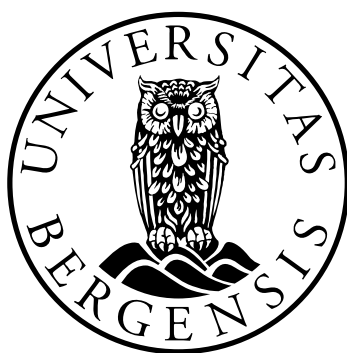


# **How the Catholic Church Influences Italian Politics**

Anders Kjølén



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University of Bergen

## Abstract

The Catholic Church has a unique relationship with Italy, with the location of the Vatican in the heart of Rome. From the time of the Italian unification in 1861, the Catholic Church has used different strategies to influence Italian politics. From boycotting Italian politics through the *Non Expedit* in 1874, to influencing politics through the *Partito Popolare Italiano* from 1919, collaborating with the Fascist regime from the 1920s, and the very influential cooperation with the *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) in the post-war era. Following the Tangentopoli and the fall of the First Republic, it was no longer possible for the Catholic Church to influence politics through the DC. New strategies were needed. The objective of this thesis is to find out which strategies the Catholic Church has used, with an emphasis on the period after the First Republic. My research question is as follows:

*“How has the Catholic Church pursued various strategies to influence Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First republic?”*

To answer the research question, I have conducted qualitative document analysis. The theoretical framework is based on theories which comprise the influence of the Catholic Church, and religious organizations as a whole, on politics, religious organizations, and how churches can use popular referendums to affect politics.

The findings indicate that the Catholic Church no longer exerts influence through one Christian democratic party, but that Catholic politicians are spread across all parties. In this way, Catholic values can be included in party politics, regardless of whether the party is on the Leftwing, Rightwing, or center. Catholic organizations have played an important role in exerting influence on Italian politics on behalf of the Catholic Church. Especially through the organizations *Comunione e Liberazione*, and the *Conferenza Episcopale Italiana*. When facing a popular referendum in 2005, the Catholic Church encouraged its adherents to abstain from voting. In this way, the vote did not reach the minimum requirement of 50 percent voter turnout, for the vote to be valid. The Pope, bishops, and clergy were active in encouraging the adherents of the Catholic Church. This occurred to a much higher degree than when facing popular referendums in the past. Some would claim that the Catholic Church has left the party for the pulpit, and to some degree this is true.

