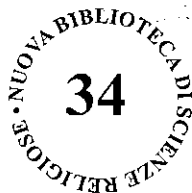


*A cura di*  
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# SOPHIA - PAIDEIA

## SAPIENZA E EDUCAZIONE (Sir 1,27)

*Miscellanea di studi  
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# *Catechesis in Europe during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

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## **1. Introduction**

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the teaching of the Catechism, and all the other forms of religious education were undergoing very serious changes and transformations. It was during this period that we get the gradual introduction of the Bible as one of the main sources of catechesis, and as a basic text for the education for the faith. It was at this time that the Bible emerged from a period of hibernation in which it was forced after the Protestant Reformation, and as a result of the Counter-Reformation.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was a period in which the Bible was re-introduced and given a central role in the pastoral activity of the Church, especially in catechesis. During this period, we find the use of the Bible to serve different catechetical Methods, and also different individuals who were outstanding in the European Catechetical sphere, by trying to give the Word of God a central role in catechesis.

Germany was a country in which the use of the Bible during the 20<sup>th</sup> century was linked to the Methodological renewals which were being experimented with at the time. In this respect, we find the Munich Method and to a much larger extent the Kerygmatic Method. In France, the use of the Bible is linked to individual persons who, each in his or her own way, tried to give a more central place to the Bible, thus opening the way to a more biblical catechesis. In Malta, Ġorġ PRECA, gave the Word of God to the Maltese people in the vernacular through his writings of a catechetical and educational nature.

## **2. Germany**

The teaching of the catechism in Germany, as in the rest of the world during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was strictly based on the traditional Method and

on uniformity.<sup>1</sup> The traditional Method was essentially made up of three steps, departing in a very orthodox way from the text of the catechism which was considered as untouchable:

1. the exposition of the official text in questions and answers;
2. the catechist's explanation of the single words of the text;
3. the application of the lesson to daily life.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1. *From the Traditional Method to the Munich Method*

The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought about a crisis in religious education and catechesis because those responsible for religious education in schools became increasingly aware that the rote learning of formulas left much to be desired with regards to the knowledge which the people actually acquired. Due to the formal rigidity, and the unintelligibility of the formulas used people could seldom put what they learnt into practice. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that many of the families abandoned their responsibility towards the religious education of their children. They no longer gave a helping hand in the education of their children with respect to the faith but delegated this responsibility to others.<sup>3</sup> This clearly called for an urgent renewal in the Method being used to teach the catechism.<sup>4</sup>

The first critical utterances, claiming that the Traditional Method was defective came from Germany's Catechist Association – the DKV.<sup>5</sup> According to these catechists, the problem with the Traditional Method was that it ignored a very important didactic principle: that the person learns by moving from the known to the unknown; from the concrete to the abstract.<sup>6</sup> These catechists were the driving force behind the strong

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Alfred LÄPPLÉ, *Breve storia della catechesi*, Brescia, Queriniana, 1985, 196.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Charles WACKENHEIM, *Breve storia della catechesi. Tradizione e novità*, Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1985, 66; Gerard FISCHER, *Germania. - I [Storia della catechesi nell'età moderna]*, in L. LENTNER (Ed.), *Dizionario di Catechetica*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 296; Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN, *Catechetica*, Alba, Edizioni Paoline, 1959, 145-148.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. JUNGSMANN, *catechetica*, 41-42.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Günther WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio. Metodologia per l'insegnamento della religione ai fanciulli e preadolescenti*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1964, 34.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. LÄPPLÉ, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 197; WACKENHEIM, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 66.

<sup>6</sup> «La trascuratezza del primo principio didattico di procedere dal noto all'ignoto, dal concreto all'astratto e la mancata attivizzazione oltre che dell'intelletto anche del senti-

movement towards a Methodological renewal in catechesis. This new movement was actually initialised at Monaco through the endeavours of Heinrich STIEGLITZ,<sup>7</sup> Josef GÖTTLER<sup>8</sup> and Gustav GÖTZEL<sup>9</sup> amongst others.<sup>10</sup>

The catechists within the DKV were not primarily interested in the theological contents which had to be taught but in the way in which these theological contents were to be presented during the lesson.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, they elaborated a Method which was inductive and not fixed to the text of the Catechism, but centred on the child and based on the psychology of the child. This does not mean that the text of the Catechism was done away with. The text played a role in the synthesis of the lesson. The new Method which was being developed was later to be known as the Munich Method.<sup>12</sup>

mento e della volontà dei ragazzi»: (Wilhelm PICHLER, *Unser Religionsunterricht. Seine Mängel und deren Ursachen*, Wien, St. Norbertus, 1907, 60, quoted in Ladislao CSONKA, *Wilhelm Pickler pioniere dell'insegnamento religioso nella scuola dell'obbligo*, in «Orientamenti Pastoral» 8 (1961) 500).

<sup>7</sup> Heinrich STIEGLITZ (17<sup>th</sup> June 1869 – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1920) was a German priest and catechist. Cf. Gerard FISCHER, *Stieglitz, Heinrich*, in ISTITUTO SUPERIORE DI PEDAGOGIA DEL PONTIFICIO ATENEO SALESIANO (Ed.), *Dizionario enciclopedico di pedagogia*. Vol. IV, Torino, S.A.I.E., 1959, 438-439.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph GÖTTLER (9<sup>th</sup> March 1874 – 14<sup>th</sup> October 1935) was a German specialist in catechesis at his time. Cf. Hans BRUNNENGRÄBER, *Göttler Joseph*, in ISTITUTO SUPERIORE DI PEDAGOGIA DEL PONTIFICIO ATENEO SALESIANO (Ed.), *Dizionario enciclopedico di pedagogia*. Vol. II, Torino, S.A.I.E., 1958, 549; Werner SIMON, *Göttler Joseph*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 308-309; [Leopold LENTNER], *Göttler Josef*, in L. LENTNER (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 317-318.

<sup>9</sup> Gustav GÖTZEL (9<sup>th</sup> May 1885 – 29<sup>th</sup> June 1950) was a German priest dedicated to the religious instruction of young people and to catechesis and its problems. He was highly influenced by the Munich Method. Cf. Hubert FISCHER, *Götzel Gustav*, in ISTITUTO SUPERIORE DI PEDAGOGIA DEL PONTIFICIO ATENEO SALESIANO (Ed.), *Dizionario enciclopedico di pedagogia*. Vol. II, Torino, S.A.I.E., 1958, 549-550; Hubert FISCHER, *Götzel Gustav*, in L. LENTNER (Ed.), *Dizionario di Catechetica*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 317-318.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. FISCHER, *Germania*. - I, 296.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. LÄPPLE, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 201.

