# CO-OPERATION OF CATHOLICS IN NON-CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ACTIVITES

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# CO-OPERATION OF CATHOLICS IN NON-CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ACTIVITES

## Part I

Moral problems concerned with the association of Catholics with non-Catholics frequently arise in the United States, as must occur in any land where the proportion of the citizens deprived of actual membership in the one true Church of Jesus Christ is very great. Most of the relations of American Catholics with their non-Catholic fellow citizens are of a business or social nature, and, generally speaking, these offer no special theological difficulty. In stores and factories, in schools and libraries, in trains and buses, in restaurants and hotels, in political and social gatherings, our Catholic people meet men and women of other religious beliefs, converse with them, do business with them, and treat them as friends and neighbors. On the whole, these associations are pleasant and amicable. Certainly, as far as Catholics are concerned, they should be such, for the Catholic religion teaches us that we must practice Christian charity to all human beings, whatever may be their religious beliefs.

Hence, the fact that the corner grocer is a Methodist should not deter Catholics from purchasing sugar and flour from him. If a Catholic girl is offered a position as secretary to the Baptist bank president, she need not refuse to accept on the ground that he is not a member of the one true Church. If a Jew is sick, his Catholic neighbor should not hesitate to visit him, but on the contrary should realize that he has an opportunity to practice one of the deeds of mercy which Christ expects of his followers.[1] And Catholics should be fully aware that in our land we willingly accept and practice the principle that equal civil rights are to be given to all citizens, whatever may be their particular religious affiliation.

Catholics were not always allowed this full freedom of association with non-Catholics. In the Middle Ages, the social and business relationships of Catholics with heretics were greatly restricted, since all heretics were considered to be under the gravest form of excommunication, which banned them from mingling with the members of the household of the faith even in the affairs of daily life.[2] No apology is needed for this attitude of the Church in view of the circumstances of the times, for it was recognized that most heretics were fanatical in their desire to win Catholics to their cause, and the Church in her motherly concern for the souls of her children quite

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[1] Matt. 25:36

[2] Cf. J. Bancroft, *Communication in Religious worship with non-Catholics* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943), p. 28

reasonably took this measure to protect them from the loss of the precious gift of the Catholic faith. Speaking of the association of Catholics with unbaptized infidels, St. Thomas distinguishes those Catholics who are strong in their faith and may associate with unbelievers because they may thus convert them, and those who are weak or ignorant and consequently should be forbidden familiarity with infidels.[3]

In 1418, Pope Martin V issued a more lenient set of rules concerning association with heretics, distinguishing between *vitandi* and the *tolerati*.[4] Most heretics belonged to this latter class. The Code has gone still further, and does not prohibit association in non-religious matters with any non-Catholics or excommunicated persons except one who has been excommunicated as *vitandus*; and a Catholic is excused even from this prohibition for a reasonable cause, as are also the members of the family, servants and subjects of the *vitandus*.[5]

This does not mean that Catholics may regard it as perfectly unobjectionable to associate with non-Catholics as frequently and as intimately as with Catholics. Undoubtedly, frequent and unnecessary association with those who are not of the household of the faith may tend to foster a spirit of indifferentism, especially if the non-Catholics are accustomed to argue in favor of their particular religious tenets or maintain the notion that it makes little difference what religion a person professes. It also is likely to promote mixed marriages. Hence, Catholics (especially our young folk) should be urged to give preference to good Catholics in choosing their intimate friends and associates.

However, the chief problems connected with the association of Catholics with persons of other religions center about *religious* communication and co-operation. These two terms are not synonymous, as used in theology. Communication *in sacris* signifies participation in public (official) non-Catholic religious rites. This is *active* when it involves a real participation in the functions, such as the reception of the sacraments, singing or organ playing, joining in the prayers, etc. It is *passive* when it consists of one's mere presence at the service without any active participation. The rules for religious communication are thus expressed in the Code of Cannon Law:

1. It is never lawful for the faithful to assist actively in any way or to take part in the religious rites of non-Catholics.

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[3] *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q.10 a. 9.

[4] *Fontes Juris Canonici*, I, n. 45.

[5] Can. 2267.

2. Passive, or merely material presence can be tolerated, by reason of civil duty or honor, for a grave reason, to be approved by the Bishop in case of doubt, at the funerals, marriages and similar solemnities of non-Catholics, provided there is no danger of perversion and scandal.[6]

However, the purpose of the series of articles now beginning is to consider problems of *co-operation*, rather than *communication*, on the part of Catholics in the religious activities of non-Catholics. Co-operation has a wider scope than communication. There are many ways of co-operation in religious matters without being present at religious functions. Decisions of the Holy See have given directions regarding many of the problems of co-operation in non-Catholic religious activities; but many others are left to the judgment of theologians and canonists. In the United States such problems are numerous at the present day; hence, it is my purpose to discuss a number of such problems, in the hope that this discussion may be helpful to our priests, so often confronted with questions of this nature. I shall be grateful if my brother-priests who read these articles and have encountered some unusual cases pertinent to this type of co-operation will send them to me for inclusion in this series.

## Co-Operation In General

Co-operation, in general, as theologians use the term, signifies the concurrence of a person in the sinful deed of another. Strictly speaking co-operation indicates a secondary or subordinate participation in the sinful act. It supposes that the principal agent takes the initiative in the performance of the sinful deed, and the co-operator merely assists him or makes it easier for him to act. Sometimes, however, there is a departure from this sense, as when *mandans* is classified as a co-operator in sins of injustice.[7]

Co-operation can be either physical or moral. Physical co-operation embraces actions of a physical nature in or toward the other's sin, such as helping a robber loot a store, or selling a contraceptive. Moral co-operation consists in encouragement, request, recommendation, etc., by which the principal agent is helped toward the performance of the sinful deed. Thus a

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[6] Can. 1258.

[7] Cf. Merkelbach, *Summa theologiae moralis* (Paris, 1938), II, a. 311.

man who asks a doctor to perform an abortion on his wife is a moral co-operator.

It should be emphasized that in designating public non-Catholic religious rites as sinful, we do not base our argument ultimately on the claim that they necessarily include or imply *false* doctrine. Usually this is the case; but it can happen that all the doctrines expressed or implied in a non-Catholic function are perfectly true (for example, a Mass celebrated by a schismatic priest). Yet, even in that event, the religious function is unlawful, because it is contrary to the order of things established by the Son of God. In the words of Father Bancroft: "Even though a form of cult exercised by a non-Catholic religious body contains nothing false, it is not a legitimate act of religion, because that body has no authority to prescribe and to practice religious acts, as a body existing against the order of things established by Christ."[8] In other words, Christ deputed only His Church to prescribe and to practice acts of public religious worship, so that public cult unauthorized by the Church is contrary to the will of God.

Co-operation can be either positive or negative, the former consisting in some action, the latter in the omission of an act which one is obliged to perform to prevent another's sin. Thus, a Catholic parent who would suggest to his son that he attend an immoral show would be guilty of positive co-operation, while one who would not use his parental authority to forbid his son such attendance, when the boy is planning to attend, would be guilty of negative co-operation.

