

In its declaration *Dignitatis humanae*, the Second Vatican Council set forth in dramatic terms new Catholic teachings on the subject of religious liberty. It is uncontested that this declaration was a dramatic change in the history of Church teachings on this subject. The question is whether the teachings of *Dignitatis humanae* were a development of doctrine, or whether the teachings set forth in *Dignitatis humanae* were a break from previous teachings and a contradiction of them. The declaration itself states in article 1 that its teachings are a part of “the treasures out of which the Church continuously brings new that that are in harmony with the things that are old.” Article 1 then concludes that the declaration “leaves untouched traditional Catholic doctrine on the moral duty of men and societies toward the true religion and toward the one Church of Christ.”¹ On the other hand, both during and after the Council, some bishops and theologians argued that its principles do contradict the traditional Church teachings.²

Based largely on the writings of Fr. John Courtney Murray, this paper will outline some arguments that the teachings of *Dignitatis humanae* are consistent with the prior Church teachings on religious liberty and the role of government with reference to the Church. In four parts it will: (1) outline the overall principles of *Dignitatis humanae* with regard to religious liberty; (2) describe some prior papal statements that would seem to contrast with these teachings; (3) outline some arguments that Fr. Murray made before and during the Council defending most of what would be the conclusions in this declaration; and (4) point out some additions from the Council that brought Fr. Murray’s arguments more to completion.

I. The Overall Doctrine of *Dignitatis Humanae*

Dignitatis humanae begins by describing two balancing points in response to the “demand [that] is increasingly made that men should act on their own judgment, enjoying and

making use of a responsible freedom, not driven by coercion but motivated by a sense of duties.” On the one hand it restates the clear teaching that “the one true religion subsists in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus committed the duty of spreading it among all men.” It describes the universal duty “to seek the truth, especially what concerns God and His Church, and to embrace the truth they come to know, and to hold fast to it.” On the other hand, the declaration affirms that “the truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth.”³ Thus, “the human person has the right to religious freedom” which “has its foundation in the every dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.” It then states that this religious freedom should be recognized by civil law.⁴

In describing what this religious freedom involves, the declaration focuses on four overall points. First, there is the “immunity from external coercion as well as psychological freedom,” an immunity that exists even for those who do not really seek the truth.⁵ Thus, the declaration declares that no one should be “forced to act in a manner contrary to his conscience” nor “is he to be restrained from acting in accord with his conscience, especially in matters religious.” And so the government should not “command or inhibit acts that are religious.”⁶

Second, religious communities should be able to “govern themselves according to their own norms, honor the Supreme Being in public worship, assist their ministers in the practice of the religious life, strengthen by instruction, and promote institutions in which they may join together.” Because religious communities are naturally involved in societal activities, these rights include the right “to establish educational, cultural, charitable and social organizations.”⁷

Third, there is the right of families to live out their faith. In particular, the declaration focused on the ability of parents to raise their own children with religious education and to send their

children to schools that support their values and that includes religious education if the parents so choose. The declaration added that children should not be required “to attend lessons or instructions which are not in agreement with their religious beliefs.”⁸

Fourth, the government and society as a whole have an affirmative duty to protect religious freedom; and this protection in fact “ranks among the essential duties of government.” Governments should go further, however and “help create conditions favorable to the fostering of religious life.” The Council recognized that “in view of particular circumstances obtaining among peoples, special civil recognition [may be] given to one religious community in the constitutional order of society.”⁹ But that situation is presented as the exception. And, even then, the government is to ensure equality before the law for all people, regardless of faith.

