

# Truth Prevails:

## The Undying Faith of Jan Hus

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDE FOR USE

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## BACKGROUND

2007 marks the 25th anniversary of the founding of Christian History Institute, co-producer of *Truth Prevails: The Undying Faith of Jan Hus*. This film has special significance for us as part of our anniversary. The very first project that we did at our inception was a 16-page study guide to accompany a dramatic film on the life of Jan Hus. That guide was the first stage that led to the creation of the quarterly *Christian History Magazine*. After publishing it for several years, we turned it over to Christianity Today International, publisher of over a dozen magazines, who have capably carried on the Christian History mission. The Jan Hus film became the basis for the ongoing collection of Christian History films produced and released by our sister company Gateway Films/Vision Video. Over the past quarter century, the institute and film company have worked closely together, with the institute usually providing the accompanying study materials for the films.

In this case, the Institute served as co-producer of the film itself as a special anniversary project. And what a change had occurred over the intervening period that you will find reflected in the two films. In the first, the approach clearly reflected a Protestant interpretation with little understanding of how Catholics viewed the situation. The current production still celebrates the life, ministry, and historic stand of Jan Hus and his challenge to the corruptions of the Church of his day. But we also give voice to Catholic spokespersons regarding Hus. This is most helpful for non-Catholics to better understand the Roman Church's actions and reactions regarding Hus.

Who would have ever expected the incredible change in the Catholic outlook on Hus? We see in the film and in these materials how the pope went to Prague, the center of Hus' ministry, to acknowledge to the people of that city the wrongful execution of Hus. The understanding of what went on then can now be seen in a much larger light with much to learn on both sides. We trust that the film and these materials will assist you in that task.

So here you will find the following.

1. The original Hus guide that we published a quarter century ago as our first project. There you will find further background on Hus and the issues that his life raised. You will also find questions for personal, group or classroom use. In addition, there are excerpts from some of the last letters that Hus wrote to his flock during his final days in captivity at the Council of Constance. There are also two reprints: "John Hus...and Us" from the July/August 1979 issue of *The North American Moravian* and "Master John Hus and His Friends," excerpted from the book *Through Five Hundred Years*.
2. Supplemental Notes regarding sources from Producer/Director Jerry Griffith
3. Address of Pope John Paul II to an International Symposium on John Hus (December 17, 1999)
4. Declaration on Religious Freedom *Dignitatis Humanae* on the Right of the Person and of Communities to Social and Civil Freedom in Matters Religious, Promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965

We hope that you find these resources useful in getting better acquainted with an important figure in Christian history whose life and witness raise questions that still face us today.

## UTILIZATION GUIDE AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

prepared by A. Kenneth Curtis, Ph.D. in 1982  
for use with the film *John Hus*

The material presented herein is supplied to help you get the most out of your showing of JOHN HUS. The film opens up a valuable opportunity to arouse interest in and further consideration of the great moments depicted, as well as the meaning and pertinence for us today.

In many circumstances you may find it difficult to do more than simply show the film without much opportunity for introduction or follow up discussion. In such cases the film stands adequately on its own and will challenge, inform and inspire viewers.

In many evangelistic settings the sponsor will want to give a brief introduction, noting that the film represents a true story and powerfully depicts the Gospel of Christ. After the showing, the leader will probably want to emphasize the abiding truths that the film portrays: the centrality of scripture, God's gracious forgiveness through Christ, justification by faith and the call to stand firm for the truth of the Gospel.

However, it is also intended that the film will be used in many settings where the powerful drama depicted on the screen will be used as a catalyst for deeper consideration of the meaning of the life of Hus, The Evangelical heritage, the development of The Protestant witness, and the working of the Spirit of God in his Church through history. Go through the suggestions and material presented below and select and adapt that which will fit your program and purposes.

(1) The pastor might want to use the showing of the film as the occasion to preach a sermon, or series of sermons, that tie into the themes raised in the motion picture. For example:

The Authority of the Scriptures for the Church and individual Believer.  
The Doctrine of Justification by Faith.  
Christ as the One Mediator Between God and Man.  
How God Reforms His Church.  
The Freedom of the Christian Soul.  
Standing Firm in the Face of Opposition.  
The Place of Hus in the Protestant Reformation.  
The Quest For Truth.

(2) The letters of Hus can be excerpted and reprinted in the church bulletin the week that the film will be shown.

(3) You will find two reprints enclosed that will serve as a useful briefing to key elements in the life of Hus. See "Master John Hus and His Friends," and "John Hus ... and Us."

(4) The same material might be used as a resource for a lesson, discussion or follow up session to the film.

(5) There are several discussion areas that might be used in small groups following the film's screening. For example:

#### WHAT PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JOHN HUS CAUGHT YOUR ATTENTION?

Discussion might examine his humility, courtesy, fortitude, faith, scholarship, pastoral compassion, humanity, hunger for truth.

#### WHAT WAS THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY FOR HUS?

Discussion here can highlight how we all respond to some authority such as public opinion, peer group pressure, inner conviction, etc. In the time of Hus the tradition of the church and its authority was stronger and different from today. Hus came to recognize the Scriptures as the ultimate authority.

#### WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE CRITICAL POINT IN HUS' LIFE?

Hus could have considered escaping or recanting. He could have "saved his life." Hus often quoted the verse: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." Long before his actual execution he had taken his stand many times.

#### HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE JOHN HUS' WALK WITH GOD?

Go into his deep faith, the fact that he had no rancor for his enemies, and that his devotion to Christ led him to expect that he should be prepared to suffer for Christ.

#### HOW DOES ONE FIND FORGIVENESS FROM GOD?

If possible, go into the historical practice of indulgences and concepts of working for one's salvation as distinguished from Hus' insistence on grace, forgiveness the free gift of God through Christ, and justification by faith.

#### WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO STAND FIRM FOR ONE'S FAITH?

Note that in spite of betrayal (he was promised safety), imprisonment, false accusation, and his own human frailty, Hus found strength in God to stand alone and even died singing.

#### WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN THE LIFE OF ONE CHRISTIAN MAKE?

Here it might be pointed out how Hus had a strong influence on Martin Luther one hundred years later and that his friends and followers, primarily the Moravians, continued his testimony, contributed to the development of world missions, influenced the formation of the Methodists (the Moravians' influence on John Wesley), and enriched the life of the Church as a whole.

## BACKGROUND MATERIAL

John Hus was strongly influenced by the writings of John Wyclif, an even earlier reformer in England. Wyclif was condemned, as the film indicates, as a heretic. Hus was probably introduced to the writings of Wyclif through his friend Jerome of Prague. (Jerome is shown with Hus early in the film. Jerome also paid with his life for his faith after Hus.)

*Martin Luther on John Hus.* Martin Luther, a towering figure in Western history, and leader of The Protestant Reformation, expressed great appreciation for the influence that Hus had on his development. He wrote:

When I was a tyro at Erfurt, I found in the library of the convent a volume of *The Sermons of John Hus*. When I read the title, I had a great curiosity to know what doctrines that heresiarch had propagated, since a volume like this in a public library had been saved from the fire. On reading I was overwhelmed with astonishment. I could not understand for what cause they had burnt so great a man, who explained the Scriptures with so much gravity and skill. But as the very name of Hus was held in so great abomination that I imagined the sky would fall and the sun be darkened if I made honourable mention of him, I shut the book and went away with no little indignation. This, however, was my comfort, that perhaps Hus had written these things before he fell into heresy. For as yet I knew not what was done at the Council of Constance.

Later in 1529 he added:

I have hitherto taught and held all the opinions of Hus without knowing it. With a like unconsciousness has Staupitz taught them. We are all of us Hussites without knowing it. I do not know what to think for amazement.

Luther saw fit to arrange for the publication of the letters of John Hus and in 1537 in a preface to the letters he commented:

Observe how firmly Hus clung in his writings and words to the doctrines of Christ; with what courage he struggled against the agonies of death; with what patience and humility he suffered every indignity, and with what greatness of soul he at last confronted a cruel death in defence of the truth; doing all these things alone before an imposing assembly of the great ones of the earth, like a lamb in the midst of lions and wolves. If such a man is to be regarded as a heretic, no person under the sun can be looked on as a true Christian. By what fruits then shall we recognize the truth, if it is not manifest by those with which John Hus was so richly adorned?

The life and testimony of John Hus was extended through a group of his followers known as the Moravians. They developed a profound missionary vision. The Encyclopedia Britannica points out that: "The first missionaries went from Herrnhut to St. Thomas in the West Indies in 1731, and within a decade Moravian missionaries were to be found from Greenland to the Cape of Good Hope. The

example and spirit of their work influenced John Wesley, William Carey, and the founding fathers of the British missionary societies.”

Kenneth Scott Latourette in his monumental work, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* gives a concise statement of this unique and dedicated missionary enterprise that was undertaken by the descendants of Hus (volume III, p. 47 48):

Most extensive of all the missionary movements in which Pietism was a major factor was that which bears the name Moravian. The Moravians, Brethren, or *Unitas Fratrum*, traced their spiritual descent from Hus and possibly also from Peter Waldo. They had grown greatly in numbers and power in the sixteenth century, but in the seventeenth century had been almost wiped out. Beginning with 1722, a few remnants settled on the estates of Count Zinzendorf in the present Saxony not far from the mountains which there separate Saxony from Bohemia. Here they built a village, Herrnhut, and here they were joined by fragments of other persecuted sects. Nicolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf, their benefactor, was of Pietist parentage and from his youth entered enthusiastically into the Pietist experience. He was educated in part at Halle under strong Pietist influences and early dreamed of an extensive propagation of Christianity among non-Christians. In the settlers at Herrnhut his ardent imagination saw the means for making this vision effective. He became the leader of the group. His conviction proved contagious and persistent. Herrnhut became the centre of a missionary enterprise which extended over much of the world. Zinzendorf's death did not bring the movement to an end. It continued and grew. We are to meet it again and again, particularly before A.D. 1800, but also in later years. Here was a new phenomenon in the expansion of Christianity, an entire community, of families as well as of the unmarried, devoted to the propagation of the faith. In its singleness of aim it resembled some of the monastic orders of earlier centuries, but these were made up of celibates. Here was a fellowship of Christians, of laity and clergy, of men and women, marrying and rearing families, with much of the quietism of the monastery and of Pietism but with the spread of the Christian message as a major objective, not of a minority of the membership, but of the group as a whole. Before the end of the eighteenth century the Moravians had begun missions in Russia, in India, in the Nicobar Islands, in Ceylon, among the Indians of the English colonies in North America, in the Danish and British West Indies, in Surinam, in Central America, on the Gold Coast, in South Africa, among the Lapps, in Greenland, and in Labrador.

