

In the Margins of Ecumenism<sup>1</sup>  
Gabriel Marcel

I have no qualifications, either from the historical or the properly theological point of view, to give an appreciation of the considerable work that Father Congar has devoted to the problem of ecumenism under the title *Disunified Christians: Principles of a Catholic Ecumenism*, and I will be careful, in the pages that follow, not to venture out onto terrains that are in no way my own, leaving it to more qualified people to formulate the commentaries or reservations that appear to them from either of those points of view. I only propose here a few remarks of a philosophical sort to make the author's position more easily accessible.

Father Congar begins by providing a succinct inventory of major dissidences that have been produced at the heart of Christianity from its beginning. He notes forcefully that the duration of our separations has become like "a heavy stone rolled to the door of the tomb where disagreements have locked unity away." I am, for my part, deeply grateful to him for having insisted, in passing, on two points.

First, contrary to tendentious or grossly superficial interpretations, he notes that "The Reformation was, in a particular set of conditions, against one part of these conditions, and with the complicity of the rest, an essentially religious movement, an attempt at renovating the religious life at its sources," that, in the beginning, it was about

rediscovering, beyond the concept, the inviolable mystery; beyond the literature of edification, a living Gospel running from the spring; beyond the devotional practices, sometimes disfigured by the highest bid and by going too far (Indulgences), a religion that is simple, pure, virile, denuded; beyond the priests in their robes and the prelates with their titlature, a one-on-one with God in the secret places of the conscience.

We might say, in a general way, that at the origins of great secessions—those that have a positive spiritual value—there's ordinarily a spiritual feeling that is authentic and, inasmuch as it is positive and pure, authentically Catholic. It's indispensable to fully recognize all of this if we want to be able to judge the Reformed Churches with a judgment that's not tainted with a falsifying partiality.

Second, Father Congar notes *very courageously* that although heresy is, for orthodox theology, an occasion for progress, in the sense that it leads it to emphasize and even to

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by Michial Farmer.

considerably deepen a truth that has risked being seriously unrecognized, nevertheless this very heresy risks initiating, in those who censure it, an overly unilateral development of thought:

Whenever an error is expressed on a given point, the organism of the Church stiffens, its forces polarize to resist evil; in the face of the false affirmation that is . . . the exaggeration [*l'exorbitation*] of a truth, we affirm, we specify the true affirmation: in most cases, we don't retrieve the dogma in its wholeness; we are content to give a great relief, a greater precision to the truth unknown or denied by the error, so that the error being always partial, the contrary dogmatic truth also risks being partial.

So, to cite one example among several, "doesn't the massive crystallization of sacramental realities around the *seven* sacraments, favorable to extreme theological-canonical precision, lend itself to forgetting the sacramentality of the whole Church, the whole Christian life, to the detriment of symbolic and liturgical meaning?" It's not about a logical consequence but about a psychological effect, linked, it seems to me, to the same conditions of attention that are oriented too exclusively toward the threatened areas, like an army amassed in a particularly vulnerable sector.

I'll gladly elaborate on this important point by saying that we're really kidding ourselves [*on se paye vraisemblablement de mots*] when we imagine that a heresy leaves the organism from which it's detached intact; bio-medical metaphors will doubtless be the least misleading here. This dissociation provokes a protective reaction on the part of the organism, comparable to a fever, but, although it is necessary, although it is curative, it is in itself contrary to the state of health, properly speaking. For my part, I'd go even further, and I don't know if Father Congar would follow me down this road. I wouldn't be content to say that heresy is an occasion for the theologian to recognize the necessity of underlining an aspect of the truth that was insufficiently highlighted until now. It seems to me that it must set in motion a reflection analogous to repentance [*elle doit amorcer une réflexion qui n'est pas sans présenter une analogie interne avec le repentir*]; for ultimately, if our conduct as Christians were always at the height of the doctrine we profess, heresy as an aberration wouldn't occur. Consequently, when we take a position against it, we must not only accuse the heretic and throw the whole error on his sinful pride—we're also obligated to recognize that we are at least partially responsible for the error into which he has fallen. At least from the philosophical point of view—I've already warned the reader that I won't speak as a theologian here—it seems indisputable to me that heresy, from the very point of view of the Church, can't be regarded as a sort of external calamity that she only needs to notice; heresy is in some way interior to her—although in another sense, the supreme sense, as the Church, as the

Body of Christ, certainly and for all eternity she remains unscathed, and the idea of a sin of the Church such as Berdyaev imagines must be resolutely rejected from the Catholic point of view.

