

Council of Trent

The nineteenth ecumenical council opened at Trent on 13 December, 1545, and closed there on 4 December, 1563. Its main object was the definitive determination of the doctrines of the Church in answer to the heresies of the Protestants; a further object was the execution of a thorough reform of the inner life of the Church by removing the numerous abuses that had developed in it.

I. CONVOCAATION AND OPENING

On 28 November 1518, Luther had appealed from the pope to a general council because he was convinced that he would be condemned at Rome for his heretical doctrines. The Diet held at Nuremberg in 1523 demanded a “free Christian council” on German soil, and at the Diet held in the same city in 1524 a demand was made for a German national council to regulate temporarily the questions in dispute, and for a general council to settle definitely the accusations against Rome, and the religious disputes. Owing to the feeling prevalent in Germany the demand was very dangerous. Rome positively rejected the German national council, but did not absolutely object to holding a general council. Emperor Charles V forbade the national council, but notified Clement VII through his ambassadors that he considered the calling of a general council expedient and proposed the city of Trent as the place of assembly. In the years directly succeeding this, the unfortunate dispute between emperor and pope prevented any further negotiations concerning a council. Nothing was done until 1529 when the papal ambassador, Pico della Mirandola, declared at the Diet of Speyer that the pope was ready to aid the Germans in the struggle against the Turks, to urge the restoration of peace among Christian rulers, and to convoke a general council to meet the following summer. Charles and Clement VII met at Bologna in 1530, and the pope agreed to call a council, if necessary. The cardinal legate, Lorenzo Campeggio, opposed a council, convinced that the Protestants were not honest in demanding it. Still the

Catholic princes of Germany, especially the dukes of Bavaria, favoured a council as the best means of overcoming the evils from which the Church was suffering; Charles never wavered in his determination to have the council held as soon as there was a period of general peace in Christendom.

The matter was also discussed at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, when Campeggio again opposed a council, while the emperor declared himself in favour of one provided the Protestants were willing to restore earlier conditions until the decision of the council. Charles's proposition met the approval of the Catholic princes, who, however, wished the assembly to meet in Germany. The emperor's letters to his ambassadors at Rome on the subject led to the discussion of the matter twice in the congregation of cardinals appointed especially for German affairs. Although opinions differed, the pope wrote to the emperor that Charles could promise the convoking of a council with his consent, provided the Protestants returned to the obedience of the Church. He proposed an Italian city, preferably Rome, as the place of assembly. The emperor, however, distrusted the pope, believing that Clement did not really desire a council. Meantime, the Protestant princes did not agree to abandon their doctrines. Clement constantly raised difficulties in regard to a council, although Charles, in accord with most of the cardinals, especially Farnese, del Monte, and Canisio, repeatedly urged upon him the calling of one as the sole means of composing the religious disputes. Meanwhile the Protestant princes refused to withdraw from the position they had taken up. Francis I, of France, sought to frustrate the convoking of the council by making impossible conditions. It was mainly his fault that the council was not held during the reign of Clement VII, for on 28 Nov., 1531, it had been unanimously agreed in a consistory that a council should be called. At Bologna in 1532, the emperor and the pope discussed the question of a council again and decided that it should meet as soon as the approval of all Christian princes had been obtained for the plan. Suitable Briefs addressed to the rulers were drawn up and legates were commissioned to

go to Germany, France, and England. The answer of the French king was unsatisfactory. Both he and Henry VIII of England avoided a definitive reply, and the German Protestants rejected the conditions proposed by the pope.