The Moravians never sought to bring all other Christians into their Church. After the Pietist pattern, they wished to be a leavening and transforming influence in other communions. As such, they had widespread effect. It was through the Moravians that in 1738 John Wesley entered into the religious experience which proved decisive in bringing Methodism into being. In the Wesleyan revival in England and America and in the growth of worldwide Methodism, the Moravians had their most extensive fruitage.

## FROM THE LETTERS OF JOHN HUS

The next pages are quotations from various correspondences of John Hus in the last years of his life. First is from a letter written on Christmas day, 1412 to the people of Prague. Although separated from his flock, his heart goes out to them with a pastoral message that emphasizes joy. December 25, 1412:

Dear friends, although I am now separated from you, because perchance I am unworthy to preach much to you, nevertheless the love which I bear towards you urges me to write at least some brief words to my loved ones.

Lo! dear friends, today, as it were, an angel is saying to the shepherds: "I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people." And suddenly a multitude of angels breaks into praise, saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill!"

As you commemorate these things, dear friends, rejoice that today God is born a man, that there may be glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of goodwill. Rejoice that today the infinitely Mighty is born a child, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice that today a Reconciler is born to reconcile man to God, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice that today He is born to cleanse sinners from their sin, to deliver them from the devil's power, to save them from eternal perdition, and to bring them to eternal joy, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice with great joy that today is born unto us a King, to bestow in its fullness upon us the heavenly kingdom, a Bishop to grant His eternal benediction, a Father of the ages to come, to keep us as His children by His side for ever: yea, there is born a Brother beloved, a wise Master, a sure Leader, a just Judge, to the end that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice, ye wicked, that God is born as a Priest, Who hath granted to every penitent absolution from all sins, that there may be glory, etc. Rejoice that today the Bread of Angels—that is, God—is made the Bread of men, to revive the starving with His Body, that there may be peace among them, and on earth, etc. Rejoice that God immortal is born, that mortal man may live forever. Rejoice that the rich Lord of the Universe lies in a manger, like a poor man, that he may make us rich. Rejoice, dearly beloved, that what the prophets prophesied has been fulfilled, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Rejoice that there is born to us a Child all powerful, and that a Son is given to us, all wise and gracious, that there may be glory to God in the highest, etc. Oh, dear friends, ought there to be but a moderate rejoicing over these things? Nay, a mighty joy! Indeed, the angel saith: "I bring you good tidings of great joy", for that there is born a Redeemer from all misery, a Saviour of sinners, a Governor of His faithful ones; there is born a Comforter of the sorrowful, and there is given to us the Son of God that we may have great joy, and that there may be glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of goodwill. May it please God, born this day, to grant to us this goodwill, this peace, and withal this joy!



As Hus began his journey to Constance to appear before the Council, he wrote to his friends in Bohemia. While hoping to return to them, he was quite aware that he might not be spared. October 12, 1414:

... Now, however, I have started on my journey.... I shall be opposed by more foes than our gracious Redeemer bishops, doctors, princes secular, and canons regular. But I put my trust in my gracious, wise, and mighty Saviour that He will give to me, by reason of His own promise and your faithful prayers, the wisdom and constancy of the Holy Spirit; for only so shall I persevere and not be led astray by them to the side of evil, though I suffer at His will temptations, revilings, imprisonment, and death as indeed He too suffered and hath subjected His own loved servants to the same trials, leaving us an example that we may suffer for His sake and our salvation. For He is God; we are His creatures. He is Lord; we are servants. He is King of the whole world; we are poor weaklings. He is without sin; we are sinners. He needeth nothing; we are needy. If He suffered, being what He is, why should not we? ... Surely it cannot fall to the lot of His faithful servant that he shall perish, if with His help he shall persevere. Therefore, beloved brothers, pray earnestly that it may please Him to grant me perseverance and to keep me undefiled. And if my death contribute aught to His glory and your advantage, may it please Him to enable me to meet it without sinful fear. But if it shall be more to your advantage, may it please Him to bring me back to you, guiding me to and fro undefiled, that united a while longer we may be taught His gospel and tear asunder some of Antichrist's nets and leave a good example to our brothers to come.

Perhaps you will not see me again at Prague before I die; but if it please Almighty God to bring me back to you, we shall be all the more joyful when we see each other again, and assuredly so when we meet in the joy of heaven. May it please the merciful God, Who giveth to His own a stainless peace both here and hereafter, "who brought again from the dead the great pastor of the sheep" after He had shed His blood, Who is the eternal witness of our salvation, to fit you in all goodness that you may do His will in harmony, free from all dissension, and that in enjoyment of peace you may by your good deeds attain to the eternal peace through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is God eternal and true man, born of the Virgin Mary. Unto Him there is praise and ever shall be with all the company of the elect, with Whom, if here we shall persevere in the truth, we shall dwell in the joy of heaven. Amen.

While imprisoned during the Council proceedings, this next letter was written to the people of Bohemia and expresses the concern of Hus that the daily lives of his people express practical Christian living. June 10, 1415:

Master John Hus, a servant of God in hope, to all the faithful Bohemians who love and will love God, praying that God may grant them to live and die in His grace and dwell for ever in the heavenly joy. Amen.

Faithful and beloved of God, lords and ladies, rich and poor! I entreat you and exhort you to love God, to spread abroad His word, and to hear and observe it more willingly. I

entreat you to hold fast the truth of God, which I have written and preached to you from the Holy Scriptures and the utterances of His saints. I entreat you also, if any have heard in my preaching or private conversation that which is opposed to God's truth, or if I have ever written anything of that kind I trust God that it is not so not to hold to it. I entreat you, if any have noticed frivolity in my words or actions, not to imitate it, but to pray God that it may please Him to pardon me. I entreat you to love and commend and cultivate priests of good life especially those that are earnest students of Holy Writ. I entreat you to beware of deceitful men, and particularly of wicked priests, of whom the Saviour saith that "they are in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." I entreat you to be kind to the poor and to rule them justly. I entreat all citizens to be righteous in their business dealings. I entreat all artisans faithfully to follow their craft and take delight in it. I entreat all servants to be faithful servants of their masters and mistresses. I entreat masters to live a good life and faithfully to instruct their scholars, especially that they may love God and learn to give themselves to knowledge, in order to promote His honour, the welfare of the state, and their own salvation, but not for the sake of avarice or the praise of man. I entreat students of letters and other scholars to obey their masters in things good, to imitate them, and diligently apply themselves to letters for the sake of God's honour and their own salvation and that of other men. I entreat all the people to give thanks to Baron Wenzel of Duba, otherwise of Lestna, Baron John of Chlum, Lord Henry of Plumlow, Lord William Zajiic, Lord Myssa, and the other nobles in Bohemia and Moravia, and the faithful nobles of the kingdom of Poland, and ever gratefully to remember their zeal in having often resisted, as God's brave defenders and helpers of His truth, the whole of the Council, telling them what they ought to do, and making replies with a view to my liberty, more especially Baron Wenzel of Duba and Baron John of Chlum. Give credence to them, whatever their account of the proceedings shall be; for they were present at the Council when I pleaded my cause, for several days. They know which of the Bohemians trumped up disgraceful charges against me, and how many those charges were, how the whole Council shouted against me, and how I replied to the questions which were put to me. I entreat you also to make supplication on behalf of his Majesty the King of Rome and Bohemia, of your Queen and nobles, that the God of love may abide with them in grace, both now and hereafter in eternal joy.

I write this letter to you in prison, bound with chains and expecting on the morrow the sentence of death, yet fully trusting in God that I shall not swerve from His truth nor swear denial of the errors, whereof I have been charged by false witnesses. What grace God hath shown me, and how He helps me in the midst of strange temptations, you will know when by His mercy we meet in joy in His presence. Of Master Jerome, my beloved friend, I hear nothing except that he too, like myself, is in a noisome prison waiting for death, and that on account of his faith which he showed so earnestly to the Bohemians. The Bohemians are our fiercest enemies, and have put us under the power and custody of other adversaries: pray for them, I beseech you. Also I entreat you, especially people of Prague, to support the chapel at Bethlehem, so far as God shall permit His holy word to be preached there. It is on account of that chapel that the devil hath blazed forth with anger, and it is against it that he hath aroused parish priests and cathedral clergy; in truth

he felt that his kingdom was being overthrown in that place. I trust that God will preserve that chapel as long as it is His pleasure, and cause greater good to be done there by others than by me, His unprofitable servant. I entreat this too of you, that ye love one another, defend good men from violent oppression, and give every one an opportunity of hearing the truth. I am writing this with the help of a good angel on Monday night before St. Vitus's Day.