<sup>12</sup> I have chosen to use the name *Munich Method*, the name with which it is mostly commonly referred to. However, the *Munich Method* has also been given other names: 'Method of Vienna', 'Psychological Method', 'Method of STIEGLITZ', 'Method of the Development of the Text', 'Method of the Formal Steps', 'Genetic Method', 'Synthetic Method', 'Analytical Method' and 'Story Method'. For more information about the Munich Method, one can consult the following: Ubaldo GIANETTO, *Monaco (Metodo di)*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di Catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 441;

## 2.2. *The Kerygmatic Renewal*

The Methodological renewal brought about by the Munich Method declined steadily due to the emergence of the kerygmatic movement within the Catholic Church in general, and specifically in catechesis. This envisaged a renewal in the contents.<sup>13</sup> It was the kerygmatic renewal which placed the Bible as the Word of God at the centre of catechesis.<sup>14</sup>

The move towards a more kerygmatic religious instruction was first raised during the 1930's when there was an awareness that the catechetical problem was not only limited to the Method being used, but also to the contents which were being transmitted.<sup>15</sup> In fact, one may state that the emergence of the Kerygmatic renewal, or Method, came about as a reaction to the Munich Method, because while the Munich Method emphasised the Method, the Kerygmatic Method emphasised the contents.

It is not easy to trace the origins of the kerygmatic renewal. However, the birth of the movement coincides with the movement to return to the sources which brought about the birth of the biblical, the liturgical, the patristic and the theological movements during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>16</sup>

Alois ZENNER, *Monaco (metodo catechistico di)*, in L. LENTNER (Ed.), *Dizionario di Catechetica*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 438; LÄPPE, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 200ff; Gerard FISCHER, *Germania. - I [Storia della catechesi nell'età moderna]*, in L. LENTNER (Ed.), *Dizionario di Catechetica*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 296; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 36ff; WACKENHEIM, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 66ff.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. BAUDLER, *Germania r. f.*, in ISTITUTO DI CATECHETICA DELL'UNIVERSITÀ SALESIANA ROMA, *Scuola e religione. 1. Una ricerca internazionale: situazioni, problemi, prospettive. Austria, Belgio (Fiandre), Belgio (Vallonia), Canada (Québec), Cile, Francia, Germania R.F., Inghilterra e Galles, Olanda, Polonia, Spagna, U.S.A.*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1971, 203.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. FISCHER, *Germania. - i*, 296; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 40.

<sup>15</sup> «ci si accorgeva che il problema catechistico non andava risolto esclusivamente sul piano metodologico e che era ormai tempo per iniziare un rinnovamento radicale della predicazione, partendo dal contenuto della predicazione stessa». (WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 41-42). Cf. also Franz ARNOLD, *Revival in Dogmatic Preaching and Catechesis*, in «Lumen Vitae» 3 (1948) 3, 510-518. (This article can also be found in French: Franz Xaver ARNOLD, *Renouveau de la prédication dogmatique et de la catéchèse*, in «Lumen Vitae» 3 (1948) 488-509.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Emilio ALBERICH, *Kerygmatica (catechesi)*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 374-376; Luis ERDOZAIN, *L'evoluzione della catechesi negli ultimi anni. Come si è arrivati alle acquisizioni odierne*, in «Presenza Pa-

The niche of kerygmatic Method can be traced back to the personnel of the Faculty of Theology of Innsbruck, amongst whom we find Karl RAHNER and his brother Hugo RAHNER, Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN and Franz Xavier ARNOLD. It was Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN<sup>17</sup> who actually started the movement towards the renewal of catechetics based on kerygmatic theology, with the Bible at the centre of religious instruction. The kerygmatic movement accentuated the doctrinal contents, the contents related to salvation and the pedagogy used by God rather than the scientific aspect of catechesis. The movement thus put the message of the Good News found in the Bible at the centre of all proclamation.<sup>18</sup>

The definition which JUNGSMANN gave to the term 'kerygma' is: «the Christian teaching in so far as it is intended to be proclaimed, that is, to be realized through pastoral care as the basis of Christian life».<sup>19</sup> Since

storale» 40 (1970) 8/9, 645; Luis ERDOZAIN, *The Evolution of Catechetics. A Survey of Six International Study Weeks on Catechetics*, in *Lumen Vitae* 25 (1970) 1, 9-10. This article can also be found in French: Luis ERDOZAIN, *L'évolution de la catéchèse. Panoramique de six Semaines Internationales de Catéchèse*, in «Lumen Vitae» 24 (1969) 4, 575-599. It has also been published as part of a book: Luis ERDOZAIN, *The Evolution of Catechetics: A Survey of Six International Study Weeks on Catechetics*, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*, Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 86-109.

<sup>17</sup> Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN (1889 - 1975) was an Austrian Jesuit and theologian who spent most of his life teaching catechetics, pastoral theology and liturgy at the University of Innsbruck. Cf. Marko PRANJIC, *Jungsmann Josef Andreas*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 371-372.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Franz Xavier ARNOLD, *Il ministero della fede. Le istanze più urgenti della pastorale d'oggi*, Alba, Edizioni Paoline, 1954, 78-80, 82-83; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 43; LÄPPE, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 202-203; CSONKA, *Storia della catechesi*, 174; Ralph SAUER, *Germania I. Chiesa Cattolica*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di Catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 290-294; Edgar Josef KORHERR, *Austria*, in ISTITUTO DI CATECHETICA DELL'UNIVERSITÀ SALESIANA ROMA, *Scuola e religione*, 45; WACKENHEIM, *Breve storia della catechesi*, 74; ALBERICH, *Kerygmatica (catechesi)*, 374.

<sup>19</sup> Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN, *The Kerygma in the History of the Pastoral Activity of the Church*, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*, Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 198-206. Cf. also Joseph André JUNGSMANN, *Theology and Kerygmatic Teaching*, in «Lumen Vitae» 5 (1950) 2-3, 259, 262 (This article can also be found in French: Joseph André JUNGSMANN, *Le problème du message à transmettre ou le problème kerygmaticque*, in «Lumen Vitae» 5 (1950) 271-276. It has also been published as part of a book: Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN, *Theology and Kerygmatic Teaching*, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*, Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 213-218); Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN, *La predicazione alla luce del Vangelo*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 94-95, 101-103; Josef Andreas JUNGSMANN, *Kerygmatic Theology*, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook*

the Catechisms used at the time were too much in the nature of theological treatises, JUNGSMANN «suggested that theology...was not suitable fare for nourishing the faith of ordinary people and that it should be replaced with the kerygma».<sup>20</sup>

The fundamental principles of the kerygmatic Method are that catechesis forms part of the evangelisation mission of the Church, and that the most important thing in catechesis is not the Method but the contents. Bearing this in mind, the proponents of the kerygmatic renewal envisaged that Christ is the centre of the Christian message. However, in the Christian message, the decisive events are those referred to as the paschal mystery. Furthermore, Christianity was not considered as a system of truths or codes but as a message – the Good News, to which the catechist must first of all bear witness, and then later communicate it to others.<sup>21</sup>

*for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*, Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 207-212; ARNOLD, *Revival*, 514; ARNOLD, *Il ministero della fede*, 84; Franz Xavier ARNOLD, *Kerygma e teologia*, in L. LENTNER (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechistica*, Roma, Edizioni Paoline, 1966, 369-372; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 42; Paul HITZ, *Théologie et catéchèse*, in «Nouvelle Revue Théologique» 77 (1955) 9, 902-903. Even Joseph COLOMB distinguished between the message and doctrine: «Tout message implique une doctrine, mais ces deux mots n'ont pas exactement le même sens. Le message est essentiellement adressé à quelqu'un : il implique chez celui qui le transmet, une attitude de personne à personne; il est interpellation et attente d'une réponse. Qui dit doctrine dit contenu du message, contemplé en lui-même, comme une ensemble de vérités, sans référence aussi directe et explicite à une personne. Or cette attitude objective, utile et nécessaire didactiquement, est seconde; dans l'acte de catéchèse il s'agit toujours de transmettre un message. C'est évidemment en face de cet acte concret, qui inclut la transmission d'une doctrine, que nous placer pour faire une catéchétique réelle». Cf. Joseph COLOMB, *Le Service de l'Évangile. Manuel Catéchétique. Tome Premier*, Paris - Tournai - Rome - New York, Desclée, 1968, 17 footnote 1.

