

followed from holy scripture. Consequently, all must take care, lest in catechizing or in preaching the word of God, they teach anything which is not in accord with the truth of the Gospel message or the spirit of Christ.

Indeed, the church reproves every form of persecution against whomsoever it may be directed. Remembering, then, its common heritage with the Jews and moved not by any political consideration, but solely by the religious motivation of Christian charity, it deplores all hatreds, persecutions, displays of anti-semitism directed against the Jews at any time or from any source. The church always held and continues to hold that Christ out of infinite love freely underwent suffering and death because of the sins of all, so that all might attain salvation. It is the duty of the church, therefore, in its preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's universal love and the source of all grace.

5. We cannot truly pray to God the Father of all if we treat any people as other than sisters and brothers, for all are created in God's image. People's relation to God the Father and their relation to other women and men are so dependent on each other that the Scripture says "they who do not love, do not know God" (1 Jn 4:8). There is no basis therefore, either in theory or in practice for any discrimination between individual and individual, or between people and people arising either from human dignity or from the rights which flow from it.

Therefore, the church reproves, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination against people or any harassment of them on the basis of their race, color, condition in life or religion. Accordingly, following the footsteps of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, the sacred council earnestly begs the Christian faithful to "conduct themselves well among the Gentiles" (1 Pet 2:12) and if possible, as far as depends on them, to be at peace with all people (see Rom 12:18) and in that way to be true daughters and sons of the Father who is in heaven (see Mt 5:45).

Notes

I. See St Gregory VII, Letter 21 to Anzir (Nacir), King of a. Mauretania: PL 148, col. 450 ff.

II. See Rom 11:28-29; see Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*.

* As found in Austin Flannery, O.P., ed., *Vatican Council II: Constitutions Decrees, Declarations*. A Completely Revised Translation in Inclusive Language (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1996).