The next pope, Paul III (1534-49), as Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, had always strongly favoured the convening of a council, and had, during the conclave, urged the calling of one. When, after his election, he first met the Cardinals, 17 October 1534, he spoke of the necessity of a general council, and repeated this opinion at the first consistory (13 November). He summoned distinguished prelates to Rome to discuss the matter with them. Representatives of Charles V and Ferdinand I also laboured to hasten the council. The majority of the cardinals, however, opposed the immediate calling of a council, and it was resolved to notify the princes of the papal decision to hold a church assembly. Nuncios were sent for this purpose to France, Spain, and the German king, Ferdinand. Vergerio, nuncio to Ferdinand, was also to apprise the German electors and the most distinguished of the remaining ruling princes personally of the impending proclamation of the council. He executed his commission with zeal, although he frequently met with reserve and distrust. The selection of the place of meeting was a source of much difficulty, as Rome insisted that the council should meet in an Italian city. The Protestant rulers, meeting at Smalkald in December 1535, rejected the proposed council. In this they were supported by Kings Henry VIII and Francis I. At the same time the latter sent assurances to Rome that he considered the council as very serviceable for the extermination of heresy, carrying on, as regards the holding of a council, the double intrigue he always pursued in reference to German Protestantism. The visit of Charles V to Rome in 1536 led to a complete agreement between him and the pope concerning the council. On 2 June, Paul III published the Bull calling all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and abbots to assemble at Mantua on 23 May 1537, for a general council. Cardinal legates were sent with an invitation to the council to the emperor, the King of the Romans, the King of France, while a number of

other nuncios carried the invitation to the other Christian countries. The Netherlander Peter van der Vorst was sent to Germany to persuade the German ruling princes to take part. The Protestant rulers received the ambassador most ungraciously; at Smalkald they refused the invitation curtly, although in 1530 they had demanded a council. Francis I took advantage of the war that had broken out between himself and Charles in 1536 to declare the journey of the French bishops to the council impossible.

Meanwhile preparations were carried on with zeal at Rome. The commission of reform, appointed in July 1536, drew up a report as the basis for the correction of the abuses in ecclesiastical life; the pope began preparations for the journey to Mantua. The Duke of Mantua now raised objections against the holding of the assembly in his city and made conditions which it was not possible to accept at Rome. The opening of the council, therefore, was put off to 1 November; later it was decided to open it at Vicenza on 1 May 1538. The course of affairs, however, was continually obstructed by Francis I. Nevertheless, the legates who were to preside at the council went to Vicenza. Only six bishops were present. The French king and the pope met at Nice, and it was decided to prorogue until Easter, 1539. Soon after this the emperor also desired to postpone the council, as he hoped to restore religious unity in Germany by conferences with the Protestants. After further unsuccessful negotiations both with Charles V and Francis I the council was indefinitely prorogued at the consistory of 21 May 1539, to reassemble at the pope's discretion. When Paul III and Charles V met at Lucca in September 1541, the former again raised the question of the council. The emperor now consented that it should meet at Vicenza, but Venice would not agree, whereupon the emperor proposed Trent, and later Cardinal Contarini suggested Mantua, but nothing was decided. The emperor and Francis I were invited later to send the cardinals of their countries to Rome, so that the question of the council could be discussed by the college of cardinals. Morone worked in Germany as legate for the council, and the pope agreed to hold it at Trent.

After further consultations at Rome, Paul III convoked on 22 May 1542, an ecumenical council to meet at Trent on 1 Nov. of the same year. The Protestants made violent attacks on the council, and Francis I opposed it energetically, not even permitting the Bull of convocation to be published in his kingdom.