Co-operation can be either formal or material. Formal co-operation consists in a real participation in the other's sin, or at least in the evil will of the principal agent.[9] Thus a doctor would be a formal co-operator in the sin of abortion if he physically aided another doctor in the performance of a sinful operation of this nature. He would also be a formal co-operator if he recommended an operation of this kind to another doctor, or even if he merely assisted at a therapeutic abortion, giving the anesthetic, but approving the procedure. As is evident, formal co-operation is entirely forbidden, for

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[8] Bancroft, op. cit., pg. 14

[9] I am following the classification of Aertnys-Damen (*Theologia moralis,* I, n. 398) who distinguish formal co-operation into into co-operation *ex parte fine operis* and *ex parte finis operantis tantum*. The former consists in an action which by its nature is directed toward participation in the sin of the principal agent; the latter consists in an action which in itself is morally indifferent but is intended by the agent to help the principal to commit sin, or at least to sin more easily.

by its very nature it is a participation in a sinful deed, or at least involves the will that something contrary to God's law be done. [10]

Material co-operation is given when a person performs an action that in itself is morally good or indifferent, though in the circumstances it provides the principal agent with the means of committing sin, or makes it easier for him to sin, presuming the co-operator does not will the sin of the principal agent. This may be either proximate or remote, the distinguishing factor between these two being, not the element of time or of place, but rather the degree of influence and aid rendered by the co-operator. Thus, the publisher of an obscene book is a more proximate co-operator toward the sin of those who will derive sinful pleasure from the book than the clerk who sells the book to the customer.

Material co-operation toward another's sin is *per se* (that is, abstracting from justifying circumstances) illicit, since any action that will contribute toward another's spiritual harm is *per se* forbidden by the law of charity. However, since charity does not bind when one would otherwise have to suffer great inconvenience or loss, material co-operation can *per accidens* become lawful, when a sufficiently serious hardship or loss of some benefit would come to the person called on to co-operate if he refused co-operation.[11] This is an application of the principle of the double effect. It should be noted that in evaluating the good and the bad effect in problems of material co-operation, the comparison is not made between the sin of the principal agent and the benefit accruing to the co-operator through his act of material co-operation. For the evil contained in a sin outweighs any benefit that a person might receive.) The comparison is rather between the toleration of the other's evil act, or the omission of a deed of charity (which one would perform by refusing to do something that will help the principal agent to commit a sin) and the benefit that the co-operation will bring (at least the avoidance of some inconvenience). Accordingly, even purely natural benefits may be sufficiently desirable to justify material co-operation toward another's sin. For a person is not bound to perform acts of charity,

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[10] In certain circumstances a person may suggest to another the performance of a sinful deed, namely, when this is the only means of preventing him from committing a more serious sin. But this is not reckoned as formal co-operation, since what is actually suggested is the lessening of the planned sin. Again, a person may take an active part in a theft if his life is at stake (the bank clerk threatened with death if he does not open the safe) but this is an application of the principle that one in extreme necessity may use another's goods to save his life. Finally, co-operation, even physical, in the violation of a positive *human* law may be permissible at times on the ground that such a law does not bind when it would cause a great hardship.

[11] CF. Aertnys-Damen, op. cit., n 399.

including the attempt to prevent another's sin, when these deeds of charity would entail proportionately grave material loss. In such a case he is justified in tolerating the other's sin. For example, the truck driver who is ordered to transport a consignment of paper to a publishing house that prints obscene books is not bound to risk his job by refusing, even though he will otherwise become a material co-operator toward the publication of literature that will induce some person to sin.

In judging the proportion between the evil effect of co-operating materially toward another's sin and the benefit the act may entail to the co-operator, many factors must be considered, especially the gravity of the sin and the greatness of the benefit. Thus, material co-operation toward a religious service in honor of a false god (for example, Buddha) would require a much greater benefit to balance it than material co-operation toward the cult of a Protestant sect, in which the true God is worshipped. But even in the latter case, there can be differences of gravity in the form of worship. To co-operate toward a religious service in which the minister believes erroneously that he is a priest and can consecrated bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (for example, by supplying him with hosts) would surely require a much graver justifying reason than co-operation toward a mere preaching service (for example by selling the clergyman a hymn book). Again, to co-operate materially when there is only a probability that the other will sin can be justified more easily than when it is certain that wrong will be done. Furthermore, as is evident, the greater the number of persons who will be aided to perform some evil deed, the greater must be the benefit to excuse the act of co-operation.

The main factor to be considered, however, is the proximity (in the sense explained above) of the co-operation to the wrong-doing. Merely to drive a good non-Catholic in an automobile to his church where he will participate in the services is remote co-operation, and can be justified by a slight reason, such as the desire of a cab driver to earn a fare, or the laudable wish of a Catholic neighbor to perform an act of courtesy. But to provide a non-Catholic clergyman with the vestments he wishes to use in a ritual function would be very proximate co-operation, justifiable only for a very grave reason.

The fact that the principal agent is in good faith (unaware of the sinfulness of his action) does not justify formal co-operation, at least when the act is contrary to the law of God, as distinct from some human law. Thus, even though all the members of a Protestant congregation are presumably sincere in their worship, a Catholic would not be allowed to play the organ. But in judging the permissibility of material co-operation, the subjective attitude of the principal agent may be considered. Thus the

Catholic driving his car to Mass on Sunday could certainly accede to the request of his sincere Protestant neighbor to take him to his Protestant church. But he could not show the same consideration to a renegade Catholic on his way to a non-Catholic church to marry a divorced woman (apart from a most grave reason, such as a threat with a gun!)

Finally, in judging the lawfulness of material co-operation, the danger of scandal must be considered, since this would make it more difficult to justify the act. In a thoroughly Catholic land this scandal, in the case of material co-operation in non-Catholic religious activities, would consist in providing circumstances that might put some Catholics in grave danger of renouncing their faith. In our country today the chief scandal would seem to be the promotion of the idea that all religions are equally good in the sight of God. Catholics, as well as non-Catholics, are likely to receive this impression if there is to much of a spirit of collaboration toward non-Catholic activities on the part of Catholics.

In proposing a solution of the various problems that I intend to consider, I have tried to judge fairly the many factors involved, so that our Catholic people will not be burdened and restricted in their associations with their fellow citizens of other creeds more than the principles of Catholic theology and the decisions of the Church demand. But I have also tried to bear in mind that Catholics must avoid all compromise in matters of faith. It is a glorious privilege to belong to the one true Church of Jesus Christ, and our people should realize that, if necessary, they must be willing to sacrifice material and social advantages rather than collaborate unlawfully in activities contrary to the true faith, however sincere may be the non Catholics who are conducting them.

## Co-Operation Towards The Construction of Non-Catholic Churches

A church is not only a place of worship but is also a constant reminder of the religion practiced therein and, in a sense, an inanimate proponent and advocate of this religion. Hence, a non-Catholic church proclaims to the community the conviction of its congregation that their creed, though not in accord with Catholicism, is true and good. Accordingly, any Catholic who aids in the erection of a non-Catholic church is co-operating toward a form of worship that is opposed to the law of God.

Formal co-operation in the purpose intended by non-Catholics in erecting their church would be an intrinsically evil act. For example, if a disgruntled Catholic contributed toward the erection of such an edifice with the express desire to see the influence of the Catholic Church weakened in the town and the influence of a non-Catholic sect increased, the co-operation would be formal *ex parte finis operantis*. If a Catholic, without such

a malicious intent, but out of a mistaken notion of brotherhood and liberalism, urged a non-Catholic clergyman to come and preach his doctrines in the town, the co-operation (moral) would be formal *ex parte finis operis*.