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Bergen, November 2017

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## **Abbreviations**

**AD:** Democratic Alliance (Alleanza Democratica)

**AN:** National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale)

**C-S:** Social Christians (Cristiano-sociali)

**CCD:** Christian Democratic Center (Centro Cristiano Democratico)

**CDL:** House of Freedom (Casa della Libertà)

**CDU:** Christian Democratic Union (Cristiani Democratici Uniti)

**CEI:** Italian Episcopal Conference (Conferenza Episcopale Italiana)

**CL:** Communion and Liberation (Comunione e Liberazione)

**CNRD:** National Committee for a Referendum on Divorce

**DC:** Christian Democratic Party (Democrazia Cristiana)

**DS:** Left Democrats (Democratici di Sinistra)

**FI:** Forza Italia

**LN:** Lega Nord

**M5S:** Five Star Movement (Movimento 5 Stelle)

**MSI:** Italian Social Movement (Movimento Sociale Italiano)

**NPSI:** New Italian Socialist Party (Nuovo Partito Socialista Italiano)

**PCI:** Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano)

**PD:** The Democratic Party (Partito Democratico)

**PdL:** The People of Freedom (Il Polo della Libertà)

**PDS:** Democratic Party of the Left (Partito Democratico della Sinistra)

**PLI:** Italian Liberal Party (Partito Liberale Italiano)

**PPI:** Italian Popular Party (Partito Popolare Italiano)

**PR:** Radical Party (Partito Radicale)

**PRC:** Communist Refoundation Party (Partito della Rifondazione Comunista)

**PRI:** Italian Republican Party (Partito Repubblicano Italiano)

**PSDI:** Italian Social Democratic Party (Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano)

**PSI:** Italian Socialist Party (Partito Socialista Italiano)

**RI:** Italian Renewal (Rinnovamento Italiano)

**RS:** Socialist Renewal (Rinascita Socialista)

**SC:** Civic Choice (Scelta Civica)

**UD:** Democratic Union (Unione Democratica)

**UDC:** The Union of Christian and Centre Democrats (Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e di Centro)

**UdC:** Union of the Centre (Unione di Centro)

**UDEUR:** Union of the Democrats for Europe (Unione Democratici per l'Europa)



# Tables

Table 1: Election results from 1992 to 2013

# Chapter 1: Introduction

The Catholic Church and Italy have a long history. Since its origin, the Catholic Church has had its center in Italy, or what was then called the Roman Empire. This thesis will have a more contemporary focus. From the time of the Italian unification in 1861, the Catholic Church and Italian state have had to relate to each other. The Catholic Church has been influential on the Italian people and the Italian state. Therefore, it is interesting to see how the Catholic Church is working to influence Italian politics.

## 1.1 Research Question

This thesis will have an emphasis on the time after 1992, or after the fall of the First Republic. Following the corruption scandal known as *Tangentopoli*, a new electoral system was implemented (Killinger 2002:169-170). Several important political parties were also dissolved, among others the Christian democratic party, *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) (Gilmour 2011:365). Thus, it can be argued that Italian politics entered a new phase. The First Republic ended in 1992 (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:135). What some would call the Second Republic started after that, and this is the period where this thesis will have its emphasis (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:142). Some theories will claim that religion has lost its influence on society (Fink 2009:78). Others will claim that the Catholic Church still has much influence on Italian politics. However, the degree of influence will not be the focal point of this thesis. This thesis will focus on the strategies the Catholic Church has pursued to influence Italian politics. The time period will, as mentioned above, have an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic. Although strategies before this will be discussed as well. My research question will be as following:

*How has the Catholic Church pursued various strategies to influence Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First republic?*

Geographically, the research question is limited to Italy. Although the Catholic Church has deep roots and influence in other countries than Italy, it is still a unique case. Italy is the only state where a religious state exists within its own boundaries. This makes it geographically unique. The location of the Vatican, which is the capital of the Catholic Church, within Rome,

the capital of Italy, also provides a special power dynamic. The Catholic Church is, and has been influential in Italian politics (DiMarco 2009:2). DiMarco (2009:30) states that the geographical location of the Catholic Church in itself will cause it to continue being an influential player in Italian politics. Because of the Vatican's location in the heart of Rome, its influence on Italian politics is different from its influence on other countries where Catholicism is the largest religion. This makes it difficult to compare different countries, and the case will only focus on Italy, but over a longer time span.

Although the research question has an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic, I will also look at how the Catholic Church influenced Italian politics from the time of unification and up until the period where the emphasis lies. This is useful to get a clearer view of what strategies the Catholic Church have used after the fall of the First Republic. By having an emphasis on the period after the First Republic, the research question will not be too comprehensive to answer. In addition, the emphasis on this period can contribute more to the field of research, as will be shown in the next section. The strategies which is used by the Catholic Church will be described in the theory chapter.

## **1.2 Why is This Research Important?**

There are multiple reasons why this research is important. Several scholars are calling for more research in this field. Bolzonar (2016:448) claims that the political influence of Catholicism after the DC deserves more investigation as a research field. Other scholars, such as Fink (2009:77), claim that the influence of religion on policy-making in western societies is of major interest. Fink also claims that both socio-political and socio-economic issues are important to religious organizations. This shows that although research has been done in this field, there is a demand for more.

Studies have been made on what strategies the Catholic Church has used in different scenarios. For example, when facing referendums, and how Catholic organizations are being used to influence politics. However, there is a lack of research which comprises all of the main strategies of the Catholic Church. This thesis will also show how the various strategies

of the Catholic Church has changed over time. The emphasis is on the strategies pursued by the Catholic Church after the fall of the First Republic, but the strategies pursued before this period will be described and discussed as well. By doing this, we can see how the strategies have changed over time. A research which comprises how the strategies have changed over time, and the discussion of all the main strategies pursued by the Catholic Church after 1992, will perhaps be the biggest contribution of this thesis to the field of study.

### **1.3 The Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters including the introduction. The sixth chapter will be a conclusion and suggestions will be made for further research.

Chapter 2 will include the theoretical framework. In this chapter, we shall see which strategies are identified in the literature. Theories on how the Catholic Church influences politics, theories on Christian democratic parties, theories on Catholic organizations and its influences on politics, and theories on the use of referendums, will be presented.

