Jesuit and Dominican Collaboration and Rivalry in Biblical Studies

Benedict Thomas Viviano, O.P.

University of Fribourg, emeritus, Fribourg, Switzerland

benedict.viviano@unifr.ch

Abstract

In the twentieth century, the Dominicans and the Jesuits have gone from being adversaries to rivals to collaborators in the contentious field of modern biblical studies. In 1890, the Dominican Marie-Joseph Lagrange founded the École Biblique in Jerusalem, which quickly became the premier school in the Catholic Church for the growing field of modern biblical studies. Opposition to this project grew among the Jesuits, led by Leopold Fonck, who in 1910 founded a rival school in Rome, the Pontifical Biblical Institute, which garnered papal favor and exclusive rights to confer pontifical degrees. Tensions in biblical studies between the two groups persisted until 1943 when they collaborated on ghost-writing the papal encyclical *Divino afflante spiritu*. Their relationship continued to improve, so that by the time of the Second Vatican Council, they collaborated strongly on its constitution on divine revelation, *Dei verbum*.

Keywords

biblical studies – École Biblique – Pontifical Biblical Institute – Marie-Joseph Lagrange – Leopold Fonck – Jesuits – Dominicans – papal encyclicals

A well-known story of Catholic intellectual history in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has to do with biblical studies—Dominican Père Marie-Joseph Lagrange (1855–1938) founding the École Biblique in Jerusalem in November 1890, and the hostility to this project from Jesuit Leopold Fonck (1865–1930).

Before telling this story, I would like to state a general observation. When a Jesuit or a Dominican ghostwrites a papal encyclical alone, it is less successful,

less well received than when the encyclical is the result of a joint Jesuit-Dominican collaboration. It is therefore better for these two orders to work together for the good of the whole church than to work against one another. The examples of collaboratively written encyclicals I can think of are *Aeterni patris* (1879), by Leo XIII (1810–1903; 1878–1903), written with the help of Joseph Kleutgen, S.J. (1811–83) and Cardinal Thomas Zigliara, O.P. (1833–93), and the biblical encyclical *Divino afflante spiritu* (1943), which was the joint work of Augustin Bea, S.J. (1881–1968) and Jacques Voste, O.P. (1883–1949).¹ The effect of these encyclicals was revolutionary. In contrast, Dominican Louis-Joseph Lebret (1897–1966) singlehandedly wrote most of Paul VI's *Populorum progressio* (1967), which has a wonderful prophetic focus on global poverty but suffers from reliance on discredited economic theories of its age, something a counterbalancing perspective could have helped alleviate. I could also cite Pius X's *Mystici corporis* (1943), written largely by the Jesuit theologian Édouard Dhanis (1902–78) from ideas collected by fellow Jesuit Émile Mersch (1890–1940). Though *Mystici corporis* is an important encyclical, after reading a draft, the German Dominican Mannes Dominikus Koster (1901–81) petitioned the German bishops to modify its singular reliance on the image of the church as the “Mystical Body of Christ” because it could play into the hands of the Nazis. “Mystical Body” theology is corporative; it is easily absorbed by Nazi ideology. To resist this tendency, it needed to be balanced by the theology of the church as the people of God, based on the Israelites in the desert following Moses and God.² The people are diffused on the plain, which is an image that is more democratic. The document was not changed at that time, but Koster's ideas of the church as the people of God were subsequently incorporated into official Catholic doctrine in 1965 by their incorporation into chapter two of the Second Vatican Council's *Lumen gentium*.