Usually, however, the co-operation of Catholics toward the erection of non-Catholic churches is merely material. Surely, the building of an edifice of wood or stone is, in itself, a morally indifferent act, and Catholics who collaborate are presumed to do so, no for a bad purpose, but to avoid some inconvenience or obtain some good. In solving the concrete problems of this kind, the nature and the proximity of the co-operation are the factors of greatest importance. Thus, the architect and the builder are much more proximate co-operators than the ordinary workmen, and accordingly need a much graver reason to justify them morally in undertaking the work. A reasonable solution of this problem is thus expressed in the recent theological work of Regatillo-Zalba, S.J.:

> It is permitted to workmen to construct churches for heretics, schismatics, Jews and Mohammedans, and also the buildings for Masonic and other reprobated societies, for the sake of avoiding an ordinary inconvenience, otherwise to be endured, because the co-operation is remote and not necessary.[12] And in this co-operation scandal is hardly present today because of the lamentable relegation of religion to the internal forum… Architects and contractors, since they are more proximate and more efficacious in co-operation, can undertake the construction of temples of a false religion in which the true God is worshipped, only because of a truly grave inconvenience, provided other similar temples are already in the place.[13]

From this it can be concluded, I believe, that the mason, carpenter, electrician, etc., sent by his employer to work on a Protestant church or Jewish synagogue (or even a Mohammedan mosque) could undertake the work, since the desire of getting his wages would be a sufficiently justifying reason. Of course, if he could just as easily get an assignment in some other construction work, he should take this in preference; but usually this opportunity is not given.

It is different with the architect, builder, etc. Their co-operation is proximate; hence they need a more serious reason to permit them to undertake the planning or the construction of a non-Catholic edifice of worship. An example of such a serious reason might be found in the case of

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[12] The meaning is that, if they refuse to perform the work, others will surely perform it.

[13] *Theologia moralis* (Madrid, 1954), I, nn. 982-83. A similar decision was given by the Cardinal Vicar of Rome to the parish priests of that city, in 1878. Cf. Genicot Salsmans, *Theologia moralis* (Brussels, 1946), I n. 237.

the young architect in the employ of a prominent firm, chosen to draw the designs for a Protestant church. If he does a good job, his future success may be assured; if he refuses, he may be excluded from future desirable chances, or even discharged from the firm. Another example would be the contractor who is having a hard time financially and is now offered a lucrative contract for the construction of a Protestant church. But, on the other hand, the well-established architect or builder who would suffer very little, either in finances or in reputation, if he turned down the offer, would not be morally justified in giving his services to the building of a non-Catholic church, which would offer only one of many opportunities to succeed and prosper. A real-estate agent, requested to obtain land for a non-Catholic church, would be in the same class as the architect and the builder.

It is interesting to note that this solution of Regatillo-Zalba supposes a church in which the *true* God will be worshipped, and in this category the authors generally put the Mohammedan mosque. It is different, however, with a building that is intended for pagan or idolatrous worship, such as a shrine to Buddha. Only for a most grave cause could even the ordinary workman take employment in the construction of such an edifice.[14] A Masonic temple could be put in the same category with a Protestant church in our country, I believe.

The problem of contributions toward the erection of non-Catholic churches frequently faces Catholics in our land. This comes under the heading of material co-operation and is justified only for a grave cause,[15] or at least a just and reasonable cause.[16] As was previously pointed out, one who contributes with the intention of promoting non-Catholic preaching or worship would be a formal co-operator *ex parte finis operantis*. The need of avoiding grave opposition and antagonism from one's non-Catholic neighbors might be a sufficient reason for this act of material co-operation. Hence, the Catholic shopkeeper who would be boycotted as a bigot unless he gave a contribution to the new Protestant church might find a justification in this fact,[17] and similarly, in those places where non-Catholics

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[14] Cf. Merkelbach, op. cit., I, n. 764

[15] *Ibid*., n 766.

[16] Cf. Iorio, Theologia moralis (Naples, 1946), I, n. 291.

[17] Cf. Konings, *Theologia moralis* (Boston, 1847), n. 313. Genicot-Salsmans, *Institutiones theologiae moralis* (Brussels, 1946). These authors merely express their uncertainty and give no positive approval of donations by Catholics toward the erection of non-Catholic churches. Piscetta-Gennaro (*Elementa theologia moralis* [Turin, 1941], II, n. 276) regard such gifts as probably lawful, provided it is evident that they are given only to avoid some grave harm. Iorio (cited below) has the most lenient view that I have seen.

have been very generous in giving to Catholic causes, the need of showing a similar generosity might be sufficient reason to justify a contribution.[18] It is apposite to remark that it is not advisable for Catholics, either lay or clerical, to seek donations for their churches from non-Catholics since this often furnishes an occasion for similar requests on their part to our people. Moreover, it may be putting a strain on the consciences of non-Catholics to give money to the spread of the Catholic faith, and though this is an erroneous conscience, we should not furnish them with an occasion of formal sin.

What about the sale of a Catholic Church, no longer needed, to a non-Catholic sect? If the building is to be used as a hall or a school, it might be permissible. But if the edifice is to be used as a house of worship, it seems impossible to justify the sale even though considerable financial loss is at stake. In addition to the co-operation involved in such a transaction, it would be gravely scandalous for a building in which Our Lord dwelt in the Blessed Sacrament to be used for a form of worship that represents His teachings erroneously, and even denies explicitly the doctrine of the Real Presence. Similarly, I could not see any justification in the sale of an altar or even an organ for non-Catholic worship. At most, it might be permitted to sell to a non-Catholic church appurtenances that have no intimate connection with worship, such as the pews or the furnace or the electric lights, but I would urge that even this not be done.

[18] Iorio (*loc. cit.*) admits gratitude and friendship as a sufficient reason for giving such contributions if otherwise considerable inconvenience would arise.

# CO-OPERATION OF CATHOLICS IN NON-CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ACTIVITES

## Part II

In a previous article I discussed the nature and the various types of co-operation and the application of the moral principles in the matter of collaboration toward non-Catholic religious activities, particularly the building of churches and the contributing of funds toward this objective. In the present article I shall attempt to apply the principles of co-operation to the question of the collaboration of Catholics in the religious rites of non-Catholics.

## General Principles

The Code of Canon Law clearly states the church's rulings regarding the actual participation of Catholics in public or official non-Catholic religious rites. Active participation, such as the reception of the sacraments, singing or praying as a part of the service, etc., is entirely forbidden; passive participation, which is mere presence without any active part, can be tolerated for a grave reason, provided there is no danger of scandal and perversion. Passive participation can be justified particularly in the case of funerals and weddings.[19]

However, co-operation in a religious service does not necessarily include presence or participation. Thus, one who urges a person to take an active part in a non-Catholic religious function is a formal co-operator, and one who provides the vestments or the book of prayers is a material co-operator, though neither may attend the service. Co-operation, therefore, is wider than *communicatio in sacris.*

It is important that Catholics in our land be familiar with the general principles relating to co-operation in non-Catholic religious rites, and especially with the reasons on which they are based. For problems in this matter frequently arise and our people need guidance and direction as to the manner in which they must solve these problems consistently with their Catholic faith. They are too prone to seek a solution in concrete terms rather than on the basis of a principle. Thus, a Catholic hears from another Catholic that this latter was told by a priest that he might attend a wedding in a Protestant church. The first individual concludes that a Catholic may always attend a wedding in a Protestant church. Of course, this conclusion is far too wide. Such attendance (even though passive) demands a grave reason, a

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[19] Can. 1258

condition that was doubtless fulfilled in the case of his friend, but may not be present in his own case to justify his presence at a particular wedding he wishes to attend. If he were familiar with the principle involved, he would not be so likely to make an erroneous decision.

