh, he was careful to insist that his teaching “would not affect the other branches of the theological curriculum.”⁷

There seems to be nothing at all comparable in Catholic circles to these early Protestant attempts to think academically and systematically about mission. There were certainly more popular works in mission magazines like those published by Arnold Janssen of the newly-founded Society of the Divine Word, the French *Missions Catholiques*, or the German Jesuit publication *Laacher Stimmen*—as there were in Protestant circles as well.⁸ But there was no mutual influence, and, if Protestants or Catholics were mentioned in these publications, it was usually with antagonism.

It was only with Gustav Warneck in the latter half of the nineteenth century that the study of mission became a recognized academic discipline. In 1873 Warneck became one of the founders of the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* and, in 1896, began teaching mission at the University of Halle in Germany.⁹ His *magnum opus*, the five-volume *Evangelische Missionslehre*,¹⁰ was published between 1887 and 1905. Joseph Schmidlin, the first Catholic to teach and write academically on mission, “freely acknowledged his indebtedness to Warneck,” borrowing both his “approach and method.”¹¹ This first Protestant influence on Catholic missiology, however, was largely negative. As Karl Müller explains it, Schmidlin more often chal-

⁷ On Breckenridge, see Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 491, citing O. G. Myklebust, *The Study of Missions in Theological Education*, Oslo: Egede Institute 1955, 146-151. On Duff, see Andrew F. Walls, *Missiological Education in Historical Perspective*, in: Dudley Woodbury/Charles van Engen/Edgar J. Ellison (eds.), *Missiological Education for the 21st Century: The Book, The Circle, and the Sandals*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1996, 17.

⁸ See Fritz Bornemann, *Arnold Janssen, Founder of Three Missionary Congregations 1837-1909*, Rome: Collegio del Verbo Divino 1975, e.g. 36-43; 76-78; 117-20.

⁹ See Hans Kasdorf, *Gustav Warneck, 1834-1910: Founder of the Scholarly Study of Missions*, in: Gerald H. Anderson/Robert T. Coote/Norman A. Hornor/James M. Phillips (eds.), *Mission Legacies: Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1994, 378; Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 491.

¹⁰ Gustav Warneck, *Evangelische Missionslehre* (five volumes), second edition, Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes 1887-1905. [Re-edited: *Evangelische Missionslehre. Ein missionstheoretischer Versuch*. Mit einer Einführung von Thomas Schirrmacher. Bearbeitet und neu herausgegeben von Friedemann Knödler, Bd. 1 und 2, Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft 2015.]

¹¹ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 491; Karl Müller, *Mission Theology: An Introduction*, Nettetal/Germany: Steyler Verlag 1987, 207.

lenged and rejected Warneck's positions. It was "precisely in the polemical sections of Schmidlin's work that the contrasting positions of Catholic mission theory [came] sharply into focus."¹²

The 1910 Edinburgh Conference and the Ecumenical Movement

Schmidlin began teaching mission at the University of Münster in the winter semester of 1909-1910. In June 1910 the World Missionary Conference was held in Edinburgh, Scotland—the conference that proved to be the beginning of the ecumenical movement and the establishment of the International Missionary Council (IMC). While no Catholics attended, Silas McBee, a lay Episcopalian from the United States, invited Catholic Bishop Geremia Bonomelli of Cremona, Italy to send a message to the Conference. McBee read the message as part of his report to the assembly.¹³ Bonomelli's comments hardly reflect official Catholic thinking of the time—one of his earlier pamphlets on church and state had been placed on the Index of Forbidden Books! His message to the Edinburgh Conference, however, "appears to be familiar with Protestant thinking on overcoming religious divisions," and "his views foreshadow the concepts developed in the documents on religious liberty and ecumenism in the Second Vatican Council."¹⁴ Indeed, as he had shared with a friend, Angelo Roncalli (the future Pope John XXIII) in 1908, what the church needed was "a great ecumenical council" that would "open up new ways to the future."¹⁵

The connection between the Edinburgh Conference—in particular the International Missionary Council (IMC) in its aftermath—and Vatican II—particularly its Decree on Mission Activity—is an important one, as we will see in the development of the theology of the *Missio Dei* below. After the Edinburgh Conference ecumenism among Protestants began to flourish, with the establishment of the IMC and the Faith and Order and Life and Work movements. The official Catholic position, however, remained hostile, evidenced by Pius XI's

¹² Ibid.