The declaration also recognized limitations on these rights both in the moral and civil sphere. Thus article 7 affirms that, in the exercise of religious and other freedoms, people are bound by the moral law to respect the rights of others and the common welfare, especially by acting with justice and civility. And it affirmed the right of society to have non-sectarian norms for the safeguarding of rights, the settlement of conflicts, and the maintenance of peace, justice, and public morality. But article 7 then stated that such norms should not curtail religious liberty any more than necessary.¹⁰ Chapter 1 of the declaration then concluded in article 8 with the hope that, with good education, all people would become “true lovers of freedom,” which it defined as those who: (1) decide matters with their own judgment and the light of truth; (2) act with a sense of responsibility; (3) strive for what is true and right; and (4) join with others in cooperation.¹¹ Chapter II reiterated the importance of religious liberty, emphasizing the example of Jesus Christ and the early Church. In that context, the declaration argued that the Church has a unique claim on liberty, but that that claim is in harmony with the claim of religious freedom for all people.¹²

II. Teachings Prior to *Dignitatis Humanae*

It would appear at first sight that much of this call for universal religious liberty and the recognition that governments need not favor the Catholic Church stand in sharp contrast to prior Church teachings. It should be noted that, well before the Second Vatican Council, the Church taught that people should not be forced to convert to the Catholic faith. Thus, canon 1351 of the 1917 Code provided that “No one unwilling is to be coerced into embracing the Catholic faith.”¹³ The sources for that canon go back to Gratian’s Decretals, which in turn cite letters from Popes Leo the Great and Gregory the Great to the effect that kind persuasion, rather than harshness, is the way to bring people into the faith.¹⁴ Likewise, another source is a decree of Pope Innocent III, recorded in the *Liber Sextus*, to the effect that no one can be baptized unwillingly.¹⁵ Another of the sources is Leo XIII’s 1885 encyclical letter *Immortale Dei*, which affirms that “no one shall be forced to embrace the Catholic faith against his will.”¹⁶

However, that same encyclical and other papal statements had indicated both that there is no natural right to religious liberty for those in error and that the civil government should give preference to the Catholic Church.¹⁷ Thus, for example, in his 1832 encyclical *Mirari Vos*, Pope Gregory XVI condemned “that absurd and erroneous proposition which claims that liberty of conscience must be maintained for everyone.”¹⁸ The encyclical went on to support the suppression of dangerous books and to say, “Nor can We predict happier times for religion and government from the plans of those who desire vehemently to separate the Church from the state.”¹⁹ In his encyclical letter *Quanta Cura*, Pope Pius IX reiterated these conclusions and condemned the proposition that civil powers have “no duty . . . of restraining by enacted penalties, offenders against the Catholic religion, except so far as public peace may require.”²⁰ Connected to *Quanta Cura* was his Syllabus of Errors, which included condemnations of the

statements: “Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, guided by the light of reason, he shall consider true” and “The state ought to be separated from the Church and the Church from the state.”²¹

In his encyclical letters *Immortale Dei* (1885) and *Libertas* (1888), Pope Leo XIII reaffirmed these teachings and provided some additional reasoning for them. In *Immortale Dei*, he pointed out that the power of the government comes from God Himself, although there are many different ways in which a country can legitimately select such a government.²² He then argued that, because God commands governments to guide people to what is best, and because the chief duty of each person is to worship and obey God, the government should act to support the true worship of God. Because the Catholic faith is the right way to worship and obey God, the government should specifically support the Catholic faith.²³ Pope Leo XIII certainly recognized that the power of the government and the power of the Church are distinct, with the government acting for well-being in this life, and the Church for everlasting life. But he argued that, because both types of goodness are from the same God, the two powers should act in concord with each other.²⁴ He warned that, if the state considered itself to be independent of the Catholic faith, there would be two contradictory duties, one guided by the Gospel values, and the other “by the delusive caprices and opinion of the mass of the people.”²⁵ He thus recalled favorably the medieval system of a union between the Church and state, saying that it had led to the civilization of nations. And he thus lamented the development in recent centuries of a secular vision for government that asserts, among other things, that

[E]ach is free to think on every subject just as he may choose; . . . government is nothing more nor less than the will of the people. . . . [The State] believes that it is not obliged to make public profession of any religion; or to inquire which of the many religions is the only one true; or to prefer one religion to all the rest; or to show any form of religion special favor; but, on the contrary, is bound to grant equal rights to every creed.²⁶

Pope Leo XIII concluded that, when such views become the organizing principle of government, then the ability of the Catholic Church either to guide society, or even to manage her own affairs would be subject to the control of a secular and even hostile state, as had been the experience with the secular governments of his time.²⁷ He also said that, while a democratic method of choosing government may be legitimate, if one adds to it the division between church and state, one could come to the conclusion that nothing other than the will of the people should guide government without any reference to the laws of God.²⁸