1 Background

Before we begin the main story, a few background points are in order. It has been well observed that the invention of the printing press made its mark on Christian theology by making the Greek text of the Bible more available. This,

- 1 Voste simply transmitted the ideas of Lagrange first published in 1903 on the plurality of literary genres in the Bible. Once you accepted that there was a diversity of genres, not only the historical genre, you could allow for evolutionary biology and ancient near eastern cosmogonies in Genesis 1–3 and Job-like trials in analogy with the Babylonian Job tale.
- 2 Koster's “People of God” theology can be found in Mannes Dominikus Koster, *Ekklesiologie im Werden* (Paderborn: Bonifacius-Druckerei, 1940).

combined with the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 and the flooding of Western Europe with refugee Greek scholars, opened up the philological approach to biblical theology based on the Greek text, which could counterbalance the predominate philosophical theology that was carried out mostly in Latin. It became fashionable to learn Greek, even at dinner parties. The Greek scholar guest became the entertainment. Desiderius Erasmus (c.1466–1536) made the first printed edition of the Greek New Testament in 1516.³

Another background point has to do with the philosophy of the Renaissance. This is usually begun with rhetor figures like Pico de la Mirandola (1463–94), a rather tame figure. Instead, I agree with Ernst Bloch (1885–1977) that the real philosophers of the Renaissance were the wayward Dominicans Giordano Bruno (1548–1600) and Tommaso Campanella (1568–1639).⁴ They were products of the Dominican tradition of studying Aristotelian philosophy before tackling theology, even though they both moved far away from Aristotelian physics. When Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) was on trial, Campanella and like-minded confrères defended him, while confrères on the Inquisition worked for his condemnation.

Once the Jesuits received papal approbation, they quickly excelled in a system of high-school education, their *Ratio studiorum*.⁵ This system included a good foundation in classics, both Greek and Latin. Erasmus would have been pleased. One weakness was that out of fidelity to a misreading of the Council of Trent (1545–63), they did not teach the reading of the Greek New Testament in their secondary schools. Trent has said that the Latin Vulgate was normative for theology. The Jesuit educators took this to mean that they should not teach the Greek Testament in the schools. Critics could say that this policy contributed to a certain secularization that led to the French Revolution. The students read pagan authors like Homer (c.750 BCE) and Sophocles (c.496–406 BCE), and Pindar (c.518–438 BCE), but not the gospels and epistles. In effect, this made them educated pagans.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Dominicans and the Jesuits continued to compete and to collaborate in the old and in the new worlds. The evangelization of North and South America (to which may be added the Philippines) was in itself a great achievement. The pressure to resist the

3 Though Erasmus's Greek version of the Bible was the first one published, it was perhaps not the first one printed in draft form, which could be the Spanish Polyglot Bible sponsored by Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436–1517).

4 Ernst Bloch, *La philosophie de la Renaissance: Bruno, Campanella, Paracelse, Boehme, Bacon, Galilée, Kepler, Newton, Machiavel, Bodin, Grotius, Hobbes, Vico* (Paris: Payot, 1974).

5 For a deeper analysis of the Jesuit system of education and its consequences see Adrien Dansette, *The Religious History of Modern France* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961).

Protestant Reformation led however to a predominantly defensive posture in theology, not to liberating creativity. Apologetics predominated. Textbooks were written in the form of theses printed in thick, heavy black type and then defended with arguments from Scripture, patristics, liturgy, church councils, history, philosophy, canon law, and papal and episcopal statements. This structure could be compared to regiments in the Thirty Years' War (1618–48), with light regiments in front and the big guns in back. In this case, the big guns were the arguments from Scripture and the early church fathers. All this was a far cry from the living debates and bold syntheses of medieval theology, where the normative genre was the *quaestio disputata*, the give-and-take of real questions. Both Jesuits and Dominicans contributed to the newer learning, especially in Greek patristics. Dominicans Jacques Combefis (1605–79) and Michel Lequien (1661–1733), and Jesuit Jean Hardouin (1646–1729) figured among other glorious names; but there was no new Thomas Aquinas (c.1226–74).