The German Catholic princes and King Sigismund of Poland consented to the convocation. Charles V, enraged at the neutral position of the pope in the war that was threatening between himself and Francis I, as well as with the wording of the Bull, wrote a reproachful letter to Paul III. Nevertheless, preparations were made for the council at Trent, by special papal commissioners, and three cardinals were appointed later as conciliary legates. The conduct, however, of Francis I and of the emperor again prevented the opening of the council. A few Italian and German bishops appeared at Trent. The pope went to Bologna in March 1543, and to a conference with Charles V at Busseto in June, yet matters were not advanced. The strained relations which appeared anew between pope and emperor, and the war between Charles V and Francis I, led to another prorogation (6 July 1543). After the Peace of Crespy (17 Sept. 1544) a reconciliation was effected between Paul III and Charles V. Francis I had abandoned his opposition and declared himself in favour of Trent as the place of meeting, as did the emperor. On 19 Nov. 1544, the Bull "Laetare Hierusalem" was issued, by which the council was again convoked to meet at Trent on 15 March 1545. Cardinals Giovanni del Monte, Marcello Cervini, and Reginald Pole were appointed in February 1545, as the papal legates to preside at the council. As in March only a few bishops had come to Trent, the date of opening had to be deferred again. The emperor, however, desired a speedy opening, consequently 13 December 1545, was appointed as the date of the first formal session. This was held in the choir of the cathedral of Trent after the first president of the council, Cardinal del Monte, had celebrated the Mass of the Holy Ghost. When the Bull of convocation and the Bull appointing the conciliary legates were read, Cardinal del Monte declared the ecumenical council opened, and

appointed 7 January as the date of the second session. Besides the three presiding legates there were present: Cardinal Madruzzo, Bishop of Trent, four archbishops, twenty-one bishops, five generals of orders. The council was attended, in addition, by the legates of the King of Germany, Ferdinand, and by forty-two theologians, and nine canonists, who had been summoned as consultants.

II. ORDER OF BUSINESS

In the work of accomplishing its great task the council had to contend with many difficulties. The first weeks were occupied mainly with settling the order of business of the assembly. After long discussion it was agreed that the matters to be taken into consideration by the members of the council were to be proposed by the cardinal legates; after they had been drawn up by a commission of consultants (*congregatio theologorum minorum*) they were to be discussed thoroughly in preparatory sessions of special congregations of prelates for dogmatic questions, and similar congregations for legal questions (*congregatio proelatorum theologorum* and *congregatio proelatorum canonistarum*). Originally the fathers of the council were divided into three congregations for discussion of subjects, but this was soon done away with as too cumbersome. After all the preliminary discussions the matter thus made ready was debated in detail in the general congregation (*congregatio generalis*) and the final form of the decrees was settled on. These general congregations were composed of all bishops, generals of orders, and abbots who were entitled to a vote, the proxies of absent members entitled to a vote, and the representatives (*oratores*) of the secular rulers. The decrees resulting from such exhaustive debates were then brought forward in the formal sessions and votes were taken upon them. On 18 December, the legates laid seventeen articles before the general congregations as regards the order of procedure in the subjects to be discussed. This led to a number of difficulties. The main one was whether dogmatic questions or the reform of church life

should be discussed first. It was finally decided that both subjects should be debated simultaneously. Thus, after the promulgation in the sessions of the decrees concerning the dogmas of the Church followed a similar promulgation of those on discipline and Church reform. The question was also raised whether the generals of orders and abbots were members of the council entitled to a vote. Opinions varied greatly on this point. Still, after long discussion the decision was reached that one vote for the entire order belonged to each general of an order, and that the three Benedictine abbots sent by the pope to represent the entire order were entitled to only one vote.

Violent differences of opinion appeared during the preparatory discussion of the decree to be laid before the second session determining the title to be given the council; the question was whether there should be added to the title "Holy Council of Trent" (*Sacrosancta tridentina synodus*) the words "representing the Church universal" (*universalem ecclesiam reprobentans*). According to the Bishop of Fiesole, Braccio Martello, a number of the members of the council desired the latter form. However, such a title, although justified in itself, appeared dangerous to the legates and other members of the council on account of its bearing on the Councils of Constance and Basle, as it might be taken to express the superiority of the ecumenical council over the pope. Therefore, instead of this formula the additional phrase "oecumenica et generalis" was proposed and accepted by nearly all the bishops. Only three bishops who raised the question unsuccessfully several times later persisted in wanting the formula "*universalem ecclesiam reprobentans*". A further point was in reference to the proxies of absent bishops, namely, whether these were entitled to a vote or not. Originally the proxies were not allowed a vote; Paul III granted to those German bishops who could not leave their dioceses on account of religious troubles, and to them alone, representation by proxies. In 1562, when the council met again, Pius IV withdrew this permission. Other regulations were also passed, in regard to the right of the members to draw the revenues of their dioceses during