<sup>20</sup> Jungmann and the Kerygmatic Theology Controversy, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*, Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 194. Cf. also Joseph André JUNGSMANN, *Christ's Place in Catechesis and Teaching*, in «Lumen Vitae» 7 (1952) 533-543. This article can also be found in French: Joseph André JUNGSMANN, *La place de Jésus Christ dans la catéchèse et la prédication*, in «Lumen Vitae» 7 (1952) 573-582.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. ERDOZAIN, *The Evolution of Catechetics*, 12-13; ERDOZAIN, *L'evoluzione della catechesi negli ultimi anni*, 646; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 42-43; ALBERICH, *Kerygmatica (catechesi)*, 375; José Miguel NUÑEZ MORENO, *Teologia Kerygmatica*, in M. SODI - A. M. TRIACCA (Eds.), *Dizionario di omiletica*, Leumann (Torino) - Gorle (Bergamo), Editrice Elledici - Velar, 1998, 1592-1594; JUNGSMANN, *La predicazione*, 105; PRANJIC, *Jungmann*, 371; *Basic Principles of Modern Catechetics*, 35-37; *General Conclusions of the Eichstätt Week: 1960*, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*,

This was the general message that was promulgated at the Congress of Eichstätt in Germany, in 1960 and by means of which the kerygmatic Method was officially adopted in catechesis:<sup>22</sup>

The chief aim of this catechetical renewal is to present the truth of our faith as an organic whole. Its core is the Good News of our Redemption in Christ. Its fruit should be the grateful response of our love.

It is in the light of this central message of Christian catechesis that all other truths of the faith must be viewed, presented, and made fruitful for Christian life.<sup>23</sup>

The 1960 Eichstätt Congress made a very important assertion about catechesis. There are four ways with which to present the faith: the Bible, the liturgy, systematic teaching and testimony on the part of Christians themselves.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, the Bible was given a primary role in catechesis because it is the Word of God, and because it is the most important didactic book which the Church possesses. Other textbooks and manuals still have a role in catechetical activity, but they are subordinate to the Word of God in the Bible.<sup>25</sup> Therefore the Bible, together with the liturgy, personal witness and systematic teaching was the source of all catechesis.

The kerygmatic renewal called the catechist to know the dogma but proclaim the kerygma. It was for this reason that JUNGMANN stressed the value of the narrative and of the historical approach in catechesis, ra-

Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 31. These conclusions can be also found in French: *Déterminations pratiques de la semaine d'études. Orientations catéchétiques. Conclusions générales. Conclusions spéciales à propos de la liturgie*, in *Renouveau de la catéchèse. Rapports de la Semaine internationale d'études d'Eichstätt sur la catéchèse dans les pays de mission, dirigée par le R. P. J. Hofinger, S.J.*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1961, 538-544.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. ERDOZAIN, *The Evolution of Catechetics*, 12; ERDOZAIN, *L'evoluzione della catechesi negli ultimi anni*, 646; ALBERICH, *Kerygmatica (catechesi)*, 375.

<sup>23</sup> *General Conclusions of the Eichstätt Week*, 30. These conclusions can also be found in French: *Déterminations pratiques de la semaine d'études. Orientations catéchétiques. Conclusions générales. Conclusions spéciales à propos de la liturgie*, in *Renouveau de la catéchèse. Rapports de la Semaine internationale d'études d'Eichstätt sur la catéchèse dans les pays de mission, dirigée par le R. P. J. Hofinger, S.J.*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1961, 538-544.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Basic Principles of Modern Catechetics: A Summary Report from Eichstätt*, in M. WARREN (Ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics. Volume 1*, Winona (Minnesota), Saint Mary's Press - Christian Brothers Publications, 1983, 37-38.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Basic Principles of Modern Catechetics*, 35; *General Conclusions of the Eichstätt Week*, 31.



ther than the abstract philosophical approach being used.<sup>26</sup> The shift brought about by the kerygmatic renewal and which developed into the kerygmatic Method called for a return to the way in which the first disciples and the apostles proclaimed the message, because catechesis is the proclamation of the same Christian message.

The return to the biblical roots, by adopting the kerygmatic Method, re-allotted a primary and a prominent place to the Bible within catechesis.<sup>27</sup> This is clearly visible in the importance given to the history of salvation in general, and to the paschal mystery in particular. The Bible became one of the major sources of catechesis. It was the point of departure for all the teaching of the Catechism. It was at this moment that the Bible emerged decisively from a long period of hibernation, and took a prominent place in evangelisation.

### 2.3. *The German and Austrian Catechisms*

The Methodological renewal brought about by the Munich Method, and the centrality of the Word of God proposed by the Kerygmatic Method were endorsed in the 1955 German Catechism and the 1960 Austrian Catechism. The 1955 *Katholischer Katechismus der Bistümer Deutschlands* (*Catechism for the German Dioceses*) marked the highest point in the catechetical renewals that had taken place in the earlier decades. It incorporated both the Methodological renewal proposed by the Munich Method and the renewal in the contents proposed by the Kerygmatic Method.<sup>28</sup> The 1960 Austrian Catechism followed on the same lines.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Cf. ARNOLD, *Il ministero della fede*, 79-80, 84; Jungmann and the Kerygmatic Theology Controversy, 194; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 43; ALBERICH, *Kerygmatica (catechesi)*, 374.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Cesare BISSOLI, *Bibbia (catechesi)*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, DC, 83.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Mario FILIPPI, *Verso il Congresso Catechistico Internazionale di Monaco*, in «Catechesi» 56 (1987) 5, 37; Joseph André JUNGSMANN, *Le nouveau catéchisme allemand. Une présentation modèle du message du salut*, in «Lumen Vitae» 10 (1955) 605-619; WEBER, *L'insegnamento della religione come annuncio*, 135; Ladislao CSONKA, *Il nuovo catechismo tedesco*, in «Orientamenti Pedagogici» 2 (1955) 746-754; Ladislao CSONKA, *Storia della catechesi*, in Pietro BRAIDO (Ed.), *Educare. Sommario di scienze pedagogiche. Vol. III. Fondamenti psicopedagogici della catechesi, storia della catechesi, problemi generali della catechesi, catechesi evolutive, differenziale*, Zurich, PAS-Verlag, 1874, 174-175; FISCHER, *Germania. - I*, 297; ALBERICH, *Kerygmatica (catechesi)*, 375; ZENNER, *Monaco (metodo di)*, 439; Franz SCHREIBMAYR, *Catechi-*

### 3. France

France is one of the most secularised countries in the world. It has been so since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the formal separation between the Church and the State taking place in 1905.<sup>30</sup> Notwithstanding this, the Church has always sought to re-establish its significance once more in France. Some priests took to the factories and to the department stores to re-establish their contact with the people but this was unsuccessful.<sup>31</sup> It is within this context that the first attempts at a catechetical renewal, in which the Word of God had a prominent role took place in France.

