



## Exercising Authority in an Adult Community

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### Introduction

Several sociological models of government have often influenced the exercise of ecclesial and religious authority. One need only think of the Roman family, monarchies, feudal bonds, and Napoleonic discipline. The modern person is marked by a breathtaking evolution predisposing her to adopt the new ways of existing and living in this changing world. Globalization makes of our world a "**a global village**", largely due to the spectacular advances of new information and communication technologies. Consequently it imposes its own culture, its own mentality. This is why one even speaks of a new world ethic. That has a not negligible importance, not only in the world, but also in the Church and in consecrated life in particular.

Out of this new culture we see new concepts emerge, such as those of shared responsibility, equality, autonomy, sustainable development, cultural diversity, quality of life, sexual orientation, risk-free abortion, same-sex parenthood, the right to choose death, non-governmental organizations, civil society, partnership, consensus, win-win, etc. 1[1]

Not only do these concepts express debatable aspirations but they also express the most serious deviations of a permissive ideology, in complete opposition to Judeo-Christian values, namely truth, morals, conscience, will, family, virginity, chastity, authority, hierarchy, justice, sin, enemy, etc. This resonates with our theme in the substitution of concepts such as moderation/support/coordination instead of authority and equality in place of hierarchy.

Moreover, one observes that *“the manner of perceiving and living authority and obedience has changed, whether it is in the Church or in society. This is due, among other things, to the awareness of the value of each individual person, with her calling and her intellectual, emotional and spiritual gifts, with her liberty and capacity for interpersonal relations; to the central position of the spirituality of communion<sup>2</sup>[2], emphasizing the tools that help us live it in a way that is different from and less individualistic in understanding its mission, in sharing with all the People of God and with the forms consistent with tangible cooperation”<sup>3</sup>[3].* This state of things is supported by the “culture” of Western societies, heavily centered on the individual and her autonomy.

One understands the relevance of reflecting anew on the exercise of authority in an adult community. Our intervention, entitled *“The Exercise of Authority in an Adult Community”*, is centered on three points, which are:

1. The concept of authority in the Church
2. The foundation of authority and its necessity
3. An image of an adult community and its interpretation

## 1. The Concept of Authority in the Church

### 1.1 Elucidation of the concepts of authority and obedience

**Authority** corresponds to the ability to command and be obeyed <sup>4</sup>[4]. It implies the concepts of legitimacy of power, of command and of obedience. It is not to be confused with authoritarianism. This means that the exercise of authority implies that obedience is vitally important. This is why the terms obedience and authority correlate with one another <sup>4</sup>. Between these two terms, authority and obedience, there is the command. From this flows the model: authority-command-obedience.

The term authority evokes power or domination. Authority is defined as the *“capacity to exercise an influence on other persons, respecting the norms established and shared with them”<sup>5</sup>[5];* while according to Max Weber, the authority of an individual over another rests on legitimacy. It underlines the different sources of legitimacy, those corresponding to the character of an authority which is accepted and recognized by the governed <sup>6</sup>[6]. *The same author considers **Power** as ‘any opportunity to cause one’s own will to triumph, at the heart of a social relationship, even against resistance, no matter on what this opportunity rests’<sup>7</sup>[7].* According to J.M. DENQUIN, to have power, one must know how to command, to be respected and to be obeyed. <sup>8</sup>[8].

The ecclesiology of communion of Vatican Council II brought about a new vision of authority, of community, of the subject and of obedience. Thus today we insist on the terms: superior, moderator, person-in-charge, coordinator... on the one hand, and personality, conscience, autonomy, conformity to the common good and responsibility... on the other.

In the governance of the Church, one gladly resorts to the terms: subsidiarity, collegiality, coresponsibility, pluralism and community. Poorly understood, these terms are confused with independence, democracy (government of the people) and above all anarchy and lawlessness.

From what is said above we can then say that authority corresponds to a recognized value, which is attributed or conferred; it differs then from authoritarianism. Authority is linked to legitimacy, and the person who exercises it is expected to abide by the norms established and respected by all. While authoritarianism resorts to power, to domination, indeed to hegemony, it can be exercised without the consent of the subjects. In the religious context, it is appropriate to underline that authority is power used for the good of others, in short, their sanctification.