Pope Leo XIII likewise condemned the proposition that there should be a “liberty of thinking, and of publishing whatsoever each one likes.” For he argued that the Church, for the salvation of souls, must be able to forbid the publishing of ideas that lead people astray. If the government does not likewise join in that effort, the Church cannot effectively do so.²⁹ For he argued that “the liberty which begets a contempt of the most sacred laws of God, is not liberty so much as license, and is most correctly styled by St. Augustine the ‘liberty of self ruin.’”³⁰ Precisely in preventing errors the Church promotes the development of rightful knowledge then in turn supports the “honorable liberty, alone worthy of human beings.”³¹

Pope Leo XIII understood that, in many cases, the only alternatives were a neutral government and a government that imposes false philosophies or faiths; and in such cases, neutrality may be the best feasible alternative. But he insisted that such a neutral government, while preferable to tyranny, is not the right model.³² He also recognized that, to keep the peace and other public goods, non-Catholic religions may have their place. But he insisted that the Catholic Church should be preferred as the defender of true liberty.³³ Building upon these teachings, Pope Leo XIII presented in his 1888 encyclical letter *Libertas* the three alternatives: (1) a government that ignores the law of God, relying at best upon its own reason; (2) a

government that is based upon the principles of a non-Catholic religion; or (3) a government that is based upon the principles of the Catholic faith. The first type of government will fail because reason alone cannot comprehend or adhere to the fullness of truth and goodness. As between the latter two alternatives, the favor of the Catholic faith must assuredly be preferred.³⁴ Once again he affirmed that, for the sake of preserving greater goods, the government may tolerate false views. But he added that, “the more a State is driven to tolerate evil, the further is it from perfection.”³⁵ He thus presented the toleration of errors in religion as perhaps a necessary evil for the sake of the greater good, but not as a matter of natural right.

III. Arguments of Fr. John Courtney Murray

Both before and during the Second Vatican Council, Fr. John Courtney Murray proposed a new approach to religious liberty and church state relations that was more consistent with the American experience. Although Fr. Murray insisted that his views were consistent with Church teachings, in 1954 the Jesuit order, at the urging of the Holy Office, instructed Fr. Murray to cease writing about religious freedom and ecumenism. However, starting in 1963, he was the peritus for Cardinal Francis Spellman at the Second Vatican Council. And in that role, he was very influential in the drafting of *Dignitatis humanae*, although there were some additions that will be described in part IV of this essay.³⁶

Overall, Fr. Murray distinguished between what he considered to be the core of the teachings of Popes Gregory XVI, Pius IX, and especially Leo XIII, and the aspects of their claims that were more specific to the crises that they faced.³⁷ He said that, the core of their teachings is that society, including the state, should be imbued with Catholic values and that civil powers should be governed by the law of God, which the Catholic Church can declare.³⁸ In such

an ideal society, the government would naturally reflect the values of the Catholic culture; there would be no need to impose the religion.³⁹ He also considered central to their teachings the view that societies and governments are willed by God and under His law, which the Church enunciates.⁴⁰ And the Church, being willed by God, has a claim above all other institutions.⁴¹

He then argued that, when the Popes, especially Leo XIII, condemned the separation of church and state, they were opposing what he called “sectarian Liberalism,” a view that guided such movements as the Enlightenment era social contract theory and the French Revolution. As he described it, sectarian Liberalism thought of the government as independent of the law of God, or at least of any revealed law, and subject only to the reason of the rulers, whether they be a monarch or the people at large. Such a view leaves government unlimited power and a focus focused only on what satisfies those in power, not what is good in itself.⁴² In addition, such a view presents the Church as merely one among other institutions whose rights come from the will of the government, and thus is subject to it. Such a view must rightfully be opposed.⁴³