#### 3.1. *The First Attempts at a Pedagogical Renewal*

The first attempts at a pedagogical renewal came from different people or entities at the same time. It is here that we meet Mgr. Pierre DADOLLE, the Method of St. Sulpice, and a catechetical manual published by an anonymous Brother of the Christian Schools.

#### 3.2. *Mgr. Pierre DADOLLE*

Mgr. Pierre DADOLLE,<sup>32</sup> Bishop of Dijon as from 1906 was dissatisfied with the traditional Method and with the books being used for the teaching of the catechism. He wanted an illustrated catechism which was

*smo cattolico (delle diocesi della Germania, 1955), in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), Dizionario di catechetica, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 119-120; GIANETTO, Monaco (Metodo di), 441.*

<sup>29</sup> Cf. CSONKA, *Storia della catechesi*, 174.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Joan L. COFFEY, *Of Catechisms and Sermons: Church-State Relations in France*, in «Church History» 66 (1997) 1, 54-66.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. COFFEY, *Of Catechisms and Sermons*, 54; Gilbert ADLER, *Francia*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 285.

<sup>32</sup> Mgr. Pierre DADOLLE (28<sup>th</sup> January 1857 – 22 May 1911) was a French priest who was nominated bishop of Dijon on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 1906. Cf. Pierre POURRAT, *Dadolle (Mgr Pierre)*, in G. JACQUEMET (Ed.), *Catholicisme. Hier - Aujourd'hui - Demain*. Tome Troisième. Confréries de Charité - Éléphantine, Paris, Letouzey et Ané, [1952], 421-422; R[oger] AUBERT, *Dadolle (Pierre)*, in R. AUBERT – E. VAN CAUWENBERGH (Eds.), *Dictionnaire d'Historie et de la Géographie Ecclésiastique*. Tome Quatorzième. Dabert - Eger, Paris, Letouzey et Ané, 1960, cc.9-10.

more based on the Bible, especially on the Gospels. This catechism was to be made more concrete through biblical episodes and the explanation of biblical texts which were not intended to be learnt-off by heart.<sup>33</sup>

Mgr DADOLLE entrusted the redaction of this catechism to Fr. BORDET.<sup>34</sup> However, the biblical text which was elaborated by BORDET was not accepted by the clergy because it was considered as too avant-garde. Consequently, it was abandoned.<sup>35</sup> In this, we see an initial attempt at giving a prominent place to the Bible within a particular catechism at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which was rejected. This is a clear example of the fact that the use of the Bible at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was still very innovative and ahead of its time to be accepted. Therefore, we get an explicit rejection of the Bible in a formal catechism and a consolidation of the Traditional Method in France.

### 3.3. *The Method of St. Sulpice*

At the parish of St. Sulpice in Paris, a different Method for teaching the Catechism was being used. The Method was to have a very strong influence on the Method used in the teaching of the Catechism in France for more than three centuries. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this Method had an undisputed authority in parochial catechesis.<sup>36</sup>

The creator of the Method of St. Sulpice was Jean-Jacques OLIER.<sup>37</sup> The teaching of the Catechism was held in a chapel and was at least two

<sup>33</sup> «Un projet de catéchisme plus évangélique, plus concret et mieux adapté que le catéchisme diocésain existant. Le projet établi différait profondément du catéchisme traditionnel ... Le contenu comprenait, insérés entre des réponses aux questions, des récits évangéliques que dépassaient parfois 25 lignes et des textes d'explication de même longueur, qui évidemment ne pouvaient être appris par cœur... Enfin, autant que possible, on y utilisait un vocabulaire dont les termes techniques étaient exclus». (André BOYER, *Un demi-siècle au sein du Mouvement Catéchistique Français. Témoignages et documents*, Paris, Editions de l'Ecole, 1966, 19-20).

<sup>34</sup> Fr. BORDET was a professor at the Major Seminary

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Mary COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique. De Jules Ferry à Vatican II*, Paris, Centurion, 1988, 40; BOYER, *Un demi-siècle*, 20.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 42-43; Ladislao CSONKA, *L'organizzatore della catechesi parrocchiale «in forma di vera scuola» Can. Camille Quinet*, in «Orientamenti Pastoralisti» 10 (1963) 81-111.

<sup>37</sup> Jean-Jacques OLIER was the parish priest of the parish of St. Sulpice in Paris from 1642-1652. Cf. COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 43; Elisabeth GERMAIN, *Saint-Sulpice*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 557.

hours long. It was directed by a priest for a large group of children together. The first moment of the meeting consisted in asking the children questions on the previous lessons. Then a text from the Bible or from the history of the saints was read out. This was followed by the singing of an adequate song. At the end of the song, the moment of instruction proper was commenced: the explanation of the text which the children then had to learn by heart. This was followed by a homily on the Sunday gospel. Finally, the priest read out the feasts which would be celebrated during the week, and if there was time, he would also make some remarks and comments on the children's behaviour.<sup>38</sup>

This Method made an explicit use of the Bible in two different moments of the teaching session: the reading of biblical texts to the children, and the homily in which the Sunday Gospel was explained. In the use of the Method of St. Sulpice, we get a more explicit use of the Bible in a direct way both through the reading of biblical texts, and through preaching on biblical texts.

### 3.4. *The Manuel du Catéchiste*

In 1907, a guide for catechists was published by an anonymous author, claiming that he was a Brother of the Christian Schools. It was entitled *Manuel du Catéchiste. Méthodologie de l'enseignement de la religion dans les écoles primaires et les pensionnats*<sup>39</sup>. The Methodology in this manual was inspired both by the Method of St. Sulpice together with the Munich Method. However, the author seems to have been more inclined towards the Munich Method.<sup>40</sup>

### 3.5. *Mgr. Maurice LANDRIEUX and the Biblical Current*

In France, at one point, there were also two different currents of renewal: the biblical current and the liturgical current. I am going to limit myself to study the biblical current, since this is relevant to our study here. However, even before the biblical current was born, we get Ca-

<sup>38</sup> Cf. GERMAIN, *Saint-Sulpice*, 558; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 43.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *Manuel du Catéchiste. Méthodologie de l'enseignement de la religion dans les écoles primaires et les pensionnats*, Tours - Paris, Mame - Poussielgue Éditeurs, 1907.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 44-45.

mille QUINET<sup>41</sup> who was interested in applying the Methodology used in other disciplines to catechesis. He was the person who applied the Munich Method to the teaching of the Catechism in France in the best way.<sup>42</sup>

The biblical current valued the Bible as the primary source for the teaching of the Catechism.<sup>43</sup> Within this current, we meet two important figures who were the protagonists of the biblical current. They worked together to produce a catechism based on the Gospels: Mgr. Maurice LANDRIEUX and Fr. Eugène CHARLES.