A brief letter to a Henry Skopek contains some pointed advice. June 13, 1413:

I cannot write at length; but in a few words I counsel you to keep in your heart God's counsels, to be kind to the poor, to abstain from pride, to lead a chaste life, and to remember these words: "What thou art, what thou wert, what thou wilt be, ever ponder: ponder too the matter, the place, the subject, the 'why', the 'how', the 'when' of thy words."

The proceedings against Hus offered him little hope or encouragement. But Hus found his strength in the words of Scripture and the example of the Lord as expressed in this letter to his friends at Constance. June 23, 1415:

... I am greatly comforted by that saying of our Lord: "Blessed shall you be when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake. Be glad in that day and rejoice; for behold your reward is great in heaven." A good greeting, nay, the best of all, yet difficult I do not mean to understand, but to live up to fully; for it bids us rejoice in those tribulations. It was a rule observed along with the other apostles by James, who saith: "Count it all joy when you shall fall into diverse temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience, and patience hath a perfect work." Verily, it is a difficult thing to rejoice with tranquillity, and to count it all joy in the midst of divers temptations. It is easy to quote and expound the words, but difficult to carry them out when that most patient and brave Soldier, although He knew He would rise again on the third day and overcome His foes by His death and redeem the elect from damnation, was yet after the last supper troubled in spirit, and said: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." Of Whom the gospel saith that He began to fear and to be heavy and sad; nay, being in an agony He was strengthened by an angel, and "his sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground." Yet He, though thus troubled, said to His faithful ones: "Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid;" It Let it not be troubled" because of my short absence "nor let it be afraid" of the cruelty of them that rage; for you will have Me for ever, and will overcome the cruelty of them that rage. Therefore, the soldiers of Christ looking to their leader, the King of glory, fought a great fight.. They passed through fire and water, yet were saved alive, and received from the Lord God the crown of life, of which James in the canonical epistle saith:

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him." That crown, I

verily trust, the Lord will make me to share along with you also, warm-hearted zealots for the truth, and with all who steadfastly love the Lord Jesus, Who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps. It behoved Him to suffer, as He Himself saith; and it behoves us to suffer, that the members may suffer with the Head, Who saith: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

O loving Christ, draw me, a weakling, after Thyself; for if Thou drawest me not, I cannot follow Thee. Grant me a brave spirit that it may be ready. If the flesh is weak, let They grace prevent, come in the middle, and follow; for without Thee I can do nothing, and, especially, for Thy sake I cannot go to a cruel death. Grant me a ready spirit, a fearless heart, a right faith, a firm hope, and a perfect love, that for Thy sake I may lay down my life with patience and joy. Amen.

Hus was repeatedly offered a way out if he would recant and abjure his teachings and writings. He steadfastly maintained that many of the accusations were false and he could not recant them because he never espoused them. He repeatedly expressed his willingness to withdraw any teaching that could be shown to be false from the Scriptures. In the words that follow we read his final declaration a few days before he was burned at the stake. July 1, 1415:

I, John Hus, in hope a priest of Jesus Christ, fearing to offend God, and fearing to fall into perjury, do hereby profess my unwillingness to abjure all or any of the articles produced against me by false witnesses. For God is my witness that I neither preached, affirmed, nor defended them, though they say that I did. Moreover, concerning the articles that they have extracted from my books, I say that I detest any false interpretation which any of them bears. But inasmuch as I fear to offend against the truth, or to gainsay the opinion of the doctors of the Church, I cannot abjure any one of them. And if it were possible that my voice could now reach the whole world, as at the Day of Judgment every lie and every sin that I have committed will be made manifest, then would I gladly abjure before all the world every falsehood and error which I either had thought of saying or actually said. I say I write this of my own free will and choice.

Written with my own hand, on the first day of July.

JOHN HUS DIED SINGING JULY 6, 1415

From the July August 1979 issue of  
The North American Moravian. Used by permission.

## “John Hus . . . and Us”

DAVID A. SCHATTSCHEIDER

Dr. David A. Schattschneider is professor of church history at Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pa.

If the Moravian Church can be said to have had a human father, then it was John Hus, so we make a unique claim to the heritage of Hus. The reform movement which he led was carried on by his followers for 212 years until they were forced underground. A remnant survived and eventually ended up in Germany where, under the leadership of Count Zinzendorf, they formed one component in the development of the present day Moravian Church. We continue to remember Hus every summer on the Sunday nearest July 6—carrying on the ancient tradition of remembering saints and martyrs on the day of their death rather than on their birthday—as an act of faith that their death also marked their birth into the kingdom of heaven.

Hus, who died in 1415, is also remembered by the people of Czechoslovakia wherever they live. The activities of Hus and his followers were intimately connected with the political life of the old kingdoms of Bohemia and Moravia. The Hussite years were a golden period in Czech history and are now viewed longingly and lovingly as a period of great political and cultural development by contemporary Czechs. For them Hus is both a religious and national hero who helped to usher in some of the best years of their country's life.

But John Hus belongs to more than the past history of a Christian denomination or a European country. In recent years we are coming to realize that Hus belongs to the whole western Christian church—Protestant and Roman Catholic. The questions which he raised were important in his time and are important now because they deal with the basic nature of the church. The reforms he demanded were never fully realized and some of them continue to have a strikingly modern ring.

There was nothing in his early life to indicate that Hus would have such a dramatic career or that anyone would remember him 500 + years later. He was born to poor peasant parents in 1372 or 1373 in Husinec, a small town in southern Czechoslovakia. The name of the town translates to Goosetown in English and the boy was simply called John of Husinec until his mid-twenties when he began to use the abbreviated form John Hus—John Goose. He and his friends greatly enjoyed playing with the name in all sorts of puns and it was a tradition which outlasted him. Even a hundred years after his death friends would remind Martin Luther of the fate of the roasted Czech goose when Luther began to encounter opposition.

His mother wanted him to become a priest and Hus had this career in mind from his youth though presumably for different reasons than she did. In his world it was extremely difficult for anyone to rise up

the ladder of economic and social success. A son was expected to follow in the craft or occupation of his father. One of the few ways out of this rigid system was to become a priest. As a priest it was quite possible to come from a humble origin and still rise to a position of relative wealth and influence. As Hus himself wrote, "When I was a young student, I confess to have entertained an evil desire, for I had thought to become a priest quickly in order to secure a good livelihood and dress and to be held in esteem by men." (Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*. p. 9).

### **To the university**

He received his B.A. degree in 1393 and his Master of Arts degree three years later. He joined the faculty on probationary status to teach philosophy and by 1398 received a full appointment. His career as a teacher in the liberal arts area of the university became well established and he served as dean of the faculty during the winter semester of 1401-1402. While achieving success there he also realized his ambition to become a priest. After appropriate studies he was ordained in 1401.

In the midst of all of his activity at the university he did take on one additional assignment which was to have a profound effect on his career—he became preacher at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague. Don't be misled by the term "chapel." It was actually more like cathedral size—capable of standing 3,000 people.

To be appointed to this post was quite an honor. It was the most popular church in Prague, then one of the largest cities in central Europe. The sermons were to be preached in Czech. Hus' predecessors in the post had a reputation which he was expected to uphold—leadership in the fifty-year-old reform movement in the church—composed of those who were calling in constantly louder voices for reform and renewal in the church.

Hus achieved all of this influence and power by the age of thirty. This was a rapid and impressive rise for the man who arrived in Prague just thirteen years before as a teenager from Goosetown.

But there was also a change in Hus that amounted to more than a change in status and influence. He experienced a conversion—a whole re-orienting of his life and ministry—a subtle enduring change which probably began early in his student years and culminated sometime before his ordination.

It is clear from his activities after his ordination that he had arrived at a new and true understanding of the priesthood and of his mission as reformer which was far different from the selfish motives expressed earlier.

Hus tells us very little about this change. All he says is, "when I was young in years and reason, I too belonged to the foolish sect. But when the Lord gave me knowledge of scripture, I discharged that kind of stupidity from my foolish mind." (Spinka, *Hus' Concept of the Church*. p. 10). Thus it was a study of the Bible that brought him to a true understanding of his life.

Hus' appointment as preacher at Bethlehem Chapel marked the mid-point of his career. He was respected both as university professor and popular preacher and was sure of his calling and pursuing with conviction his efforts to reform the church. Yet in another thirteen years he would be executed. His ideas declared heretical and dangerous to the souls of all obedient Christians and his remains crushed and thrown into the Rhine River to prevent anyone from gathering relics.

What happened? How could he come to such a disgraceful end in just the number of years it had taken him to reach what appeared to be the height of success?

The answer lies in the fact that Hus had publicly thrown in his lot with those who were calling for reform in the church. He became the acknowledged leader of the reform party. He had had his personal reformation, and in his Bethlehem Chapel post he was expected to be the spokesman for the reform party. Even while leading those calling for reform, Hus was able to develop his own clear ideas and to state them forcefully—particularly in reference to three important points.

In the first place, Hus declared that all his teaching was grounded in the Bible. No one could go beyond the Bible as it was the source of truth and rule of faith. "I confess that I desire nothing but simply to believe, hold, preach and assert as faith which is necessary to salvation, unless I have the following theological demonstration. 'Thus the sacred Scriptures have declared explicitly or implicitly, therefore we should thus believe, hold and assert it as faith.' Accordingly, I humbly accord faith, i.e. trust, to the holy Scriptures, desiring to hold, believe, and assert whatever is contained in them as long as I have breath in me." (*550 Years of Hus' Witness*, pp. 1-2).