the session of the council, and concerning the mode of life of the members. At a later date, during the third period of the council, various modifications were made in these decisions. Thus, the theologians of the council, who had grown in the meantime into a large body, were divided into six classes, each of which received a number of drafts of decrees for discussion. Special deputations also were often appointed for special questions. The entire regulation of the debates was a very prudent one, and offered every guarantee for an absolutely objective and exhaustive discussion in all their bearings of the questions brought up for debate. A regular courier service was maintained between Rome and Trent, so that the pope was kept fully informed in regard to the debates of the council.

III. THE WORK AND SESSIONS

A. First Period at Trent

Among the fathers of the council and the theologians who had been summoned to Trent were a number of important men. The legates who presided at the council were equal to their difficult task; Paceco of Jaen, Campeggio of Feltre, and the Bishop of Fiesole already mentioned were especially conspicuous among the bishops who were present at the early sessions. Girolamo Seripando, General of the Augustinian Hermits, was the most prominent of the heads of the orders; of the theologians, the two learned Dominicans, Ambrogio Catarino and Domenico Soto, should be mentioned. After the formal opening session (13 December 1545), the various questions pertaining to the order of business were debated; neither in the second session (7 January 1546) nor in the third (4 February 1546) were any matters touching faith or discipline brought forward. It was only after the third session, when the preliminary questions and the order of business had been essentially settled, that the real work of the council began. The emperor's representative, Francisco de Toledo, did not reach Trent until 15 March, and a further personal representative, Mendoza, arrived on 25 May. The first subject of discussion which was laid before

the general congregation by the legates on 8 February was the Scriptures as the source of Divine revelation. After exhaustive preliminary discussions in the various congregations, two decrees were ready for debate at the fourth session (8 April 1546), and were adopted by the fathers. In treating the canon of Scripture they declare at the same time that in matters of faith and morals the tradition of the Church is, together with the Bible, the standard of supernatural revelation; then taking up the text and the use of the sacred Books they declare the Vulgate to be the authentic text for sermons and disputations, although this did not exclude textual emendations. It was also determined that the Bible should be interpreted according to the unanimous testimony of the Fathers and never misused for superstitious purposes. Nothing was decided in regard to the translation of the Bible in the vernaculars.

In the meantime earnest discussions concerning the question of church reform had been carried on between the pope and the legates, and a number of items had been suggested by the latter. These had special reference to the Roman Curia and its administration, to the bishops, the ecclesiastical benefices and tithes, the orders, and the training of the clergy. Charles V wished the discussion of the dogmatic questions to be postponed, but the council and the pope could not agree to that, and the council debated dogmas simultaneously with decrees concerning discipline. On 24 May, the general congregation took up the discussion of original sin, its nature, consequences, and cancellation by baptism. At the same time the question of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin was brought forward, but the majority of the members finally decided not to give any definite dogmatic decision on this point. The reforms debated concerned the establishment of theological professorships, preaching, and episcopal obligation of residence. In reference to the latter the Spanish bishop, Paceco, raised the point whether this obligation was of Divine origin, or whether it was merely an ecclesiastical ordinance of human origin, a question which led later to long and violent discussions. In the fifth session (17 June 1546) the decree on the dogma of original sin was

promulgated with five canons (anathemas) against the corresponding erroneous doctrines; and the first decree on reform (de reformatione) was also promulgated. This treats (in two chapters) of professorships of the Scriptures, and of secular learning (artes liberales), of those who preach the Divine word, and of the collectors of alms.