¹³ See Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2009, 11; Joan Delaney, MM, *From Cremona to Edinburgh: Bishop Bonomelli and The World Missionary Conference of 1910: The Ecumenical Review*, 52:3 (2000) 418-431.

¹⁴ Delaney, 426.

¹⁵ Ibid., 420. Delaney refers to Silvio Tramontin, *Un secolo della storia della Chiesa*, 86, quoted in Peter Hebblethwaite, *John XXIII: Shepherd of the Modern World*, New York: Doubleday 1984, 62.

1928 encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, which forbade Catholic participation in the ecumenical movement. Gradually, however, because of the work theologians such as Yves Congar and Jan Willibrands, and movements such as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Catholic interest in ecumenism gained more and more momentum.¹⁶ When John XXIII announced on January 25, 1959 (the last day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity) that he intended to convoke an ecumenical council, one of the goals for it that he articulated was “a renewed cordial invitation to the faithful of the separated communities to participate with us in this quest for unity and grace...”¹⁷ The council’s Decree on Ecumenism acknowledges that the quest for unity among Christians in one of the council’s “chief concerns,” and recognizes that the church’s present disunity “inflicts damage on the holy cause of proclaiming the gospel to every creature.” It notes with gratitude the work for unity that had already been done among Protestants and Orthodox, a work that was “fostered by the grace of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁸

Although the Catholic church still does not see its way clear to join the World Council of Churches (WCC), the ultimate result of the 1910 Edinburgh Conference, it does have full membership in the WCC’s Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), on which sit three Vatican-appointed commissioners. The Protestant commitment to ecumenism has had significant influence on the Catholic church to engage in real interchurch partnership in mission today. The entry of Catholics into the ecumenical movement also opened the way for Catholic scholars to join scholarly societies like the International Association for Mission Studies and, in the United States, the highly ecumenical (strongly Protestant and Evangelical) American Society of Missiology. Such associations have stimulated Catholic thinking on mission in many constructive ways, resulting in books such as Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder’s *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, a book that is heavily influenced by Protestant missiologists David J. Bosch, James A. Scherer, Andrew F. Walls, Dale T. Irvin, and Scott W. Sunquist.¹⁹

¹⁶ See E. Duff, Ecumenical Movement, in: *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 5, Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America 1967, 96-101.

¹⁷ Quoted in John W. O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press at Harvard University Press 2008, 17.

¹⁸ Vatican Council II, Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio* (UR), http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html, 1.

¹⁹ Bevans/Schroeder, *Constants in Context*. Other important Catholic missiologists, equally influenced by Protestant missiology, are Robert J. Schreiter,

Missio Dei

In 1932, at the Brandenburg Missionary Conference, Karl Barth delivered a paper that is often cited as the first attempt to think about mission as the work of the Triune God as such, not primarily of the church. “Mission,” said Barth, is “not a matter of human goodwill and reparations, but a matter of divine purpose.” Originally, the term “mission” was “an expression of the doctrine of the Trinity—namely the expression of the divine sending forth of the self, the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the world...”²⁰ The following year theologian Karl Hartenstein said very much the same thing in his doctoral dissertation, *Die Mission als theologisches Problem* and, in 1934, first used the expression *Missio Dei*. “Out of the ‘Missio Dei’ alone comes the ‘Missio ecclesiae.’ Thus mission is placed in the widest possible frame of salvation-history and God’s plan for salvation.”²¹

This powerful and fresh understanding of mission among Protestant theologians was being articulated, of course, at the beginning of the gradual takeover of National Socialism in Germany, a takeover that led to the immense tragedy of the Second World War. After the War, however, especially at the third World Mission Conference of the IMC (the result of the continuing committee established at the Edinburgh Conference) in Willingen, Germany, the concept of *Missio Dei* continued to influence missiological thinking in a significant way. Although the term *Missio Dei* does not appear in the Willingen document entitled “The Theological Basis of the Mission Obligation,” the theocentric, Trinitarian focus of mission comes through clearly. “The missionary obligation of the Church comes from the love of God in His active relationship with [humanity]. ... For God sent forth His Son, Jesus Christ, to seek out and gather together, and transform, all

Anthony J. Gittins, Margaret E. Guider. Eminent German missiologist Karl Müller (1918–2001) has been influenced by German Protestant missiological scholars, an influence marked by the publication of a highly ecumenical dictionary of mission theology, published in English as Karl Müller/Theo Sundermeier/Stephen B. Bevans/Richard H. Bliese, *Dictionary of Mission: Theology, History, Perspectives*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1997.