But he said that there is a different sort of separation of church and state that recognizes the natural law ordained by God and discernable by reason, a law that restrains the government and respects the rights of people and religions.⁴⁴ In his book *We Hold These Truths*, Fr. Murray presented the American experiment as one that exemplified this ability.⁴⁵ He recognized that the Popes had argued for official recognition of the Catholic faith as the state religion; and Pope Leo XIII has said in his encyclical *Longinqua* that this American system cannot be considered the model for everywhere. Fr. Murray certainly agreed that it is unwise simply to take the American model, or any specific country’s model, and apply it everywhere.⁴⁶ Rather, Fr. Murray argued, Pope Leo XIII himself recognized that the specific situation of each time and each country should guide how it is that Catholic values, and the law of God generally, guide a society.⁴⁷

In support of this proposition, Fr. Murray cited a 1953 speech by Pope Pius XII entitled *Ci Riesce*, in which he said: (1) each country must decide based upon its own situation what errors in religion to tolerate; and (2) in the modern world, with its many interactions between nations, more tolerance is often required.⁴⁸ Based upon these new conditions, he argued that, in the modern pluralistic world in which people were calling for self-determination, favoring one religion over another usually leads to more problems than benefits. Rather, he said, the faith should imbue society of its own accord. As he pointed out, government should reflect society, not dominate it.⁴⁹ And thus, trying to force a faith on society through the government invites the government to be involved in matters beyond its competence and rightful authority.⁵⁰

Regarding the respect for other faiths, Fr. Murray argued that, in a pluralistic society, respect for all of the faiths is the only way to keep the peace, and is thus universally the best policy even for the sake of sincere Catholicism.⁵¹ During the Second Vatican Council, he went further and said that the modern world's call for more human freedom and dignity is the soundest basis for respect for the religious liberty of all people. Thus, he said that tolerance of other faiths is not based only upon a reluctant conclusion that suppressing them is impracticable. Rather, he argued that such tolerance reflects a respect for the freedom of the human person that the modern world rightly calls for.⁵² Thus, he argued that this religious freedom is not an assertion that error has rights, but rather an assertion that each person should be free to practice their faith.

IV. Two Additions to the Thought of Fr. Murray

Although Fr. Murray's views largely prevailed at the Second Vatican Council, there are two additional and related points that the Council made to complete the defense and explanation of the right of religious liberty. In particular, Fr. Murray tended to present religious liberty as

basically a matter of maintaining peace and freedom and avoiding excessive government, distinct from the freedom offered by the Gospel.⁵³ However, as then Archbishop Karol Wojtyla argued in his interventions regarding the declaration and later writings as Pope John Paul II, we should value freedom of religion primarily in terms of what it is for, namely the seeking of truth and goodness.⁵⁴ For, as Pope Leo XIII taught, truth is condition of the real liberty of individuals and of societies.⁵⁵ As they both point out, it is that a person is first free and then understands the truth; rather knowing the truth about God and ourselves, both by reason and revelation, is necessary to live a truly free life. And thus, after affirming the respect for human freedom in general, *Dignitatis humanae* describes the obligation to seek the truth and adhere to it.

In the context of the grounding of freedom of religion in the pursuit of truth, it also becomes apparent why the Council moved from a mere tolerance of other religions to an affirmation of the goodness of freedom even for non-Catholics. In its decree *Unitatis redintegratio* and declaration *Nostra Aetate*, the Council recognized that, while they are burdened with some errors, these non-Catholic faiths, do have much truth in them.⁵⁶ Likewise, the dogmatic constitution recognized that non-Catholics are related to the Church in a number of ways.⁵⁷ Thus, while the erroneous aspects may be the subject of mere tolerance, their positive and true aspects are the positive foundation for their liberty and that of their members. Along similar lines, because they contain much that is true, they can and should rightfully be the subject of government support along with the Catholic faith. With this recognition, the Church can at the same time: (1) claim a unique freedom for herself because she is “by the will of God, the teacher of the truth;”⁵⁸ and also (2) see a positive value in the freedom of other faiths. She thus maintains the connection between truth and freedom reflected in the words of Jesus, “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”⁵⁹

¹ Second Vatican Council, declaration *Dignitatis humanae* 1, December 7, 1965: AAS 58 (1966) 929-930; for this and other citations of the Vatican II Council, this paper will use the English translation in *The Documents of Vatican II: Vatican Translation*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana (Staten Island: St. Paul's, 2009).