Mgr. Maurice LANDRIEUX<sup>44</sup> was aware that 12 year old children, even after having attended catechism classes for two or three times a week, for at least two years, still did not have an integral view and a significant knowledge of the faith.<sup>45</sup> He concluded that one of the reasons for this is the Method and the Catechism which were being used to teach the children.<sup>46</sup>

The fundamental proposition, which he proposed in a pastoral letter entitled "*Sinite Parvulos*". *Le premier enseignement par l'Évangile*, was that since the Gospels are a narrative, they have to be taught as a story and not as a lesson. The child endures a lesson but never gets tired of a story.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, he concluded that the Bible is the indispensable teaching book for catechesis.<sup>48</sup> Mgr LANDRIEUX claimed that all the Catechism can

<sup>41</sup> Camille QUINET (1<sup>st</sup> November 1879 – 29<sup>th</sup> September 1961) was a French priest who was at the forefront of the catechetical movement in France. He was a specialist in catechetics. Cf. Ubaldo GIANETTO, *Quinet Camille*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechistica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 527-528; CSONKA, *L'organizzatore della catechesi parrocchiale*, 81-111; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 79; Gilbert ADLER - VOGELISEN Gérard, *Un siècle de catéchèse en France 1893-1980. Histoire - Déplacements - Enjeux*, Paris, Éditions Beauchesne, 1981, 161.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 45; CSONKA, *L'organizzatore della catechesi parrocchiale*, 87.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 182-183.

<sup>44</sup> Mgr. Maurice LANDRIEUX (1857 – 1926) is one of the great figures who tried to bring about a catechetical renewal in the Diocese of Dijon. He wrote many books which were aimed at giving the Gospels to everybody without distinction. He was bishop of Dijon as from 1921. Cf. COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 47-49.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. André BOYER, *Pédagogie chrétienne. Problèmes et méthodes*, Paris, P. Lethielleux, 1945, 251.

<sup>46</sup> «Se demande "à qui la faute", il concluait. En général pas aux enfants, pas aux maîtres, mais sans doute à la méthode». (BOYER, *Pédagogie chrétienne. Problèmes et méthodes*, 251). Cf. also *Direttorio di pastorale catechistica*, 13; ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 176; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 50-51.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 176; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 52.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. BOYER, *Pédagogie chrétienne. Problèmes et méthodes*, 251-252; COKE, *Le mouvement*

be traced in the Gospels, but not all the Gospels can be found in the Catechism.<sup>49</sup>

LANDRIEUX found a very strong ally for his ideas and endeavours in Fr. Eugène CHARLES, who took up his ideas and articulated them into a new catechism in three volumes.<sup>50</sup> The merit of LANDRIEUX and CHARLES lies not only in having decided upon a historical presentation, but also in offering a Catechism which directly uses and explains the text of the Bible.<sup>51</sup> By the publication of their biblical catechism, LANDRIEUX and CHARLES gave the Word of God in the Bible a primary place within the catechetical sphere in France.

### 3.6. Joseph COLOMB

One of the figures who brought about a radical renewal of catechesis in France, and around whom a catechetical controversy arose, just before the Second Vatican Council, was Joseph COLOMB.<sup>52</sup> His work in the catechetical area has to be seen in the light of what his predecessors had achieved. COLOMB crowned all their work in the publication of the progressive catechism.<sup>53</sup>

The catechism which he develops is a progressive catechism because

*catéchétique*, 48-49, 52.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. BOYER, *Pédagogie chrétienne. Problèmes et méthodes*, 252; ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 177; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 53.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Eugène CHARLES, *Le catéchisme par l'Évangile*. Vol. 1: *Le livre du prêtre. Pour mes catéchismes évangéliques. Pour mes prônes catéchistiques*, Marseille, Éditions Publiroc, 1931; Eugène CHARLES, *Le catéchisme par l'Évangile*. Vol. 2: *Le livre de mère et des dames catéchistes. Pour rompre le pain divin à nos enfants*, Marseille, Éditions Publiroc, 1931; Eugène CHARLES, *Le catéchisme par l'Évangile*. Vol. 3: *Le livre des tous-petits. Pour connaître et aimer Jésus*, Marseille, Éditions Publiroc, 1931. Cf. also BOYER, *Pédagogie chrétienne. Problèmes et méthodes*, 254-257; ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 177-178; *Direttorio di pastorale catechistica ad uso delle diocesi in Francia*, Leumann (Torino), Elle Di Ci, [1965], 14; VERNHET Paul, *Dimensions nouvelles du catéchisme*, Toulouse, Édition Edouard Privat, 1957, 205-206; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 54.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 181.

<sup>52</sup> Joseph COLOMB (21<sup>st</sup> July 1902 – 8<sup>th</sup> June 1979) was a priest of St. Sulpice, a professor at the Major Seminary and in the Faculty of Theology, the general secretary of the French National Commission for the Catechism and of the Centre National Catéchistique. Cf. Georges DUPERRAY, *Colomb Joseph*, in J. GEVAERT (Ed.), *Dizionario di catechetica*, Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elledici, 1986, 157-159; VERNHET, *Dimensions nouvelles du catéchisme*, 225.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. DUPERRAY, *Colomb Joseph*, 158.

it is not guided by a theological system in which one has to present a complete synthesis of a particular theme, but it presents a topic depending on the age of the child, his/her needs, and an amount which is appropriate to the child without trying to present him/her with everything.<sup>54</sup> COLOMB himself confirms this: «The series of manuals form a progressive course. That is to say, they are designed for each year or group of years not as a theological system...but as coinciding with the age of the child and the requirements of that age».<sup>55</sup> Moreover, COLOMB states that: «The characteristic of the manuals is... in the doctrine itself, in the sources from which it is drawn and the manner in which it is presented. The sources are Holy Scripture and the liturgy».<sup>56</sup>

With Joseph COLOMB we get a definite breakthrough in the use of the Bible for catechesis. The Bible became a source for catechesis together with the liturgy. COLOMB's work put the Bible at the forefront of catechesis thus affirming what his predecessors tried to achieve. Still there were very strong reactions to his Method, which ended up both by his condemnation, and the condemnation of his method, in 1957.<sup>57</sup> As a result, we return once again for some time to the Methods that had been used previously.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. VERNHET, *Dimensions nouvelles du catéchisme*, 229; Gilbert ADLER, *Joseph Colomb: un mouvement, un homme, un héritage*, in «Catéchèse» 20 (1980) 80, 38-40; ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 203-204; Jean-Dominique DURAND, *La crise du catéchisme de 1957*, in «Catéchèse» 38 (1998) 150, 120.

<sup>55</sup> Joseph COLOMB, *Progressive Catechism Manuals*, in «Lumen Vitae» 5 (1950) 4, 550. This article can also be found in French: Joseph COLOMB, *Des manuels de catéchisme progressif*, in «Lumen Vitae» 5 (1950) 4, 581-590.