²⁰ Excerpts from Barth’s Brandenburg paper in Norman E. Thomas (ed.), *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity: A Reader’s Companion to David Bosch’s Transforming Mission*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1995, 105–106.

²¹ See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 389–390; Jürgen Schuster, Karl Hartenstein: Mission with a Focus on the End: *Mission Studies* XIX:1 (2002) 65. Schuster is quoting a citation from Herwig Wagner, Hartensteins Beitrag zum Aufbruch in der Missionstheologie 1945–1960, in: Fritz Lamparter (ed.), *Karl Hartenstein – Leben in weltweitem Horizont. Beiträge zu seinem 100. Geburtstag*, Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft 1995, 131.

[persons] who are alienated by sin from God and their fellows. ... For God also sends forth the Holy Spirit. By the Holy Spirit the Church, experiencing God's active love, is assured that God will complete what He has set His hand to in the sending of the Son."²²

In the decade following, Catholic missiology was largely caught up with the debate between the Münster School inspired by Schmidlin and the Louvain School inspired by Pierre Charles. Although by the beginning of the Second Vatican Council in 1962 there was more dialogue than debate in this regard, the issue was whether the goal of mission was the "salvation of souls" (Münster) or the "establishment of the church" (Louvain).²³ Vatican II actually accepted the insights of both schools in its Decree on Mission Activity.²⁴

Much more significant in the council's mission decree, however, was its understanding of mission in terms of *Missio Dei* theology. As the decree puts it in its second paragraph: "The pilgrim church is missionary by its very nature. For it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that it takes its origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father."²⁵ This idea is spelled out in more detail in the rest of the paragraph, and in the following two paragraphs as well. Although the mission decree expresses the *Missio Dei* theology more clearly, it is certainly an echo as well of paragraphs 2-4 of the council's Constitution on the Church.²⁶

In his important commentary on AG 2, Yves Congar, one of if not the principal author of this first chapter of the mission decree, credits the Trinitarian approach to mission laid out here to Augustine, the great scholastics of the thirteenth century, and Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle of the seventeenth century French School of Spirituality. Congar also remarks, however, that this approach, "at least in a general way," is influenced by contemporary Protestant thought on mission. In this regard he gives as a reference the work of the great twentieth-century churchman and missiologist Lesslie Newbigin, but

²² From *Missions under the Cross*, N. Goodall (ed.), London: Edinburgh House Press for the IMC 1953, 241. Quoted in Thomas, *Classic Texts*, 103.

²³ See Müller, *Mission Theology*, 36-38.

²⁴ Vatican Council II, Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes* (AG), http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html, 6.

²⁵ AG 2 (my translation).

²⁶ Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (LG), http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html, 2-4.

he references the Willingen Conference as well.²⁷ Congar may well have understated the Protestant influence of *Missio Dei* theology in the decree, but it is clear that such influence is there, no doubt through Congar's great ecumenical interest and reading of Protestant scholars in the years leading up to the Council. In any case, even though Pope Paul VI does not take an overt Trinitarian approach to mission in his great Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, the theology of *Missio Dei* is present in both Pope John Paul II's 1990 encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* and Pope Francis's 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*.²⁸

Church and Kingdom of God

Missio Dei may well be Protestantism's most important influence on Catholic thinking on mission, but it is not the only one. Equally significant was the Protestant "rediscovery" of eschatology at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the influence of that rediscovery in Catholic theology, and eventually in the Catholic theology of mission. As David Bosch reports in the words of Ernst Troeltsch, in the wake of liberal theology, that "the eschatology office" was "mostly closed."²⁹ But Bosch goes on to say that soon after the turn of the twentieth century the eschatology office was reopened. In 1900, Protestant scripture scholar Johannes Weiss published *The Preaching of Jesus Concerning the Kingdom of God*, a book that "pulled the rug out from under nineteenth-century Protestant liberal theology and set the stage for the future discussion of Christian eschatology as we find it even at the present time."³⁰ Weiss's work was followed in 1906 by Albert Schweitzer's groundbreaking *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, which developed a "consistent future eschatology,"³¹ and set the