Chapter 3 will describe the research design which is used in this thesis. It is a comparative historical analysis, with the use of process tracing and longitudinal comparison. Document analysis has been the strategy for the data collection.

Chapter 4 will present a historical background for the thesis. In this chapter, I will present which strategies the Catholic Church used to affect Italian politics from the time of national unification in 1861 to the fall of the First Republic in 1992. The chapter will also describe a historical context, and describe the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Italian state during this time period.

Chapter 5 consists of three parts. This is the analysis. First, I will discuss how the Catholic Church has been using political parties to influence Italian politics after 1992. In the second part, I will look at Catholic organizations and what role they are playing in influencing Italian politics after 1992. The third part will look at how the Catholic Church has influenced Italian politics through referendums after 1992. Mainly the 2005 referendum on assisted

reproduction. Each of the parts will be compared to the strategies of the Catholic Church prior to 1992.

Chapter 6 will, as mentioned, present a conclusion and suggestions for further research.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework**

In this thesis, I shall not be testing one specific theory. Rather, the discussion will focus on why the Catholic Church changed her strategy after 1992, and what the new strategies are. The primary change in the value of an independent variable, was the party system. When this path had closed, the Catholic Church had to find new ways of influencing Italian politics. Here lies the focus of my thesis.

Here, I will present theories on how the Catholic Church has an influence on politics, and theories which comprise how the Catholic Church have affected Italian politics. Some of the theories are specifically on the Catholic Church, some are on Christian churches in general, and others are on religion in general.

### **2.1 The Catholic Church and influence on politics**

The Catholic Church influences politics on many levels. Religion has a way of influencing policy-making in many countries. Some policy-areas are generally more important to religious groups than others. These include socio-economic policies, such as welfare systems and the development of social security institutions. Others include socio-political policies. Abortion, education, stem-cell research, and gay-rights are some of these issues (Fink 2009:77). There are many areas of policy which empirically show an impact from religious beliefs (Fink 2009:79). In the past, issues such as the legalization of divorce was also a socio-political policy which occupied the Catholic Church in particular. One can argue that secularization has been on the rise in western industrialized countries during the last century. This has led to a debate on how large the role of religion is in social life (Fink 2009:78-79). Even though secularization has been on the rise, this does not mean that the shift towards secularism is inevitable, nor does it mean that religion has lost all its influence in society. How great this influence will be, depends on several factors.

Fink (2009:79) claims that it will depend on the interaction between the followers, Church, and state. In addition, Fink claims that religion still plays a major role in the politics of western industrialized countries. This is based on empirical and theoretical evidence. Churches in western industrialized countries play an important role, although this has been

disputed by the secularization thesis (Fink 2009:93). The secularization thesis suggests that religion will begin to diminish in both the public and private arena as a society becomes more and more modernized (Nash 2000:1). This thesis has, however, been heavily disputed both empirically and theoretically (Fink 2009:78). As mentioned above, there are still many areas of policy where we can find empirical evidence of the influence of religious views (Fink 2009:79). Research shows that Catholic adherents are more religious than protestants. As a result, they should be readier to mobilize for religious causes (Norris & Inglehart 2011).

According to Nash (2000:1), there are several ways in which a church can influence politically. It can be directly or indirectly. Direct influence involves that the church publicly enters the political sphere. This may be through obtaining state positions, by hiring lobbyists, through legal means, or by participating institutionally in corporatist negotiating. A direct way of influencing occurs at the institutional level. Indirect influence will refer to the Church's ability to affect individuals, and its capability to influence the laity. It is expected that the way a church intervenes in politics, is dependent on how it perceives its religious mission. Churches who see their role as moral and religious providers to individuals, are more likely to be indirectly influential in politics. A direct influence on politics would be exerted by churches which see their religious mission as moral and religious guardians to a nation or society (Nash 2000:2).

In Italy, the Catholic Church has a great potential for mobilization. A large number of its followers are regularly churchgoing, and identify themselves as religious. Depending on how religious their adherents are, churches should vary in political behavior. The more religious the adherents are, the more influence the Church has on public policy. Therefore, it is easy to presume that the Catholic Church has a greater power to mobilize than the Protestant churches (Fink 2009:82). That is if, as mentioned above, Catholic adherents are more religious than protestant adherents. Surveys in Italy shows that 40 percent attended religious services more than once a week, or once a week, in 2001 (Norris & Inglehart 2011:74). Fink (2009:84) also claims that what determines the influence of churches, is their mobilization potential. The higher potential for mobilization, the more influence a church can exert. The Catholic Church in Italy has great mobilization potential, and has been a major player in the policy field (Fink 2009:86).