**To obey** is to submit to someone by conforming to what that person orders or forbids; it means bending to the will of others, as a child obeys his /her parents, the subject his lord, the individual the law. This then seems to indicate that, in any form of social organization, there exist relationships of authority, and that the establishment of this authority is expressly or tacitly accepted by the various parties. Obedience would consist of adhering to the values communicated by those in authority; this is the attitude of a

mature or adult person, because it is not a matter of surrendering her person and her will, but to be raised up in the pursuit of these values.

This involves a great deal of willpower that one can only be found among persons who are free, capable of understanding, of choosing and of wanting, and who are mature enough to accept in an unconstrained and responsible manner the norms of community life (in a society) in the ungrudging exercise of their own duties and in respect of the rights of others.

Obedience, in its natural and purely human dimension, is the act of an intelligent and free person who says yes to an arrangement recognized as acceptable (valid) and accepted in practice by society. It is the capacity of an adult to assume with full knowledge her proper task and proper role at the heart of a community.

As for the command, it is the action of a person who commands, that is to say, who gives an order. In the framework of authority, the command is necessary and legitimate as long as the people recognize the rationale for the order received (e.g. planning, dialogue, preparations, implementation, etc.); they accept and obey.

Submission, according to the New Testament, "is an attitude which consists of voluntarily yielding to the guidance or the exhortation of another person, an attitude of cooperation with another. In fact, submission does not mean letting oneself be controlled or dominated, but an attitude which involves yielding to others to the extent that they reflect the thinking of the Lord"<sup>9</sup>[9]. Obedience in this sense does not end with submission, but with the person who issues orders and with whom one enters into a relationship. When this interpersonal relationship is reached, obedience becomes an attitude of love, the attitude typical of a Christian.

## **2. The Foundation of Authority and its Necessity**

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Sacred Scriptures take on the character of the full moral authority that God exercises over God's creatures<sup>10</sup>[10]. Thus this reality reveals to us that the Lord, our God, possesses an unshakeable authority.

### **2.1 The Foundation of Authority**

'All authority comes from God' (Romans 13:1), for the service and in the spirit of truth. Besides, in the story of the Sons of Zebedee, Jesus trashes the worldly mentality characterized by power and domination. He recommends a new state of spirit, such as: "*but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant,*<sup>27</sup> *and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave*"; (Mt 20:26). In this world, leaders work on the basis of a socio-political structure, a hierarchy assuring them the obedience of their orders, and which is thus the basis of their power. In the Kingdom of God, authority comes from childlike humility and devoted service. Among the Pagans, authority is based on position and rank; in the Kingdom of God, authority is recognized in those whose character resembles that of God. This is why Christ said of the leader in the Kingdom of God: "whoever wants to be first must be slave to all" (Mark 10:43-44). In the eyes of our Lord, "being precedes doing and doing comes from being. In other words, function comes from character. Those who serve do so because they are servants".<sup>11</sup>[11]

In the pagan world, one measures the importance of a person by his superficial power and the influence of his position over others. In the Kingdom of God, greatness is measured by inner humility and service expressed as an external attitude; leaders do not want to be honored particularly: they consider themselves "the lowest". This is why the Lord does not hide his disapproval of this concept of authority. He even said "It will not be like that among you" (Mt 20:26; Mk 10:43). For Jesus authority is service and it is his *raison d'être* in the Gospels. This is the Golden Rule which requires the true practice of authority in the Church which is service. In this sense, the Word of God is paramount: its only basis is Jesus Christ, who came to serve and to give his life for mankind (Mt 28:18, Jn 3:30-36).

### **2.2 The Need for Authority**

Authority is necessary in any organization that brings together human beings. The need to establish authority assumes a dual theme: **natural** and **supernatural**.

On the **natural level**, there does not exist a human group capable of balancing by itself its interpersonal life and the attainment of the objectives it sets for itself without a norm (an inner system), and above all without a leader to whom the others must refer. Nothing can be more doubtful than a social group without a dynamic and fervent leader in a role that the others recognize, condemning it to live in a state of anarchy, which jeopardizes the established goals or ideals.