In a few very simple propositions, Father Congar summarizes what we know about the unity of the Church. You will excuse me for quoting them for the sake of clarity in what will follow:

The Church is the family of God, constituted by the communication of the trinitarian life to human beings in grace, faith, and charity; it is one as God is one.

The communication of the trinitarian life is accomplished in Christ and only in Christ. The Church is the Body of Christ, associated with the life of the One who alone can return to the bosom of the Father, from whence he proceeds.

We are associated with the life of Christ in the sacraments, in which our faith is expressed and vivified. Baptism and the eucharist are the final reason for which we form a single body, which is the Body of Christ.

It must be added, moreover, that, according to everything we know about our condition as “incarnated men, members of the same species, destined by nature to live their human life in society, not communicating amongst themselves or nourishing their spirits [*leur esprit*] except by means of sensory [*sensibles*] things,” it’s perfectly comprehensible that “the society of the Holy Trinity that is in motion here is prepared according a mode connatural to humanity itself—that is, in a Church with a corporate form [*forme sociétaire*], incarnated in sensory realities, learning, governing, active, and militant.” In particular, it will be of the essence of sacraments to be sensible [*sensibles*] signs, symbolic and collective gestures, adapted to the fact that we’re moving toward the substance of celestial realities. One will recall here the text, so characteristic, of Hugh of Saint Victor: “*Usque hodie Christus amicos suos in Scriptura sacra et sacramentis Ecclesiae atque aliis visibilibus virtutum exercitiis quasi quadam corporali praesentia consolatur.*”<sup>2</sup> The earthly Church, to the extent that it fulfills Israel’s destiny, according to the same logic as the Incarnation, will be sensory and human through and through and divine through and through, theandric like Christ: “The faith, being given to the Church in human terms and through the ministry of men, will be dogmatic and magisterial; the life of Christ, being given in the sensory sacraments and through the ministry of men, will be sacramental and sacerdotal.”

We will thus be led, from the Catholic point of view:

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<sup>2</sup> Marcel’s English translator Robert Rosthal presents this Latin as “Now Christ consoles his friends through the Holy Scriptures and the Sacraments of the Church and through other outward signs of His power which affect us as though He were still in the flesh.”

To at the same time distinguish between the Church as Mystical Body, which is and remains eternal, of which Christ is the sole head, and in which no hierarchy can be conceived except the hierarchy of sanctity and virtue, such that in this order a Pope might be less close to Christ than a humble, ignorant woman;

and the Church as Society or Institution, in which there is an authority and subjects, and which is a body in the sociological and juridical sense of the word, spreading out physically into the world [*donc grandeur etendue dans le monde*] and having distinct parts;

but also to conceive a unity between the two, an “organic junction comparable to the one that links the soul and the body, or rather the one that exists in Christ between the human and divine natures; this junction operates on the level of the sacraments and through them; in its terrestrial existence, the Church is itself like a sacrament in which everything has a sensory meaning and procures an interior unity of grace.” “It’s equally true to say ‘*Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia*,’<sup>3</sup> because, as soon as there is communication from the Spirit of Christ, the Church exists; and ‘*Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia*,’<sup>4</sup> because the interior community of life is realized through human means, an apostolic ministry which itself has, in Peter, its visible criterion of unity.”

It’s extremely important to note not only that the most fundamental dissidences over the course of history have been about the nature of the Church, but also that—contrary to what some Protestants may have said—these dissidences aren’t at all about an element extrinsic to Christianity, but an essential element, to the degree that the Church is basically the prolongment of the Incarnation. What’s more, I would personally be tempted to ask myself if a heterodoxy that flourished on ecclesiological terrain wasn’t already present in the way its adherents thought about the Incarnation itself, Christ himself, even if it remained indiscernible because of the ambiguities of vocabulary. At any rate, the audience at the Union for the Truth couldn’t help feeling this when they heard Pastor Boegner and Monsieur Florowski discuss results obtained at the ecumenical conference that took place in Oxford in the summer of 1937 with some Catholic religious, including Father Congar himself. Over the course of this same interview, it became clear that these misunderstandings accumulate around the base of the very idea of catholicity.