<sup>56</sup> COLOMB, *Progressive Catechism Manuals*, 553.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. DUPERRAY, *Colomb Joseph*, 158; COKE, *Le mouvement catéchétique*, 138, 141 ; ADLER - VOGELISEN, *Un siècle*, 212-222, 218; DURAND, *La crise du catéchisme*, 122, 125-126; Peggy CALDERHEAD, *Marie Fargues, Pedagogue and the Active Method*, in «The Living Light» 21 (1984-1985) 2, 123-125; Ladislao CSONKA, *Educazione religiosa della prima infanzia in Francia*, in «Orientamenti Pedagogici» 6 (1959) 2, 231-232; [COMMISSION ÉPISCOPALE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT RELIGIEUX], *Communiqué de la Commission épiscopale de l'enseignement religieux*, in «La documentation Catholique» 54 (1957) 1261, cc. 1271-1274; [COMMISSIONE EPISCOPALE DELL'INSEGNAMENTO RELIGIOSO], *Comunicato della Commissione Episcopale dell'insegnamento religioso*, in *Direttorio di pastorale catechistica ad uso delle Diocesi di Francia*, Leumann (Torino), Elle Di Ci, [1965], 37-39; 213-222.

#### 4. Malta<sup>58</sup>

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Malta was also experiencing a renewal in catechesis in which the Word of God had a prominent role. The individual behind this catechetical renewal was St George PRECA<sup>59</sup>, or Dun Ġorġ PRECA<sup>60</sup> as he is locally known. Dun Ġorġ PRECA was a very prolific writer and preacher. His basic text was the Word of God in the Bible. His written

<sup>58</sup> The Maltese Islands are made up of six islands and islets with the main islands being Malta, Gozo and Comino. The uninhabited islets are Cominetto, Filfla and St Paul's Island. Malta is situated in a strategic position between two continents and between two different world views which differ in both culture and mentality. The islands lie in the Mediterranean Sea around 96 km south of the tip of the Italian island of Sicily and around 290 km from the northern coast of North Africa. On the western side the Maltese Islands are around 1590 km from Gibraltar and on the eastern side 1510 km from Port Said. For more information cf. Neville RANSLEY - Anton AZZOPARDI, *A Geography of the Maltese Islands*, Malta, St Aloysius' College Publications, 4<sup>th</sup>1988.

<sup>59</sup> George PRECA was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> February. He was ordained a priest, and founded a society of celibate men and women who dedicated themselves to the teaching of the Catechism in Malta. He died on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 1962. He was canonised in 2003. For more details and biography, cf. Alexander BONNICI, *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Hajja-Xhieda-Dokumenti*. Vol I: *Zmien ta' Prova (1880-1916)*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Soċjetà Duttrina Nisranija M.U.S.E.U.M., 1980. [*Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Life-Witnesses-Documents*. Vol I: *A Time of Trial (1880-1916)*]; Alexander BONNICI, *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Hajja-Xhieda-Dokumenti*. Vol II: *L-Inkjestja tal-Knisja (1916-1917)*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Soċjetà Duttrina Nisranija M.U.S.E.U.M., 1981. [*Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Life-Witnesses-Documents*. Vol II: *The Inquiry of the Church (1916-1917)*]; Alexander BONNICI, *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Hajja-Xhieda-Dokumenti*. Vol III: *Il-Bniedem t'Alla (1918-1962)*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Soċjetà Duttrina Nisranija M.U.S.E.U.M., 1989. [*Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Life-Witnesses-Documents*. Vol III: *A Man of God (1918-1962)*]; Angelo MONTONATI, *Coraggio e profezia. Un pioniere del Vaticano II. Il beato Giorgio Preca (Malta 1880-1962)*, Cinisello Balsamo (Milano), Edizioni San Paolo, 2003; [Abel GIGLIO - John FORMOSA], *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962)*, in [A. GIGLIO - J. FORMOSA] (Eds.), *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Fundatur Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M.*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], [Museum], 1965, 8-61. [*Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962)*, in *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Founder of the Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M.*]; *Dun Ġorġ. 1880 - 1962*, [Valletta (Malta)], Progress Press, 1980. [*Dun Ġorġ. 1880 - 1862*]; Alexander BONNICI, *Dun Ġorġ Preca (1880-1962). Apostle for the Spreading of the Word of God and Founder of the Society of Christian Doctrine*, Malta, The Society [of] Christian Doctrine, 1985. In much more concise versions we find: Roberto DARMANIN, *La Società della Dottrina Cristiana e il suo fondatore, Don Giorgio Preca*, in «Civiltà Cattolica» 141/II (1990) 256-260; Lorenzo GATT, *Don Giorgio Preca: pioniere dell'apostolato dei laici*, in «Rogate Ergo» 2 (1987) 50, 45-47; Lorenzo GATT, *Don Giorgio Preca: generoso apostolo della Chiesa Maltese*, in «L'Osservatore Romano» (6 Marzo 1987) 4; N[azzareno] CAMILLERI, *Il Servo di Dio Mons. Giorgio Preca apostolo delle isole di Malta e Gozo*, in «L'Osservatore Romano» (31 Luglio - 1 Agosto 1972) 2.

<sup>60</sup> 'Dun' is the Maltese equivalent for 'Father', when this is used to refer to a priest.



works are full of references, and of direct quotations from the Bible which he himself had to translate from the Latin Vulgate, into the Maltese language.

Dun Ġorġ Preca wrote a significant number of works, but not all are of a biblical nature. However, all of PRECA's works were intended to teach and to educate the people, by making special reference to the Bible. It was he who introduced the Bible to the Maltese people, in the form of books and writings which make use of the Bible, and explain biblical texts. Some are of a theological nature, others are in the form of manuals, and others still are in the form of stories. However, among the different writings of Dun Ġorġ we also find a series of works which make use of the Bible in a particular way. These works are heavily based on the Bible. Still, one must keep in mind that most of the works which PRECA wrote make references to the Bible in a sporadic manner.

The way in which Dun Ġorġ PRECA uses the Bible in his works can be summarised under three major headings:

1. works in which the Bible is used for specific aims;
2. works in which the Bible is used when applied to a particular pedagogical Method;
3. works in which the Bible is used in a particular genre of writing.<sup>61</sup>

#### 4.1. *Works in which the Bible is used for a Specific Aim*

The works in which the Bible is used for a specific aim are those in which PRECA uses the Bible for a particular purpose, such as to teach. The fact that Dun Ġorġ PRECA wrote primarily to teach indicates that the great majority of his writings have a didactic aim. In such writings, Dun Ġorġ makes a didactic use of the Bible. In this respect, PRECA makes use of both the Old Testament and the New Testament in different ways, from simply quoting Sacred Scripture in order to teach through the explanation of the words, to the compilation of lists of quotations taken from different books of the Bible on a particular theme or subject, intended to be learnt-off by heart. The writings vary from entire writings, to leaflets and pamphlets.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>61</sup> See Carl-Mario SULTANA, *The Presence and the Use of the Bible in the Ministry and in the Works of Dun Ġorġ Preca*, S.T.D. dissertation, Faculty of Theology, Università Pontificia Salesiana, Roma, 2007.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. amongst others Ġorġ PRECA, *X'Ghandna Nagħmlu Biex Insalvaw Ruhna*, in *X'Ghandna Nagħmlu Biex Insalvaw Ruhna*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae

The repertoire of Dun Ġorġ PRECA's writings contains a substantial amount of writings in the form of meditations in which the reader is called to meditate upon the Word of God and apply it to daily life. All the meditations which PRECA wrote are drawn from one source: the Word of God in Sacred Scripture. PRECA was able to write meditations on any part of Sacred Scripture, with meditations on texts taken from books of the Bible in a transversal way, except for the Book of Revelations, which PRECA claimed to be very difficult for the common people to understand. His deepest meditations were based on the passion and the death of Christ.<sup>63</sup>