For the following session, which was originally set for 29 July, the matters proposed for general debate were the dogma of justification as the dogmatic question and the obligation of residence as regards bishops as the disciplinary decree; the treatment of these questions was proposed to the general congregation by the legates on 21 June. The dogma of justification brought up for debate one of the fundamental questions which had to be discussed with reference to the heretics of the sixteenth century, and which in itself presented great difficulties. The imperial party sought to block the discussion of the entire matter, some of the fathers were anxious on account of the approaching war of Charles V against the Protestant princes, and there was fresh dissension between the emperor and the pope. However, the debates on the question were prosecuted with the greatest zeal; animated, at times even stormy, discussions took place; the debate of the next general session had to be postponed. No less than sixty-one general congregations and forty-four other congregations were held for the debate of the important subjects of justification and the obligation of residence, before the matters were ready for the final decision. At the sixth regular session on 13 January 1547, was promulgated the masterly decree on justification (de justificatione), which consisted of a prooemium or preface and sixteen chapters with thirty-three canons in condemnation of the opposing heresies. The decree on reform of this session was one in five chapters respecting the obligation of residence of bishops and of the occupants of ecclesiastical benefices or offices. These decrees make the sixth session one of the most important and decisive of the entire council.

The legates proposed to the general congregation as the subject-matter for the following session, the doctrine of the Church as to the sacraments, and for the disciplinary question a series of ordinances respecting both the appointment and official activities of bishops, and on ecclesiastical benefices. When the questions had been debated, in the seventh session (3 March 1547), a dogmatic decree with suitable canons was promulgated on the sacraments in general (thirteen canons), on baptism (fourteen canons), and on confirmation (three canons); a decree on reform (in fifteen chapters) was also enacted in regard to bishops and ecclesiastical benefices, in particular as to pluralities, visitations, and exemptions, concerning the founding of infirmaries, and as to the legal affairs of the clergy. Before this session was held the question of the prorogation of the council or its transfer to another city had been discussed. The relations between pope and emperor had grown even more strained; the Smalkaldic War had begun in Germany; and now an infectious disease broke out in Trent, carrying off the general of the Franciscans and others. The cardinal legates, therefore, in the eighth session (11 March 1547) proposed the transfer of the council to another city, supporting themselves in this action by a Brief which had been given them by the pope some time before. The majority of the fathers voted to transfer the council to Bologna, and on the following day (12 March) the legates went there. By the ninth session the number of participants had risen to four cardinals, nine archbishops, forty-nine bishops, two proxies, two abbots, three generals of orders, and fifty theologians.

B. Period at Bologna

The majority of the fathers of the council went with the cardinal legates from Trent to Bologna; but fourteen bishops who belonged to the party of Charles V remained at Trent and would not recognize the transfer. The sudden change of place without any special consultation beforehand with the pope did not please Paul III, who probably foresaw that this would

lead to further severe difficulties between himself and the emperor. As a matter of fact, Charles V was very indignant at the change, and through his ambassador Vaga protested against it, vigorously urging a return to Trent. The emperor's defeat of the Smalkaldic League increased his power. Influential cardinals sought to mediate between the emperor and the pope, but the negotiations failed. The emperor protested formally against the transfer to Bologna, and, refusing to permit the Spanish bishops who had remained at Trent to leave that city, began negotiations again with the German Protestants on his own responsibility. Consequently, at the ninth session of the council held at Bologna on 21 April, 1547, the only decree issued was one proroguing the session. The same action was all that was taken in the tenth session on 2 June 1547, although there had been exhaustive debates on various subjects in congregations. The tension between the emperor and the pope had increased despite the efforts of Cardinals Sfondrato and Madruzzo. All negotiations were fruitless. The bishops who had remained at Trent had held no sessions, but when the pope called to Rome four of the bishops at Bologna and four of those at Trent, the latter said in excuse that they could not obey the call. Paul III had now to expect extreme opposition from the emperor. Therefore, on 13 September, he proclaimed the suspension of the council and commanded the cardinal legate del Monte to dismiss the members of the council assembled at Bologna; this was done on 17 September. The bishops were called to Rome, where they were to prepare decrees for disciplinary reforms. This closed the first period of the council. On 10 Nov. 1549, the pope died.

