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## ***LUMEN GENTIUM*, the 1989 PROFESSION OF FAITH, and the “AUTHENTIC MAGISTERIUM”**

**Rabbi David Rosen, wrote:**

"If '*Nostra Aetate*' and '*Lumen Gentium*' are not considered fundamental doctrines of the Church, and it is possible to question them without challenging the authority of the church, then we (and not just Jewish-Catholic relations) are in for a very rough ride ahead."  
Rabbi David Rosen, American Jewish Committee, Head of Interreligious Affairs Office

**Most Reverend Kevin John Patrick McDonald, BA, STL, STD, Archbishop of Southwark wrote:**

*Nostra Aetate* is a very short document but its implications and repercussions have been enormous. It has to be seen in the context of the overall renewal of Vatican II since it focuses and symbolises the spirit and the direction of that renewal. .... Yet *Nostra Aetate* is integral to the whole direction of conciliar teaching. Crucially it is organically linked to the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, and is very specifically related to the Declaration on Religious Liberty.

*Lumen Gentium* provided a new articulation of the Church's self-understanding, one that is in some way inclusive of other Christians, of other religions and of all people of good will. ....

*Nostra Aetate* built on these dogmatic principles of *Lumen Gentium*, and in order to implement this body of teaching, Pope Paul VI set up the body which is now called the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue. And there has been nothing token about the mandate and the responsibility given to this department. Moreover, the present Pope (John Paul II) has given this office his full support. His initiatives and his developing teaching in this area have been among the most remarkable features of this papacy. Indeed the very profile of the papacy has changed through these initiatives. Archbishop Runcie, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, said that only one Church and only one Church leader could have convened the historic gathering of religious leaders in Assisi in 1986. So the Church can be justly proud of what it has achieved over the last forty years.

Most Reverend Kevin John Patrick McDonald, BA, STL, STD, Archbishop of Southwark,  
*Nostra Aetate*: Forty Years On

*Lumen Gentium*, the Vatican II's "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church," provides the "new articulation of the Church's self-understanding," that is, *Lumen Gentium* articulated a new ecclesiology and Bishop McDonald regards this new ecclesiology as being "dogmatic." The "dogmatic principles" of *Lumen Gentium* form the first principles for the pastoral document, *Nostra Aetate*. The quotation from Rabbi Rosen indicates that he recognizes the relationship between the two documents and expects their teaching to be "considered fundamental doctrines of the Church" so that a Catholic cannot "question them without challenging the authority of the Church."

*Lumen Gentium* is the key document of Vatican II. In establishing the new ecclesiology it is the lynchpin providing the doctrinal justification, not only for *Nostra Aetate*, but for the pastoral documents on ecumenism and religious liberty. In the [Angelqueen discussion, Assisi-Contrast: Lefebvre and Benedict XVI](#), authoritative quotations supporting the subordinate relationship of the pastoral documents to *Lumen Gentium* were provided. Regarding *Lumen Gentium* in particular, the problem of "subsist" was discussed and the relationship of the *Lumen Gentium* to the 1949 Holy Office Letter and the interreligious Prayer Meeting at Assisi was demonstrated. There is another problem with *Lumen Gentium* that deserves our immediate attention. Just how is it that a modern bishop and a Jewish rabbi are able to suppose that the new ecclesiology is a "dogmatic" question that represents a doctrinal development that binds the conscience of Catholic faithful? This problem with *Lumen Gentium* also directly pertains to the current negotiations between Rome and the SSPX and will likely be included in the "Profession of Faith" that

those in the SSPX will be obligated to take to be ‘regularized’ with Rome.

The term “**authentic Magisterium**,” or, as it would be better translated, “**authorized**,” has its authoritative origin from *Lumen Gentium*.

***Lumen Gentium* wrote:**

"In matters of faith and morals the bishops speak in the name of Christ, and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent of soul. This religious submission of will and of mind must be shown in a special way to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking *ex cathedra*."