Father Congar notes in his book that we must understand the word *catholicity* to mean the universality of *truth*, of *redemption*, of spiritual goods and gifts, and also universality in time; the dynamic universality that catholicity consists of comes directly from the unity and uniqueness of the Church; and these in turn express the indissoluble link that unites the Church as Mystical Body to the Church as Institution. This universality is not only compatible with an extreme

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<sup>3</sup> “Where Christ is, there is the Church.” This saying dates back to the earliest Church Fathers.

<sup>4</sup> “Where Peter is, there is the Church.” This saying is attributed to St. Ambrose of Milan.

diversity of religious experiences and ways of approaching God; *it requires that diversity*. However, at the same time she welcomes in these elements, she intends to purify them, that is, to divest them of their particularistic or exclusivist pretensions. For now, I'll limit myself to summarizing a few propositions that a Catholic reader will have no trouble finding multiple applications for. I'd like, on the other hand, to note a problem that risks arising [*comment le problème risqué de se poser*] for the non-Catholic Christian and, indirectly, for the unbeliever.

It's surely impossible for the non-Catholic Christian not to rebel against what risks seeming to him like overweening pretense; and I personally felt this with real acuity at the interview I referred to earlier. "This universality, this catholicity understood holistically," the Protestant in particular will say: "How can you claim it so categorically for your Church, which, all the same, in the historic configuration of the world that we can all plainly see, is just *one* Church among *other* Churches? How are you not aware of how offensive, even scandalous, it is for us to hear you declare that you retain the Truth in its integrity, whereas the rest of us only possess some broken fragment of it, some adulterated residue?"

For my part, I would observe that if we situate ourselves on the plane of *having*, if we take the verb *to possess* [*détenir*] literally, this feeling of scandal in the non-Catholic is not only explainable but justified in a very large measure. We only possess, in fact, what has been assimilated into something [*ce qui se laisse assimiler à une chose*], not a truth in the spiritual sense of the word but a formula, a recipe. It's almost inevitable that a Protestant attributes to the Catholic who imprudently expresses himself the pretense that his church *possesses* the true formulas, the sovereign recipes; and quite far from them seeming enviable to him, he risks, on the contrary, turning the other way, with the feeling that they're linked to a presumption contrary to the very spirit of the Gospel.

We must not have any illusions about the "soothing" value that can be offered to the non-Catholic by the distinction that will surely be made between the spiritual quality of some heretic in his capacity as a soul, as a person, and the doctrine that belongs to him and that we repudiate without reservation (even when it's admitted that that doctrine is true in what it affirms and false in what it denies—since affirmation and negation aren't really separable here). It seems to me that it's not exactly about doctrine here; or more precisely, what the Catholic thinks of and condemns as heretical doctrine is understood and lived from the inside as tradition, as the Church; *a tradition, a Church that counts martyrs as its own*, and this has a seriousness that we may not normally take stock of. The existence of these martyrs is enough, I'd personally say, even though it leaves open many protestations; it is enough, I say, to confer to a determined community a reality that in some way absolutely transcends the judgments that we'd have a right to make on

the doctrine that its members profess. And here we return, although on a much deeper level, to the remark that, following Father Congar's lead, I presented at the beginning of these notes, about the impossibility for the Catholic to free himself from his responsibility for heresy considered not only in its origins but in its very development.

That's one of the reasons why every controversy in this domain will, it seems to me, end up being regarded not only as sterile but also as exterior to what is truly in question and absolutely will not allow itself to be understood [*qui ne se laisse guère cerner*] through words. In truth, it would be too simple if we could admit that, on the one side, there's a person who, by belonging to the Roman Church, is in possession of the Truth understood in its organic totality (even if, as is inevitable, he understands it only in proportion to his deficient faculties); and on the other side, a heretic who pridefully clutches a few fragments of that same truth that he's been taught to isolate from everything they're a part of, and who claims [*prétend*] to be assembling these pieces into an absolute. Presented this way, this opposition, though we can't go so far as to say that it's meaningless, is only the fallacious schema of what must be regarded as a drama interior to the Christian conscience itself. I'd be tempted to say, personally, that if the Catholic is able to think of the heretic entirely otherwise than the heretic is in a condition to think of the Catholic—and in a certain sense, that's true, that *must* be true—it's on the condition that he despoils himself of everything that could resemble a feeling of superiority, a feeling of a heritage possessed, and instead adopts a conscience that is always more severe about his own personal deficiency and his responsibility vis-à-vis this heretic who must be converted; it's on the condition of taking on, in some way, the weight of his errors, quite far from imputing them to him as a crime and congratulating himself in a Pharisaical way for being so marvelously exempt from them. I am afraid—though I am speaking here as a philosopher, not as a theologian—that we're close to committing this sin of Pharisaism every time when we establish ourselves [*nous nous poser*] as “we Catholics” in the face of these poor blind people. By an invincible dialectic, we're quickly affected by the blindness that we claim to discover in the other. I see very well what confusion I will be charged with here: it will be pointed out that if, inasmuch as I am a Christian, I must practice humility for myself, it's not the same when we're talking about a transcendent Truth to which I'm merely a tiny witness. Nothing could be fairer; but I'm going to maintain this precise word, *witness* [*témoin*], which seems essential to me here. The whole problem is knowing in which conditions I can effectively witness in favor of this Truth.