In the second place, Hus concentrated particular attention upon an understanding of ordination. The church believed that at the moment of ordination a priest received a special kind of grace which meant that everything he did as a priest was effective for his congregation even if he lived an immoral life. If you received communion in good conscience from a priest who had a mistress, the sacrament had its desired good effect for you despite the bad character of the priest. Hus argued that while there are proper procedures for educating, ordaining and certifying priests, this process alone does not make a true priest. The true priest is one who possesses the spirit of Christ and shows this in his life. So among the clergy, he said, there were those who are merely legitimate according to church procedures and there were those who are true servants of God. Moreover, the true priest's function was to minister to others in the name of God, not to take the place of God. In particular, the priest did not forgive anyone's sins—only God could do that—the priest simply declared them forgiven when all the required conditions were met.

### **In conflict with authority**

These two views on the supremacy of scripture and the necessity to consider the character of the clergy brought Hus into conflict with the supreme teaching authority of the church. It was the duty of all believers, argued Hus, to judge for themselves the orders of popes, bishops and priests on these grounds. Thus Hus himself refused, in 1409, a papal order to cease preaching in Bethlehem Chapel on the grounds that the edict resulted from inadequate information being given to the Pope and that it was his duty not to deprive his audience of the word of God. He argued that he was not rebelling against his superiors as such but only against their abuse of their authority.

That action was thrown against Hus at his trial. The Council at Constance in Germany, which tried Hus, had its hands full of problems about the question of authority. Two parties had developed in the church. One group said supreme authority rested with the Pope and the other said it belonged to a Council composed of representatives from all parts of the church. For the time being those who favored the Council

idea were in charge. While dealing with Hus the Council also had to deal with the problem of a divided papacy—three men in fact claiming the title.

Lastly Hus formulated certain views about the church which also tended to go against much of the thinking of his time. He defined the true church as a spiritual fellowship of those possessing the spirit of Christ, not as a legal corporation or as a society with a membership list which one entered in some purely formal way. The average congregation, he would have said, always contains those who are members of this true church and others who are in the church but not of the church—these will be purged from the church at the day of judgment. Hus also argued that the Roman Catholic Church did not possess universal rule over Christians everywhere but that its authority was limited to its own denomination as we would say. He claimed that there were other “denominations” in the world—the Greek Orthodox, the national churches of the near eastern countries, all of whom possessed their own history, structure and independence and existed, rightly, along side of the Roman Church. As far as Hus was concerned, there were true Christians—those possessing the spirit of Christ—in all these groups and it was these people who made up the one, universal church of Christ, the Body of Christ. No one could produce this spiritual unity but God and it superseded all bounds of geography and nationality. These reforming ideas were particularly threatening to a church which too often equated salvation with formal church attendance and which was still trying to assert its authority over all Christians everywhere.

The proclamation of these major ideas soon found Hus encountering stiff opposition. Relations to his superiors within the church and the university deteriorated. Hus finally left Prague in 1412 in the face of a threat from the Pope to suspend all religious services in any city where Hus lived. For the next two years Hus lived in the country, preaching and writing under the protection of powerful nobles who ignored the papal threat.

The Council of Constance was called to settle the divided papacy and to reform the church. Hus was invited to attend to try to settle his differences with the church. The emperor promised him freedom and safety but these conditions were not honored. Hus arrived in early November, 1414, and before the end of the month was arrested and confined under increasingly harsh conditions.

He received no thorough discussion of his ideas during his trial. A commission interviewed the witnesses against him and extracted statements from his writings to compose a list of thirty-one charges against him. He was then asked to recant of all these positions ascribed to him by his enemies. During the public hearings Hus’ words were seldom heard since these meetings quickly turned into an uproar with everyone shouting at him and at each other. Some members of the council tried individually to work out a compromise with him but to no avail. Hus argued that the accusations against him were based on distortions of his teachings, that he was never allowed to present his own views, nor was he refuted on the basis of scripture. He was thus condemned not for his own views but for what others, for a variety of reasons, said he thought.

On July 6, in the presence of the Council, the charges were again read and Hus was denied the opportunity to defend himself. The sentence of execution was read to him and he was led to a site outside the city wall where he was burned at the stake as he sang, according to an eye-witness, “ ‘Christ, thou son of the living God, have mercy upon us, Christ, thou son of the living God, have mercy upon me, thou who



art born of Mary the Virgin . . . ' and when he began to sing the third time, the wind blew the flame into his face and thus praying within himself and moving his lips and the head, he expired in the Lord." (Spinka, *Hus at Constance*, p. 233).

Later historians, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, have agreed that Hus did not receive a fair trial according to the procedures of the times and that the basic content of his ideas was not heretical. But what was done was done and history cannot be tidied up in some neat fashion.

The appropriate way to respond to the story of John Hus is to remember and accept the challenges which he gave to his generation and which are given to every generation of Christians—to maintain the centrality of the Bible in the life of Christians and the church, to live a life which gives form to our profession of church membership, to show concern for those who exercise authority in the church and encourage them to use their power in the right ways, and to recognize fellow believers in all the many forms in which God has chosen to mold his church in the world.

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## Master John Hus and His Friends

### Fighting Words

Tradition says that followers of John Hus were fond of singing a certain hymn just before their minister's sermon. It begins with the stanza:

"The Word of God which ne'er shall cease,  
Proclaims free pardon, grace and peace,  
Salvation shows in Christ alone,  
The perfect will of God makes known."

When we sing these words expressing our conviction to the effect that salvation is the free gift of God to all who have faith in Jesus Christ, we do not realize that we are singing "fighting words." We forget that these words were written as a protest against the evil practice of the Catholic Church in selling the forgiveness of sins to those who paid money for slips of paper called "indulgences."

It was in the year 1411 that this custom was first introduced into Bohemia and Moravia. John XXIII had just become pope and his first important act was to call Europe to a war against King Ladislaus of Naples. Now wars cost money. In order to raise the necessary funds the pope did what previous popes had done: he offered forgiveness of sins to all who would participate in his "crusade" by purchasing indulgences.

Within a short time papal agents swarmed throughout Europe. Often they traveled in groups with advance agents to announce their coming and to set up stands for them in the town squares.

In the May of 1412 Wenzel Tiem and his company arrived in the ancient city of Prague with a bountiful supply of indulgences. Papal representatives presided over great chests which they placed in all the important churches. Soon the traffic was in full sway in every great church except one. The exception was Bethlehem Chapel, whose preacher was Master John Hus. Although called a chapel, Hus' church was a very large building, capable of holding 3,000 people. To the crowds which thronged his church John Hus cried out, "A man can receive the pardon of his sins only through the power of God and by the merits of Christ. Let who will proclaim the contrary, let the pope or a bishop or a priest say, 'I forgive thy sins, I absolve thee from their penalty, I free thee from the pains of hell'—it is all vain and helps thee nothing. God alone, I repeat, can forgive sins through Christ, and He pardons the penitent only."

### Master John Hus

Who was this man who dared to defy the Pope? He was an unknown peasant's son, born in 1369, probably on July 6. His name seems to have come from the obscure village of Hussinetz, in which he was born. How much preliminary schooling he had no one can say; but he had friends who believed in him, for when he was ready to go to the great University of Prague, his friends and neighbors helped to pay

his fees. He was graduated in 1393 and took his master's degree in 1396. Two years later he was invited to become a lecturer in the university. In 1401 he was made dean of the philosophical faculty, and in 1402 he became rector of the university. How large the university was no one can say with certainty as estimates of the number of students vary all the way from 7,000 to 30,000.

During his busy days as lecturer and administrator, Hus became more and more interested in theology. He became especially fond of the writings of John Wyclif, the courageous English reformer who had died in 1384. When Hus read Wyclif's bold assertions to the effect that even the pope was not to be obeyed when his commands were contrary to the Scriptures, he felt that the brave little Englishman had found a great truth. And, as Jan Herben, a modern Czech historian puts it, "Once a Czech sets his teeth into a matter that is clear to him, nobody will ever tear him away from it."

In 1402 Hus requested ordination as a priest, and shortly thereafter he was chosen to be the preacher in Bethlehem Chapel. This building had been erected in 1391 by patriotic Czechs who had stipulated that the sermons preached in it must be not in the Latin which the Catholics insisted upon, but in the Czech language of the people. Bethlehem Chapel thus became a rallying point for thousands of Czechs who were earnestly seeking to learn the truth which could make them free. "The Czech tongue," said Hus, "is as precious to God as the Latin!"

In his dual position as rector of the university and preacher in the great chapel, Hus soon became known throughout the little kingdom of Bohemia. The queen became a faithful worshipper in the chapel, and King Wenzel admired the courage of Hus so greatly that when papal agents began protesting against some of the things he was preaching, he ordered that "Master John Hus is to be allowed to preach the Word of God in peace."

But even the support of the king and the queen could not turn aside the anger of the Church which smarted under the rebukes of the fearless preacher. In July 1410 Hus was placed under a "ban" forbidding him to preach. Shortly thereafter more than two hundred volumes of Wyclif's writings were publicly burned in the city of Prague while church bells were rung throughout the city. In spite of this grim warning Hus continued his work. In June 1412 a public debate was held in the university. Thousands of Hus' friends mingled with the students and when the debate ended a crowd of cheering students carried Hus to his home. Less than one month later the Church struck the first blow in the bitter struggle which was to cost Hus his life.

### **Martyrs of Christ**

On Sunday morning, July 10, 1412 priests throughout the city of Prague were urging the faithful to buy indulgences. In three churches open protest was made. In each church a man stood up, interrupted the priest, and cried out: "Priest, thou liest! We have heard better things from Master John Hus. These indulgences are a fraud!" The three men, all of them mechanics, who had probably agreed in advance to challenge the teachings of their Church publicly, were immediately arrested, beaten, taken to the Council House, tortured upon the rack and then condemned to death. Word of what was occurring spread rapidly throughout the city, and crowds of students, with Hus as their leader, began surrounding the Council House, begging that the sentence of death be cancelled. In alarm the magistrates appealed to Hus, promising him that if he would induce the mob to go home they would remit the death sentence. Hus then

appealed to the crowds and they began to disperse. As soon as most of the people and students had started home the magistrates called a strong guard of soldiers and began taking the three men to the place of execution. Once more the alarm was given, and people began to block the streets leading to the place of execution. Suddenly a command rang out and the three men were beheaded in the street.

