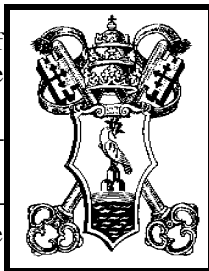


Acta Sanctæ Sedis

Pope Pius XII

Encyclical Letter *Sempiternus Rex Christus* on the Council of Chalcedon. Numbers 30-37.

30 While there is no reason why the humanity of Christ should not be studied more deeply also from a psychological point of view, there are, nevertheless, some who, in their arduous pursuit, desert the ancient teachings more than is right, and make an erroneous use of the authority of the definition of Chalcedon to support their new ideas.



31 These emphasize the state and condition of Christ's human nature to such an extent as to make it seem² something existing in its own right (*subjectum quoddam sui iuris*), and not as subsisting in the Word itself. But the Council of Chalcedon in full accord with that of Ephesus, clearly asserts that both natures are united in 'One Person and subsistence', and rules out the placing of two individuals in Christ, as if some one man, completely autonomous in himself, had been taken up and placed by the side of the Word. St. Leo not only adheres to this opinion (i.e. that of Chalcedon), but he also indicates the source whence he derives his sound doctrine. 'Whatever', he says, 'we have written has manifestly clearly been taken from the doctrine of the Apostles and of the Gospels' (Ep. clii. PL. Liv, 1123).

2. The text published in *L'Osservatore Romano* includes the phrase "at least psychologically." This phrase (*saltem psychologicae*) was omitted in the text published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 43 (1951), p. 638, lines 15-17: "Hi humanae Christi naturae statum et conditionem ita provehant ut eadem reputari videatur subiectum quoddam sui iuris, quasi in ipsius Verbi persona non subsistat".

32 It is indeed the truth that from the earliest times and in the most ancient writings, sermons and liturgical prayers, the Church openly and without qualification professes that our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of the Eternal Father, was born on earth, suffered, was nailed to the cross, rose from the sepulcher and ascended into heaven. And, further, the words of sacred Scripture give to the one Christ, the Son of God, human attributes, and to the same [Christ] the Son of Man, divine attributes.

33 Thus St. John the Evangelist declares: 'The Word was made flesh' (John i, 14). St. Paul writes of him: 'When He was in the form of God . . . He humbled Himself and became obedient even unto death' (Phil. ii, 6-8); or again: 'But when the fullness of time was come, God sent His Son, made from a woman' (Gal. iv, 4), and our Divine Redeemer Himself put the matter beyond doubt when He says: 'I and the Father are One' (John x, 30); and again, 'I went out from the Father and I came into the world' (John xvi, 28). The divine origin of our Redeemer is also manifest from this passage of the Gospel: 'I came down from heaven, not that I should do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me' (John vi, 38). And again: 'He who descended, this is he who ascended above all the heavens' (Eph. iv, 10). St. Thomas Aquinas explains this last sentence thus: 'He who descended, this is the same as he who ascended. By these words is signified the