Françoise Rossetti is right to deem the functions of authority to be above all else: the **commitment to law, facilitating the group's objective** and the **facilitation of internal relations**. Facilitating the group's objective is to be carried out at the level of stimulating the group, coordinating its efforts and its decisions on the opportune means to attain the group's objectives, whilst the function of facilitating internal relations lies in the growth of cohesion, in strengthening morale, and in maintaining the unity of the group.<sup>12</sup>[12].

Likewise on the **supernatural level**, one must remember that the Religious Institute, and the communities which compose it, are communities of the Church. They are desired and publicly constituted by the competent ecclesiastical authority. "Nowhere in the Church does there exist an ecclesial community that has no leader. To the contrary, such a community would be unthinkable, erroneous and above all would not conform to the ecclesial nature of its place as an integral part of the People of God"<sup>13</sup>[13]

It is with this in mind that Pope John Paul II underlines that "in the consecrated life the role of the Superiors and the Superior Generals has always had a major importance for the spiritual life as for the mission....those that exercise authority cannot renounce duties as primary leaders of the community, as guides to the brothers and sisters on their spiritual and Apostolic Path"<sup>14</sup>[14].

In this service of governance, "it is not easy in highly individualistic circles to make the role that authority plays to the benefit of all, recognized and welcomed. Therefore, what must be reaffirmed is **the importance** of this responsibility, which is **necessary** precisely in order to consolidate fraternal communion and to avoid rendering avowed obedience vain"<sup>15</sup>[15].

Pope Benedict XVI justly said in his speech to the Superiors of both genders that "the service of authority requires a constant presence capable of motivating and proposing, of reminding us of the basic purpose of the Consecrated Life, of helping persons, who are entrusted to you to answer with ever renewed fidelity the appeal of the Spirit"<sup>16</sup>[16]. Authority and obedience are an exercise of charity - the new law which is love (cf. Jn 5:9-15; Jn 6:57) - that leads to the Will of God, to His holiness.

### **3. Authority in an Adult Community**

An adult community is a framework for living where the members have acquired sufficient maturity in their knowledge and growth on a physical, psychological, intellectual, moral and spiritual level. They possess a certain experience of people and of events, a clear-sightedness of things, a level of rectitude and lucidity in the appreciation of values, of people and of events.

#### **3.1 Character of the Members of an Adult Community**

Before proceeding to a description of the character of the members of an adult community, it would first of all be suitable to give a sketch of an adult person, of what she is and what she is not.

##### **3.1.1 What an Adult is on the Human Level**

An adult is a person who has arrived at her full development, who has attained a maturity which has conferred on her the mastery of her physical and intellectual means, and which makes her psychologically and spiritually capable of an integrity of judgment.

The adult then possesses a capacity to take free decisions and to keep commitments undertaken; she is a person oriented towards realities and questions of great importance, who is open to the problems of others and of the world; she is a person who has acquired a certain experience of people and things; thus

she becomes less severe, more nuanced, more understanding. She is a person who knows that every human being possesses limits and defects, and this does not scandalize her.

According to Cardinal Malula, (now deceased), Founder of the Congregation of the sisters of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus of Kinshasa, an adult person has blossomed into: *“a responsible person, who has personal convictions and strives to put them into practice and to communicate them, who acts and is capable of initiatives and original experiences”*17[17]. The adult is she who has already abandoned or is gradually abandoning childish behavior.

### 3.1.2 What a Non-Adult is on the Human Level

A person who is not adult shows off and delights in her faults or childish whims; she is interested in trivia and in her own little gratifications; she deals in pointless details, incidentals rather than what is essential; she brandishes her rights rather than her obligations; she easily slips into complaints, demands and negative criticisms. She is a self-centered person who takes herself as the center of her community's interest without opening herself in the slightest to the common interest or to that of other individuals. *Based on what has just been stated, one can appreciate that an adult woman religious is a person who makes “a choice once and for all and who bears within herself the passion of the love of God, a passion for charity which excludes any mediocrity and the easy way of doing things. Her life becomes an endless quest for the perfect love.”*18[18].