In wild frenzy the helpless crowd roared out its anger. Men and women trampled upon one another in an attempt to dip their handkerchiefs in the blood of the martyrs. A band of students reverently lifted up the bodies of the mechanics and carried them to Bethlehem Chapel. There Hus buried them with all the rites of the Church, crying out, "They are martyrs of Christ; they have given their lives for the truth!"

### **The Stones of Cursing**

Soon the Pope's "excommunication" of John Hus arrived in Prague. It was a lengthy document which forbade any man to give him food or drink or a place of refuge. Further decrees ordered that Bethlehem Chapel was to be destroyed, that Hus was to be seized and held prisoner, and that three stones were to be thrown against his house as a sign of the everlasting curse of the Church. On October 2, 1412 a band of armed men invaded the service at Bethlehem Chapel and attempted to seize Hus while he was preaching. His faithful congregation forced the men to leave the church. Bethlehem Chapel was watched day and night by friends ready to give an alarm, but no very serious attempt was ever made to destroy it. In an attempt to prevent further trouble King Wenzel asked Hus to withdraw from the city for a while. Hus reluctantly agreed to his royal friend's request. During his "exile" he put down in writing expositions of the faith for which he was fighting. The most notable work of this period is *The Church*. In this volume, which he sent to Prague to be read in Bethlehem Chapel, Hus asserted that Christ alone was the true Head of the Church, that the true Church needed neither cardinals nor Pope, that even a Pope "through ignorance and the love of money" may make mistakes, and that to rebel against an erring Pope is to obey Christ.

### **On to Constance**

In October 1413 Pope John XXIII issued the call for a council of the Church to deal with abuses and to decide once and for all who was the true Pope. For thirty-five years there had been at least two "Popes," each one claiming to be the supreme head of the Church on earth, and hurling curses at his rival. The common people had long protested against sad conditions like these. At last their protests had become loud enough to make an impression upon John XXIII.

When the call to this council, scheduled to be held in Constance, arrived in Bohemia, Prince Sigismund, who had now assumed many of the duties of his aged father, King Wenzel, suggested that Hus should go and plead his cause. When Hus' friends protested loudly that he ought not to go "into the camp of the enemy," Sigismund gave him a "safe conduct" reading, "The honorable Master John Hus we have taken under the protection and guardianship of ourselves and of the holy empire. We enjoin upon you (that is, upon anyone who might think of harming him) to allow him to pass, to stop, to remain and to return, freely and without any hindrance whatsoever; and you will, as in duty bound, provide for him and his, whenever it shall be needed, secure and safe conduct, to the honor and dignity of our majesty."

Accompanied by two barons, Hus set out for Constance. Upon his arrival on November 3, 1414 he took lodgings in a home near the White Pigeon Inn. His two friends arranged to see the Pope, who assured

them that Hus would not be harmed during his stay in the city. (The Pope's words were; "Even if he had killed my own brother . . . he must be safe while he is at Constance.")

Several weeks later Hus was summoned to a meeting with the cardinals and when he appeared he was surrounded by soldiers and taken to a prison cell in a dungeon under the Dominican convent. The cell was right next to the sewer system, and Hus soon became violently ill. To his keeper Robert he gave a letter which eventually got back to Bohemia. "I am in prison and in chains," he wrote. "Keep me in remembrance and pray God that He may bestow faithfulness upon me and Jerome, my brother in Christ, for I believe that he will suffer death with me."

When it seemed as if Hus might die before the synod got around to considering his case (the synod actually lasted four years, so no one was in a hurry about anything), Hus was taken out of the foul dungeon and transferred to a kind of cage at the top of one of the towers of the castle of the Bishop of Constance. Here he had scant shelter from either the burning sun or the chilling night winds. For more than two months he was kept in this place and every night his arm was chained to the wall so that he could not even try to keep warm by moving around.

Meanwhile "the Holy Synod of Constance," as it called itself in its resolutions, dragged on from month to month. Old records state that at least 50,000 people were present, including hundreds of buglers and fiddlers who had come to entertain the crowds. To thousands of the attendants the synod was no more significant than a country fair would be today.

When word of what had happened to Hus reached Bohemia, 250 noblemen signed a vigorous protest, demanding that "the beloved master and Christian teacher" be tried promptly and permitted to return home. This appeal was completely ignored. One of the barons who had accompanied Hus to Constance appealed directly to Prince Sigismund. Sigismund ordered that Hus should be set free, but when the wily cardinals replied that it was not necessary to keep promises made to heretics, Sigismund said no more.

On June 5, 1415 Hus was taken out of prison and brought into the council. Into the details of the two trials, which lasted for a month, we cannot go. When Hus attempted to read from his book, *The Church*, members of the examining commission drowned out his voice by shouting, "Burn the book! Burn the book!" When he declared that God and conscience were on his side, his examiners ignored his appeal to God and shouted, "We cannot go by your conscience."

### **"Today in His Kingdom"**

On the morning of July 6 Hus was ushered into the cathedral. There sat Prince Sigismund, who had been false to his solemn promises of protection. There were the cardinals and the bishops in their glorious robes. Hus was placed upon a high stool in the middle of the huge building. The Bishop of Lodi preached a funeral sermon saying that the blotting out of heretics was one of the works most pleasing to God. Thirty charges of heresy were read and when Hus attempted to speak he was ordered to remain silent. The vestments of a priest were hung upon his shoulders and a communion cup was placed in his hands. Then the priestly garments were removed one by one and the communion cup was torn from his fingers with the words, "We take from thee, thou Judas, this cup of salvation!"

This time the reply of Hus could be distinctly heard: "But God does not take it from me, and I shall drink of it today in His Kingdom."

At length the proceedings came to an end. Attendants placed upon Hus' head a tall fool's cap decorated with a picture of three devils fighting for his soul, and the march to the place of execution began. A thousand soldiers cleared the way. As the procession passed the city square, Hus saw the huge bonfire in which copies of his books were being burned. Aeneas Sylvius, who later became Pope Pius II, admits that "not a word escaped him which gave indication of the least weakness." Over the bridge went the procession to an open field outside the city. Here a post had been firmly driven into the ground. To this stake Hus was bound with wet ropes. Then straw and wood were piled up around him. Once more he was asked if he would recant. "I shall die with joy," he replied, "in the faith of the gospel which I have preached."

An officer clapped his hands, and the burning torch was applied to the straw. As the flames flared up around him, Hus began to sing in Latin one of the chants of the Church: "Christ, Thou Son of the Living God, have mercy upon me!" And so, upon "a chariot of fire" the soul of John Hus went up to heaven.

When the fire had consumed the martyr's body, soldiers gathered up the ashes and tossed them into the Rhine, so that friends might find nothing which could be kept as a relic of the man. A few of his countrymen came, nevertheless, when the soldiers had gone away, and dug up a bit of the ground where the stake had been planted and carried that ground all the way back to Bohemia with them.

*TRUTH PREVAILS*  
**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES REGARDING SOURCES  
 FROM PRODUCER/DIRECTOR JERRY GRIFFITH**

As noted in the film, the life of Hus has been interpreted in many different ways for many different purposes. Within this project we have limited ourselves to information that can be stated with a reasonable degree of certainty. This has led us to omit a number of points that we feel did not reach this standard.

One of the principal sources of misinformation is a book titled, *Hus the Heretic* by Poggius the Papist published in 1930. Poggio Bracciolini (Poggius in Latin) was an Italian scholar and philosopher who visited the Council of Constance and witnessed the execution of Hus' friend Jerome of Prague. The work *Hus the Heretic*, full title, *Hus the Heretic: The Infallibility of the Pope at the Council of Constance: The Trial of Hus His Sentence and Death at the Stake in Two Letters by a Member of the Council*, contains detailed descriptions of Hus' travel, incarceration, trial and execution. The book is a fascinating read and is occasionally cited by non-scholars as a source. However, the book has been fully discredited. It is a forgery, apparently written in the 1840s, that often contradicts the accounts of eyewitnesses. A debunking of the work appears in David Schaff's work *John Huss—His Life, Teachings and Death After Five Hundred Years*. New York, Charles Scribner and Sons, 1915.

The website **wikipedia.org** contains much valid information. However, because wikipedia can be edited and changed by anyone, it does not meet scholarly standards.

One story, often repeated, says that as he was led to the stake Hus said, "Today you burn a goose, but in a century you will have a swan which you can neither roast nor boil." The swan was a symbol used by Martin Luther, and Hus means goose in the Czech language. Luther made public his 95 theses 102 years after the death of Hus. However, this prophecy does not appear in the records of any of the eyewitnesses to Hus' execution.

It has been suggested in a number of places that the expression, "Your goose is cooked," is also a reference to the burning of Hus. However, there are a number of other equally plausible explanations for the origin of this idiom.

Hus is most often portrayed in artwork as thin and bearded. However there are no records of his physical appearance. In one letter he refers to himself as "stout." In another letter he makes reference to his friend Jerome of Prague as "the bearded one," which may indicate that Hus himself was clean shaven.

**ADDRESS OF THE HOLY FATHER  
TO AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON JOHN HUS**

*17 December 1999*

*Distinguished Members of the Government,  
Dear Cardinal and Brother Bishops,  
Distinguished Scholars,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

1. It gives me great pleasure to greet you on the occasion of your Symposium on John Hus, which has been another important step towards a deeper understanding of the life and work of the renowned Bohemian preacher, one of the most famous of the many great scholars to come from the University of Prague. Hus is a memorable figure for many reasons. But it is particularly his moral courage in the face of adversity and death that has made him a figure of special significance to the Czech people, who have themselves suffered much through the centuries. I am particularly grateful to all of you who have contributed to the work of the ecumenical Commission "Husovská", established some years ago by Cardinal Miloslav Vlk in order to identify more precisely the place that Jan Hus occupies among those who sought a reform of the Church.