²⁷ Yves Congar, *Principes doctrinaux*, in: Johannes Schütte (ed.), *Vatican II: L'activité Missionnaire de l'Église* (Unam Sanctam 67), Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1967, 186. See Stephen B. Bevans, SVD/Jeffrey Gros, FSC, *Evangelization and Religious Freedom: Ad Gentes, Dignitatis Humanae*, New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press 2009, 33-34.

²⁸ Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* takes a more Christocentric approach, beginning with Jesus' preaching of the Reign of God. See http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html. This could very well be in reaction to a turn in *Missio Dei* theology that seemed to give a very subordinate role for the church in mission. See Bevans/Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 290-291.

²⁹ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 498.

³⁰ Zachary Hayes, *What Are They Saying about the End of the World?*, Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press 1983, 6.

³¹ *Ibid.*

tone for a vigorous debate throughout the first part of the twentieth century on the nature of the Kingdom or Reign of God.

As Bosch summarizes it, a first position in that debate was the highly transcendent one of Karl Barth, who understood eschatology as a way of speaking of the absolute inability of humans to influence the Kingdom's final coming. A second position was the existential eschatology of Rudolf Bultmann, which was not about history at all, but about the individual's call to decision when encountered by God's Word. A third position was articulated by C. H. Dodd and Paul Alt-haus, who claimed that the Kingdom had been already fully inaugurated by the Christ event, available only to the eyes of faith. Finally, Oscar Cullmann proposed that the Kingdom of God had been realized in principle by the Christ event, but needed to be further realized in history and would be fully inaugurated at the end of time.³² Between this "now" and "not yet" is the time of the church, and the role of the church's mission is to witness to, embody, and proclaim this coming Kingdom. The church does not promote itself, but the Kingdom proclaimed and personified in Jesus of Nazareth.

Catholic scripture scholarship and theology (for example, in the work of Rudolf Schnackenburg)³³ was eventually influenced by this eschatological turn in Protestant theology and quite naturally gravitated toward the "salvation history" approach of Cullmann. One of the major effects of such an eschatological perspective was a new Catholic understanding of the nature of the church, particularly in terms of its relation to the already but not yet Kingdom of God. This new understanding was to influence its mission theology as well.

Catholic theology up until this point had all but identified the church itself with that Kingdom. As John Haughey points out, "examples of this identification are not difficult to find in Pius IX, Pius XI, and Pius XII."³⁴ But in the light of twentieth-century (mostly Protestant) scripture scholarship, as Hans Küng insists, "it is impossible to speak of Christian society or even of the Church as being 'God's kingdom on earth,' 'the present form of the kingdom of God,'

³² Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 502-504.

³³ See John Haughey, Church and Kingdom: Ecclesiology in the Light of Eschatology: *Theological Studies* 29:1 (1968) 80-82. Schnackenburg develops his ideas in *God's Rule and Kingdom*, New York: Herder and Herder 1963.

³⁴ Haughey, Church and Kingdom, 79. Haughey gives examples from Pius IX's *Amantissimus* and *Vix dum a Nobis*, Pius XI's *Mortalium animos*, and Pius XII's *Mystici corporis*, among others, citing from E. O'Gorman (trans.), *Papal Teachings: The Church*, selected and arranged by the Monks of Solemnus, Boston, 1962, 165, 240, 452, and 557.

‘the forerunner of the kingdom of God.’”³⁵ Such distinction between church and Kingdom appears rather cautiously in Vatican II’s document on the church when it speaks of the church as “the initial budding forth” of the Kingdom,³⁶ but it becomes more evident in later documents on mission like Paul VI’s *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and John Paul II’s *Redemptoris Missio*. In these documents we read how Christians “gather together in Jesus’ name to seek together the kingdom,” and that the church is “ordered to the Kingdom of God” while not entirely separate from it.³⁷ Such a distinction between the church and Kingdom of God is now standard in Catholic ecclesiology, and furthers the conviction that the church, existing to witness to, embody, and proclaim the Kingdom of God is indeed missionary by its very nature.³⁸