In religious life, to be an adult is to know how to live according to one's basic choice, totally welcoming all the demands of her circumstance of life with joy and a sense of responsibility, whatever difficulties may arise which may tinge her development. The adult woman religious assumes with serenity the rights and duties associated with her condition and operates within those limits, in such a way that she shows a voluntary openness, without constraint or reluctance, to the demands of her life. In brief, an adult religious is a person who has opted for Jesus (who was crucified in order to devote himself to his mission of salvation), and who already knows enough - through the experience of prayer, obedience and fraternal devotion - about Apostolic service, true poverty and the discipline of life.

### 3.2 The Figure of Authority in an Adult Community

The person of authority in an adult community is first and foremost a member of the community. Therefore, she must embody the values and vision (the charism and spirituality) of her community. Authority is expressed in terms of obedience, mission and service.

**Authority is obedience.** The Superior is above all else the first to obey, because her authority is practiced in compliance with the Word of God, hence an obedience to God because it is practiced by listening to God, to the Magisterium of the Church and to the law itself, in the service of the common good and of each member of the mission. Just as Father Bernard DUCRUET stressed, authority in the Christian community is at the service of the Word of God. It is distinguished in this way from all other forms of community. It rests on the clear and manifest Word of God, which is primary, and Jesus Christ is its sole foundation 19[19].

Authority is a mission that one can associate with the triple function of the pastoral ministry of bishops in the Church (Mk 13). The Superior governs while teaching, in dedication to God. The Superior must lead to saintliness.

The Abbot, says Saint Benedict, “will always be remembered by the name he bears,” and it is he who defines the mission that has been entrusted to him, of leading the sons of God to the Father 20[20]. In the women's community, the **Superior** is **Mother**, but not in the manner of parents who raise their children, even if there is sometimes an analogy. She is the mother in the manner of Christ in the midst of his disciples. Christ had as his mission to reveal to them the Father, to lead them to the Father through his whole being, his example, his teaching. The Superior is not a simple substitute for the natural mother, who might have been lacking; she does not have the job of filling the emotional gaps of our childhood.

The maternity of the Superior is to be taught to the sister so that she discovers her origin and rearing in God 21[21]. Touching on the same idea, a Rwandan proverb says “*Only God truly engenders/gives life, people merely educate*”.

Only the Superior who is perfectly faithful to the Word of God can envisage here her origin in God, showing herself to be obedient to the teaching of the Gospel, of the Church and to her own rights.

This is why Saint Benedict adds: “He will not teach, create, or order anything apart from the teachings of the Lord. His doctrine, his orders and his example must evoke the filial spirit in the monks, as the fermentation of the Word of Christ”22[22].

**Authority is service**, because the Superior must be for his brothers or her sisters a servant, a motivator with the sole purpose of fulfilling his or her mission in a responsible manner with a view to creating an obedient, united and brotherly/sisterly community, a charismatic community, for each member. Being in the service of the community, the Superior plays the role of scout and guide. It is as if “the spiritual authority draws not its existence from man, friend or foe, but from Christ and from his word which says: *‘I have come to serve and not to be served.’*” (Mt 20:27-28). She renounces her desires, be they more or less intense, to decide, to constrain, to dominate or to charm her neighbor. She does not seek to act on people’s emotionalism, nor even to kindle their piety. Her favor extends to all her brothers and sisters and especially to those who are weak, in whom she sees the image that Jesus Christ has marked and wishes to mark with his imprint. Authority in such a community is not first and foremost based on discipline, but on coordination and guidance. To this end, it must be founded on the Lord and His Word. Thus “true spiritual authority does not prove itself by success or achievement, but depends on humility, on listening to each person, on honesty, on the love for the Lord, His Word and his Church”23[23].

Its ministry is unity – it is a symbol of and accountable for the unity of the community. Is this ideal achievable? One may ask that, but we remain fully conscious that authority in the community, as in the Church, remains a gift of God and the gift remains an ideal against which one must measure oneself each day.