² Thomas Guarino, *The Disputed Teachings of Vatican II* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018) 181-182, 184-197 (presenting both views and arguing that the teachings of *Dignitatis humanae* were a reversal of immediately prior teachings, but not a fundamental change in doctrine.)

³ DH 1, 930; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 391-392.

⁴ DH 2, 930-931; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 392-393.

⁵ DH 2, 931; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 393.

⁶ DH 3, 931-932; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 393-394.

⁷ DH 4, 932-939; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 394.

⁸ DH 5, 933; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 393-395. It is noteworthy that historically the Church has presented her teachings on Church-state relations in the context of describing both herself and the government as “societatis perfectae,” with both of them having their dignity and role, but the Church having the higher goal. See Kurt Martens, “Dignitatis Humanae: A Hermeneutical Perspective on Religious Freedom as Interpreted by the Roman Catholic Church” in *Hermeneutics, Scriptural Politics, and Human Rights: Between Text and Context*, ed. by Bas Fortman, Kurt Martens and M.S. Salih (New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2009) 147-148. Here the Second Vatican Council also present the family as a “society in its own right,” thus perhaps elevating the family to the same rank.

⁹ DH 6, 933-934; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 395-396.

¹⁰ DH 7, 934-935; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 396.

¹¹ DH 8, 935; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 396.

¹² DH 13, 939-940; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 400.

¹³ *Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi iussu digestus Benedicti Papae XV auctoritate promulgatus* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis 1917) canon 1351: *Ad amplectendam fidem catholicam nemo invitus cogatur.*

¹⁴ 3, 6, D. XIV.

¹⁵ X, XLII, c. 3.

¹⁶ Leo XIII, encyclical letter *Immortale Dei* (1885) 39, at https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_01111885_immortale-dei.html.

¹⁷ See Guarino, 184-188 (listing several of these teachings.)

¹⁸ Gregory XVI, encyclical letter *Mirari Vos* 14, at <https://www.vatican.va/content/gregorius-xvi/it/documents/encyclica-mirari-vos-15-augusti-1832.html>.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 20.

²⁰ Pius IX, encyclical letter, *Quanta Cura* (1864) 3, at <https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-ix/la/documents/encyclica-quanta-cura-8-decembris-1864.html>.

²¹ Pius IX, *Syllabus Complectens Praecipuis nostrae aetatis errores* (1864) §III, statement 15, § VI, statement 55, at <https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-ix/it/documents/encyclica-quanta-cura-8-decembris-1864.html>.

²² *Immortale Dei* 3-4.

²³ *Ibid.* 6-7.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 13-16.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 18-19.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 25-26.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 27-29.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 31, 35.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 33-34.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 37.

³¹ *Ibid.* 38, 39.

³² *Ibid.* 42.

³³ *Ibid.* 36. In *Longinqua*, an encyclical letter sent to the archbishops and bishops of the United States, Pope Leo XIII did grant that the American system of allowing full religious liberty and state neutrality among religions had allowed the Catholic faith to flourish in a mostly non-Catholic land. However, he said that this arrangement should not be considered the model for other countries and in fact said that the Church would have flourished more in the United States

if she had “enjoyed the favor of the laws and the patronage of the public authority.” Leo XIII, encyclical letter *Longinqua* (1895) 6, at https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_06011895_longinqua.html. Fr. Joseph Fenton expressed the general view that this letter expressed a magisterial teaching that: (1) the state should specifically support the Church; and (2) the situation in America is thus flawed, albeit the least flawed among the likely alternatives. Joseph Fenton, “Principles Underlying Traditional Church-State Doctrine,” *American Ecclesiastical Review* 126 (June 1952) 452-462.

³⁴ Leo XIII *Libertas* (1888) 19-21, at https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_20061888_libertas.html.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 33.

³⁶ Robert Nugent, *Silence Speaks: Teilhard de Chardin, Yves Congar, John Courtney Murray and Thomas Merton* (New York: Paulist Press 2011) 54-70 (describing these events.)

