

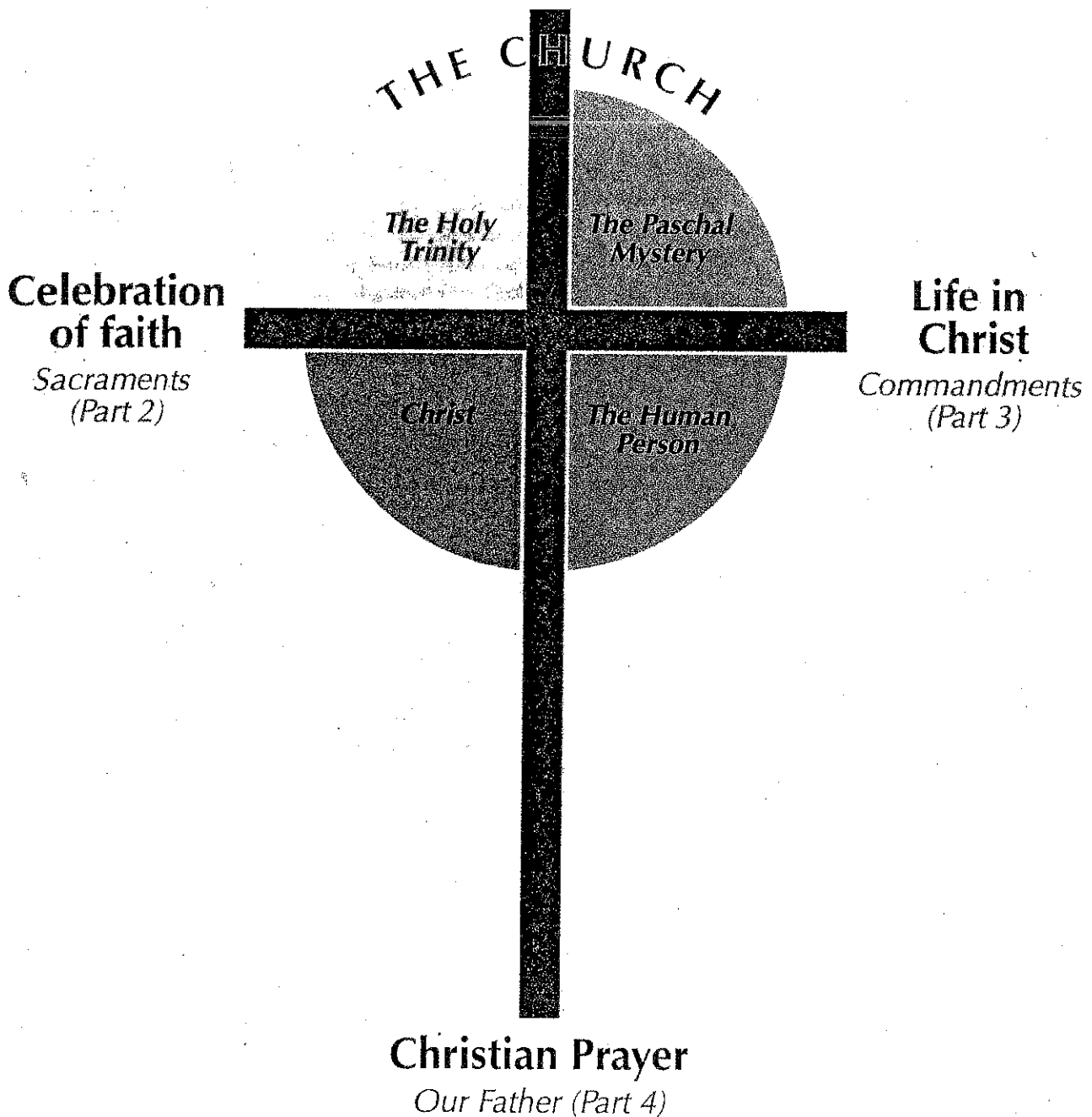
Echoes

Session 3

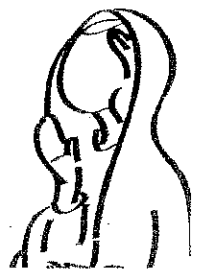
HANDOUT 1

Profession of faith

Creed (Part 1)



God so loved the world that he gave His only Son,
so that everyone who has faith in him may not die but have eternal life (*John 3:16*)



THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

III. God, 'HE WHO IS', Is Truth and Love

214 God, 'HE WHO IS', revealed himself to Israel as the one 'abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness'.²⁷ These two terms express summarily the riches of the divine name. In all his works God displays not only his kindness, goodness, grace and steadfast love, but also his trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness and truth. 'I give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness.'²⁸ He is the Truth, for 'God is light and in him there is no darkness'; 'God is love', as the apostle John teaches.²⁹

God is Truth

215 'The sum of your word is truth; and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever.'³⁰ 'And now, O LORD God, you are God, and your words are true';³¹ this is why God's promises always come true.³² God is Truth itself, whose words cannot deceive. This is why one can abandon oneself in full trust to the truth and faithfulness of his word in all things. The beginning of sin and man's fall was due to a lie of the tempter who induced doubt of God's word, kindness and faithfulness.

216 God's truth is his wisdom, which commands the whole created order and governs the world.³³ God, who alone made heaven and earth, can alone impart true knowledge of every created thing in relation to himself.³⁴

217 God is also truthful when he reveals himself – the teaching that comes from God is 'true instruction'.³⁵ When he sends his Son into the world it will be 'to bear witness to the truth'.³⁶ 'We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true.'³⁷

God is Love

218 In the course of its history, Israel was able to discover that God had only one reason to reveal himself to them, a single motive for choosing them from among all peoples as his special possession: his sheer gratuitous love.³⁸ And thanks to the prophets Israel understood that it was again out of love that God never stopped saving them and pardoning their unfaithfulness and sins.³⁹

219 God's love for Israel is compared to a father's love for his son. His love for his people is stronger than a mother's for her children. God loves his people more than a bridegroom his beloved; his love will be victorious over even the worst infidelities and will extend to his most precious gift: 'God so loved the world that he gave his only Son'.⁴⁰

220 God's love is 'everlasting'.⁴¹ 'For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you.'⁴² Through Jeremiah, God declares to his people, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.'⁴³

221 But St John goes even further when he affirms that 'God is love'.⁴⁴ God's very being is love. By sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time, God has revealed his innermost secret:⁴⁵ God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange.

²⁷ Ex 34:6

²⁸ Ps 138:2; cf Ps 85:11

²⁹ 1 Jn 1:5; 4:8

³⁰ Ps 119:160

³¹ 2 Sam 7:28

³² cf Dt 7:9

³³ cf Wis 13:11–9

³⁴ Cf Ps 115:15; Wis 7:17–21

³⁵ Mal 2:6

³⁶ Jn 18:37

³⁷ 1 Jn 5:20; cf Jn 17:3

³⁸ Cf Dt 4:37; 7:8; 10:15

³⁹ Cf Is 43:1–7; Hos 2

⁴⁰ Jn 3:16; Hos 11:1; Is 49:14–15; 62:4–5;

Ezek 16; Hos 11;

⁴¹ Is 54:8

⁴² Is 54:10; cf 54:8

⁴³ Jer 31:3

⁴⁴ 1 Jn 4:8, 16

⁴⁵ Cf 1 Cor 2:7–16; Eph 3:9–12