The other day, during the interview I've referred to several times, I couldn't help but notice that, despite the pertinence of the arguments advanced by the Catholics, the effect they had on their interlocutors was obviously the opposite of what they must have wanted to obtain; I mean

that they reinforced, in their separated brothers, the painful feeling of the intransigence of the Church and its exorbitant claims [*prétensions*]. On the other hand, how could we reproach them for having tried to dissipate every equivocation? As scholars, they were obligated to speak clearly.

But aren't we in the presence of a real antimony here? And what positive conclusion can we draw from this contradiction? For one thing, at least as far as I'm concerned, the whole discussion, as I've indicated, is probably harmful, because it's not in the power of the person who professes a doctrine not to appear to hold [*détenir*] it like a privilege. I mean that the fact of exposing a truth isn't simply an ideal presentation of that truth, so to speak, in itself; it's a concrete act accomplished by a determined person; in some ways, it's an act of aggression that risks compromising that very truth by changing it into a weapon. But this is particularly serious when what's at stake is not a truth but the Truth, that is, Christ.

For my part, I believe it's my duty to conclude that a testimony [*témoignage*] that is thus placed on the plane of discourse and polemic is always to some degree impure and something like essentially inadequate to the cause that it claims to make triumph.

These remarks, which strongly risk seeming underwhelming [*décevantes*], seem to me necessary for the person who wants to take full stock of the problem that the ecumenical movement poses today.

Father Congar has very strongly noted the stages of this movement from the conference in Stockholm in 1925, and the progress that followed, to the conference in Oxford last summer. Although Stockholm was still impregnated with the optimistic and evolutionary pathos that would characterize postwar liberalism, which has held sway on every plane since, it was understood "that the Church should, even more than improving man, be what God wanted it to be in faith"; we recognize more clearly than in 1925, that unity could be neither declared nor created by human will, but that it will be, in time, the work of God." True ecumenism begins when we admit that others—and not only individuals, but the ecclesial bodies, such as they are—are also right, although they say something different than we do, that they also have truth, saintliness, the gifts of God, although their Christianity [*chrétienté*] is not ours. "There is ecumenism," said an active member of the movement, "when one person believes that another is Christian not despite his confession but in it and by it." Examining the diverse possible ways of justifying this attitude, Father Congar shows that it won't be a question of refusing to see any Church as being the true Church, that is, in relegating the identity of the true Church to some unknown future; rather, we should surely summon it from beyond the ecclesiastical and confessional truth (undisputed anyway), to a margin of activity available [*disponible*] and open to the new initiatives of the Holy Spirit, irreducible to normal frameworks and to the logic of theologies. Some orthodox Christians,