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the Jesuits entered a serious crisis, perhaps due to their success up to then. After local royal suppressions, the whole Society of Jesus was suppressed by the pope in 1773. This suppression was not seriously enforced in countries that did not claim to obey the pope, like England and the United States.⁶ The Empress Catherine the Great of Russia (1729–96) went beyond this. She was not willing to have her school system in Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine destroyed. She got an exemption from the pope so that a young man in France or elsewhere who wanted to become a Jesuit could risk traveling across war-ravaged Europe and enter the Jesuit novitiate in Russia.

When the French Revolution occurred soon thereafter, all the orders were suppressed in lands where French arms prevailed (1789–93). The ban was enforced by Napoleon (r.1804–14). Only with his defeat at Waterloo and the Congress of Vienna in 1815 did the pope officially restore the Jesuits. The Jesuits sprang from their place of refuge and were ready to act. Gradually thereafter, there was what has been called the Romantic restoration of religious life in Europe and elsewhere. The novels of Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) and Catholic Emancipation in Britain (1829) changed the atmosphere.⁷ Religious life was no longer regarded in an exclusively negative light. First in France there were the Benedictines, with the reactionary Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805–75)

6 For more details on this history see John T. McGreevy, *American Jesuits and the World: How an Embattled Religious Order Made Modern Catholicism Global* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 1–25.

7 Dame Antonia Fraser, *The King and the Catholics: England, Ireland, and the Fight for Religious Freedom, 1780–1829* (New York: Nan A. Talese Doubleday, 2018).

and his start at Solemnes, supporting a Bourbon restoration. Then under the constitutional monarchy of the House of Orleans, the great cathedral preacher Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, O.P. (1802–61) revived the Dominicans, resisted by Klemens von Metternich (1773–1859) who smelled democracy in this project instead of the monarchical absolutism he preferred and promoted.⁸ Lacordaire's liberal spirit influenced about ten of the provinces out of the whole Order of Preachers, including England, Belgium, The Netherlands, Switzerland, and parts of Italy. Lying on his deathbed, Lacordaire professed that he died an impenitent liberal and a penitent Catholic. "Liberal" in this case meant belief in a constitutional parliamentary, fiscally responsible government such as the Orleanist Catholic monarchy in France, which lives on in Belgium, and now Spain. This model of government was what Lacordaire thought he had found in the Dominican constitutions.

2 The Rise of Modern Biblical Studies

Now we come to biblical studies. After Napoleon, the Lands of the Bible (the Levant) lay under the cruel, ignorant hand of the Ottoman Turks. Due to an incident in the crypt of the basilica in Bethlehem, there was an intervention on the part of Russia, acting as the protector of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire. Britain, France, and Piedmont intervened to protect Western Christian interests. The war that ensued was fought in Crimea (1853–54).⁹ Russia was humiliated. The Ottoman Empire continued its long decline. It made concessions to the Western powers. These concessions included the establishment of consulates in Jerusalem that included the responsibility to protect the local Christians of Latin and Protestant denominations.

This was the heyday of colonialism. A Bible-based land-grab ensued. The Russians, helped by the Greek Orthodox Christians, acquired extensive properties and began to build. The Italians (politically Sardinia-Piedmont or the House of Savoy) operated through the Franciscan custody of the Holy Land, which had been theirs since around 1300. The Spanish worked with them. The role of France was complicated. The French traditionally felt that they belonged in Jerusalem and the Near East because of their past involvement in the Crusades which were largely a French affair. When the Second Empire fell in France, beaten by the Prussians in 1870, France was governed by the very

8 For more on Metternich see Wolfram Siemann, *Metternich: Strategy and Visionary*, Daniel Steuer, trans. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2019).

9 Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: A History* (New York: Holt, 2010).

anticlerical Third Republic. This meant that wealthy French aristocrats, who would normally spend their excess cash in maintaining a place at court in Paris, no longer had a court in which to invest, so they began to invest in a memorial or monument to their crusading ancestors. As the Western powers guaranteed more security on the ground, more and more pilgrimages were organized. Large hostels were built to accommodate the pilgrims, such as the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem.