*Lumen Gentium*, ch. 3, n. 25

From *Lumen Gentium* it was incorporated by the CDF, with approval by John Paul II, in the 1989 new **Profession of Faith** as the third paragraph of three paragraphs that were added to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. The first two paragraphs are, like the rest of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, dogmas. The third paragraph, taken from *Lumen Gentium*, is not a dogma of the Catholic Church:

**Profession of Faith, 1989 wrote:**

What is more, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman pontiff or the college of bishops enunciate when they exercise the authentic Magisterium even if they proclaim those teachings in an act that is not definitive.

Profession of Faith, 1989, third of the three added paragraphs

In 1998 John Paul II, with the *Motu Proprio*, *Ad Tuendam Fidem*, amended the 1983 Code of Canon Law to cover the additional paragraphs of this Profession of Faith and made its denial a criminal offense with appropriate penalties.

**Code of Canon Law wrote:**

Can. 752 Although not an assent of faith, a religious submission of the intellect and will must be given to a doctrine which the Supreme Pontiff or the college of bishops declares concerning faith or morals when they exercise the authentic magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim it by definitive act; therefore, the Christian faithful are to take care to avoid those things which do not agree with it.

Can. 1371 The following are to be punished with a just penalty:

§2 or in can. 752 and who does not retract after having been admonished by the Apostolic See or an ordinary.

**Canon Law 752, translated with Commentary from the Canon Law Society of Great Britan and Ireland wrote:**

Canon 752, as translated from the Church’s original Latin, states: “While the assent of faith is not required, a religious submission of intellect and will is to be given to any doctrine which either the Supreme Pontiff or the College of Bishops, exercising their authentic magisterium, declare upon a matter of faith and morals, even though they do not intend to proclaim that doctrine by definitive act. Christ’s faithful are therefore to ensure that they avoid whatever does not accord with that doctrine.”

Commentary: The “religious submission of intellect and will” means a real internal assent, not a mere external adherence. The original Latin word in Canon 752 is *obsequium*, which is properly translated, “submission.”

*Lumen Gentium* # 25, confirms it: “This religious submission of mind and will must be shown

in a special way to the **authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff**, even when he is not speaking *ex cathedra*; that is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to, according to his manifest mind and will.”

At the same time of the publication of *Ad Tuendam Fidem*, the CDF issues a clarification of the three paragraphs with references. Regarding the third paragraph:

**Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, CDF wrote:**

10. The third proposition of the *Professio fidei* states: "Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act." To this paragraph belong all those teachings → on faith and morals - presented as true or at least as sure, even if they have not been defined with a solemn judgment or proposed as definitive by the ordinary and universal Magisterium. Such teachings are, however, an authentic expression of the ordinary Magisterium of the Roman Pontiff or of the College of Bishops and therefore require religious submission of will and intellect.<sup>18</sup> They are set forth in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of revelation, or to recall the conformity of a teaching with the truths of faith, or lastly to warn against ideas incompatible with these truths or against dangerous opinions that can lead to error. <sup>19</sup>

A proposition contrary to these doctrines can be qualified as erroneous or, in the case of teachings of the prudential order, as rash or dangerous and therefore "tuto doceri non potest".<sup>20</sup>

As examples of doctrines belonging to the third paragraph, one can point in general to teachings set forth by the authentic ordinary Magisterium in a non-definitive way, which require degrees of adherence differentiated according to the mind and the will manifested; this is shown especially by the nature of the documents, by the frequent repetition of the same doctrine, or by the tenor of the verbal expression.<sup>38</sup>

18. Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 25; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum Veritatis*, 23: AAS 82 (1990), 1559-1560.

19. Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum Veritatis*, 23 and 24: AAS 82 (1990), 1559-1561.

38. Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, 25; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum Veritatis*, 17, 23 and 24: AAS 82 (1990), 1557-1558, 1559-1561.