Mission and the Bible

The eschatological turn in contemporary Catholic theology and missiology is obviously the result of another important Protestant influence: its emphasis on the centrality of scripture, expressed in the principle of *sola scriptura*. In the nineteenth century, Protestantism’s reliance on scripture was rocked to the core with the publication of David Friedrich Strauss’s *Life of Jesus* (1835). Strauss did not deny the existence of the historical Jesus, but argued that much of what Christians believed about Jesus was the product of fanciful myths.³⁹ Although some Protestants completely denied such a perspective, others began to investigate the scriptures with the tools of the newly-emerging historical-critical method. Those who chose to wrestle with Strauss’s and the Enlightenment’s challenge to the Bible were pioneers in a movement that was to revolutionize biblical interpretation in both the Protestant and Catholic Churches.

³⁵ Hans Küng, *The Church*, New York: Sheed and Ward 1967, 92.

³⁶ LG 5.

³⁷ EN 14 and John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (RM), http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html, 18.

³⁸ See, for example, Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2008, 54 and 61. Bevans/Schroeder’s *Constants in Context* is based on the premise that the church exists and comes into existence as it “preaches, serves, and witnesses to the reign of God” (7, see also 396).

³⁹ Charles A. Bobertz, *Dei verbum: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation: A Liturgical Companion to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, Chicago: Liturgical Training Publications 2015, 15-16.

Among Catholics, while the Bible was nominally accepted as central to the church's theological and spiritual life, in reality "Church teaching and pious spiritual practices overshadowed the Bible as a source of God's revelation."⁴⁰ The First Vatican Council was called in part to deal with the dangers of the new historical-critical method to traditional biblical interpretation, and Leo XIII's 1893 encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* emphasized the historical reliability of the inspired scriptures. Nevertheless, Leo encouraged Catholic scholars to use all available tools in their work, and commended the study of Scripture in seminaries and universities.⁴¹

Leo's halting call for scientific biblical scholarship was made in the midst of a growing biblical movement in the Catholic Church, which, as coupled with a growing liturgical movement, was discovering a renewed role for the Bible in ordinary Christian spirituality and liturgical life. Scholars such as Marie-Joseph Lagrange, not without opposition from official church sources, began serious critical work in biblical interpretation, a work that was finally accepted in Pius XII's 1943 encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritus* and especially by Vatican II's document on revelation, *Dei Verbum*. Ronald Witherup suggests that the virtual motto of this latter document was St. Jerome's statement that "ignorance of scripture is ignorance of Christ."⁴² In paragraph 21, DV makes a statement with which Luther would heartily agree: "... all the preaching of the Church, as indeed the entire Christian religion, should be nourished and ruled by sacred Scripture." Indeed, says DV 23, scripture is "the soul of Christian theology." The document on seminary formation revolutionizes post-Tridentine approaches to theological teaching and study by insisting that (especially) doctrinal theology begin from a biblical basis.⁴³

Such a renewed attitude to scripture among Catholics found a strong resonance in other documents of Vatican II, not least in the council's decree on mission. Particularly in Chapter I of the mission document, scripture quotations are much in evidence, and although they are perhaps used more as "proof texts," there is a clear biblical

⁴⁰ Ronald D. Witherup, *Scripture: Dei Verbum*, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006, 4.

⁴¹ Witherup, *Scripture*, 9.

⁴² Witherup, *Scripture*, 8. Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, *Dei Verbum* (DV), http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html, 25. The citation from Jerome is from his Commentary on Isaiah, Prologue, PL 24, 17.

⁴³ Vatican Council II, Decree on Priestly Formation, *Optatam Totius* (OT), http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html, 16.

spirit that runs through this rich theological chapter. This is especially noticeable if the document is contrasted with earlier drafts, which were more juridical and canonical in spirit.⁴⁴ Subsequent mission documents as well, notably EN, the 1991 curial document on *Dialogue and Proclamation*, and Pope Francis's 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* are imbued with the same biblical spirit. To a certain extent, so is John Paul II's encyclical RM.⁴⁵ Catholic scholars profit from Protestant studies of mission in the Bible, as well as those written by their own fellow Catholics.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Pope Francis has described Protestants and Catholics as “pilgrims journeying alongside one another.”⁴⁷ As we have learned to walk together in this last one hundred years or so, we recognize that, while we have come from different places and have different histories, we have the same goal—that the Christian gospel be worthily witnessed to, embodied, and preached—and so we help each other to reach that common goal. Catholic mission theology and practice has only been enriched as we share with one another on the way, as has Protestant mission thinking as well. As we observe the five hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, may our pilgrimage and conversation continue!