3 Founding of the École Biblique

A foolish French Dominican, Matthieu Lecomte (1831–87),¹⁰ escaped to Jerusalem to flee his superiors' control. He was somehow able to acquire a large property north of the Damascus Gate. The site turned out to be the place where the Byzantine Christians venerated the relics of St. Stephan at the site of his stoning (Acts 6–7). The original mosaic floors are still partly visible. On the site was standing a Turkish slaughterhouse, which gave off a terrible stench. The neighbors were glad that Lecomte could stop the slaughter and remove the odor, but he had no clear idea what to do with the property. A meeting was held in Rome. It was decided to turn the property into a school of biblical studies. Who would run it?

The Dominican authorities in Rome knew of a young priest named Marie-Joseph Lagrange who was interested in biblical studies. Before he entered the order, Lagrange had trained as a lawyer in Paris. He was now studying Orientalism in Vienna, especially Hebrew, Arabic, and Assyriology. Lagrange gladly accepted the offer to head a biblical school in Jerusalem.¹¹

The amateurish school was launched on the feast of Albert the Great (1205–80), November 1890. Despite its humble beginnings (the rings to hold the animals for slaughter were still in the walls), the school took off. There were a number of factors that contributed to this early success. The time was right. A school for biblical studies in the land of the Bible made sense. Interest in archaeology was high. It sufficed to ride out into a farmer's field and make papier-mâché copies of the inscriptions found there, and one had fresh comparative material to renew biblical studies. In France, the government was again persecuting religious orders. Student brothers were sent to Jerusalem

10 Dates from the catalogue of the Library of the Dominican Institute for Oriental Studies, Cairo, Egypt: <https://alkindi.ideo-cairo.org/agent/44015> (accessed February 1, 2020).

11 Bernard Montagnes, *The Story of Father Marie-Joseph Lagrange: The Founder of Modern Catholic Biblical Studies*, trans. B. T. Viviano (New York: Paulist, 2006).

to continue their basic formation. Other orders wanted to piggyback on the school once launched.

The British, the Americans, and the Germans started schools of their own. The French School differed from them in that it had a stable body of teachers who resided there year-round. It also developed a full library, gave regular courses, and provided degrees or certificates for students. It also had a full-service basilica on the property. Systematic study trips to biblical sites and participation in archaeological excavations were part of the program. The other schools in comparison were archaeological flophouses so to speak, places where one could store one's findings, clean up from the digs, and write up one's reports.

Two years after the launch of the French School, Lagrange began a scholarly journal, *La Revue biblique* (1892), to publish their newly discovered inscriptions, analyses of classical biblical texts, and revues of current publications. This was followed by a monograph series called *Études bibliques*, inaugurated by a commentary on Joshua. Lagrange wanted this series to have commentaries on the whole Bible. In the early days, some French Jesuits were eager to collaborate with him. Albert Condamin, S.J. (1862–1940) published a commentary on Isaiah in the series. Lagrange was extremely prolific, commenting on all four gospels and the letters to the Romans and the Galatians. He completed a full commentary on Genesis, but it has yet to be published because he began to run into difficulties with the censors.

Lagrange had launched the school during the pontificate of Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903, r.1878–1903). After the long mental stagnation and negativity under Pius IX (1792–1878, r.1846–78), Leo XIII helped the church with a series of encyclical letters. These letters helped the church to adjust to the new situation that had occurred with the unification of the Italian peninsula and the disappearance of the Papal States in central Italy. Leo's main strengths were philosophical and diplomatic-social-political. He also made contributions in historical and biblical studies, but one could say that he was less well-prepared and less well-advised in biblical studies than in other areas. Nevertheless, in 1893, he published the first ever encyclical dedicated to biblical studies, *Providentissimus Deus*. Even if it had its flaws, it was an act of courage to tackle this sensitive area when intellectual interest was high due to the explosion of new comparative materials from the ancient Near East through archaeological discoveries, especially the literature preserved in cuneiform script in Iraq, such as the Gilgamesh epic poem and Hammurabi's law code. The École Biblique had barely begun a few years earlier. There were no comparable schools to praise at the time, although there were German Catholic state faculties of theology that could have been mentioned.