Catholics should realize particularly that in proposing legislation regarding the co-operation in non-Catholic religious activities, the Church is not laying down merely ecclesiastical law. It is the law of God that is at stake. For our Divine Saviour established only one Church entitled to perform and to authorize acts of worship, particularly the Holy Sacrifice and the sacraments. It is only when these sacred ceremonies are conducted with the authorization of the one true Church that they are objectively lawful and conformable to the will of God. Even when a non-Catholic religious function contains nothing that is false, it is not a licit act of worship because it lacks the approbation of Christ's Church. For this reason, a Catholic does not satisfy his obligation of Sunday Mass if he is present at a Liturgy celebrated in a schismatic rite, even though a true Eucharistic sacrifice is offered.[20]

Sometimes it is true, a Catholic is permitted to receive the ministrations of a non-Catholic priest. For example, a Catholic in danger of death is allowed to receive the sacrament of Penance from a schismatic priest.[21] However this is not an exception to the principle just enunciated. For in such a case the schismatic priest is approved by the Church to administer the sacrament, and receives the same jurisdiction that the Church confers in such circumstances on Catholic priests.

It is especially necessary that our Catholic people should be aware of the principles governing religious communication and co-operation nowadays because of the strong tendency outside the Church to "bury differences," and there are many well-intentioned non-Catholics who believe that a mutual participation and collaboration in the religious rites of different groups is one of the most effective means to amity and brotherhood. Beyond doubt, there is often genuine good will on the part of many who hold this view, which may render it more difficult for a Catholic to maintain his stand without compromise than if he were being attacked in a spirit of hostility. Thus, a Catholic is a week-end guest of a Protestant friend. On Sunday morning his host may attend Mass with him as a mark of friendship. But when he himself is visiting the Catholic, he may expect this latter to accompany him to the

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[20] Cf. Can. 1249. Bancroft, *Communication in Religious Worship with non-Catholics* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943), p 116.

[21] Cf. Szal, *The Communication of Catholics with Schismatics* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1948), p.93.

Protestant church, and may even be offended if this mark of courtesy (as he regards it) is refused. A Catholic placed in such a situation should not be content with the bare statement: "My Church forbids me to attend non-Catholic services," but should be able to explain the reasonable and logical basis of this prohibition by the Catholic Church. In a word, our Catholic laity should have an intelligent grasp of the Church's teaching on co-operation and *communicatio in sacris*.

As was stated in the previous article, co-operation in another's action can be either physical or moral. Under these two headings we shall consider some of the more frequent occasions presented to Catholics in our land of co-operation in non-Catholic religious activities.

## Physical Co-Operation

By physical co-operation we mean collaboration consisting essentially in some physical act, such as providing articles to be used in a non-Catholic religious service, allowing such a service to be held in a place under one's jurisdiction, etc. Participation in a service would be a form of physical co-operation, active participation being formal co-operation, passive participation ordinarily being material co-operation. The general rule is that the formal co-operation is never allowed, material co-operation is *per se* forbidden, but for a sufficiently grave reason can *per accidens* become licit.[22]

To provide articles for use in non-Catholic religious services, such as sacramental bread and wine, sacred vessels, candles, etc., is in itself material co-operation, though it would become formal co-operation *ex parte finis operantis* if the one performing the action explicitly directed it toward the promotion of unauthorized or false religious worship. The more important an article is toward the conducting of non-Catholic worship, the graver the reason must a Catholic have to justify him in consigning it to the church or the clergyman. Thus, a more serious reason would be needed to allow a Catholic to sell vestments for a non-Catholic service than to sell flowers. Moreover, the measure of authority a person possesses over an object would vary the problem. The express man who is told to deliver a box of candles to be used in the Protestant church can regard the fact that this is his assigned job a sufficient justification for this act of material co-operation; whereas the owner of the candles needs a much greater reason to sell or donate them to the church for use in religious ceremonies.

In determining the lawfulness of this type of material co-operation we must make an important distinction between tradespeople and private individuals. The former generally are morally justified in selling whatever

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[22] Cf. Aertnys-Damen. *Theologia moralis* (Turin, 1950), I. n. 399

goods they have on display to anyone who requests them, whatever his creed or church. It would impose considerable hardship on a salesman if he had to ask the religious belief of every customer. Moreover in some places a manifestation of discrimination on religious grounds might result in the loss of the storekeeper's license.[23] But it is different with private individuals. Apart from the most extraordinary instances they would not be justified in providing articles that proximately serve for use in non-Catholic worship, such as altar-vessels, wine, vestments, etc. Thus, a community of nuns could not contract to make a set of vestments for a Protestant church, even though they are greatly in need of financial resources. I believe that like a judgment would have to be passed in the case of the Oriental schismatic church, even though their Liturgy is a true Eucharistic sacrifice.

I have heard of instances in which a Protestant clergyman requested a priest to lend or give him some altar-breads for his religious services. In such a case, the only answer must be a courteous but firm refusal, even though the result will be a definite severance of friendly relations. As I stated in a previous issue of this periodical: "The co-operation toward an objectively sinful religious service would be so proximate on the part of a priest who would furnish the Protestant minister with altar breads specially prepared for communion that it is difficult to see how there could be a sufficiently grave reason to justify it."[24]

A somewhat different case occurred, I have been told, in our armed forces in the East in recent years. The army furnished large quantities of altar-breads for all chaplains, and sometimes one of the Catholic chaplains was assigned to distribute them. In such a case, he need have no qualms of conscience in providing non-Catholic chaplains with their share, for since the altar-breads were the property of the army, intended for Protestants as well as Catholics, all had the same right to them. However, it is certainly more desirable that Catholic chaplains provide themselves with altar-breads intended only for use in Catholic services.

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[23] It is not true, however, that a storekeeper will always be liable to the loss of his license if he refuses to deal with a certain customer. Hence a Catholic tradesman should refuse to make or sell a chalice for non-Catholic religious functions unless he has a very grave reason to justify him. The mere fact that he will derive considerable profit from the transaction is not a sufficient reason.