C. Second Period at Trent

The successor of Paul III was Julius III (1550-55), Giovanni del Monte, first cardinal legate of the council. He at once began negotiations with the emperor to reopen the council. On 14 Nov. 1550, he issued the Bull "Quum ad tollenda," in which the reassembling at Trent was arranged. As

presidents he appointed Cardinal Marcellus Crescentius, Archbishop Sebastian Pighinus of Siponto, and Bishop Aloysius Lipomanni of Verona. The cardinal legate reached Trent on 29 April 1551, where, besides the bishop of the city, fourteen bishops from the countries ruled by the emperor were in attendance; several bishops came from Rome, where they had been staying, and on 1 May 1551, the eleventh session was held. In this the resumption of the council was decreed, and 1 September was appointed as the date of the next session. The Sacrament of the Eucharist and drafts of further disciplinary decrees were discussed in the congregations of the theologians and also in several general congregations. Among the theologians were Lainez and Salmeron, who had been sent by the pope, and Johannes Arza, who represented the emperor. Ambassadors of the emperor, King Ferdinand, and Henry II of France were present. The King of France, however, was unwilling to allow any French bishop to go to the council. In the twelfth session (1 Sept. 1551) the only decision was the prorogation until 11 October. This was due to the expectation of the arrival of other German bishops, besides the Archbishops of Mainz and Trier who were already in attendance. The thirteenth session was held on 11 Oct. 1551; it promulgated a comprehensive decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist (in eight chapters and eleven canons) and also a decree on reform (in eight chapters) in regard to the supervision to be exercised by bishops, and on episcopal jurisdiction. Another decree deferred until the next session the discussion of four articles concerning the Eucharist, namely, Communion under the two species of bread and wine and the Communion of children; a safe-conduct was also issued for Protestants who desired to come to the council. An ambassador of Joachim II of Brandenburg had already reached Trent.

The presidents laid before the general congregation of 15 October drafts of definitions of the Sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction for discussion. These subjects occupied the congregations of theologians, among whom Gropper, Nausea, Tapper, and Hessels were especially

prominent, and also the general congregations during the months of October and November. At the fourteenth session, held on 25 November, the dogmatic decree promulgated contained nine chapters on the dogma of the Church respecting the Sacrament of Penance and three chapters on extreme unction. To the chapters on penance were added fifteen canons condemning heretical teachings on this point, and four canons condemning heresies to the chapters on unction. The decree on reform treated the discipline of the clergy and various matters respecting ecclesiastical benefices. In the meantime, ambassadors from several Protestant princes and cities reached Trent. They made various demands, as: that the earlier decisions which were contrary to the Augsburg Confession should be recalled; that debates on questions in dispute between Catholics and Protestants should be deferred; that the subordination of the pope to an ecumenical council should be defined; and other propositions which the council could not accept. Since the close of the last session both the theologians and the general congregations had been occupied in numerous assemblies with the dogma of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and of the ordination of priests, as well as with plans for new reformatory decrees. At the fifteenth session (25 January 1552), in order to make some advances to the ambassadors of the Protestants, the decisions in regard to the subjects under consideration were postponed and a new safe-conduct, such as they had desired, was drawn up for them. Besides the three papal legates and Cardinal Madruzzo, there were present at Trent ten archbishops and fifty-four bishops, most of them from the countries ruled by the emperor. On account of the treacherous attack made by Maurice of Saxony on Charles V, the city of Trent and the members of the council were placed in danger; consequently, at the sixteenth session (23 April 1552) a decree suspending the council for two years was promulgated. However, a considerably longer period of time elapsed before it could resume its sessions.