The Jesuit superior general Luis Martín (1846–1906) ruled the Society from 1892 to 1906. One of the challenges he faced was the shift in policy from one pontificate to another. Leo XIII was attempting to adjust to the situation in Europe after the French Revolution, especially the shift to parliamentary democracy, often very imperfectly realized. Many in the Roman Curia and in the French nobility were not enthusiastic about this effort. When Leo XIII died in 1903, the malcontents saw their chance. In the conclave, when it seemed that Mariano Cardinal Rampolla (1843–1913), who had been Leo's secretary of state, was going to be elected as successor, the Austrian emperor Franz Joseph (1830–1916) instructed the Polish cardinal, Jan Maurycy Paweł Puzyna de Kosielskov (1842–1911) of Cracow, to pronounce the imperial veto against Rampolla. The cardinals accepted this veto, though some were indignant; then they turned to Giuseppe Melchior Sarto (1835–1914), patriarch of Venice, strongly promoted by Raphael Merry del Val (1865–1930), and elected Sarto pope. He was called Pius X, and he reigned from 1903 to 1914.

This pope had been a successful and energetic rural pastor in the Veneto. In these domains, he remains a positive model. But he turned resolutely against Leo XIII's conciliatory policies toward the states and the modern world. In theology and biblical studies, he declared open war on what he deemed Modernism. By 1907, the warfare was clear in the encyclical *Pascendi* and the decree *Lamentabili*, ghost-written mainly by the Canadian Oblate of Mary Immaculate Joseph Lemius (1860–1923) and directed primarily against Alfred Loisy (1857–1940). Moreover, Pius X took an initiative of Leo XIII to promote biblical studies—namely a biblical commission of about thirty members—and filled it with non-biblical theologians. This commission started issuing decrees that mainly hindered biblical studies and tortured consciences. An example is the decree rejecting the division of the book of Isaiah into three parts, each with a difference date of composition.

4 Founding of the Pontifical Biblical Institute as Rival

Into this tense situation stepped a German Jesuit, Leopold Fonck. He is the villain of this story. We must bear in mind that there were several factors that could have contributed to his antagonistic relationship with Lagrange. The first would be a traditional rivalry between the Dominicans and the Jesuits. The second would be an element of nationalism encouraging Franco-German hostility after 1870. The third factor was a political one, between people who wanted to maintain (e.g. Spain) or restore (e.g. France and Naples) absolute, non-constitutional monarchy and the Papal States and those who did not. For

those who supported monarchies, any accommodation with the modern world was hateful.¹² Lagrange had joined the Toulouse province because it was not Bourbon Restoration in political outlook.¹³ The Toulouse province was openly against the restoration of non-constitutional monarchy in France and implicitly against the restoration of the Papal States. Conversely, Fonck, bound by the fourth Jesuit vow of special obedience to the pope, would have supported the papal wishes, which at that point included the restoration of the Papal States.

Fonck resolved to block Lagrange's success. He intended to erect a Jesuit biblical institute in Jerusalem and bought the property. He had the support of Pius x. The superior general of the Jesuits prohibited any further collaboration with Lagrange whether in the *Revue biblique* or in the monograph series *Études bibliques*. The French Jesuits started a new scholarly journal in Paris to give their men an outlet, *Recherches de science religieuse*.

Partly because Lagrange had campaigned against having two rival Catholic biblical schools in the same small (at the time) town, the Pontifical Biblical Institute (commonly called the Biblicum and hereafter as the Roman Institute) was opened in Rome in 1910, rather than in Jerusalem. By 1910, biblical studies had become controversial and dangerous. A biblical school in Rome lost the advantage of being on the site of much of the Bible, but it meant more papal protection and political advantage.