⁴⁴ On the use of scripture in AG, see John W. Nyquist, “The Uses of the New Testament as Illustrated in Missiological Themes within Selected Documents of the Second Vatican Council.” Unpublished D. Miss. Dissertation, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL., 1991. On a more biblical and less juridical approach, see Bevens/Gros, *Evangelization and Religious Freedom*, 23.

⁴⁵ Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Dialogue and Proclamation* (DP), http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_19051991_dialogue-and-proclamatio_en.html; Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG), https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html; on the use of the Bible in RM, see Stephen B. Bevens, The Biblical Basis of the Mission of the Church in *Redemptoris Missio*, in: Charles van Engen/Dean S. Gilliland/Paul Pierson (eds.), *The Good News of the Kingdom*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1993, 37-44.

⁴⁶ Among many important Protestant studies of mission in the Bible, see in particular Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2006. A classic Catholic study is *Biblical Foundations for Mission* by Carroll Stuhlmueller/Donald Senior, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1983.

⁴⁷ EG 244.

ABSTRACTS

Der Autor geht der katholischen Reflexion über Mission von ihren ersten Anfängen in der Moderne nach und zeigt, wie sehr sie den protestantischen Missionsbewegungen und Überlegungen seit Gustav Warneck verpflichtet ist. Die Weltmissionskonferenz in Edinburgh 1910 und ihre ökumenische Ausrichtung war für die katholische Missionswissenschaft bedeutsam, wie auch das Nachdenken über Gott selbst als das Zentrum der Mission in der Idee von der *missio Dei*. Diese Sichtweise zusammen mit der Betonung von Eschatologie und Heiliger Schrift fand Eingang in die Dokumente des II. Vatikanischen Konzils. Das half auch, das Verhältnis von Kirche und Reich Gottes zu klären. So kommen viele gemeinsame Überzeugungen und theologische Einsichten zum Vorschein, die Mission und Missionswissenschaft zu einem gemeinsamen Anliegen der Kirchen werden lässt. (Dieser Artikel wird gleichzeitig in der Zeitschrift *Spiritus* auf Französisch und Spanisch veröffentlicht [*Spiritus* 227, Juni 2017].)

El autor sigue el desarrollo de la reflexión católica sobre la misión desde sus primeros orígenes modernos y muestra su deuda con los movimientos misioneros y reflexiones misionológicas protestantes desde Gustav Warneck. La Conferencia sobre la misión mundial de Edimburgo en 1910 y su perspectiva ecuménica tomó mucha influencia en la misionología católica al igual que las reflexiones sobre Dios como centro de la misión – la *missio Dei*. Esta perspectiva junto con el énfasis en la escatología y las Escrituras entraron en los documentos del II Concilio Vaticano. Esto también ayudó a esclarecer la relación entre la iglesia y el reino de Dios. De esta manera hay muchas convicciones y enfoques teológicos compartidos que hacen de la misión y la misionología una tarea común entre las diferentes iglesias. (Este artículo se publica conjuntamente con *Spiritus* en francés y español [*Spiritus* 227, junio de 2017].)

L'auteur retourne aux origines modernes de la pensée missionnaire catholique et montre en quoi elle est redevable aux réflexions et mouvements missionnaires protestants depuis Gustav Warneck. La Conférence missionnaire mondiale d'Edimbourg en 1910 et sa perspective œcuménique ont eu une grande influence sur la missiologie catholique, de même que les réflexions sur la place de Dieu au centre de la mission – dans la *missio Dei*. Ce point de vue ainsi que l'accent sur l'eschatologie et l'Écriture furent repris dans les documents de Vatican II. Cela a également aidé à clarifier la relation entre l'Église et le royaume de Dieu. Ainsi, de nombreuses convictions et intuitions théologiques partagés font de la mission et de la missiologie une entreprise commune des Églises.