There are also other factors that affect the influence of the Catholic Church on Italian politics. In the Italian society, the Catholic Church has served as a moral authority. It has a great cultural power (Fink 2009:86). The Catholic Church do not only have an influence on policy-making through political parties, but it has an enormous influence in people's personal lives. This is not unique for Italy, but underlines the influence and power of the Catholic Church.

Although the Catholic Church has much influence, not everyone is satisfied with its involvement in politics. An Italian survey from 1972 shows that 71.8 percent of the respondents think the Church should stay out of politics. Interestingly, 60.6 percent of the Christian Democrats asked agreed on this (Marradi 1976:129). A decade earlier, La Palombara (1964:59) reported that there are Italians who see the involvement of the Catholic Church in politics as a threat. Either to their own interests, or to democratic institutions. This being said, others still supported the involvement of the Church in politics.

As will be shown in chapter 4, the Catholic Church has influenced Italian politics for a long time. In 1964, at the time when the Catholic Church used the DC to influence politics, they were also influential in other ways. At that time, La Palombara (1964:58) claimed that organized Catholicism was deeply involved in Italian politics in every way.

This thesis focuses on Italy, and so will this theory chapter. The Catholics in Italy are distinctive. Italy has unique conditions compared to the state of other nations in Europe with Christian cultures. Even though secularization has affected Italy as well, the majority of its population identify themselves as Catholics.

## **2.2 Political Parties**

Christian democratic parties can be found in most European and Latin American countries. Some of these consist of a majority of Catholics, some of Protestants, and some of other denominations. Not all Christian democratic parties are very influential. While on the other hand, parties such as the *Christlich Demokratische Union* (Christian Democratic Union) led by Angela Merkel, exert a great deal of power. Given that the focal point of this thesis is Italy, this part will focus on the links between the Catholic Church and Christian democratic parties, mainly in Italy.



Theories claim that there are organizational links between the Catholic Church and Christian democratic parties in Western Europe (Norris & Inglehart 2011:22). Historically, there have been evidence of this in Italy as well. In Italy, this has been most evident between the Catholic Church and the DC. As shown in the chapter on a historical retrospective, the DC was a part of the Italian government for more than forty-five years. The DC was strongly supported by the Vatican. This shows empirically that there have been organizational links between the Catholic Church and a Christian democratic party in Italy. Thus, it confirms the theory of which Norris and Inglehart (2011:22) speaks, regarding organizational links between the Catholic Church and Christian democratic parties. Fink (2009:85) argues that strong Churches and religious parties are related phenomena. This does not, however, mean that the Church and Christian democratic party agree on everything. The Churches in general often have more extreme opinions than the parties. In Italy, some laws which were against the preferences of the Catholic Church, were implemented during the governance of the DC. An example of this is the law passed in 1970 which allowed divorce in Italy. In 1974, the law was submitted to a referendum. The referendum sought to repeal the law. With 50.1 percent of the electorate voting “no” to repeal, the referendum failed (Marradi 1976:115-117). However, this does not mean that the DC supported the law. The DC opposed the law before it eventually passed in 1970, and it campaigned against it in the 1974 referendum (Marradi 1976:115-116). This is one concrete example of how the Catholic Church attempted to affect Italian politics through a political party.

Close ties between the Church and the state may constrain the political influence of the Church (Fink 2009:85). This may have been the case during the Fascist regime in particular. The Catholic Church had made a deal with Mussolini which they both benefited from. In this case the Church made compromises with the regime. In the case of disputes, the Catholic Church often emerged victorious (Duggan 2007:485-486). Despite the deal made between the Catholic Church and Mussolini, the Church did not hesitate to condemn the actions of the Fascist regime (Absalom 1995:140). Theoretically, however, close ties between the Church and state may reduce the political influence of the Church.

In spite of this, another theory presented by Fink (2009:85) indicates that with a strong religious party present in politics, the political power of the churches will be enhanced. With a

strong religious party, this will be another access point to affect politics. Once again, if we look at the DC, it was another access point to politics for the Catholic Church.