such as Monsieur Berdyaev—who, because of the audacity of his personal conceptions, cannot, to tell the truth, be regarded in any way as an authorized representative of the confession that he claims—will feel obligated to distinguish between their Church as just such a confession, which, while being more true than others in their eyes, nevertheless wears, in their own opinion, the marks of human limitation, and the ecumenical Church in which fullness is found and which is called to realize itself in that Church and beyond it, beyond its present limits. Since the Orthodox, while maintaining their superiority, have agreed to take part in ecumenical conferences, perhaps it will be asked why the Catholic Church hasn't felt obligated to adopt the same attitude. Father Congar justifies this refusal as follows: Besides the fact, he says, that we can't engage a body as complex and considerable as the Catholic Church in a movement that's still in its earliest stages and that seems called to go through many vicissitudes, she can legitimately fear that, if she participates in it, the sense of unity that is essential to her will tend to weaken, to become anemic in contact with the multiplicity of separate confessions; additionally, she worries that she will not be able, over the course of these meetings [*réunions*] and conferences, to define herself without attenuating the fullness that she bears in herself, that she will be cornered into acting like a fragment of a whole, whereas she is really the living totality that surpasses every verbal expression that we can give it. Finally, if, beyond the ecclesiastical government properly speaking, she fully recognizes the existence of a government of the Holy Spirit, one that she believes is in accord with the ecclesiastical government but which the final reunion of all Christians in unity depends on, if she is thus disposed to admit the existence of the margin to which we referred a moment ago, and by the same token the existence of a metalogical zone, she is eminently on guard against the danger of relying on an act of God's will that is situated ahead of us and will manifest itself in the future. She is concerned about all of this, I imagine, because of the perilously conjectural character of the presumptions by which we claim to reach such a government—and because it's of her essence, in her capacity as the Catholic Church, to keep her eyes fixed on the promises and creative words that serve as her foundation, in a sense that certainly implies history, but at the same time flies above it.

Leaving aside the sections that Father Congar dedicates to Anglicanism and to Orthodoxy, I'd like to focus, for the moment, on the two final chapters of the book, in which the author tries to specify the situation of dissents and dissidences in relationship to the Church, and to sketch out a concrete program of Catholic ecumenism.

If the dissident, whom we suppose to be in good faith, by definition never finds in his sect or his Church the totality of principles of life with Christ, which are also the principles of the realization and unity of the Church, he will nevertheless be a member of that church to the



imperfect degree that those principles belong to [*seront immanents à*] his confession. The Church thus has members who belong to her invisibly, incompletely, but really. Tracing a parallel between the “good dissident” and the “bad Catholic,” Father Congar notes that “if the latter is worse off, his Church is nevertheless true [*a raison*] and offers him, in herself, all the means to become a saint; and if the former is better off, his Church is in error and, in itself, offers him only incomplete and misleading assistance.” From my point of view, that is, from the perspective of as sharp as possible a comprehension of *the other as other*, I would say that these declarations, perfectly natural for a Catholic, cannot fail to scandalize his “separated brothers,” for whom they seem to be destined. How could they not recuse themselves *a priori* from a verdict that, by definition, can only look biased [*partial*] to them? One might respond: We’re not partial [*partie*], because we’re the whole, and you’re the only ones who are partial. But it’s only too clear that this manner of thinking is absolutely foreign to the conditions of any eristic whatsoever; what’s more, we as much as refuse to have a discussion, since we claim to place ourselves above any possible controversy.

As I see it, it’s not about condemning this claim, but simply pointing out that it is, by definition, inadmissible for the person to whom it is transmitted. When Father Congar, a little later, defends the Church from every accusation of imperialism, affirming that “what we desire is neither the triumph of an institutional apparatus nor the triumph of a system of truths as a system, but the triumph of life itself,” he makes an affirmation that can only appear to his interlocutor as tainted with a singular presumption. And I think it’s necessary here to submit the ideas of the *whole* and the *part* to a more rigorous metaphysical analysis; or, what comes to the same thing, to think deeply about the scope of the idea of fullness. It’s impossible, Father Congar says forcefully, for the reunion to take place if instead of appearing to the Christians who still see it from the outside as Fullness, it appears to them as a particular confession, one system among others, an “ism” as particular and exclusive as the other “isms.” Nothing is more true; but on the other hand, inasmuch as its scholars proclaim that the dissident Church is in error and “offers its members only incomplete and misleading assistance,” it’s impossible for the Catholic Church not to appear to those on the outside as precisely the most exclusive, the most particularistic church that there is. From the moment when the other is led to recognize that he is only a part that takes himself for a whole in the face of the only true whole, he is converted; this is a simple truism that I nevertheless don’t hesitate to stress, because it’s of the foremost importance to point out that we’re not talking about [*gravitons*] a problem here: I mean by that a difficulty that could be resolved, a difference that could be ironed out by using some dialectic or other, no matter how eminent is the good will that inspired it. We might be sometimes tempted to wonder if any attempt at clarification, even an attempt made in a spirit of ardent charity, doesn’t contradict its own ends

and doesn't risk, as I indicated above, exacerbating the conflict that we hope with all our heart to eliminate.