### 3.3 Authority and its Position in the Community

The Superior exercises her authority according to the plan of God as taught by Christ: “*I have come to serve and not to be served*” (Mt 20:27-28). In reality the Superior is an imperfect person, who must recognize and outdo herself in order to fulfill the demands of her responsibility. She must promote those human qualities in herself which will make her a decent person, even in a context which is anything but religious. Beyond all these human qualities and those of a woman of a social nature, she must be a woman of confidence. She creates the uninhibited opening up of her members. Thus by her reassurance she encourages others' self-awareness.

Confidence gives the Superior an interior freedom, the facility and the joy of exercising her authority-service. This confidence is merited and not bought. It is the fundamental basis of her action, which conforms to these rules: to exercise in a spirit of service the authority received from God; to be obedient to the will of God in the exercise of God's power; to govern the members of the community as children of God; to promote voluntary obedience; to show respect for the human being; to listen to each member of the community; to favor collaboration and encourage initiatives for the good of the Institute and the Church of God (cf. Canon 618).

#### 3.3.1 The Situation of Authority in the Community

The Superior does not impose herself in a community using absolutist expressions. But she lives in it as one of its members, in cooperation with the others, conscious of her mission of achieving the adaptability and functioning of its other members, because her **principal task** is to help them attain **the religious objectives of the individuals and the community**. To highlight this cooperation, African wisdom has a maxim which says: “*Mulalenga wa bantu, bantuba mukalenga*”, which means “*the chief for the people, the people for the chief*”. Therefore there is a circularity of belonging. The Superior does not impose on the group her own way of thinking and living. She is the motivator of the community. That brings us back

to stimulating the life of the group, to reflect on this in order for it to have a life of its own, beginning with its own manner of being. This is why in a religious community authority is essentially “pastoral”<sup>24</sup>[24]. From the point of view of functioning, the Superior manages the community beginning with the community itself; she must show great respect for its members since the objectives of the community are not different from those of its members, nor vice versa, since she has entered into their way of thinking. The Superior is called upon to take on an “attitude of thoughtful and diligent service.” This attitude permits her to transform a community which is passive and without a collective life into a motivated, active group, which supports the potential of its members and of the community itself. One expects to find in her more of a sisterly and an accommodating attitude, than that of an expert who knows everything and how to do everything.

### **The Superior as Guide to the Community**

In exercising guidance, the Superior is attentive not only to the work that her sisters are carrying out but also to all that has to do with their person on the human, emotional, relational, spiritual and religious levels. She goes above and beyond observance to encourage within members an opening up so that they become attentive and interested in living evangelical lives in the joy of the Lord. **Being a Superior** is more important than **acting as a Superior**. The fact of being a guide implies having the capacity of knowing how to be with another person, without preventing them from being themselves by an approach that guides rather than commands, with a way of allowing things to arise naturally rather than of organizing them herself.

### **The Superior as Motivator of the Community**

Motivation is a method of governing the community based on collaboration and participation. It will be accomplished through her availability, her kindness and her devotion, her generosity in accepting and understanding the members of the community, her evangelical maturity, her ability to welcome and to live through the circumstances that arise, the acceptance of her own limits, her sensitivity in perceiving the reality of her community and the situations which it encounters, her constantly-progressing and authentic life of prayer, her ability to speak as well as to remain quiet, her ability to discern ambiguities, to live her own fear, to discover and to be able to read her own defense mechanisms and tendencies toward flight and resistance.

### **3.4 The Means for Action of the Religious Superior**

In order to encourage the development of the values which help a community to grow, we focus on several ways of acting that the Religious Superior is expected to use to guarantee a voluntary obedience:

**Information** is an effective means to encourage the awareness, shared responsibility and commitment of the members; **delegation of responsibility** (having the capacity to delegate her power), is the most effective route for identifying a reasonable space in which to organize oneself and to organize the life of the community. It falls to the Superior to bring consciences to life in order to promote voluntary obedience. Therefore, the adult religious will have: sufficient knowledge of the charism and of the demands of the religious life, and of the spirituality and the charism that are characteristic of her institute; she will display a voluntary embrace of faith in all of the above-mentioned, a capacity for listening and for accepting authority, an openness to dialogue, a constancy and stability in discernment, disinterestedness and generosity in her action, and a submission to norms and to authority.