Christian democratic parties in general have typically tried to implement different types of welfare policies. This includes insurance-based benefits, and support for large families. Even though these are policies typically implemented by Christian democratic parties, it can also be found in countries where strong Christian democratic parties are absent. These empirical findings led to two findings, according to Bolzonar (2016:450). The first finding is that even in the absence of a strong political party, Catholic political ideas may have an impact. The second finding is that non-Christian democratic parties can take up Christian democratic values. Christian democratic values can be promoted through non-Christian democratic parties as well, and thus the Catholic Church can promote some values through non-Christian parties.

I will end this section with a quote from Pope John Paul II. Despite the theories claiming there are organizational links between the Catholic Church and Christian democratic parties in Western Europe (Norris & Inglehart 2011:22), Pope John Paul II had a different opinion of how the relationship between the Catholic Church and political parties should be. Note that this was directed to the Polish episcopate. Weigel (1994:41) writes that when addressing the Polish bishops, John Paul II said:

“the Church is not a political party nor is she identified with any political party; she is above them, open to all people of good will, and no political party can claim the right to represent her”.

## **2.3 Organizations**

Much more numerous than political parties, Catholic organizations can be found all over Italy. Both on the national-, regional-, and local level. These organizations vary in size, purpose, and influence. Naturally, Catholic organizations do not have a direct involvement in politics in the same way as Catholic parties do. This does not, however, mean that they are not involved in politics altogether. Catholic parties influence through governance, policy-making,

and presence in the legislature, and the judicial and executive branches. Catholic organizations and interest groups on the other hand, have other ways of affecting politics.

Interest groups may also support political parties. This support can come in different forms. Some will endorse the party as a whole, or individual candidates. They may offer support during elections and campaigns. For example, by financial aid, supplying campaign workers, offer facilities for rallies and meetings, offer logistical support, or contribute with organizers. The Catholic Church in Italy functioned in this way as an interest group focusing on helping Catholic parties in Italy, which again would benefit the Catholic Church (Warner 2000:98).

The Catholic Church in itself is a religious organization. However, the section on organizations will have its focal point on how the Catholic Church uses other organizations as a way to influence Italian politics. Another brief historical retrospective will show that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Roman Catholic Church itself was a major contributor to the emergence of civil society at the international level. Today, religious international nongovernmental organizations are one of the largest groups of lobbyists at the United Nations. Their work in both addressing and solving international problems has been more and more recognized since the 1980s (Beckford 2015:411). This group of religious international nongovernmental organizations does not only include Catholic nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), but the Catholic NGOs are a part of it. In other words, Catholic NGOs also represent a large group of lobbyist. There is no reason to believe that lobbying activities only occur at an international level. It also occurs on the national level in Italy. Knill and Preidel (2015:383) claims that the Catholic Church in Italy is active in lobbying. This, they claim, is made easier by the close connections between representatives of the Catholic Church and political actors.

## **2.4 Referendums**

Before presenting theories, and later on discussing, popular referendums, it is necessary to define what a popular referendum is. Le Bihan (2016:1) refers to referendums as a “direct vote of the general electorate on a single political question”. I argue that this is a suitable definition. Each country has different criterions of how one can submit a law to a referendum, but this definition is suitable for how a referendum works. In Italy, 500 000 signatures must be collected before a law can be submitted to a referendum. In addition, in Italy a referendum

cannot be submitted on laws that encompasses certain issues. These include for example regulation on the budget and taxes (Le Bihan 2016:4).

According to Fink (2009:84), referendums are the most important veto points which churches can use. Veto points has the role of facilitating political action from churches. Referendums can be used in several ways. As shown by the example in Italy from the 1974 referendum on divorce, referendums can be used to overturn, or try to overturn, already implemented laws. It does not always come to this. It is not only the push for a referendum that can affect laws. Even a threat to promote a referendum can be useful for churches. By threatening with a referendum in the case of an implementation of a law, the churches can affect policy-making. In this way, the strategy can be used even before a law has passed, or a referendum has been issued. If, say the Catholic Church, threatens with a referendum, the legislators must calculate how large the risk is of the law being overturned later. After calculating the risk, the legislators must design the law proposal accordingly. This strategy can be used not only by churches, but other interest groups as well (Immergut 1992:31). Fink (2009:84), claims that it is obvious how important referendums are for churches. With the mobilization potential of churches, they can threaten to use this in a referendum. This threat can lead to negotiations with political actors. If the negotiations do not lead to anything, or the law has already been passed, churches can use referendums to overturn existing laws.