[24] *AER*, CXI, 1 (July 1944). A Somewhat easier judgment could be passed on the Catholic baker from whom a non-Catholic clergyman orders bread, even though the baker suspects that it will be used for sacramental purposes. For bread baked in a loaf is not specifically adapted to liturgical use

In a hospital the utensils employed in sick-calls that are of a definitely religious character, such as the candles, the crucifix, the holy water sprinkler- should be reserved for use by the Catholic priest. If a public hospital provides such articles, but in such wise that all clergymen are free to use them, the priest should purchase a set for his own use. On the other hand, there would be no objection to the common use of a table, spoons, drinking glasses, etc., which the priest utilizes on a communion-call. In a Catholic hospital the Protestant clergyman should be permitted to have a place for whatever articles he wishes to use on his sick-calls. Moreover, in a Catholic hospital it is permissible for the authorities to allow the use of a room for the circumcision of Jewish children.[25]

The question was once presented to me whether a pastor could allow the local Protestant congregation the use of his hall for their services on Sunday, when their church had been destroyed by fire. The problem is indeed a difficult one, and there may be theologians who would answer in the affirmative. But, while admiring the sincerity and good will of the Protestants who wish to keep up their religious functions in this difficult situation, I answered that the co-operation in this case was too proximate to justify the granting of the permission, even though misunderstanding and hard feeling would very likely follow. For, the opening of the Catholic hall to Protestant worship would surely tend to give the impression that differences of belief are an affair of little consequence.

## Moral Co-Operation

Co-operation is not limited to physical activity in or toward another's action. Co-operation may consist in moral concurrence, for example, advice, counseling, urging, which will induce or help another to act. If such advice or counseling or inducement is directed to the performance of an action that is intrinsically wrong, it ordinarily constitutes formal co-operation in the evil act, and consequently is intrinsically wrong and partakes of the nature and gravity of the evil act to which it is directed. I say *ordinarily* such co-operation is intrinsically wrong, because theologians commonly admit a principle that has an important bearing on the particular problem we are considering – the principle that when a person is definitely determined to commit a sin and can be deterred from performing the evil deed only by inducing him to commit a sin of lesser gravity, it is morally justifiable to persuade him to commit this lesser sin. An example is the man who is determined to kill his wife, but who can be deterred from this base deed only by persuading him to get drunk and thus forget his troubles. In such a case, according to the teaching of reliable

[25] Cf. *AER*, CX, 3 (March 1944), 223.

theologians, it is permissible to induce the individual in question to drink to excess.[26]

However the primary principle to be emphasized is that it is ordinarily sinful to persuade a person to commit a sin, even though he himself is not aware of the sinfulness of the act, namely, even though it is only a material sin. As it is expressed by Merkelbach: "It is not lawful to invite others to the services or sermons of heretics, either by persuasion or by authority or by any other type of invitation, because this is to induce them directly to commit sin, which is intrinsically wrong."[27]

The problem most frequently adduced in this connection is that of the Catholic nurse who is requested by the non-Catholic patient to summon a clergyman of his own creed to confer on him some sacramental rite. A decision of the Holy Office, given on March 15, 1848, declared that the nurse (actually, the question was concerned with a nursing sister) could not licitly fulfill the request. The question seems to have visualized an explicit request on the part of the nurse that the minister perform some spiritual ministration. This would be formal co-operation toward unauthorized cult, and consequently would be forbidden. In practice, however, at least as far as this country is concerned, the solution of the problem seems very simple. The nurse can simply transmit to the clergyman the request that he come and visit the patient, without making reference to any rites or ceremonies he may wish to perform. Surely, no minister should demand more than this information, which is all that a priest would expect in the case of a Catholic patient. And, when the nurse confines herself to this simple request, she is free from any formal co-operation in non-Catholic rites, and can have the assurance that her material co-operation is sufficiently justified by the fact that a hospital that opens its doors to persons of all creeds is expected to show all patients the courtesy of inviting a clergyman of whatever denomination they may choose to come and visit them.

When we study the problem of moral co-operation toward non-Catholic services on a broader scale, we must begin with an important distinction; the distinction between merely conveying to others the information that such a service is to be held and recommending or advising the conducting of non-Catholic worship or active participation in it. It is only this latter that constitutes formal co-operation. Merely to announce in a word or writing that a non-Catholic ceremony is to take place in a certain church at a certain hour is material co-operation, which can be justified for a sufficient reason. Let us illustrate by some concrete cases. A Catholic manager in a large hotel

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[26] Cf. Aertnys-Damen, *Theologia moralis* (Turin, 1950), I, n. 379.

[27] Merkelbach, *Summa theologiae moralis* (Paris, 1938), I, n. 758.

may be asked by a guest about the hour of Sunday services in the neighboring Protestant church. He would be permitted to inquire about the matter and convey the information to the guest. Similarly, the Catholic editor of a newspaper could print the schedule of services in the various non-Catholic houses of worship. It is well to note that in giving out information of this kind (an act of material co-operation) the Catholic is not justified merely because of any temporal benefits he may thereby gain. There can and should be a sincere regard for the sincerity and good will of those who are striving to worship God according to their conscience; and though this will not justify formal co-operation, it can at times serve as a potent reason for material co-operation. Indeed, this point was explicitly mentioned by Pope Pius XII in his discourse *Ci riesce*, of Dec. 6, 1953, in which he adduced as one of the reasons why the Church is lenient toward those who profess non-Catholic creeds "regard for those who in good conscience (though erroneous but invincibly so) are of different opinion."[28] Hence, we can say that the earnest desire of non-Catholic inquirers to worship in accord with their conscience can provide the hotel manager and the editor described above with a sufficient reason to perform the act of material co-operation entailed in giving information as to the place and time of a non-Catholic worship.

However, the case is different when there is question of urging or advising non-Catholics to take part in worship that a Catholic logically regards as contrary to the will of God. The well-instructed Catholic will see the fallacy and the indifferentism contained in the phrase, so commonly circulated today, that "everyone should be encouraged to worship God in the form of religion he prefers." To follow this principle in such a manner that one would urge Protestants, Jews, Mohammedans, etc., to practice their respective religious rites would be formal co-operation in false and unauthorized worship of a most extreme type, a deplorable disregard of the fact that the Son of God established and authorized only one Church entitled to render true public worship to the Creator.

Hence, the Catholic delivering a radio talk on the need of religion in present-day life should not advise all his hearers to "go regularly to their respective churches to participate in the services," although he may urge them to pray, since prayer is a private act of religious cult which is a good deed, as long as it contains no erroneous doctrine. (Indeed, Catholics may pray privately with non-Catholics, as long as the prayer contains nothing false.)

Neither may Catholics participate in campaigns with the slogan "worship in the church of your choice," a movement that is becoming rather common in America nowadays. In such participation, it would seem, there is not only formal co-operation but also a very pronounced factor of indifferentism.

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[28] Cf. *AER*, CXX,2 (Feb. 1954), 137.