Soon, a new series of academic degrees was set up wherein a student could earn a degree either through the Pontifical Biblical Commission or directly through the newly erected Roman Institute. Lagrange resented that his "sweat equity" had not been honored. The Roman Institute acquired a virtual monopoly on these degrees because most students preferred to earn the degrees through course work at the Roman Institute rather than examination before the commission.¹⁴ The new rules for seminaries wanted Scripture professors to have a biblical license. That the Roman Institute could offer this degree and the École could not gave the Institute a big advantage over the École. Bishops wanted to avoid trouble, so they sent their future biblical professors to the Roman Institute to be safe. In 1914, two events slowed down Fonck's assault: the First World War broke out and Pius x died. The new pope, Benedict xv (1854–1922, r.1914–22), intended to calm the anti-Modernist crusade.

12 This third factor may seem absurd to people who grew up in the United States of America, but for many curialists it was no joke. Americans can get a taste of the situation by reading Henry James's novel *The American*.

13 See Bernard Montagnes, *Le père Lagrange (1855–1938): L'exégèse catholique dans la crise moderniste* (Paris: Cerf, 1995); and Bernard Montagnes, ed., *Exégèse et obéissance: Correspondance Cormier-Lagrange 1904–1916* (Paris: Gabalda, 1989).

14 This monopoly has been ended in recent years through the Franciscans in Jerusalem.

An illustrative story from this period is that of Joseph Bonsirven (1880–1958), who had been a gifted seminarian under the progressive bishop of Albi, France. After Bonsirven's ordination, the bishop, Eudoxe-Irénée-Edouard Mignot (1842–1918), sent him to Jerusalem to study with Lagrange, who at the time happened to be working on rabbinic literature. Bonsirven caught fire from Lagrange's enthusiasm. Lagrange naively sent Bonsirven to Rome to submit his voluminous dissertation on rabbinic theology to the Roman Institute. Bonsirven had invested prodigious labor into this work, which has since become a standard reference, but it was rejected by the Roman Institute, which in those days that meant it was rejected by Fonck. Bonsirven's bishop then had him teaching in lower schools, which did not require an advanced degree. When the First World War broke out, Bonsirven was called to the colors and soon wounded. After the war Bonsirven became a Jesuit, perhaps to find protection. The Jesuits were pleased with their learned priest but cautious. They did not let Bonsirven teach Scripture immediately. But after the 1943 encyclical the coast was clear, so to speak, and Bonsirven began teaching and publishing on Scripture. Shortly before his death, Bonsirven began teaching at the Roman Institute, being ultimately vindicated over those who caused him woe.

After the First World War, the Roman Institute started its own biblical journal, *Biblica*, and its own monograph series, *Analecta biblica*. During the British Mandate in Palestine, Zionist Jews settled in the land in force, and in 1921 the Hebrew University was created, with instruction in Hebrew. Eliezer Ben Yehuda (1858–1922) wrote the main dictionary of modern Hebrew in the École Library.

5 Moving towards Collaboration

The tension continued until 1943. The encyclical *Divino afflante spiritu* of that year recognized the role of literary genres in the Bible, and a new era of biblical studies began after the war. The École could chalk up two major successes in this period. The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1948. The British Palestinian and then Jordanian antiquities department entrusted the excavation of the site and the publication of the texts to the École. The director of the École, Roland de Vaux (1903–71), became a media star because of his involvement in the Qumran story. The École also edited a new translation of the Bible into French, wherein, alongside de Vaux, Pierre Benoit (1906–87) played a major role. The new translation was published first as a series of fascicles, beginning in 1948, and then as a one-volume annotated Bible, the *Bible de Jerusalem*, in French in 1955, and then in English in 1966 as the Jerusalem Bible. This Bible

represented a breakthrough by including the more assured results of modern biblical criticism, like the four-source documentary hypothesis for the Pentateuch. It was also a showcase for the French Catholic Church in a period of its flourishing creativity. Members of the main religious orders, besides diocesan clergy and learned laity, all contributed. Most important for our tale, the Jesuits contributed significantly, especially Stanislas Lyonnet (1902–86) of the Roman Institute and Donatien Mollat (1904–77).