Popular referendums are viewed by political parties as unexpected and as a largely unwanted phenomenon. At first, political parties thought they could control the outcomes of referendums, and on which laws that were subjected to a referendum. Catholic groups, among others, were the first of non-political parties to promote referendums. This caught the political parties by surprise (Uleri 2002:868).

The use of referendums does not always benefit the churches. Whether or not to use a referendum, or threaten to use a referendum, is something each church must evaluate. If the mobilization potential of the church is low, a referendum could work against its purpose. Churches with low mobilization power, should try to avoid the usage of referendums. Even the Catholic Church do no longer fight to restrict the law on abortion, as shown in the historical retrospective chapter, but choose battles they are more likely to win (DiMarco 2009:13). The Catholic Church in Italy, however, has a high mobilization potential. It is therefore more likely that they will succeed in using referendums, or threaten to use

referendums. As Fink (2009:77) claims, the Catholic Church is a stronger veto player than protestant churches. Whether or not the Catholic Church in Italy is more likely to succeed in using referendums, however, will not be discussed further in depth here.

Referendums increases the potential of churches to act politically (Fink 2009:84). Even though the Catholic Church used the DC to mobilize voters against the 1974 referendum, a church is not dependent of a political party to repeal laws through referendums.

There are empirical observations which show that mobilization potential is strongly dependent on issues. In some cases, a church may lose the votes of their adherents, while in others they may attract the votes of non-adherents (Fink 2009:82). Further empirical evidence, and discussions, will take place in the analysis chapter.

## Chapter 3: Method

The research method of this thesis will use a case study. Traditionally the qualitative method is oriented toward cases (Ragin 1987:3). Neuman (2011:165) claims that qualitative research speaks a language of cultural meaning, cases and contexts. The emphasis of qualitative research, Neuman claims, is to examine specific cases which occur in the social life. Therefore, using a qualitative research design will be most suitable for my thesis.

### 3.1 Case study

It can be difficult to give a precise definition of case study. Gerring (2004:341-342) lists several meanings to the term case study. These includes that the research is conducted “in the field”, that the method is qualitative, the research will be described by process-tracing, the properties of a single case is investigated during the research, or that the research revolves around a single example or phenomenon. The first four definitions are problematized, and Gerring concludes that a case study centers on an example, phenomenon or instance. Although this is also an ambiguous meaning. A new definition is proposed as a substitute for these others. Gerring (2004:342) defines the case study as: “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units”. This is a minimal definition. The definition proposed by Gerring does not focus much on a specific method or research design, but more on generalization. I will use the definition presented by Creswell (2013:97):

“Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bound system (a *case*) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a *case description* and *case themes*. The unit of analysis in the case study might be multiple cases (a *multisite* study) or a single case (a *within-site* study)”.

The definition presented by Gerring is, as mentioned above, focused on how we study a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of units. Its focus lies on generalization.

Although one can argue that the results of my thesis can be used to understand other cases, it is still in many ways a unique case. Catholicism plays a meaningful part in the life of many Italian citizens. This is not unique for Italy. There are many countries where Catholicism is an important part of people's lives. Italy is unique because of the geographical location of the Vatican City. The geographical center of the Catholic Church is within the borders of the Italian state. Because of the location of the Vatican state, this case cannot automatically be applied to other Catholic countries. This makes the Italian case unique. More on whether or not the findings in this thesis can be generalized will be mentioned under 3.6.

### **3.2 Case and case selection**

The case country in this thesis is Italy. Italy was selected as the case country before I found theories on this case. When looking at the influence of the Catholic Church on state politics, there has historically never been a country which was more influenced by the Vatican State. As I mentioned more thoroughly in the brief historical retrospective, the Vatican has exercised a great deal of influence on Italian politics and the Italian state. Even if we limit the timeline from the unification of Italy in 1861 to today's date. Italy is not the only country where the Catholic faith is an important part of people's lives, nor is it the only country where the Catholic Church can influence politics. In many countries, Catholicism is the dominant religion. For example, in Brazil, Poland, and Spain, 65 percent or more of its population are Catholics (Nash 2000:1). But aforementioned, Italy is a unique case because of its historical close ties with the Vatican City, and the location of the Vatican state.