2. It is significant that scholars not only from the Czech Republic but also from neighbouring countries have taken part in this Symposium. No less significant is the fact that, despite the tensions that have marred relations between Czech Christians in the past, scholars from different Confessions have come together to share their knowledge. Now that you have brought together the best and latest scholarly work on Jan Hus and the events in which he was involved, the next step will be to publish the results of the Symposium, so that as many people as possible will have an insight not only into a remarkable man but also into an important and complex period of Christian and European history.

Today, on the eve of the Great Jubilee, I feel the need to express deep regret for the cruel death inflicted on John Hus, and for the consequent wound of conflict and division which was thus imposed on the minds and hearts of the Bohemian people. It was during my first visit to Prague that I declared my hope that precisely in your land decisive steps could be taken on the path of reconciliation and true unity in Christ. The wounds of past centuries must be healed through a new attitude and completely renewed relationships. May our Lord Jesus Christ, "who is our peace... and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph 2:14), guide the path of your people's history towards the rediscovered unity of all Christians, which we ardently hope for in the millennium that is about to begin.

3. Scholarly endeavours to reach a more profound and complete grasp of historical truth are crucial to this cause. Faith has nothing to fear from the work of historical research, for, in the final analysis, research too is directed towards the truth which has in God its source. Therefore, I give thanks to our Father in Heaven for your work as it reaches its end, just as I was keen to encourage you as you began.

The writing of history is sometimes beset by ideological, political or economic pressures, so that the truth is obscured and history itself becomes a prisoner of the powerful. Genuinely scientific study is our



best defence against such pressures and the distortions they can bring. It is true that it is very difficult to attain an absolutely objective account of history, since personal convictions, values and experiences inevitably impinge upon historical study. Yet this does not mean that we cannot offer an account of history which is in a very real sense impartial and therefore true and liberating. Your own work is a proof that this is possible.

4. The truth can also prove uncomfortable when it asks us to abandon long-held prejudices and stereotypes. This is as true of Churches, ecclesial communities and religions as it is of nations and individuals. Yet the truth which sets us free from error is also the truth which sets us free for love; and it is Christian love which has been the horizon of what your Commission has sought to do. Your work means that a figure like Jan Hus, who has been such a point of contention in the past, has now become a subject of dialogue, of comparison and shared investigation.

At a time when many are working to create a new kind of unity in Europe, studies such as yours can help to inspire people to go beyond narrow ethnic and national confines to genuine openness and solidarity. It can help Europeans to understand that the continent will advance more assuredly to a new and enduring unity if it draws in fresh and creative ways upon its shared Christian roots and upon the specific identity which derived from them.

5. It is clear, then, that your work is an important service not only to the historical figure of Jan Hus but also to Christians and European society more generally. This is because, in the end, it is a service to the truth about man; and it is this truth above all which the human family needs to recover at the dawn of the Third Millennium of the Christian era.

In contemplating the truth about man, we turn inevitably to the figure of the Risen Christ. He alone teaches and embodies completely the truth of man created in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26). I pray most fervently that he who is "the same... forever" (Heb 13:8) will send his light into your hearts. As a pledge of grace and peace in him, I invoke upon you, your loved ones, and upon the whole Czech nation the abundant blessings of Almighty God, to whom be "glory and wisdom and thanksgiving for ever and ever! Amen" (Rev 7:12).

**DECLARATION ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**  
***DIGNITATIS HUMANAE***  
**ON THE RIGHT OF THE PERSON AND OF COMMUNITIES**  
**TO SOCIAL AND CIVIL FREEDOM IN MATTERS RELIGIOUS**  
**PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS**  
**POPE PAUL VI**  
**ON DECEMBER 7, 1965**

1. A sense of the dignity of the human person has been impressing itself more and more deeply on the consciousness of contemporary man,<sup>(1)</sup> and the demand is increasingly made that men should act on their own judgment, enjoying and making use of a responsible freedom, not driven by coercion but motivated by a sense of duty. The demand is likewise made that constitutional limits should be set to the powers of government, in order that there may be no encroachment on the rightful freedom of the person and of associations. This demand for freedom in human society chiefly regards the quest for the values proper to the human spirit. It regards, in the first place, the free exercise of religion in society. This Vatican Council takes careful note of these desires in the minds of men. It proposes to declare them to be greatly in accord with truth and justice. To this end, it searches into the sacred tradition and doctrine of the Church—the treasury out of which the Church continually brings forth new things that are in harmony with the things that are old.

First, the council professes its belief that God Himself has made known to mankind the way in which men are to serve Him, and thus be saved in Christ and come to blessedness. We believe that this one true religion subsists in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus committed the duty of spreading it abroad among all men. Thus He spoke to the Apostles: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined upon you" (Matt. 28: 19-20). On their part, all men are bound to seek the truth, especially in what concerns God and His Church, and to embrace the truth they come to know, and to hold fast to it. This Vatican Council likewise professes its belief that it is upon the human conscience that these obligations fall and exert their binding force. The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power.

Religious freedom, in turn, which men demand as necessary to fulfill their duty to worship God, has to do with immunity from coercion in civil society. Therefore it leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ.

Over and above all this, the council intends to develop the doctrine of recent popes on the inviolable rights of the human person and the constitutional order of society.

2. This Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.

The council further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.<sup>(2)</sup> This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed and thus it is to become a civil right.

It is in accordance with their dignity as persons—that is, beings endowed with reason and free will and therefore privileged to bear personal responsibility—that all men should be at once impelled by nature and also bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth, once it is known, and to order their whole lives in accord with the demands of truth. However, men cannot discharge these obligations in a manner in keeping with their own nature unless they enjoy immunity from external coercion as well as psychological freedom. Therefore the right to religious freedom has its foundation not in the subjective disposition of the person, but in his very nature. In consequence, the right to this immunity continues to exist even in those who do not live up to their obligation of seeking the truth and adhering to it and the exercise of this right is not to be impeded, provided that just public order be observed.

3. Further light is shed on the subject if one considers that the highest norm of human life is the divine law—eternal, objective and universal—whereby God orders, directs and governs the entire universe and all the ways of the human community by a plan conceived in wisdom and love. Man has been made by God to participate in this law, with the result that, under the gentle disposition of divine Providence, he can come to perceive ever more fully the truth that is unchanging. Wherefore every man has the duty, and therefore the right, to seek the truth in matters religious in order that he may with prudence form for himself right and true judgments of conscience, under use of all suitable means.

Truth, however, is to be sought after in a manner proper to the dignity of the human person and his social nature. The inquiry is to be free, carried on with the aid of teaching or instruction, communication and dialogue, in the course of which men explain to one another the truth they have discovered, or think they have discovered, in order thus to assist one another in the quest for truth.

Moreover, as the truth is discovered, it is by a personal assent that men are to adhere to it.

On his part, man perceives and acknowledges the imperatives of the divine law through the mediation of conscience. In all his activity a man is bound to follow his conscience in order that he may come to God, the end and purpose of life. It follows that he is not to be forced to act in manner contrary to his conscience. Nor, on the other hand, is he to be restrained from acting in accordance with his conscience, especially in matters religious. The reason is that the exercise of religion, of its very nature, consists before all else in those internal, voluntary and free acts whereby man sets the course of his life directly toward God. No merely human power can either command or prohibit acts of this kind.<sup>(3)</sup> The social nature of man, however, itself requires that he should give external expression to his internal acts of religion: that he should share with others in matters religious; that he should profess his religion in community. Injury therefore is done to the human person and to the very order established by God for human life, if the free exercise of religion is denied in society, provided just public order is observed.

There is a further consideration. The religious acts whereby men, in private and in public and out of a sense of personal conviction, direct their lives to God transcend by their very nature the order of terrestrial and temporal affairs. Government therefore ought indeed to take account of the religious life of the citizenry and show it favor, since the function of government is to make provision for the common welfare. However, it would clearly transgress the limits set to its power, were it to presume to command or inhibit acts that are religious.

4. The freedom or immunity from coercion in matters religious which is the endowment of persons as individuals is also to be recognized as their right when they act in community. Religious communities are a requirement of the social nature both of man and of religion itself.

Provided the just demands of public order are observed, religious communities rightfully claim freedom in order that they may govern themselves according to their own norms, honor the Supreme Being in public worship, assist their members in the practice of the religious life, strengthen them by instruction, and promote institutions in which they may join together for the purpose of ordering their own lives in accordance with their religious principles.

Religious communities also have the right not to be hindered, either by legal measures or by administrative action on the part of government, in the selection, training, appointment, and transferral of their own ministers, in communicating with religious authorities and communities abroad, in erecting buildings for religious purposes, and in the acquisition and use of suitable funds or properties.

Religious communities also have the right not to be hindered in their public teaching and witness to their faith, whether by the spoken or by the written word. However, in spreading religious faith and in introducing religious practices everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which might seem to carry a hint of coercion or of a kind of persuasion that would be dishonorable or unworthy, especially when dealing with poor or uneducated people. Such a manner of action would have to be considered an abuse of one's right and a violation of the right of others.

In addition, it comes within the meaning of religious freedom that religious communities should not be prohibited from freely undertaking to show the special value of their doctrine in what concerns the organization of society and the inspiration of the whole of human activity. Finally, the social nature of man and the very nature of religion afford the foundation of the right of men freely to hold meetings and to establish educational, cultural, charitable and social organizations, under the impulse of their own religious sense.