D. Third Period at Trent

Julius III did not live to call the council together again. He was followed by Marcellus II (1555), a former cardinal legate at Trent, Marcello Cervino; Marcellus died twenty-two days after his election. His successor, the austere Paul IV (1555-9), energetically carried out internal reforms both in Rome and in the other parts of the Church; but he did not seriously consider reconvening the council. Pius IV (1559-65) announced to the cardinals shortly after his election his intention of reopening the council. Indeed, he had found the right man, his nephew, the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, Charles Borromeo, to complete the important work and to bring its decisions into customary usage in the Church. Great difficulties were raised once more on various sides. The Emperor Ferdinand desired the council, but wished it to be held in some German city, and not at Trent; moreover, he desired it to meet not as a continuation of the earlier assembly but as a new council. The King of France also desired the assembling of a new council, but he did not wish it at Trent. The Protestants of Germany worked in every way against the assembling of the Council. After long negotiations Ferdinand, the Kings of Spain and Portugal, Catholic Switzerland, and Venice left the matter to the pope. On 29 Nov. 1560, the Bull "Ad ecclesiae regimen," by which the council was ordered to meet again at Trent at Easter, 1561, was published. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the papal nuncios, Delfino and Commendone, the German Protestants persisted in their opposition. Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga was appointed president of the council; he was to be assisted by the cardinal legates Stanislaus Hosius, Jacobus Puteus (du Puy), Hieronymus Seripando, Luigi Simonetta, and Marcus Siticus of Altemps. As the bishops made their appearance very slowly, the opening of the council was delayed. Finally, on 18 Jan. 1562, the seventeenth session was held; it proclaimed the revocation of the suspension of the council and appointed the date for the next session. There were present, besides the four cardinal legates, one cardinal, three patriarchs, eleven archbishops, forty bishops, four abbots, and four generals of orders; in

addition thirty-four theologians were in attendance. The ambassadors of the princes were a source of much trouble to the presidents of the council and made demands which were in part impossible. The Protestants continued to calumniate the assembly. Emperor Ferdinand wished to have the discussion of dogmatic questions deferred.

At the eighteenth session (25 Feb. 1562) the only matters decided were the publication of a decree concerning the drawing up of a list of forbidden books and an agreement as to a safe-conduct for Protestants. At the next two sessions, the nineteenth on 14 May, and the twentieth on 4 June 1562, only decrees proroguing the council were issued. The number of members had, it is true, increased, and various ambassadors of Catholic rulers had arrived at Trent, but some princes continued to raise obstacles both as to the character of the council and the place of meeting. Emperor Ferdinand sent an exhaustive plan of church reform which contained many articles impossible to accept. The legates, however, continued the work of the assembly, and presented the draft of the decree on Holy Communion, which treated especially the question of Communion under both species, as well as drafts of several disciplinary decrees. These questions were subjected to the usual discussions. At the twenty-first session (16 July 1562) the decree on Communion under both species and on the Communion of children was promulgated in four chapters and four canons. A decree upon reformation in nine chapters was also promulgated; it treated ordination to the priesthood, the revenues of canons, the founding of new parishes, and the collectors of alms. Articles on the Sacrifice of the Mass were now laid before the congregations for discussion; in the following months there were long and animated debates over the dogma. At the twenty-second session, which was not held until 17 Sept. 1562, four decrees were promulgated: the first contained the dogma of the Church on the Sacrifice of the Mass (in nine chapters and nine canons); the second directed the suppression of abuses in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice; a third (in eleven chapters) treated reform, especially in regard to the morals of the clergy, the requirements necessary

before ecclesiastical offices could be assumed, wills, the administration of religious foundations; the fourth treated the granting of the cup to the laity at Communion, which was left to the discretion of the pope.