It may be asked whether the principle proposed above, that one may sometimes suggest to another the performance of a lesser evil if this is the only way in which he can be deterred from a greater evil, can be applied to this question of co-operation. In the present problem the greater evil is the entire neglect of religious interests and activities, the lesser evil is participation in a form of worship that is unauthorized, and usually false to some extent, but yet contains elements of truth and goodness and furnishes some inspiring motives to virtuous conduct. I believe that this principle can be utilized in certain specific instances. Thus, about ten years ago, I wrote as follows in respect to two possible applications of this principle in the matter of recommending attendance at non-Catholic religious instruction and worship:

"Catholics believe that Catholicism alone is true and all other religions are false, and hence they regard it as *per se* sinful to urge anyone to participate actively in non-Catholic religious services or to attend non-Catholic religious instruction. We say that *per se* this is sinful, for there is a moral principle that might justify such conduct in certain circumstances. It is the principle, admitted by many good theologians, that when a person is going to do something wrong, another may lawfully urge him to do something less sinful, if this is the only way of deterring him from the greater evil. Now it might be argued that at the present day the majority of non-Catholic children in our great cities will be brought up in entire ignorance of religion and morality if they are not given instruction in the released-time program, and that it would be a lesser evil to have them receive non-Catholic instruction (which contains much that is true and good, even though it contains error) that if they were brought up utterly devoid of religion. If conditions are such that in a city that the released-time program will not be introduced unless Catholics are willing to urge non-Catholics to attend non-Catholic instructions, this principle might be applied. But in these circumstances Catholic lay workers should be properly instructed, lest they become imbued with indifferentistic ideas. Similarly, Catholic chaplains might use this principle at times to allow them to urge non-Catholic soldiers and sailors to attend their own services. If it can be reasonably judged that the men will derive some religious ideas from these services and will be induced to lead better lives, whereas they would exclude God from their lives entirely if they did not attend, a Catholic chaplain might be justified in urging such attendance as the lesser of two evils."[29]

But to apply this principle in a general way to justify the indiscriminate urging of non-Catholics to take part in their particular church services is utterly unjustifiable. For there are many non-Catholics who have a considerable amount of religious practice in their private and domestic lives, and it surely cannot be said of these persons that if they do not attend their church services their lives will be entirely irreligious and godless. However it

[29] *AER*, CXIII, 6 (June 1945), 474.

is only on this last supposition that the principle of the recommendation of the lesser of two evils can be utilized.

## Conclusion

Priests must expect resentment and bewilderment on the part of some hearers if they proclaim as they should the principles of Catholic theology concerning the co-operation of Catholics toward the religious worship of non-Catholics. For, beyond doubt, their attitude that all religions are good and should be favored, that we must forget our differences, etc., has been accepted by many Catholics. It is a very comfortable attitude as far as this world is concerned, winning for Catholics from their non-Catholic neighbors the encomium that they are really very broad-minded persons, much less bigoted than the Catholics of past generations. But such praise is a poor compensation for the spiritual loss entailed by the compromise of a fundamental Catholic principle, the principle that all forms of public worship devoid of the approval of the Catholic Church are opposed to the will of God. It is the duty of priests to provide their people with proper instruction and inspiration on this important matter. We must try to develop intelligent lay Catholics, who fully realize that, while Christian charity must be manifested to all men, the beliefs and worship of those who are separated from the Catholic Church are not in harmony with the divine plan for human salvation.

# CO-OPERATION OF CATHOLICS IN NON-CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

## Part III

In two previous articles[30] we considered some of the moral problems pertinent to the co-operation of Catholics in non-Catholic religious activities, such as the building of protestant churches, the selling of articles to be used in non-Catholic religious functions, the advertising of non-Catholic services, etc. It is the purpose of this article to discuss several other particular problems that are likely to be proposed to the priests of our country, and to essay a solution that will represent the proper Catholic attitude and will serve as a prudent guide for priests and people.

### Membership in the Y.M.C.A.

Membership in the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) and its corresponding female organization, the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A), has been a topic of considerable discussion among Catholic priests in our land, and it would seem that the practice of our people in this matter differs greatly in different parts of the country. The Y.M.C.A. claims to be undenominational, and welcomes among its members, not only Catholics but (at least in some places) Jews. It provides a program of lectures, instructions, social events, athletic facilities, etc., that offer a strong attraction to the average young person.

It cannot be denied that in its origin and spirit the Y.M.C.A. is Protestant. It was established in Scotland and England before the middle of the nineteenth century chiefly for the religious instruction and improvement of young Protestants of the working classes. As late as 1911 the *Encyclopedia Brittanica* stated that to be a member of the Y.M.C.A. "means a definite acceptance of the doctrines of the Evangelical Christian faith."[31] However, in the United States Catholics are admitted as members, though formerly it was the ruling that Catholics could not be elected to any of the superior or directing offices of the organization, and in some chapters the number of Catholics admitted to membership could not be more than five percent of the whole group.[32] However, I have been informed by an official of the organization that nowadays these restrictions no longer exist and that

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[30] *AER,* CXXXIV, 2,3, (February, March, 1956), 98-108;190-200)

[31] *Encyclopedia Brittanica*, ed. 11 (1911), "Young Men's Christian Association," XXVIII, 940.

[32] Cf. *AER*, LXIV, 3 (March, 1921), 242-49; LXVI, 3 (March, 1922), 297-99.

Catholics may be members of the board of management and hold other official posts.

As to the moral problem of the participation of Catholics in the activities of the Y.M.C.A., it is very evident that they may not take part in any religious functions, for these are surely Protestant in character. Neither could they attend Bible classes, religious lectures, etc. At most, it would be permissible for a Catholic to join the Y.M.C.A. in order to take advantage of the athletic facilities and perhaps some of the social or cultural functions.[33] From this, however, it does not follow that every boy or young man must be permitted to join the organization as long as he promises to restrict his interests to the social, cultural and athletic features. Some Catholic youths would be spiritually endangered even if they were limited to these spheres of activities, either because they are not staunch in the faith or because in the particular chapter efforts are being made to weaken the loyalty of Catholics to their Church. Hence, a priest should carefully consider the case of each Catholic boy who wishes to join the Y.M.C.A. in order to benefit by the features that in themselves are not opposed to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. For the particular circumstances may render such affiliation wrong, even though the mode of affiliation may not be in itself sinful. It should be noted that the spirit of indifferentism, the notion that differences of religion are unimportant, is more dangerous than positive opposition to the Catholic Church. It is this fact that induced the Holy Office, in 1920, to warn Catholics against affiliation with the Y.M.C.A.[34]

As to the participation in the Y.M.C.A. as members of the board of directors or other officials, I cannot see any other solution than an absolute denial unless the office is definitely restricted to non-religious functions. How can a Catholic consistently take an active part in promoting all forms of Christianity as good and commendable? Similarly, it is utterly inconsistent for a Catholic to take part in a membership drive for the Y.M.C.A., thus suggesting that Protestant youth be encouraged to profess and practice Protestantism fervently, if he is convinced that the Son of God established only one religion, the Catholic religion, for all mankind.

The solution of the question of catholic co-operation toward the work of the Salvation Army follows very logically from the principles just enunciated. The Salvation Army is a protestant movement, in which many sincere and good Protestants participate. But it is not a movement in which Catholics may actively participate. When this organization inaugurates a drive

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[33] By licit cultural functions I mean such events as lectures on literature or history, classes in the study of languages, etc., provided no anti-Catholic spirit is injected into them.

[34] Cf. *AAS*, XII (1920), 595-97

for a particular purpose that involves no distinctively Protestant activity, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner for the poor, it is surely lawful for Catholics to contribute. But to co-operate toward the spread of the organization in itself, which includes the propagation of non-Catholic doctrine, is entirely forbidden to those who believe that Jesus Christ established only one religion, and that the religion He established is promulgated only by the Catholic Church..