5. The family, since it is a society in its own original right, has the right freely to live its own domestic religious life under the guidance of parents. Parents, moreover, have the right to determine, in accordance with their own religious beliefs, the kind of religious education that their children are to receive. Government, in consequence, must acknowledge the right of parents to make a genuinely free choice of schools and of other means of education, and the use of this freedom of choice is not to be made a reason for imposing unjust burdens on parents, whether directly or indirectly. Besides, the right of parents are violated, if their children are forced to attend lessons or instructions which are not in agreement with their religious beliefs, or if a single system of education, from which all religious formation is excluded, is imposed upon all.

6. Since the common welfare of society consists in the entirety of those conditions of social life under which men enjoy the possibility of achieving their own perfection in a certain fullness of measure and also with some relative ease, it chiefly consists in the protection of the rights, and in the performance of the duties, of the human person.<sup>(4)</sup> Therefore the care of the right to religious freedom devolves upon the whole citizenry, upon social groups, upon government, and upon the Church and other religious communities, in virtue of the duty of all toward the common welfare, and in the manner proper to each.

The protection and promotion of the inviolable rights of man ranks among the essential duties of government.<sup>(5)</sup> Therefore government is to assume the safeguard of the religious freedom of all its citizens, in an effective manner, by just laws and by other appropriate means.

Government is also to help create conditions favorable to the fostering of religious life, in order that the people may be truly enabled to exercise their religious rights and to fulfill their religious duties, and also in order that society itself may profit by the moral qualities of justice and peace which have their origin in men's faithfulness to God and to His holy will.<sup>(6)</sup>

If, in view of peculiar circumstances obtaining among peoples, special civil recognition is given to one religious community in the constitutional order of society, it is at the same time imperative that the right of all citizens and religious communities to religious freedom should be recognized and made effective in practice.

Finally, government is to see to it that equality of citizens before the law, which is itself an element of the common good, is never violated, whether openly or covertly, for religious reasons. Nor is there to be discrimination among citizens.

It follows that a wrong is done when government imposes upon its people, by force or fear or other means, the profession or repudiation of any religion, or when it hinders men from joining or leaving a religious community. All the more is it a violation of the will of God and of the sacred rights of the person and the family of nations when force is brought to bear in any way in order to destroy or repress religion, either in the whole of mankind or in a particular country or in a definite community.

7. The right to religious freedom is exercised in human society: hence its exercise is subject to certain regulatory norms. In the use of all freedoms the moral principle of personal and social responsibility is to be observed. In the exercise of their rights, individual men and social groups are bound by the moral law to have respect both for the rights of others and for their own duties toward others and for the common welfare of all. Men are to deal with their fellows in justice and civility.

Furthermore, society has the right to defend itself against possible abuses committed on the pretext of freedom of religion. It is the special duty of government to provide this protection. However, government is not to act in an arbitrary fashion or in an unfair spirit of partisanship. Its action is to be controlled by juridical norms which are in conformity with the objective moral order. These norms arise out of the need for the effective safeguard of the rights of all citizens and for the peaceful settlement of conflicts of rights, also out of the need for an adequate care of genuine public peace, which comes about when men live together in good order and in true justice, and finally out of the need for a proper guardianship of public morality.

These matters constitute the basic component of the common welfare: they are what is meant by public order. For the rest, the usages of society are to be the usages of freedom in their full range: that is, the freedom of man is to be respected as far as possible and is not to be curtailed except when and insofar as necessary.

8. Many pressures are brought to bear upon the men of our day, to the point where the danger arises lest they lose the possibility of acting on their own judgment. On the other hand, not a few can be found who seem inclined to use the name of freedom as the pretext for refusing to submit to authority and for making light of the duty of obedience. Wherefore this Vatican Council urges everyone, especially those who are charged with the task of educating others, to do their utmost to form men who, on the one hand, will respect the moral order and be obedient to lawful authority, and on the other hand, will be lovers of true freedom-men, in other words, who will come to decisions on their own judgment and in the light of truth, govern their activities with a sense of responsibility, and strive after what is true and right, willing always to join with others in cooperative effort.

Religious freedom therefore ought to have this further purpose and aim, namely, that men may come to act with greater responsibility in fulfilling their duties in community life.

9. The declaration of this Vatican Council on the right of man to religious freedom has its foundation in the dignity of the person, whose exigencies have come to be fully known to human reason through centuries of experience. What is more, this doctrine of freedom has roots in divine revelation, and for this reason Christians are bound to respect it all the more conscientiously. Revelation does not indeed affirm in so many words the right of man to immunity from external coercion in matters religious. It does, however, disclose the dignity of the human person in its full dimensions. It gives evidence of the respect which Christ showed toward the freedom with which man is to fulfill his duty of belief in the word of God and it gives us lessons in the spirit which disciples of such a Master ought to adopt and continually follow. Thus further light is cast upon the general principles upon which the doctrine of this declaration on religious freedom is based. In particular, religious freedom in society is entirely consonant with the freedom of the act of Christian faith.

10. It is one of the major tenets of Catholic doctrine that man's response to God in faith must be free: no one therefore is to be forced to embrace the Christian faith against his own will.<sup>(8)</sup> This doctrine is contained in the word of God and it was constantly proclaimed by the Fathers of the Church.<sup>(7)</sup> The act of faith is of its very nature a free act. Man, redeemed by Christ the Savior and through Christ Jesus called to be God's adopted son,<sup>(9)</sup> cannot give his adherence to God revealing Himself unless, under the drawing of the Father,<sup>(10)</sup> he offers to God the reasonable and free submission of faith. It is therefore completely in accord with the nature of faith that in matters religious every manner of coercion on the part of men should be excluded. In consequence, the principle of religious freedom makes no small contribution to the creation of an environment in which men can without hindrance be invited to the Christian faith, embrace it of their own free will, and profess it effectively in their whole manner of life.

11. God calls men to serve Him in spirit and in truth, hence they are bound in conscience but they stand under no compulsion. God has regard for the dignity of the human person whom He Himself created and man is to be guided by his own judgment and he is to enjoy freedom. This truth appears at its

height in Christ Jesus, in whom God manifested Himself and His ways with men. Christ is at once our Master and our Lord<sup>(11)</sup> and also meek and humble of heart.<sup>(12)</sup> In attracting and inviting His disciples He used patience.<sup>(13)</sup> He wrought miracles to illuminate His teaching and to establish its truth, but His intention was to rouse faith in His hearers and to confirm them in faith, not to exert coercion upon them.<sup>(14)</sup> He did indeed denounce the unbelief of some who listened to Him, but He left vengeance to God in expectation of the day of judgment.<sup>(15)</sup> When He sent His Apostles into the world, He said to them: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved. He who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). But He Himself, noting that the cockle had been sown amid the wheat, gave orders that both should be allowed to grow until the harvest time, which will come at the end of the world.<sup>(16)</sup> He refused to be a political messiah, ruling by force:<sup>(17)</sup> He preferred to call Himself the Son of Man, who came "to serve and to give his life as a ransom for the many" (Mark 10:45). He showed Himself the perfect servant of God,<sup>(18)</sup> who "does not break the bruised reed nor extinguish the smoking flax" (Matt. 12:20).

He acknowledged the power of government and its rights, when He commanded that tribute be given to Caesar: but He gave clear warning that the higher rights of God are to be kept inviolate: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). In the end, when He completed on the cross the work of redemption whereby He achieved salvation and true freedom for men, He brought His revelation to completion. For He bore witness to the truth,<sup>(19)</sup> but He refused to impose the truth by force on those who spoke against it. Not by force of blows does His rule assert its claims.<sup>(20)</sup> It is established by witnessing to the truth and by hearing the truth, and it extends its dominion by the love whereby Christ, lifted up on the cross, draws all men to Himself.<sup>(21)</sup>

Taught by the word and example of Christ, the Apostles followed the same way. From the very origins of the Church the disciples of Christ strove to convert men to faith in Christ as the Lord; not, however, by the use of coercion or of devices unworthy of the Gospel, but by the power, above all, of the word of God.<sup>(22)</sup> Steadfastly they proclaimed to all the plan of God our Savior, "who wills that all men should be saved and come to the acknowledgment of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4). At the same time, however, they showed respect for those of weaker stuff, even though they were in error, and thus they made it plain that "each one of us is to render to God an account of himself" (Romans 14:12),<sup>(23)</sup> and for that reason is bound to obey his conscience. Like Christ Himself, the Apostles were unceasingly bent upon bearing witness to the truth of God, and they showed the fullest measure of boldness in "speaking the word with confidence" (Acts 4:31)<sup>(24)</sup> before the people and their rulers. With a firm faith they held that the Gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation for all who believe.<sup>(25)</sup> Therefore they rejected all "carnal weapons:<sup>(26)</sup> they followed the example of the gentleness and respectfulness of Christ and they preached the word of God in the full confidence that there was resident in this word itself a divine power able to destroy all the forces arrayed against God<sup>(27)</sup> and bring men to faith in Christ and to His service.<sup>(28)</sup> As the Master, so too the Apostles recognized legitimate civil authority. "For there is no power except from God," the Apostle teaches, and thereafter commands: "Let everyone be subject to higher authorities.... He who resists authority resists God's ordinance" (Romans 13:1-5).<sup>(29)</sup> At the same time, however, they did not hesitate to speak out against governing powers which set themselves in opposition to the holy will of God: "It is necessary to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).<sup>(30)</sup> This is the way along which the martyrs and other faithful have walked through all ages and over all the earth.