One of the aims of Dun Ġorġ PRECA's writings was to help the reader to live a truly authentic Christian life. It is for this reason that Dun Ġorġ dedicated some parts of his works to biblical characters who could serve as models to the readers. PRECA does not only present the biblical models as good examples of a Christian life, but he also exhorts the reader to imitate the model in his/her life, and to live as that particular biblical character lived.<sup>64</sup> In such instances, these writings can be considered as parenetic works. However, for Dun Ġorġ, the supreme model was al-

Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1990, 1-41. [*What we Need to Do to Save our Soul*, in *What we Need to Do to Save our Soul*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Versetti mill-Evangelju li jmissu fil-Qrib is-Salvazzjoni tar-Ruh*, in *X'Ghandna Nagħmlu*, 45-49. [*Verses from the Gospel which Touch very Closely on the Salvation of the Soul*, in *What we Need*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-'Missierna'*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1992. [*The 'Our Father'*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *Katekizmu fuq Alla u fuq Ġesù Kristu*, Sliema (Malta), Salesian Press, 1946. [*Catechism on God and on Jesus Christ*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Ktieb tal-Lanterni*, in «*Kalendarju Museumin*» 4 (1950) 65-66. (Continued in subsequent issues and concluded in 3 (1960) iv). [*The Book of Lanterns*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *Is-Sala ta' l-Udjenzi*, in «*Kalendarju Museumin*» 2 (1946) 16-17. (Continued in subsequent issues and concluded in 6 (1977) iv). [*The Hall of Audiences*].

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Ktieb il-Kbir*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1983. [*The Great Book*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *Qagħdiet Musewmini*, [Valletta (Malta)], [Chretien & Co.], [1920's]. [*Museum Sessions*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Ktieb tan-Notturni*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1992. [*The Book of Nocturnes*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *Lucerna ta l-Ispirtu Santu*, [Valletta (Malta)], [Chretien & Co.], [1920's]. [*The Lamp of the Holy Spirit*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Mansjonijiet*, in *Il-Mansjonijiet u Praeconia*, 5-46. [*The Mansions*, in *The Mansions and Praeconia*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Pasklu fuq ix-Xenovlepija ta' San Ġużepp*, in *San Ġużepp*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1997, 37-40. [*A Glance at Scenes (from the Life) of St. Joseph*, in *St. Joseph*].

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *L-Eku tal-Hbieb u Is-Sinagoga l-Ġdida*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1998. [*The Echo of Friends and the New Synagogue*].

ways Christ himself. It was for this reason that he dedicated an entire work to the discipleship of Christ.<sup>65</sup>

Dun Ġorġ PRECA's writings were undoubtedly influenced by the theological sources, and the theology which he studied during his time. One such clear influence is the use of typologies.<sup>66</sup> These are characters from the Old Testament which prefigured characters from the New Testament. In this respect, Dun Ġorġ was certainly influenced by the Fathers of the Church, who made an abundant use of typologies in their writings. We have three particular typologies in PRECA's works:

1. he presents Joseph, the son of Jacob as a type of Joseph, the husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary;<sup>67</sup>
2. he presents Judith's chastity as a type of the Blessed Virgin Mary's chastity;<sup>68</sup>
3. he presents Esther as a type of Mary.<sup>69</sup>

#### 4.2. *Works in which the Bible is used when applied to a particular pedagogical Method*

The writings classified according to the Method prevalently used in the work are those in which a particular Method is preferred and overtly demonstrated in the writing itself. Dun Ġorġ never mentions the names of the Methods which are going to be used here.

In studying the works of Dun Ġorġ, one cannot miss the use which he makes of the Munich Method. This is clearly demonstrated in *Konastrija - Mill-Konkret Ghall-Astratt*.<sup>70</sup> *Konastrija* is a term which Ġorġ PRECA him-

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Id-Dixxipulat*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1988. [*Discipleship*].

<sup>66</sup> For a definition of a *typology*, cf. Mario CIMOSA, *La pedagogia di Dio nell'Antico Testamento*, in M. CIMOSA - C. BUZZETTI (Eds.), *I giovani e la lettura della Bibbia. Orientamenti e proposte*, Roma, LAS, 1992, 75.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *San Ġużepp. Qari Ghax-Xahar ta' Marzu*, in *San Ġużepp*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1997, 35. [*St. Joseph. Readings for the Month of March, in St. Joseph*].

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Lapidarju*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 2000, 55. [*The Collection of Marble Slabs*].

<sup>69</sup> Cf. PRECA, *Il-Lapidarju*, 59.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Konastrija - Mill-Konkret Ghall-Astratt*, in *Konastrija u Gabinetti fil-Museum*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1991, 1-30. [*Konastrija - From the Concrete to the Abstract, in Konastrija and Small Chambers in Museum*].

self coined by putting together two parts of two different words: *kon-* from *konkret* (concrete) and *astr-* from *astratt* (abstract). The ending *-ija* indicates a state of an object or things. Thus, the term signifies a state of motion from the concrete to the abstract. As the definition of the term *konastrija* points out, it is a work in which Dun Ġorġ seeks to move from the concrete to the abstract by using different stories.

There are some writings among Dun Ġorġ PRECA's works which clearly adopt the Kerygmatic approach. These writings depart from the Word of God, and then elaborate upon the morals which can be drawn from different biblical texts.<sup>71</sup>

The Narrative Method has been used, and is still being used, in many different spheres with different aims and effects. Christ himself used the Narrative Method to teach the multitudes, who could not understand God's wonders in any other way. Moreover, the early Church adopted this Method, and transmitted the wonders which God had done through Christ using the Narrative Method. Probably, the narration of a biblical scene does not give the listener any new information which was not previously known, but it helps the person to reflect on, and change his/her life. This is how Dun Ġorġ PRECA used the Narrative Method in his written works. PRECA used simple words in an attractive narrative style in order to narrate once again the wonders of God's plan of salvation through Christ.<sup>72</sup>

An interesting Method of the use of the Bible which can be traced in some of Dun Ġorġ PRECA's written works is the Method of Correlation, or what is referred to as the Hermeneutical Circle. When using this Method, the person departs from the major questions of life and poses questions to the Word of God, which on its part, as the Word of God, highlights human endeavours. This was quite an innovative way of using the Bible during the time in which PRECA lived, especially when one

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Ix-Xbiha ta' Alla*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1987. [*The Image of God*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *Iċ-Ċahda*, Ħamrun [(Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1947. [*Renunciation*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *L-Iskandlu*, [Sliema] (Malta), Salesian Press, 1941. [*Scandal*].