Joseph Card. Ratzinger, Prefect CDF, June 29, 1998

*Donum Veritatis*, on religious vocation of theologians, references *Lumen Gentium* and says that the “religious submission of will and intellect... cannot be simply exterior or disciplinary but must be understood within the logic of faith and under the impulse of obedience to the faith” and indicates the “indissoluble bond between the ‘sensus fidei’” and the “religious submission of the will and intellect... to the (authentic) magisterium.”

**Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, CDF, *Donum Veritatis* wrote:**

When the Magisterium, not intending to act "definitively", teaches a doctrine to aid a better understanding of Revelation and make explicit its contents, or to recall how some teaching is in conformity with the truths of faith, or finally to guard against ideas that are incompatible with these truths, the response called for is that of the religious submission of will and

intellect. (23) This kind of response cannot be simply exterior or disciplinary but must be understood within the logic of faith and under the impulse of obedience to the faith..... **Not without reason did the Second Vatican Council emphasize the indissoluble bond between the "sensus fidei" and the guidance of God's People by the (authentic) magisterium of the Pastors. These two realities cannot be separated. (Cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, n. 12.)**

(23) Cf. Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, n. 25; Code of Canon Law, can. 752.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, CDF, *Donum Veritatis*, May 1990

The problem with this new formulation, aside from the fact that the third paragraph is the only part of this **Profession of Faith** that is not a dogma, and aside from the fact that those who have given us this **'article of faith'** never submitted their 'minds and wills' to the condemnations of liberalism and modernism, is that there is no distinction made between the authority of different acts of the **"authentic magisterium"** other than those that are not ex cathedra.

Cardinal Ratzinger said regarding Vatican II:

**Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote:**

"The truth is that this particular Council defined no dogma at all, and deliberately chose to remain on a modest level, as a merely pastoral council; and yet many treat it as though it had made itself into a sort of 'superdogma' which takes away the importance of all the rest."

Cardinal Ratzinger, addressing the bishops of Chili, 1988

*Lumen Gentium* has not **"made itself into a 'superdogma.'"** That is being orchestrated by Rome in the new Profession of Faith. A traditional chapel in Pennsylvania was accused by their local ordinary of **"heresy"** and **"schism."** In a letter from the judicial vicar of the diocese at the direction of the bishop, the vicar said, **"The action of choosing or rejecting doctrine by personal preference ...is dissent from the authentic Magisterium."** His accusation of **"heresy"** and **"schism"** was based upon **"dissent from the authentic Magisterium."** Is Rome soon to level the same charges against traditional Catholics who do not conform to the modernist agenda?

**The "authentic (or authorized) magisterium" refers only to the person who occupies the Church office to which the Magisterium is attached.** The word magisterium is used equivocally and it is important to distinguish the different senses. The Church was founded by Jesus Christ as a visible society. St. Pius X in *Pascendi* says **"every society needs a directing authority to guide its members toward the common end, to foster prudently the elements of cohesion, which in a religious society are doctrine and worship; hence, the triple authority in the Catholic Church, disciplinary, dogmatic and liturgical"** (emphasis his).

**Thus the Church has been endowed by its creator with three attributes: authority, infallibility, and indefectibility.** Attributes are qualities a thing must possess to be what it is. Infallibility, the power to teach without error, like the other attributes, belongs primarily to the Church and only secondarily to those persons who occupy the offices in the Church to which the Magisterium is attached. The Magisterium is the teaching authority of the Church. Jesus said, **"He that heareth you, heareth me"** (Lk. 10, 16). The Magisterium is always infallible and cannot be otherwise because it is Jesus Christ, 'truth itself', who is speaking. In this sense the word Magisterium should always be written with a capital letter. The Magisterium can be engaged infallibly in the **extraordinary form** when the Pope speaks ex cathedra or approves the dogmatic teaching of an ecumenical council. It can also be engaged infallibly in the **ordinary and universal form**. The Magisterium can also be engaged when the Pope teaches, without the **possibility of error, definitive doctrines on faith and morals to the universal Church that are necessarily related to dogmas.**