## The Jewish Paschal Meal

In connection with the Passover celebration the Jews partake of the paschal meal; and sometimes a Catholic is invited to the repast by a Jewish family. May the Catholic accept this invitation? I have consulted Catholic scholars familiar with the Jewish religion on this point, but I hesitate to give a definite answer. The point at issue is whether or not the paschal supper is to be regarded as an official liturgical function of the Jewish religion or merely as a family meal with some religious accessories of a private nature. The latter seems to be the more probable interpretation; nevertheless, I recommend that a Catholic who receives such an invitation courteously decline. His Jewish neighbors may have invited him in a spirit of sincere friendliness, without any intention of having him violate his conscientious convictions. But, since there are surely some religious connotations connected with the meal, it is at least the better procedure for Catholics not to be present.

## Ministerial Associations

In some parts of our country the clergymen of different creeds form a society known as the "Ministerial Association," or some such similar title. Sometimes the local priest is invited to become a member of this organization. I earnestly exhort Catholic priests to refrain from membership. Beyond doubt, the invitation in many instances proceeds from a sincere desire to promote good will and friendship among the different clergymen of the community; and this in itself is a desirable good. But by joining an organization of this kind the priest implies that his ministerial office is on the same plane as that of the Protestant minister; and our faith teaches that the priest is elevated by his ordination to a dignity immeasurably superior to that of any other human being.

The priest may and should collaborate with non-Catholic clergymen toward the social and moral improvement of the community. He can, for example, join in movements to procure better housing conditions, to protect public schools from Communistic infiltration, to eliminate racial segregation,

etc. And certainly, in his association with non-Catholic clergymen he should ever manifest the courtesy and kindness that are expected of one whose life is supposed to be an outstanding exemplification of Christian charity. He could even address a meeting of the Ministerial Association to explain the teachings of the Church, though in such an event he must be sure that he has first obtained the permission of the Ordinary, at least if the meeting can be classed as a *disputatio* or a *collatio*.[35] But when there is a question of association with non-Catholic clergymen in a way that implies equality of ministry with them and the acceptance of their creeds as something good, the priest must take an uncompromising stand and decline to enter such an association.

## Publication and Distribution of non-Catholic Literature

The problems of co-operation in the matter of the publication and the distribution of non-Catholic books, magazines, pamphlets etc., are numerous in these days when the business of publishing and selling various types of reading material is so extensive. Only the more common problems can be considered in this brief discussion, but the general norms will be presented.

A Catholic may never, for any reason whatsoever, publish a book or article that upholds false religious doctrine. For the publisher of a piece of literature co-operates formally in proclaiming the doctrines it proposes and defends.[36] This principle applies both to errors in faith (for example, a work that denounces Christian revelation) and to errors in morality (for example, a book defending contraception). This same prohibition applies to the Catholic owner of a printing plant.

However, those who work in a publishing house or printing plant without any right to determine what books are to be published are only material co-operators with respect to the spread of error and the harm it may do to readers. Hence, in certain circumstances they may licitly hold their jobs, namely, if there are sufficiently grave reasons to render their particular type of material co-operation permissible. The proximity (in importance and influence) of their co-operation and especially the frequency with which books containing false doctrine are published are the main factors to be

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[35] Can. 1325, § 3; "Instructio S. Officii de Motione Oecumenica," *AAS*, XLII (1950), 142-47.

[36] It would not necessarily be wrong to publish a book in which false doctrine is enunciated, as long as the publisher makes it known that he is not approving of the error, for example, when it is published with a refutation, or when an erroneous statement of some individual is merely reported as a fact. We are referring to the case of a publisher whose act of publishing a book is reasonable interpreted as an approval of its contents.

considered in determining whether or not these workers may be permitted to continue their tasks. Thus, the linotyper certainly needs a graver reason to work on a book proclaiming a false religion than the man who loads the printed copies on a truck. generally speaking, if a establishment only occasionally prints a book that contains false doctrine, the workers are allowed to keep their jobs; but it is difficult to see how a Catholic could work in any capacity in a printing plant that specializes in anti-Catholic literature. Even those whose co-operation is quite remote could not be allowed to remain, except, perhaps, for a brief time, until they can get another job.[37]

Those who publish books by apostates, heretics or schismatics upholding apostasy, heresy or schism incur *ipso facto* an excommunication specially reserved to the Holy See.[38] The printer as such does not incur this censure, though he might be included under it directly, namely, as a necessary participant.[39] However, this would seem to refer only to the owner of the plant, not to the workmen. The norms laid down above would have to be applied to determine whether or not their material co-operation is justifiable.

Catholics who own bookstores may not expose to sale (*venales ne habeant*) books forbidden by the Church, either by name in the Index or by the general norms of cannon 1399. However they may retain privately forbidden books (except those that *ex professo* treat of obscene subjects) and sell them to persons whom they prudently judge may lawfully read them.[40] Thus a bookseller could keep in some secluded place books that attack Catholic doctrine and sell them to priests (or lay persons) who have received permission to read them.

Those who work as clerks in a bookstore conducted by non-Catholics are permitted to retain their jobs if the store, for the most part, carries good books, not, however, if it specializes in false or immoral books. In the former situation the clerks could sell even prohibited books to those who ask for them. The same rule can be followed by an attendant in a public library. In the words of Bishop Pernicone:

"A librarian in such public institutions is allowed to use some discretion as to the persons to whom he gives books and as to the kind of book he lends. A Catholic librarian is bound, as far as he is permitted, to use this power for the observance of the laws of God and of the Church in this matter. However, since he is a servant of

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[37] Cf. Merkelbach, *Summa theologiae moralis* (Paris, 1938) n. 767.

[38] Can. 2318, **Need symbol** 1

[39] Cf. Pernicone, *The Eccelesiastical Prohibition of Books* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1932), p. 229

[40] Can. 1404

the library, when he has used all that discretion which the library statutes permit him, he cannot be obliged further. Therefore he need not ask everyone who requests a forbidden book whether he has permission or not; if he did so, he might lose his position. Besides, it is impossible to know whether every person coming to the public library is baptized and therefore bound by the laws of the Church; it is also impossible for him to know all the publications which are forbidden.[41]

## Publication and Sale of Protestant Bibles

Particular attention must be given to the problem of the publication and sale of Protestant Bibles by Catholics. As to the publication, the matter is clear from the Code of Cannon Law. One who publishes an edition of the Sacred Scripture without ecclesiastical approbation (and certainly this applies to one who publishes a Protestant Bible) incurs *ipso facto* an excommunication *nemini reservatam*.[42] While this excommunication can be taken away by any confessor in the sacramental forum,[43] the confessor cannot absolve one from this censure unless he promises to give up the work of publishing this type Bible.

As to the sale of Protestant Bibles, Church law is more lenient. As was stated above, Catholic booksellers could keep such Bibles in stock (privately) and sell them to persons who presumably have the right to read them. Now, according to the prescriptions of the Church, those who are engaged in theological or biblical studies may use Bibles published without ecclesiastical approbation, provided they have been edited faithfully and integrally and the dogmas of Catholic faith are not impugned in their foreword or footnotes.[44] I have been informed by competent Scripture scholars that many Protestant editions of the Bible today measure up to these conditions. Hence, Catholic book dealers may sell such Bibles to persons engaged in theological or biblical studies.[45] Under this category of theologians or biblical students would come, not only priests and seminarians (in their Scripture course), but also lay persons who are seriously devoted to the theological or biblical studies, for example, the Catholic college student preparing for an examination on the Bible in his religion course.[46] It should be emphasized, however, that

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[41] Pernicone, *op. cit.*, pp 208-9

[42] Can. 2318, § 2.