³⁷ Thomas Ferguson, *The Political Theology of John Courtney Murray* 38-39 (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1993).

³⁸ John Courtney Murray, “Leo XIII and Pius XII: Government and the Order of Religion” in *Religious Liberty* 49, 56-57; Ferguson, 24-28. Fr. Murray wrote 68 works on the topic of religious liberty. J. Leon Hooper, “Introduction” in *Religious Liberty: Catholic Struggles With Pluralism*, ed. by J. Leon Hooper (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Know Press, 1993) 27 (hereafter *Religious Liberty*.) This paper will especially cite two of Fr. John Courtney Murray’s articles, “Leo XIII and Pius II: Government and the Order of Religion” (1955) and “The Problem of Religious Freedom” (1964), as well as his 1960 *Book We Hold These Truths* (1960) to illustrate his views. See John Courtney Murray, “The Problem of Religious Liberty” in *Religious Liberty* 127 – 197; John Courtney Murray, *We Hold These Truths* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1960).

³⁹ Murray, “Government and the Order of Religion,” 61-62.

⁴⁰ Murray, “Government and the Order of Religion,” 70-71.

⁴¹ Murray, “Government and the Order of Religion,” 67-73.

⁴² Murray, “Government and the Order of Religion,” 52, 62-64, 92-93; Murray, “The Problem of Religious Freedom,” 158-160; Ferguson, 37-39.

⁴³ Murray, “Government and the Order of Religion” 70-72; Murray, “The Problem of Religious Freedom,” 163-164; Ferguson, 31-34.

⁴⁴ Murray, “Government and the Order of Religion,” 89; Ferguson, 59-62.

⁴⁵ Murray, *We Hold These Truths*, 44-53, 81-85.

⁴⁶ Murray, "Government and the Order of Religion," 87-88; Ferguson, 119-120.

⁴⁷ Murray, "Government and the Order of Religion," 79-83; Ferguson, 63-65.

⁴⁸ Murray, "Government and the Order of Religion," 102-103; Ferguson, 65-66. In his speech *Ci Riesce*, given to the National Convention of Italian Jurists, Pope Pius XII addressed the issue of whether Catholic countries rightfully enter into international treaties that mandated a respect for religious toleration. He argued that the specific facts of each situation must resolve the question, and that, as God tolerates error, but never approves of it, so governments can legitimately do the same. Pius XII, "Ci Riesce: A Discourse to the National Convention of Italian Jurists," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 130 (February 1954) 129-138.

⁴⁹ Murray, "Government and the Order of Religion," 104-110; Ferguson, 28-30.

⁵⁰ Murray, "The Problem of Religious Freedom," 144-146

⁵¹ Murray, "Government and the Order of Religion," 98-100.

⁵² Murray, "The Problem of Religious Freedom," 137-140; Ferguson, 76-80

⁵³ Murray, "The Problem of Religious Liberty," 50; David Schindler, *An Interpretation of Dignitatis Humanae* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmann Publishing Company, 2015) 43-48.

⁵⁴ Schindler, 48-52.

⁵⁵ *Libertas* 5-11. Pope John Paul II would develop this theme, among other places, in his encyclical letter *Veritatis splendor*. John Paul II encyclical *Veritatis splendor* 17-18, AAS 85 (1993) 1133, 1147-48.

⁵⁶ Second Vatican Council decree *Unitatis redintegratio* 3, November 21, 1964: AAS 57 (1965) 90, 92-94 ; Second Vatican Council declaration *Nostra aetate*, October 28, 1965: AAS 58 (1966) 740-744. In fact the statements on religious liberty were initially a part of the decree on ecumenism. And likewise, the declaration *Nostra Aetate* is connected to the *Dignitatis humanae*, for it ends with a condemnation of discrimination based upon race, color, class or religion. See Martens, 153-154.

⁵⁷ Second Vatican Council, dogmatic constitution *Lumen gentium* 15-16, November 21, 1964: AAS 57 (1965) 5, 19-20.

⁵⁸ DH 13-14, 939-941; *The Documents of Vatican II*, 400-401.

⁵⁹ John 8:32.