The conclusion that offers itself, needless to say, is that reunion—the word *reconciliation*, from the Catholic point of view, seems unacceptable—can be brought about only through means of grace, not of reason; this is because we're talking about a mystery here, not a problem. Nothing would be more false, however, than adopting, in consequence, an attitude of passive resignation, or, if you like, pure expectation . . . Father Congar himself has said, in an unforgettable formula in which is condensed the essential element of my personal observations, “When we go against someone, even when we go against error, we do not do it quite Catholically”; but this amounts to saying that error will be attacked much more directly by every nonpolemical but positive action by which Catholics try, not to purify their doctrine but to incarnate it and to model it [*la rayonner*] more perfectly. For them, it's not so much a question of proclaiming, “Our Church is the Church, it is Fullness itself,” as making this truth manifest, not to their adversaries—for on this plane that word no longer has any meaning, and can't have one—but to their separated [*épars*] brothers, suffering and partially blinded, to whom they communicate the Life and Light that have been lent to them to spread about in their turn.

I'll add, for my part—and I don't think I'm contradicting Father Congar—that at the precise moment of history that we find ourselves in, all collaboration between Catholic and non-Catholic Christians in view of a work of justice contributes in some way to preparing the road to that reunion that's so hard for us to imagine—to the same degree that this collaboration suppresses that fatal distinction between “us” and “you” that is in itself a principle of reciprocal irritation and war.

Finally, Father Congar has pointed out, with magnificent courage, that there is, after all, a sense in which the Church, fully Catholic from the point of view of its dynamic possibilities and its living substance, “explicitly realizes that catholicity only in an imperfect way, and that the division of Christians plays an appreciable role in this imperfection,” that “what our separated brothers have taken away from the Church and realized outside of us is what our explicit and visible catholicity lacks.” It will be said not only that

because Russia is Orthodox and the Scandinavian countries are Lutheran, the Church lacks Slavic and Nordic expressions of the singular yet multicolored grace of Christ; we'll even be able to say that, to the degree that the existence of dissident forms of Christianity, manifested as religious bodies, holds to the affirmation of certain values that exist in them

as a particularly acute perception, these religious bodies also represent spiritual families that have their own message and, in a sense, their own mission.

“To the degree that there is in Luther an astonishing acute experience of certain authentic values that this man might perhaps have had the mission of unveiling for the benefit of the whole Church in becoming one of its chosen souls, but which, pulling them out of communion with all other values, warping them, mixing them with error, he created the soul of a dissident”—yes, perhaps what is true in the Lutheran religious experience is absent, certainly not from the substance of the Catholic Church, but from the incarnation, the full explanation of its living principles. I feel, for my part, the keenest satisfaction that Father Congar has so firmly and delicately pointed out this nuance, which would risk, if it were expressed less rigorously, giving way to a relativist, and for that reason fundamentally heterodox, interpretation. I remember having scandalized a very holy priest one day by impulsively declaring, “We really don’t know what God thinks about the Reformation.”

“Well, *I* know,” this clergyman replied—wherein he was, I think, greatly mistaken. Even error [*L’erreur, la faute même*] has its mysterious function in the providential economy; it’s not permitted to any creature, not even to the wisest scholars, to treat it simply as “what shouldn’t have been.” Or more exactly, beyond this perspective, there’s another, much deeper, much more real perspective that we’re given to foresee or make out through the mist [*entrevoir ou de pressentir*], a perspective that won’t reveal itself until the consummation of time. One might wonder, in the light of a parable like that of the Prodigal Son, if divisions that are scandalous in and of themselves won’t contribute, at the end of history, to a deepening of the content of faith, which, without them, wouldn’t be realized to the same degree of interiority.

We can’t unreservedly subscribe to Father Congar’s conclusions because of the broad Irenicism they are marked by:

Give us an evangelical, fraternal, amicable soul. Far from being a systemic being, become a communal being. And, so that the reunion will seem first possible, then desirable, to others, may the Church show itself to them as being the catholicity of the whole heritage of Christ, where they will keep all their poor treasures, though enriched and transfigured by a fullness of possession and communion; let us show them a true, full, radiant freedom that nevertheless doesn’t deny authority—a deep sense of God’s most merciful action that nevertheless doesn’t deny the free cooperation of man—a faith inscribed in the Church’s

orthodoxy, a submissive docility, which nevertheless does not cease to be a mystical, fully interior and spontaneous reality . . .