When those who occupy the offices of the Magisterium teach by virtue of the grace of their person, that is, the grace of state, and do not engage the Magisterium of the Church, they are said to be teaching by the “**ordinary magisterium**,” or as it is sometimes called, the “**ordinary authentic magisterium**” or the “**ordinary papal magisterium**.” In this sense, the word “magisterium” should be written with a very small “m” because the teaching is based upon his personal authority and his grace of state. And, in this case, there is no question of infallibility. **Every act of the Pope is an act of the "authentic magisterium" but not every act of the “authentic magisterium” is a Magisterial act. Vatican II was an act of the “authentic magisterium” but it was not a Magisterial act, because, as Cardinal Ratzinger said, “this particular Council defined no dogma at all, and deliberately chose to remain on a modest level, as a merely pastoral council.”**

Fr. Joseph Fenton attributes the term “**authentic (or authorized) magisterium**” to the theological writings of the esteemed Fr. Joachim Salaverri who said:

**Fr. Joachim Salaverri wrote:**

**“An internal and religious assent of the mind is due to the doctrinal decrees of the Holy See which have been authentically approved by the Roman Pontiff.”** Fr. Joachim Salaverri, of the Jesuit faculty of theology in the Pontifical Institute of Comillas in Spain, quote taken from article by Fr. Joseph C. Fenton, Infallibility in the Encyclicals, AER, 1953

**Papal Magisterium that is mere authenticum, that is, only "authentic" or "authorized" as regards the person himself, not as regards his infallibility.** (no.659ff). Fr. Joachim Salaverri, Sacrae Theologiae Summa (vol. I, 5th ed., Madrid, B.A.C.)

N.B.: Fr. Fenton considered Fr. Salaverri and Louis Cardinal Billot, S. J. the foremost theologians of their time.

Fr. Fenton said regarding the authentic magisterium:

**Fr. Joseph Fenton wrote:**

The fact of the matter is that every doctrine taught by the Holy Father in his capacity as the Vicar of Christ must, by the very constitution of the Church militant of the New Testament, be accepted by the faithful for what it is. If it is an infallible declaration, it is to be accepted with an absolutely firm and irrevocable assent. **If it is a non-infallible statement, it must be accepted with a firm but conditional mental assent.**  
Fr. Joseph C. Fenton, Infallibility in the Encyclicals, AER, 1953

Other theologians before Vatican II were in agreement with Fr. Fenton.

**Fr. Nicolas Jung wrote:**

**"This is why we owe the "authentic" Magisterium not a blind and unconditional assent but a prudent and conditional one:** Since not everything taught by the Ordinary Magisterium is infallible, we must ask what kind of assent we should give to its various decisions. The Christian is required to give the assent of faith to all the doctrinal and moral truths defined by the Church's Magisterium. He is not required to give the same assent to teaching imparted by the sovereign pontiff that is not imposed on the whole Christian body as a dogma of faith. In this case it suffices to give that inner and religious assent which we give to legitimate ecclesiastical authority. **This is not an absolute assent, because such decrees are not infallible, but only a prudential and conditional assent, since in questions of faith and morals there is a presumption in favor of one's superior....**Such prudential assent does not eliminate the possibility of submitting the doctrine to a further examination, if that seems



required by the gravity of the question.  
Nicolas Jung, *Le Magistère de L'Église*, 1935, pp.153,154

**Dom Paul Nau wrote:**

"If we are not to be drawn into error, we urgently need to remember that **the assent due to the non-infallible Magisterium is... that of inward assent, not as of faith, but as of prudence**, the refusal of which could not escape the mark of temerity, unless the doctrine rejected was an actual novelty or involved a manifest discordance between the pontifical affirmation and the doctrine which had hitherto been taught."  
Dom Paul Nau, *Pope or Church?*, p.29, 1956

Acts of the “**authentic magisterium**” that once called for, “**a firm but conditional mental assent,**” “**only a prudential and conditional assent,**” an “**inward assent, not as of faith, but as of prudence,**” have been changed by the new **Profession of Faith** into an internal “**submission of the mind and will.**”