In 1948, the secretary of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, Dominican Jacques Voste (1883–1949), wrote an official public letter to Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard (1874–1949), archbishop of Paris. Suhard had asked for clarification of the application of the recent encyclical. The letter fully endorsed the freedom of exegetes to interpret Genesis 1–11 in a critical manner. This was important for teachers of biology in Catholic schools. They were now free to teach Darwinian evolution, in a responsible manner. The solution had been found by Lagrange in 1903. Some of the solution had been published in his series and review. In those years, the Jesuits were not allowed publicly to support Lagrange. In private some Jesuits continued to correspond with him, in sympathy. After 1943, when Lagrange's main ideas became official policy, the Jesuits were in open agreement.

The next chapter is the story of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) under Pope John XXIII (1881–1963, r.1958–63), which had strong Jesuit-Dominican collaboration. Some Jesuits contributed significantly to Vatican II, others were opposed to much of it. As the council was opening, two Jesuit professors were attacked at the Roman Institute, Lyonnet and Max Zerwick (1901–75). Forced to retire abruptly, they were restored to their chairs shortly after.

The main document of the council on biblical studies was the constitution on divine revelation, *Dei verbum*. All participants in the council realized that this was a crucial text. It was bitterly fought over from the start to the last session of the council. Although the whole document has many fine points, the three battleground paragraphs were 9, 11, and 19. Paragraph 9 concerned the right relation of Scripture and tradition. Paragraph 11 concerned biblical inerrancy. Paragraph 19 concerned form criticism of the Gospels. The ninth paragraph was the subject of direct papal intervention at the last minute. So formulated, it allowed for the view that all revelation is contained in Scripture and that Scripture is materially sufficient for salvation. This view was then carefully circumscribed. The eleventh paragraph strongly affirmed that Scripture contained no errors in those things that God wanted in the Scripture *for the sake of our salvation*. But it also included the idea that God did not want the Scripture to teach us about geology, mathematics, architecture and the like. (Galileo had said that the scriptures do not tell us how the heavens go, but how

to go to heaven.) Paragraph 19 affirmed the basic historicity of the Gospels but admitted that they were selective, sometimes synthesizing, sometimes shaping the facts for preaching.

6 The Current Relationship

Since the council, the atmosphere has changed greatly. When Lyonnet and Zerwick (both my teachers) were punished, Pierre Benoit (1906–87) of the École and a *peritus* at the council, built a strong friendship with Lyonnet. This friendship created a better basis for relations between the two schools after the council. Some Jesuits, such as the admirable Belgian Maurice Gilbert (b.1934), aware of the negative element in the past, wanted to make amends. Besides helping with administrative plans, Gilbert taught at the École. The Holy See offered the École the right to grant the three pontifical degrees—baccalaurate, licence, and doctorate—a right that had been originally reserved to Roman Institute. But at this crucial juncture, the École became its own worst enemy. Two of the Dominican faculty, fearful of direct Vatican interference, convinced the École faculty not to accept the offer to confer all three degrees, but only the doctorate. This was a capital blunder. Many students want to study at the École, but they need a licence to teach in their seminary or faculty back home. This is the crucial degree to win a decent number of students to sustain a school. God in his mercy has provided an interim solution. Students at the Roman Institute now have an option to spend a year in Jerusalem and to take courses either at the École Biblique and or at Hebrew University. So, these philologically well-prepared students can now fill up the classrooms at the École and receive the spirit of Père Lagrange. It is not a perfect solution, but it works well enough.