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *L-Istorja ta' Ġesù Kristu*, in *Summarium in Memoriam Iesu Christi u Kitbiet Ohra Qosra fuq Kristu*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 2004, 33-36. [*The Story of Jesus Christ, in Summarium in Memoriam Iesu Christi and Other Short Writings about Christ*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Paragrafi fuq Ġesù Kristu*, [Ħamrun (Malta)], Lux Press, [1962]. [*Paragraphs on Jesus Christ*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Benedicta*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1997. [*The Blessed*].

considers that the Bible was never given to lay persons, but was withheld in the hands of priests in the Latin Vulgate version. It was a result of this situation that PRECA decided to give the text of the Bible to lay persons in an intelligible way using the Method of Correlation.<sup>73</sup>

#### 4.3. Works in which the Bible is used in a particular Genre of Writing

A number of Dun Ġorġ PRECA's writings are elaborated using particular literary genres. These genres are styles of writing and of presenting a work. Literary genres are used to render the writing more interesting or effective. In the writings of Dun Ġorġ which are either based upon or draw their inspiration from the Word of God in Sacred Scripture, one can find a number of literary genres.

One of the theological genres which was common during the life of Dun Ġorġ PRECA was the "manual". These "manuals" or treatises were writings based on a particular argument which was treated in as exhaustive a way as possible. In fact, a "manual" dealt in a profound manner with a particular argument from all the different points of view, thus studying all the nuances of the argument. Dun Ġorġ PRECA was influenced by this form of writing, and amongst his different writings we find a very important "manual" in which he makes a profound use of the Bible. This "manual" is entitled *Is-Sakrarju ta' l-Ispirtu ta' Kristu* (*The Sanctuary of Christ's Spirit*).<sup>74</sup>

Dun Ġorġ PRECA also wrote two texts which he referred to as Psalms. PRECA decided to use the term 'psalm' to refer to these two writings for the simple reason that they are written in the form of songs of praise, in which he praises God for his economy of salvation, and how he prepared and formed a people within which his plan of salvation was to unfold.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *Eżercizzju Memorjali*, in *Summarium in Memoriam Iesu Christi*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 2004, 37-40. [*A Memory Exercise*, in *Summarium in Memoriam Iesu Christi*].

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Is-Sakrarju ta' l-Ispirtu ta' Kristu*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], [Societas Doctrinae Christianae] M.U.S.E.U.M., 1981. [*The Sanctuary of Christ's Spirit*]. This book has also been translated into English: George PRECA, *The Sanctuary of Christ's Spirit*, [Blata l-Bajda] (Malta), Society of Christian Doctrine, 1992.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Is-Salm ta' Patri Franku*, in *Ftuħ il-Qalb. Talb ta' Dun Ġorġ Preca. L-Ewwel Ktieb*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1998.

Dun Ġorġ PRECA wrote a substantial amount of prayers. His prayers touch upon a variety of ways of praying and consequently he also drew ideas from various sources. One of the major sources of Dun Ġorġ PRECA's prayers is the Bible. In such prayers, Dun Ġorġ uses biblical episodes, quotes biblical scenes, or recalls biblical characters in such a way that he and the reader can use them for personal or communitarian prayer, while recalling biblical episodes to mind.<sup>76</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

The way in which the Bible came to the forefront in pastoral activities during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after a long period of hibernation during the late middle ages, took different forms and itineraries in different countries. The German catechetical sphere was dominated by the endeavours of different movements. In this respect, we encounter the Munich Method based on the formal grades, and the kerygmatic Method based on the kerygmatic renewal, and the primary importance which this renewal gave to the Word of God in Sacred Scriptures.

The French catechetical renewal was not dominated by the work of different movements and Methods but by the labours of single individuals. The first attempts at a pedagogical renewal using the Word of God occurred through the efforts of Mgr. Pierre DADOLLE, of the Method of St. Sulpice and through the publication of the *Manuel du Catéchiste*. Nonetheless, the real first reformer was Camille QUINET with his interest in applying pedagogical innovations to catechesis.

The rise of two different currents of catechetical renewal in France gave

[*The Psalm of Fr Franco, in Openness of Heart. Prayers of Dun Ġorġ Preca. Vol I*]; This "psalm" has also been translated into English and published in two separate publications: George PRECA, *The Psalm of Father Franco, a Carmelite*, [Blata l-Bajda] (Malta), M.U.S.E.U.M., 1993; George PRECA, *Singing God's Glory. A Psalm, in Singing the Glory and Mercy of Our God. Two Psalms*, [Blata l-Bajda] (Malta), Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 2000, 3-18; Ġorġ PRECA, *Salm Vangeliku tas-Sirjaku*, Blata l-Bajda (Malta), Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 2002. [*Evangelical Psalm of the Syrian*].

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Ġorġ PRECA, *Ir-Rużarju tal-Madonna Mqassam Għal Ħmistax-il Sibt*, in *Ir-Rużarju tal-Madonna*, [Blata l-Bajda (Malta)], Societas Doctrinae Christianae M.U.S.E.U.M., 1991, 7-47. [*The Rosary of Our Lady Distributed for Fifteen Saturdays, in The Rosary of Our Lady*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Il-Ħames Misteri tad-Dawl*, in *Ir-Rużarju*, 85. [*The Five Mysteries of Light, in The Rosary*]; [Ġorġ PRECA], *Arloġġ Museumin*, [Malta], [Socjetà tad-Duttrina Nisranija], 1996. [*The Watch*]; Ġorġ PRECA, *Memento Domine (Iftakar, Sinjur)*, in *Ftuħ il-Qalb*, 94-103.

a helping hand to the attempts at renovation which had already been started. Here, the chief protagonists of the biblical current were Mgr Maurice LANDRIEUX and Eugene CHARLES. However, it was only Joseph COLOMB who appeared within the catechetical sphere after the Second World War that we get a true synthesis of all the renewals proposed in France.

In Malta, Dun Ġorġ PRECA, was able to re-introduce the Bible in catechesis and in education for the faith through the different writings which he wrote in order to teach the Maltese people, who at the time were engulfed in deep-seeded religious ignorance. Ġorġ PRECA did this by helping the people to come into contact with the text of Sacred Scripture, which at the time were scarcely found in the vernacular, but only in Latin, and in the hands of priests. As a result, while educating the people, PRECA was also making the Word of God in the Bible known to the people in the vernacular for the first time.

These scattered endeavours at giving a more central role to the Bible were not insignificant. At first glance, they may seem negligible, when considered in themselves, and when compared to with what needed to be done in order to re-introduce the Bible and give it the role it should have always had in catechesis. They constitute an initial attempt at giving the Bible the primary role it should have always had in catechesis, and which it was negated for centuries. These endeavours paved the way for the Biblical renewal which had been started with the publication of Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical Letter *Providentissimus Deus* [18<sup>th</sup> November 1893] on the study of Sacred Scriptures.

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### Abstract

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the teaching of the Catechism, and all the other forms of religious education were undergoing very serious changes and transformations. As a result of these transformations, we get the gradual introduction of the Bible as one of the main sources of the pastoral activity of the Church, especially catechesis. The Bible emerged from a period of hibernation into which it had entered for several centuries. In this work, the catechetical endeavours of Germany, of France and of Malta are highlighted. In this respect, we find the Munich method and to a much larger extent the Kerygmatic method, in Germany. In France, the use of the Bible is more linked to individual persons who, each in his or her own way tried to give a more central place to the Bible, thus opening the way to a more biblical catechesis. In Malta, we get Fr Ġorg PRECA, who through his writings of a catechetical and educational nature gave the Word of God to the Maltese people in the vernacular.

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