

CONCEPCION DE LA IGLESIA Y VALIDACION DE LOS MINISTERIOS

En febrero del año 1967, el teólogo luterano Carl E. Braaten pronunció una conferencia en St. Mary's College, St. Mary's, Kansas, cuyo contenido, al menos parcialmente, puede servirnos de punto de partida en la cuestión que tenemos propósito de examinar¹.

Afirma este teólogo que prácticamente hasta el Concilio Vaticano II la concepción sobre la Iglesia —al menos en el campo católico— parecía dogmáticamente precisa y ampliamente desarrollada; hoy, en cambio, es su opinión, se experimenta una problemática incluso en torno a la misma naturaleza eclesial, a sus funciones esenciales².

Tal cambio radical de actitud frente a la concepción de la Iglesia ha demostrado, estima él, que la eclesiología es una de

1. C. E. Braaten, 'The Church in Ecumenical and Cultural Cross-Fire', *Theology Digest* 15 (1967) 283-94.

2. C. E. Braaten, *o. c.*, 284. «Up to Vatican II, most Roman Catholic theologians —and we shared that view— imagined that if anywhere there existed a dogmatically precise and fully developed concept of the Church, it was in Roman Catholicism. We have been surprised to observe the degree of sheer flux, even lively debate, on the doctrine of the Church in contemporary Roman Catholic theology. I believe the quest for the true nature of the Church, its essential marks and functions, is now as much a subject of inquiry among Roman Catholic as among Protestant theologians. Protestants, of course, have been used to flux and even chaos in doctrinal inquiry. This is the price they have had to pay for the freedom of radical questioning. They derive some comfort from the fact that more and more Roman Catholic theologians are willing to join in paying that price. For freedom of honest inquiry is a basic presupposition in reaching a consensus on the Church that will pioneer the way to reunion».