

CATHOLICISM IS 'MOTHER' CHURCH - ALL OTHERS ARE DEFECTIVE

03 Sep 2000 (AP) VATICAN CITY (AP) - One of Pope John Paul II's closest aides has written to bishops worldwide declaring that the Catholic church is the "mother" of other Christian churches, a move which could hurt Vatican efforts toward unity with other believers.

The Vatican Saturday had no comment on the document, which was reported on Friday by the Italian religious news agency Adista. In the document, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger told the bishops that it was incorrect to refer to Christian churches, ranging from Orthodox to Protestant, as "sister" churches of the Catholic church...

VATICAN SAYS NO RELIGION EQUALS ROMAN CATHOLICISM

VATICAN CITY, Sept 5 (Reuters) (Condensed) - The Vatican on Tuesday rejected the concept that other religions could be equal to Roman Catholicism and ordered its theologians not to manipulate what it called the truth of the faith.

The Vatican's restatement of its position was outlined in a complex theological document, the English title of which was "Declaration The Lord Jesus -- On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church".

The document repeated Church teachings that non-Christians were in a "gravely deficient situation" regarding salvation and that other Christian churches had "defects," partly because they did not recognise the primacy of the Pope.

At a news conference to present the document, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Vatican's doctrinal head, said some theologians were "manipulating and going beyond the limits" of tolerance when they put all religions on the same plane.

"Therefore, there exists a single Church of Christ, which subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him," it said.

"DEFECTS" OF OTHER CHURCHES

Some other Christian churches, while not in "perfect union," remained united to Catholics by close bonds, it [the statement] said. "The Church of Christ is present and operative also in these Churches, even though they lack full communion with the Catholic Church