12. In faithfulness therefore to the truth of the Gospel, the Church is following the way of Christ and the apostles when she recognizes and gives support to the principle of religious freedom as befitting the dignity of man and as being in accord with divine revelation. Throughout the ages the Church has kept safe and handed on the doctrine received from the Master and from the apostles. In the life of the People of God, as it has made its pilgrim way through the vicissitudes of human history, there has at times appeared a way of acting that was hardly in accord with the spirit of the Gospel or even opposed to it. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the Church that no one is to be coerced into faith has always stood firm.

Thus the leaven of the Gospel has long been about its quiet work in the minds of men, and to it is due in great measure the fact that in the course of time men have come more widely to recognize their dignity as persons, and the conviction has grown stronger that the person in society is to be kept free from all manner of coercion in matters religious.

13. Among the things that concern the good of the Church and indeed the welfare of society here on earth—things therefore that are always and everywhere to be kept secure and defended against all injury—this certainly is preeminent, namely, that the Church should enjoy that full measure of freedom which her care for the salvation of men requires.<sup>(31)</sup> This is a sacred freedom, because the only-begotten Son endowed with it the Church which He purchased with His blood. Indeed it is so much the property of the Church that to act against it is to act against the will of God. The freedom of the Church is the fundamental principle in what concerns the relations between the Church and governments and the whole civil order.

In human society and in the face of government the Church claims freedom for herself in her character as a spiritual authority, established by Christ the Lord, upon which there rests, by divine mandate, the duty of going out into the whole world and preaching the Gospel to every creature.<sup>(32)</sup> The Church also claims freedom for herself in her character as a society of men who have the right to live in society in accordance with the precepts of the Christian faith.<sup>(33)</sup>

In turn, where the principle of religious freedom is not only proclaimed in words or simply incorporated in law but also given sincere and practical application, there the Church succeeds in achieving a stable situation of right as well as of fact and the independence which is necessary for the fulfillment of her divine mission.

This independence is precisely what the authorities of the Church claim in society.<sup>(34)</sup> At the same time, the Christian faithful, in common with all other men, possess the civil right not to be hindered in leading their lives in accordance with their consciences. Therefore, a harmony exists between the freedom of the Church and the religious freedom which is to be recognized as the right of all men and communities and sanctioned by constitutional law.

14. In order to be faithful to the divine command, "teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19-20), the Catholic Church must work with all urgency and concern "that the word of God be spread abroad and glorified" (2 Thess. 3:1). Hence the Church earnestly begs of its children that, "first of all, supplications, prayers, petitions, acts of thanksgiving be made for all men.... For this is good and agreeable in the sight of God our Savior, who wills that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:1-4). In the



formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church.<sup>(35)</sup> For the Church is, by the will of Christ, the teacher of the truth. It is her duty to give utterance to, and authoritatively to teach, that truth which is Christ Himself, and also to declare and confirm by her authority those principles of the moral order which have their origins in human nature itself. Furthermore, let Christians walk in wisdom in the face of those outside, "in the Holy Spirit, in unaffected love, in the word of truth" (2 Cor. 6:6-7), and let them be about their task of spreading the light of life with all confidence<sup>(36)</sup> and apostolic courage, even to the shedding of their blood.

The disciple is bound by a grave obligation toward Christ, his Master, ever more fully to understand the truth received from Him, faithfully to proclaim it, and vigorously to defend it, never-be it understood-having recourse to means that are incompatible with the spirit of the Gospel. At the same time, the charity of Christ urges him to love and have prudence and patience in his dealings with those who are in error or in ignorance with regard to the faith.<sup>(37)</sup> All is to be taken into account-the Christian duty to Christ, the life-giving word which must be proclaimed, the rights of the human person, and the measure of grace granted by God through Christ to men who are invited freely to accept and profess the faith.

15. The fact is that men of the present day want to be able freely to profess their religion in private and in public. Indeed, religious freedom has already been declared to be a civil right in most constitutions, and it is solemnly recognized in international documents.<sup>(38)</sup> The further fact is that forms of government still exist under which, even though freedom of religious worship receives constitutional recognition, the powers of government are engaged in the effort to deter citizens from the profession of religion and to make life very difficult and dangerous for religious communities.

This council greets with joy the first of these two facts as among the signs of the times. With sorrow, however, it denounces the other fact, as only to be deplored. The council exhorts Catholics, and it directs a plea to all men, most carefully to consider how greatly necessary religious freedom is, especially in the present condition of the human family. All nations are coming into even closer unity. Men of different cultures and religions are being brought together in closer relationships. There is a growing consciousness of the personal responsibility that every man has. All this is evident. Consequently, in order that relationships of peace and harmony be established and maintained within the whole of mankind, it is necessary that religious freedom be everywhere provided with an effective constitutional guarantee and that respect be shown for the high duty and right of man freely to lead his religious life in society.

May the God and Father of all grant that the human family, through careful observance of the principle of religious freedom in society, may be brought by the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to the sublime and unending and "glorious freedom of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21).

#### NOTES

1. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963) p. 279; *ibid.*, p. 265; Pius XII, radio message, Dec. 24, 1944: AAS 37 (1945), p. 14.
2. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 260-261; Pius XII, radio message, Dec. 24, 1942: AAS 35 (1943), p. 19; Pius XI, encycl. "Mit Brennender Sorge," March 14, 1937: AAS 29 (1937), p. 160; Leo XIII, encycl. "Libertas Praestantissimum," June 20, 1888: Acts of Leo XIII 8 (1888), p. 237-238.
3. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), p. 270; Paul VI, radio message, Dec. 22, 1964: AAS 57 (1965), pp. 181-182.

4. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Mater et Magistra," May 15, 1961: AAS 53 (1961), p. 417; idem, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), p. 273.
5. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963: AAS 55 (1963), pp. 273-274; Pius XII, radio message, June 1 1941: AAS 33 (1941), p. 200.
6. Cf. Leo XIII, encycl. "Immortale Dei," Nov. 1, 1885: AAS 18 (1885) p. 161.
7. Cf. Lactantius "Divinarum Institutionum," Book V, 19: CSEL 19, pp. 463-464, 465: PL 6, 614 and 616 (ch. 20); St. Ambrose, "Epistola ad Valentianum Imp.," Letter 21: PL 16, 1005; St. Augustine, "Contra Litteras Petiliani," Book II, ch. 83: CSEL 52 p. 112: PL 43, 315; cf. C. 23, q. 5, c. 33, (ed. Friedberg, col. 939); idem, Letter 23: PL 33, 98, idem, Letter 34: PL 33, 132; idem, Letter 35: PL 33, 135; St. Gregory the Great, "Epistola ad Virgilium et Theodorum Episcopos Massiliae Galliarum, Register of Letters I, 45: MGH Ep. 1, p. 72: PL 77, 510-511 (Book I, ep. 47); idem, "Epistola ad Johannem Episcopum Constantinopolitanum," Register of Letters, III, 52: MGH Letter 1, p. 210: PL 77, 649 (Book III, Letter 53); cf. D. 45, c. 1 (ed. Friedberg, col 160); Council of Toledo IV, c. 57: Mansi 10, 633; cf. D. 45, c. 5 (ed. Friedberg, col. 161-162); Clement III: X., V, 6, 9: ed. Friedberg, col. 774; Innocent III, "Epistola ad Arelatensem Archiepiscopum," X., III, 42, 3: Friedberg, col. 646.
8. Cf. CIC, c. 1351; Pius XII, allocution to prelate auditors and other officials and administrators of the tribune of the Holy Roman Rota, Oct. 6, 1946: AAS 38 (1946), p. 394; idem. Encycl *Mystici Corporis*," June 29, 1943: AAS (1943) p. 243.
9. Cf. Eph. 1:5.
10. Cf. John 6:44.
11. Cf. John 13:13.
12. Cf. Matt. 11:29.
13. Cf. Matt. 11:28-30; John 6:67-68.
14. Cf. Matt. 9:28-29; Mark 9:23-24; 6:5-6; Paul VI, encycl. "Ecclesiam Suam," Aug. 6, 1964: AAS 56 (1964), pp. 642-643.
15. Cf. Matt. 11:20-24; Rom. 12:19-20; 2 Thess. 1:8.
16. Cf. Matt. 13:30 and 40-42.
17. Cf. Matt. 4:8-10; John 6:15.
18. Cf. Is. 42:1-4.
19. Cf. John 18:37.
20. Cf. Matt. 26:51-53; John 18:36.
21. Cf. John 12:32.
22. Cf. 1 Cor. 2:3-5; 1 Thess. 2:3-5.
23. Cf. Rom. 14:1-23; 1 Cor. 8:9-13; 10:23-33.
24. Cf. Eph. 6:19-20.
25. Cf. Rom. 1:16.
26. Cf. 2 Cor. 10:4; 1 Thess. 5:8-9.
27. Cf. Eph. 6:11-17.
28. Cf. 2 Cor. 10:3-5.
29. Cf. 1 Pet. 2:13-17.
30. Cf. Acts 4: 19-20.
31. Cf. Leo XIII, letter "Officio Sanctissimo," Dec. 22 1887: AAS 20 (1887), p. 269; idem, letter "Ex Litteris," April 7 1887: AAS 19 (1886), p. 465.
32. Cf. Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20, Pius XII, encycl. "Summi Pontificatus," Oct. 20, 1939: AAS 31 (1939). pp. 445-446.
33. Cf. Pius XI, letter "Firmissiman Constantiam," March 28, 1937: AAS 29 (1937), p. 196.
34. Cf. Pius XII, allocution, "Ci Riesce," Dec. 6, 1953: AAS 45 (1953), p. 802.
35. Cf. Pius XII, radio message, March 23, 1952: AAS 44 (1952) pp. 270-278.
36. Cf. Acts 4:29.
37. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963:AAS 55 (1963), pp. 299-300.
38. Cf. John XXIII, encycl. "Pacem in Terris," April 11, 1963:AAS 55 (1963) pp. 295-296