Vatican I teaches:

**Vatican Council I, On Faith wrote:**

“Since human beings are totally dependent on God as their creator and lord, and created reason is completely subject to uncreated truth, we are obliged to yield to God the revealer full submission of intellect and will by faith. This faith, which is the beginning of human salvation, the catholic church professes to be a supernatural virtue, by means of which, with the grace of God inspiring and assisting us, we believe to be true what He has revealed, not because we perceive its intrinsic truth by the natural light of reason, but because of the authority of God himself, who makes the revelation and can neither deceive nor be deceived.”  
Vatican I, *On Faith*, chap. 3

*Lumen Gentium* equates the “**religious submission of will and mind**” as the “**religious assent of soul.**” The “**will and mind**” are the spiritual powers of the soul. An act of the virtue of faith is the submission of the “**intellect and will**” to God on the “**authority of God**” because “**created reason is completely subject to uncreated truth.**” Recall that an act of Faith is grounded in the will because the truths of our Faith are not evident to the intellect. The **1989 Profession of Faith** calls for a “**religious submission of will and intellect**” to the Pope, not by virtue of the infallibility of the Church, but only to his personal authority without any necessary qualification, without any appeal to revealed truth. Since there is no certain claim to truth, the Magisterium of the Church, the power of its attribute of infallibility, is not employed. What is employed is the attribute of authority. But, authority, even the authority of the Church exercised by the Pope, is concerned with commands, injunctions, laws, precepts, etc. These are only accidentally related to truth and they are **always conditional**. It is an abuse of authority to command that the internal forum in a **Profession of Faith** submit the mind and will unconditionally to anyone but God. If the Pope wants to bind the mind and the will in the internal forum without qualification, he must employ the Magisterium of “**the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth**” (1 Tim 3, 15), that is attached to his office. He cannot do so by relying upon his grace of state.

What has been constructed is a Profession of Faith with canonical censors to punish Catholics for disobedience to authority under the appearance of disloyalty to the faith.

Where is this leading? Pope Benedict XVI said in September 2011 to the Muslims in Germany:

**Pope Benedict XVI wrote:**

“The Catholic Church firmly advocates that due recognition be given to the public dimension of religious adherence. In an overwhelmingly pluralist society, this demand is not unimportant. Care must be taken to guarantee that others are always treated with respect. Mutual respect grows only on the basis of agreement on certain inalienable values that are proper to human nature, in particular the inviolable dignity of every single person. Such agreement does not limit the expression of individual religions; on the contrary, it allows each person to bear witness explicitly to what he believes, not avoiding comparison with others.”  
Pope Benedict XVI to the Muslims

**Rights are derived from duties. God has imposed no duty to worship false gods.** So how is it that the “Catholic Church firmly advocates” and “demands” that “due recognition be given to the public dimension of religious adherence” to false gods? How does it follow that treating one “with respect... allows each person to bear witness explicitly to what he believes”? **Pope Benedict is appealing to pastoral decrees of Vatican II.** *Unitatis Redintegratio*, the decree on Ecumenism, *Nostra Aetate*, the declaration in the Church’s relations with non-Christian religions and *Dignitatis Humanae*, on Religious Liberty, are pastoral documents that are predicated upon *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution on the Church, which is the authoritative source for the new ecclesiology. In this quote, Pope Benedict affirms that the “Catholic Church... demands” our compliance with these documents.

This “demand” is imposed by the “**authentic magisterium**” of the Church to which they “demand” internal “**submission of the mind and will,**” that is, the will must conform and submit the mind to “truths” that are not self-evident. As Cardinal Ratzinger said in *Donum Veritatis*, while referencing *Lumen Gentium*, this “**religious submission of will and intellect... cannot be simply exterior or disciplinary but must be understood within the logic of faith and under the impulse of obedience to the faith.**” That is, the “demand” is imposed by an appeal to truth and not to (his personal) authority.

This, in my opinion, is nothing but one big dishonest sham.

Br. Joseph, O.P.

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