### **3.5 An Image of a Community of Adults**

A religious community is a communion of consecrated persons who make it their profession to search for and to fulfill together the Will of God: a community of brothers and sisters in diverse roles, but sharing the same objective, ideal and passion<sup>25</sup>[25]. All this imparts certain characteristics upon them, which makes them witnesses of the Trinitarian communion. The members of an adult community cultivate Gospel

values and fight gradually against anti-values, and possess a great capacity for submission to general and personal norms.

The characteristics of a community of adults are, therefore, articulated co-responsibility, mutual appreciation in the recognition, acceptance and the encouragement of others in their capabilities; in other words, there exists a complementarity. It must be emphasized here that common life, the union, is further perfected if all its members join together in the management of life together. Each member takes her share of responsibility, according to her capacities, towards supporting and completing the action and the initiatives of the community. The complementarity of its members permits a good level of co-responsibility and compliance to the Will of God. An African proverb says that it is only in uniting together that ants arrive at transporting an elephant (Mossi).

#### **4. Image of a Non-Adult Community**

This is a community whose members have no reference to Christ at the center of their life. Its members are more likely to freely make demands than to be promoters. This is a community bereft of support and constructive initiatives; a community where one observes the lack of acceptance of authority and submission to general and personal norms.

In a non-adult community, the exercise of authority itself is exposed to difficulties which can show up as defects of authority of which we find several signs: authoritarianism in all its forms, inequality in treatment (favoritism), a lack of respect towards the persons governing and to their human and Christian dignity, the desire to control (an omnipresence of authority), an attitude of monitoring and suspicion, egoism and inertia in not facing up to real problems, a lack of charity, hardheartedness, etc.

Then as consequences, one must also expect defects in obedience whose manifestations can be: revolt or rebellion, recrimination against everything, an attitude of general denigration and gossiping, hypocrisy and lack of sincerity, routine as an approach to life and disgust at everything, childishness, depression, etc.

#### **5. Means for Attaining the Necessary Maturity**

The adult community is neither ready-made nor is it spontaneously generated by individuals. It is the fruit of actions and of a culture which finds roots in the initial and on-going formation and in the resourceful person in charge.

Thus from the time of initial formation, one must have training in willpower and an apprenticeship in human values, namely loyalty, rectitude, a sense of responsibility, a critical spirit, liberty and emotional equilibrium. This training must be done through a formative process which will have to have recourse to certain common practices:

1) Promoting the education of willpower: the education of willpower, its reinforcement or a culture based on it will have to be done by self-denial, in learning to say no or to limit one's time; by a spirit of generosity in making oneself available on a stable basis; by precision, promptness, self-discipline, self-denial, courage in facing certain difficult situations, personal work and initiatives.

2) Improving the method of discernment: this improvement can only be obtained by creating a hierarchy of values: the values of Christ (virtues), personal values (one's own projects) and institutional values (such as religious obligations). This practice must be supported by daily prayer and meditation. If discernment is distorted, the dialogue will become empty.

3) Training to listen (to reinforce one's capacity to listen, one has to try to understand the presence, experience, the here and now of the other person, to listen to her with her heart, to understand and listen, to know when to be quiet and let the other speak...).

4) Respecting the needs of the other person in her entire personality (another form of a culture of obedience consists in knowing and understanding the other person, to have an attitude of sincere, sisterly interest in her growth... another way to cultivate the culture of obedience is through the free and spontaneous service towards all, an availability without limits, a disinterested availability through volunteer and charity work).

#### **Conclusion**

Authority, obedience, submission. Biblical submission exists and it is a precious thing, but it must begin with what God desires, and what the Word of God presumes to know, that we are all - individually and

collectively (those in authority and the members of the community) - in submission to Jesus Christ; that we are, all of us, submissive in the Church where we live in order to be taken as devoted travelers who serve the Body of Christ and who show ourselves to be faithful. St. Paul is particularly clear: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph 5:21).

Peter expresses essentially the same thought when he says: "In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5).

Love drives us to accept the responsibility of being the "guardian of our brother or sister". But it forbids us to interfere too energetically in their private life. In fact, we are called to follow the discreet path of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of one another. And we are never called to substitute ourselves for God, nor to do God's work! 26[26].