When selecting a case, we need to be aware of potential selection bias. George and Bennett (2005:22) claims that case study methods are often criticized for selection bias. Even though selection bias can be a threat in case study research, it can pose a much larger problem in statistical research. However, this does not mean that we should not devote attention to the issue. In this thesis, I will also address the issue of selection bias. According to George and Bennett (2005:83), when selecting a case, the highest priority is that the case should be relevant to the objective of the research. This applies whether the research objective of the study includes theory development, or theory testing. In this research, the case has been selected in advance. This is one of the arguments for why selection bias is not a problem in

this thesis. Another argument is the uniqueness of the case. A similar case would be difficult, if at all possible, to find. Italy is unique in this aspect.

This thesis studies the relationship between religion and politics in a specific country. A similar study could be conducted by researching a similar relationship in a different country as well. I will, however, argue that this is a unique case.

### **3.3 The Comparative Method**

In comparative social science, the comparative method has been viewed as the main method. Comparison is valuable because it allows us to evaluate and interpret cases with theories. It also makes it possible for us to make statements about empirical regularities. Comparison is very common in social research. Empirical social research will in almost every case involve comparison. Cases are compared to each other, but they are also compared to theoretically derived pure cases. For empirical social science, comparison is essential (Ragin 1987:1). The comparative method focuses on comparing cases and examining cases. It is essentially a case-oriented strategy of comparative research. The comparative method is qualitatively different from the statistical method. In many ways, it is advantageous because it is suited for questions which is common for comparatists to ask (Ragin 1987:16).

Ragin (1987:3-4) states that a common definition of comparative research is a: “research that uses comparable data from at least two societies”. However, many researchers within the field would argue that this definition is too restrictive. This is partly because the definition states that data of comparative social science are cross-societal. Ragin (1987:4) points out that the aforementioned definition would exclude comparative case studies such as *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville. My thesis does not use comparable data from two societies as well, but compares the same society over time. Thus, the research is comparative, but instead of focusing on different societies in one specific period of time, the focus lies on the same society over time.

Mill’s indirect method of difference, is what Ragin (1987:39) calls “a double application of the method of agreement”. The method of agreement argues that if a phenomenon is being investigated, and two or more instances of that phenomenon have only one of several possible



causal circumstances in common, then the circumstance in which all the instances agree is what cause the phenomenon (Ragin 1987:36). While the method of agreement views the causal circumstance in which all the instances agree upon as the cause of the phenomenon, the indirect method of difference views the causal circumstance which is different as the cause of the phenomenon. The indirect method of difference, as well as the method of difference, is an empirical method (Ragin 1987:39). After the First Republic, the causal circumstance that differed from the post-war era is the party system. As we shall see in chapter 5, the Catholic Church could no longer influence Italian politics through a large Christian democratic party as it had done during the post-war era, due to a change in the party system.

In this case study, the focus lies on one single case. One country is being observed and examined over a period of time. The main emphasis in this thesis, is from 1992 to the present day. In addition, the time period from the formation of the Italian state, and to the fall of the First Republic in 1992, will be observed and discussed. The longitudinal comparison research design is common in observational studies. According to Gerring and McDermott (2007:694), longitudinal comparison is in use where a researcher concentrates on a single case and the theoretical variable of interest in that case goes through a change. Neuman (2011:44) defines longitudinal research as “Any research that examines information from many units or cases across more than one point in time”. Further on, Neuman (2011:44) states that longitudinal studies can be used for explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive purposes. In this research, it will be used for exploratory purposes.

### **3.4 Process Tracing**

When conducting a qualitative analysis, process tracing is an essential tool. According to George and Bennett (2005:6), process tracing “attempts to trace the links between possible causes and observed outcomes”. When a theory hypothesizes a causal process in a case, process-tracing is used to see if this is apparent in the variables in that case. This is done through examining documents, histories, and other sources (George and Bennett 2005:6). Collier (2011:823) defines process tracing as:

“the systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analyzed in light of research questions and hypothesis posed by the investigator”.

Further on, he explains how process tracing can contribute to evaluate causal claims, as well as describing both social and political phenomena. Process training can contribute to research objectives such as identifying new phenomena, both political and social. It can contribute to the discovery of new hypotheses, evaluate prior explanatory hypotheses, gain insight to causal mechanisms, and address selection bias, spuriousness and reciprocal causation (Collier 2011:824). Process tracing is also a tool of causal inference. The tool focus on how events or situations unfold over time. However, to do this, one must be able to describe an event at one point in time. Instead of starting with observations of change, process tracing has to begin with making good observations of specific moments. This is essential for characterizing a process. First, we must characterize important steps in the process, and only then can we make a good analysis of the sequence and change (Collier 2011:824).