The council had hardly ever been in as difficult a position as that in which it now found itself. The secular rulers made contradictory and, in part, impossible demands. At the same time warm debates were held by the fathers on the questions of the duty of residence and the relations of the bishops to the pope. The French bishops who arrived on 13 November made several dubious propositions. Cardinals Gonzaga and Seripando, who were of the number of cardinal legates, died. The two new legates and presidents, Morone and Navagero, gradually mastered the difficulties. The various points of the dogma concerning the ordination of priests were discussed both in the congregations of the eighty-four theologians, among whom Salmeron, Soto, and Lainez were the most prominent, and in the general congregations. Finally, on 15 July 1563, the twenty-third session was held. It promulgated the decree on the Sacrament of Orders and on the ecclesiastical hierarchy (in four chapters and eight canons), and a decree on reform (in eighteen chapters). This disciplinary decree treated the obligation of residence, the conferring of the different grades of ordination, and the education of young clerics (seminarists). The decrees which were proclaimed to the Church at this session were the result of long and arduous debates, in which 235 members entitled to a vote took part. Disputes now arose once more as to whether the council should be speedily terminated or should be carried on longer. In the meantime the congregations debated the draft of the decree on the Sacrament of Matrimony, and at the twenty-fourth session (11 Nov., 1563) there were promulgated a dogmatic decree (with twelve canons) on marriage as a sacrament and a reformatory decree (in ten chapters), which treated the various conditions requisite for contracting of a valid marriage. A general decree on reform (in twenty-one chapters) was also published which treated the various questions connected with the administration of ecclesiastical offices.

The desire for the closing of the council grew stronger among all connected with it, and it was decided to close it as speedily as possible. A number of questions had been discussed preliminarily and were now ready for final definition. Consequently in the twenty-fifth and final session, which occupied two days (3-4 December 1563), the following decrees were approved and promulgated: on 3 December a dogmatic decree on the veneration and invocation of the saints, and on the relics and images of the same; a decree on reform (in twenty-two chapters) concerning monks and nuns; a decree on reform, treating of the mode of life of cardinals and bishops, certificates of fitness for ecclesiastics, legacies for Masses, the administration of ecclesiastical benefices, the suppression of concubinage among the clergy, and the life of the clergy in general. On 4 December, the following were promulgated: a dogmatic decree on indulgences; a decree on fasts and feast days; a further decree on the preparation by the pope of editions of the Missal, the Breviary, and a catechism, and of a list of forbidden books. It was also declared that no secular power had been placed at a disadvantage by the rank accorded to its ambassadors, and the secular rulers were called upon to accept the decisions of the council and to execute them. Finally, the decrees passed by the council during the pontificates of Paul III and Julius III were read and proclaimed to be binding. After the fathers had agreed to lay the decisions before the pope for confirmation, the president, Cardinal Morone, declared the council to be closed. The decrees were subscribed by two hundred and fifteen fathers of the council, consisting of four cardinal legates, two cardinals, three patriarchs, twenty-five archbishops, one hundred and sixty-seven bishops, seven abbots, seven generals of orders, and also by nineteen proxies for thirty-three absent prelates. The decrees were confirmed on 26 Jan. 1564, by Pius IV in the Bull "Benedictus Deus," and were accepted by Catholic countries, by some with reservations.

The Ecumenical Council of Trent has proved to be of the greatest importance for the development of the inner life of the Church. No council has ever had to accomplish its task under more serious difficulties, none has had so many questions of the greatest importance to decide. The assembly proved to the world that notwithstanding repeated apostasy in church life there still existed in it an abundance of religious force and of loyal championship of the unchanging principles of Christianity. Although unfortunately the council, through no fault of the fathers assembled, was not able to heal the religious differences of western Europe, yet the infallible Divine truth was clearly proclaimed in opposition to the false doctrines of the day, and in this way a firm foundation was laid for the overthrow of heresy and the carrying out of genuine internal reform in the Church.

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