As mutual submission blends into love, it finds its origin in the very nature of the Divinity. By God's nature, God is Community. The one God is composed of a community of three Persons, who from eternity to eternity share their life together.

It is thus that authority proceeds by a divine intuition of which the Trinity is its expression: a unique community of complementarity and co-responsibility.

Rome, May 6, 2013.

(1[1] cf. the identity of the women dedicated to the tribulation of our cultures. Acts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> national symposium on the dedicated life in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kinshasa from the 25<sup>th</sup> of January to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, 2009, p173.

(2[2]) John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio ineunte* (January 6, 2001), no's 43-45; Vita Consacrata No. 46.50.

(3[3]) cf. Congrégation pour les Instituts de vie consacrée et les Sociétés de vie apostolique, **Le service de l'autorité et l'obéissance**, no. 3§ 4.

(4[4]) *The Micro Robert, a dictionary for learners of the French language*. Dictionnaire Le Robert P859.

(5[5]) NAKAHOSA KABEMBA, J.K., Renowned figure of religious superiors, community promoter. *Analyse Juridico pastorale*, p.8.

(6[6]) Max WEBER, "Economie and Sociale"(1992), /wiki/power (Sociology) 28/12/2012

(7[7]) Idem

(8[8]) J.M. DENQUIN cited by Roger MUCCHIELLI, [www.wikipédia.org/](http://www.wikipédia.org/) the psychology of relationships. /28/12/2012

(9[9]) Franck, A. VIOLA, L'autorité spirituelle dans l'Eglise, chap. 3 "L'autorité et la soumission." [www.eglisedemaison.com/livres/viola/co](http://www.eglisedemaison.com/livres/viola/co)

(10[10]) Revue la trompette, A 197 "La source de l'autorité dans l'Eglise Catholique." [www.bereanbean.org](http://www.bereanbean.org)

(11[11]) Franck A. VIOLA, L'autorité spirituelle dans l'Eglise, chap. 1. "Les Modèles de l'autorité" [www.eglisedemaison.com/livres/viola/co](http://www.eglisedemaison.com/livres/viola/co)

(12[12]) Françoise ROSSETTI HERBELIN, What is Authority?

(13[13]) Canons 608 & 617; NAKAHOSA KABEMBA, J.K., idem, p.5

(14[14]) Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Post-synodal Exhortation, Vita Consacrata, no. 43 Fraternal Life in Community no. 50; Repartir du Christ no. 14

([15]) Vie fraternelle en communauté nn. 47-53 ; la documentation catholique g1(1994) pp.425-426 ; CIC 618 ; proposition 19.

([16]) Benedict XVI, Speech to the Superior Generals of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life. AULA Paolo VI, (Monday May 22, 2006).

([17]) Cf Cardinal MALULA « La vocation particulière de la Congrégation », in Léon de Saint MOULIN, S.J., Œuvres Complètes du Cardinal Malula, volume 5, textes concernant la religieuse, FCK, 1997, p.235 – 236.

([18]) Cf. Cardinal MALULA «La vocation particulière de la Congrégation», in Léon de Saint MOULIN, S.J., Œuvres Complètes du Cardinal Malula, volume 5, textes concernant la religieuse, FCK, 1997,p.236.

([19]) cfr. Bernard DUCRUET, L'autorité en communauté, collection Petits traités spirituels, VI, Vie consacrée : Ed. Brandi Borth 1997, p.11.

([20]) cfr. Bernard DUCRUET, idem. P.16.

([21]) cf. Bernard DUCRUET, idem, P.31.

([22]) cf. Bernard DUCRUET, idem, P.16.

([23]) Jacques DUBOIS, «l'autorité dans l'Eglise locale. Promesse», Revue de réflexion biblique, sommaire du no. 147, January-March, 2004

(24[24]) Service of Authority and Obedience No. 14

([25]) Service of Authority and Obedience n° 1.

([26]) FRANCK A. VIOLA, L'autorité spirituelle dans l'Eglise, Chap.3. « L'autorité et la soumission » [http //www.eglisedemaison.com/livres/viola/co](http://www.eglisedemaison.com/livres/viola/co)