

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

One with Christ Twenty-fourth Week in Ordinary Time Tuesday, September 16, 2014
8:15 AM **1 Cor 12:12-14, 27-31a; Lk7:11-17** (Sts. Cornelius, pope, and Cyprian,
bishop, martyrs) (There is no possible problem we can have that does not have a remedy in
Christ.)

St. Paul is trying to instruct the Corinthians and us in a **proper regard for the Church**. This is the beginning of what is called “ecclesiology,” that is, understanding who we are—who we are. But the question “Who we are” is related to another question that is more basic: Who am I? The problem is that **we answer the question “Who am I?” wrongly and therefore we never really can understand “Who are we?”** That’s St. Paul’s point here.

We grew up identifying with our bodies. Children supposedly start identifying with their toes, and then their toys, and then everything is “mine.” This is a process, but we have to keep going; we can’t stop. But often people do stop. The world surely does stop. The world’s idea is you are your body and all your possessions, and you can throw in your feelings and your opinions and your convictions. But according to St. Paul that is not who you are.

Who are you? **You are a member of the body of Christ**; therefore, you as an individual are not really anything. **You don’t exist as an individual. You only exist as part of the body of Christ.** That is your true identity. And **if you understand that, then you can understand “Who are we?”** They both end up with the very same answer. We are the body of Christ, each an individual member, but **no one should be too focused on that individual membership.**

So he says some are prophets, yes, but let’s not focus on that. Some are ministers, yes, but don’t think that’s significant. Some are teachers, yes; some do mighty deed, yes, but that’s not important. This all relates to what Jesus called in the Pharisees **“hypocrisy,”** that is, **identifying with a role.** That’s what the Pharisees did. That’s why Jesus said, “Call no man

rabbi.’’ That was identifying with a role. That’s what St. Paul is talking about here. Yeah, there are some teachers and some are prophets and some are apostles and some do mighty deeds and some have gifts of healing and assistance and so on and so on and so on. But **that is not who you are. That’s just the service you have been given to do.**

When this really starts to dawn, then **we are really growing into an awareness of what Baptism means**, that we are not who we were, and we are not who the world thinks we are either, not as individuals, not as a community. **We are really one with Christ, and as one with Christ we have a right to everything he has.** This is why it is such good news. We have access to and a right to **the mind of Christ.** There is no possible problem we can have that does not have a remedy in Christ. St. Paul was very, very eager to get his message across to his people in Corinth. And we should be very eager to drink it in.