[43] Can. 2253, § 1.

[44] Can. 1400

[45] However, the same Scripture experts informed me that there are some editions of the Bible that contain dangerous attacks on the faith, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses edition.

[46] Cf. Pernicone, *op. cit.*, p 195.

ordinarily the Catholic lay person will find all that he requires for his intellectual and devotional needs in the Catholic edition of the Bible with its helpful notes. Furthermore, in quoting passages from the Bible, either in speech or in writing, Catholics should use a translation approved by Catholic ecclesiastical authorities. In those places where public schools begin their classes with a reading from the Bible, the Catholic teacher should bring her own Bible to school and read it.[47]

What about the sale of Protestant Bibles to Protestants by Catholics? Catholics working for non-Catholic book dealers as salesmen, whether in a shop or by a house-to-house procedure, may certainly sell such editions as do not distort the true text and contain no attacks on Catholicism (such as the present King James edition, the Authorized Translation, the Chicago edition) to Protestants who request them. But, may a Catholic who owns a book shop keep these editions and sell them indiscriminately to non-Catholics? If the store is definitely known as a *Catholic* book store, I would answer in the negative. For, it would savor of scandal for a store professedly committed to the sale of books approved by the Church to sell indiscriminately those that are explicitly rated as forbidden books by Canon Law. However, if the establishment is a book store of more general character, though in the ownership of a Catholic, a more generous policy might be followed in regard to the editions of the Bible just described. For, it would seem, these books are not forbidden by *divine* law, since they present the inspired word without distortion or deceptive omissions. Indeed, they are good and inspiring in their message. Hence, if their sale to non-Catholics is forbidden it is only because of ecclesiastical law; and there are some authors who hold that the Church's laws on forbidden books do not bind even baptized non-Catholics.[48] At any rate, the Church law itself implies a solution to Catholic book dealers who would wish to sell Protestant Bibles to all who request them. For the Code prescribes that book dealers shall not expose for sale forbidden books *unless they have receive permission from the Holy See*, thus implying that such permission may be given.[49] Hence, I recommend that a Catholic book merchant who deems he has sufficient reason to sell Protestant editions

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[47] Cf. Connell, "The Catholic Public School Teacher," *Morals in Politics and Professions* (Westminster, Md., 1946), p. 157.

[48] E.g., Augustine, *A Commentary on Canon Law* (St. Louis, 1919) VI, 454. Most authorities do not regard this view as sufficiently probable. However, one might defend the practice suggested on the ground that it is a lesser evil for non-Catholics to have a Bible that is good in itself, even though forbidden by Church law, than not to have a Bible at all.

[49] Can. 1404

of the Bible to all who ask for them seek permission from the Holy Office to sell them indiscriminately.

## Attendance At Cremation

The law of the Church commands that the "bodies of the faithful shall be buried," and "reprobates their cremation."[50] From this it can be inferred that (apart from most extraordinary circumstances) a Catholic may not assist, even passively, at the cremation of one who was a Catholic, since his mere presence would be regarded as an approval of this forbidden method of disposing of the body. It is true, the decrees of the Church allow for a case in which funeral rights and ecclesiastical burial can be granted to one whose body is cremated, not at his own request but at the instance of other persons; but this will be allowed only when scandal can be prevented.[51] But even in such a case a Catholic must absent himself from the cremation, even though he might attend the funeral rites and the interment of the ashes. In the case of a non-Catholic a somewhat more lenient judgment must be passed on Catholics who wish to assist, because the law forbids cremation only with respect to "corpora *fidelium* defunctorum." I believe, however, that even in such an instance attendance would be wrong because it would be a source of scandal to those who cannot make fine distinctions. But there would not seem to be any objection to the presence of a Catholic at the funeral rites of such a person in a church or home, if the conditions for passive presence laid down by cannon 1258, 2, are verified.

The participation of a Catholic undertaker in a funeral that is to terminate in cremation offers a practical problem. If the deceased was a Catholic who, in defiance of the Church's prohibition, stipulated that his body was to be disposed of in this way it is difficult to see how a Catholic undertaker could lawfully take charge of the funeral. But if the deceased was a non-Catholic, a Catholic undertaker could conduct the funeral, including the delivery of the body to the crematorium. Material co-operation of a remote nature could be allowed to a Catholic working in the crematorium- for example, a clerk recording the cremations, a laboring man washing the windows and corridors- but not the proximate (or even formal) co-operation of one who is deputed to the actual task of burning the corpses.

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[50] Can. 1203, §1.

[51] *Collactanea S.C. de Prop. Fide,* n 1665; *AAS*, XVIII (1926), 282-83.

## Secretarial Work

A Catholic could serve as a secretary to a non-Catholic clergyman if her work consisted regularly in assistance of a secular nature, such as writing letters regarding the management of a hospital, making arrangements for social affairs, etc., but not if her usual work was copying sermons, making arrangements for church services, etc. In this latter case, the co-operation would be material; but it would be so proximate that it is difficult to find a reason to justify it. The case would be different if the secretary's employer were a non-Catholic business or professional man who would occasionally dictate a letter pertaining to religious activities. In such circumstances the slight co-operation thus rendered would be sufficiently balanced by her normal desire to retain a good position.

## Summer Schools and Kindergartens Under Non-Catholic Auspices

Catholic parents are sometimes invited to send their small children to vacation schools or kindergartens under non-Catholic church auspices; and often the advantages to an over-worked mother are very tempting. However, such a procedure is entirely forbidden if the children are to receive any form of non-Catholic instruction, engage in Bible-reading, or recite non-Catholic prayers. If none of these features are present, it would not be *per se* wrong for a Catholic child to attend, but even in this event it is possible that the children will be subjected to non-Catholic propaganda or the spirit of indifferentism. Hence, Catholic parents should be urged not to accept an invitation of this kind, even though the intention of those who give it are evidently most sincere and generous. Their good will does not make up for the real danger to the faith of Catholic boys and girls from attendance at such schools.

## Conclusion

Doubtless many non-Catholics would characterize as casuistical even pharisaical the distinctions and the details that have been made in this series of articles on the co-operation of Catholics in non-Catholic religious activities. But the realization should not deter the Catholic priest from making an earnest effort to acquire the requisite knowledge to guide his people aright in the many practical problems on this matter that they encounter in present-day America. Probably, too, there are some theologians who would take a different view from myself on some of the solutions I have proposed, and to this there can be no reasonable objection as long as they

safeguard the principles of Catholic theology and the declarations of the Church.

But, above all, it is important that priests keep constantly before their people the vast distinction between charity and tolerance, on the one hand, toward persons of other creeds, and compromise in religious truth on the other. To all we must show the charity of Christ, whatever may be their particular religious beliefs. Here in the United States we must be most conscientious in granting full civil equality to non-Catholics. The Catholic who would vote for a Catholic because he is a coreligionist and refuse his vote to a non-Catholic more worthy of office would thereby commit a sin. But in religious matters, when the teachings of Jesus Christ as proposed by His Church are at stake, we cannot yield even though we thereby draw down ridicule and the charge that we are bigoted and narrow. We must be willing to endure any temporal evil rather than be guilty of disloyalty to the one true faith to which God in His mercy has called us.

Francis J Connell, C.S.S.R.
*The Catholic University of America*
*Washington, D. C.*