In the fourth chapter of this thesis I write about the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Italian State in a historical perspective. The chapter comprises the historical relationship from 1861 to the end of the First Republic. Although the emphasis of my research objective is to look at what strategies the Catholic Church has used to influence Italian politics after 1992, I also discuss the strategies used before this. As mentioned above, process tracing focus on how events or situations unfold over time. For this to be possible, one needs to be able to describe an event at one point in time. My observations have been of several points throughout the history of Italy since its process of unification in the 1860s. This makes it possible for me to make a good analysis of the various strategies the Catholic Church has pursued to influence Italian politics in the period before the Second Republic, and the time after which is where the emphasis of this thesis lies.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

The data collected for this thesis is mainly done through qualitative document analysis. Documents analyzed are collected from different sources. This entails books on the history of Italy, research which is published from other scholars, encyclicals from the Vatican, speeches from different Popes, and documents on election results. Previously published research will include both research on the subject being researched, but also other subjects which will help enlighten the subject of my research.

Qualitative document analysis involves a systematic review of documents with an aim to register relevant data, and categorize its content. Selection of documents is partly done during collection of the data. Collecting the data also happens simultaneous with analyzing the data. While the researcher analyzes the collected documents, he/she gains a greater understanding of what type of texts are relevant for the analysis. The researcher also becomes more capable of answering the research question (Grønmo 2004:187).

There are some problems the researcher must be conscious of when conducting a qualitative document analysis. One of them is that the perspective of the researcher can affect the selection and interpretation of the documents. Some documents can be left out because the content does not fit in with the perspective of the researcher. This in turn can affect the findings and results of the research (Grønmo 2004:188-192). Problems related to the perspective of the researcher can be dealt with. Throughout my research I have tried to take in every interesting perspective. If a text is relevant or can contribute to a new perspective, I have tried to use it in my research. Grønmo (2004:192) claims that problems related to the perspective of the researcher can be prevented by viewing the relevance of the text from different perspectives, and not only texts that are typical for the categories in the research. Texts that are deviant from these categories can also be of importance for the research, and including this can prevent the perspective of the researcher to be a problem.

Another potential problem when conducting a qualitative document analysis is to be careless when considering sources. All sources must be viewed with a critical and contextual consideration (Grønmo 2004:188). When conducting a research, there are many available sources which we can use. The selection of specific sources must therefore be thoroughly considered. It is important to be critical of the sources we have. Grønmo (2004:121-123) names four criteria in which all sources should be critically judged. These are *availability*, *relevance*, *authenticity*, and *credibility*.

In my thesis, I have found numerous sources that are *available*. These are mainly collected from books, scientific journals and other scientific publications. A problem which may occur with availability is that sources which may be important are not available. If documents are not available, then this could make it difficult to answer the research question (Grønmo 2004:122). Translated into my thesis, I believe some hypothetical documents that I do not

have could come be useful. For example, if the Vatican City had a formal strategy on how to affect politics in Italy. Both prior to 1992, and past. I wrote “hypothetical” because it is hard to say if such documents exist. If such documents do exist, I do not have access to them. In my case, the lack of official Vatican documents does not prevent me from answering the research question. Some Vatican documents, encyclicals, and speeches from different Popes, are however available, and have been useful in this thesis. Other documents have also been very useful. Publications in the Journal of Modern Italian Studies in particular. The Oxford Handbook of Italian Politics is one of several books that have also been useful. As well as other publications. Another problem with availability in my thesis is the possibility of potentially useful articles which have been overlooked because they are written in Italian. In spite of this potential problem, there are many publications in the field of research which are written in, or translated into, English. I therefore do not consider lack of availability to be an issue.

When selecting sources, it is important to choose the sources that are most *relevant* (Grønmo 2004:122). Of the available sources, I have only included the ones that are relevant in my thesis. Not all data which is collected and reviewed will be relevant for my thesis. In such cases, I will exclude the irrelevant data.

Judging whether or not the sources are *authentic* is an important aspect when selecting sources. This is especially important when conducting qualitative interviews, or when reviewing old documents (Grønmo 2004:122-123). Neither of these take place in my thesis. Even though neither of these take place in my thesis, I have been aware of considering the authenticity of the sources I have used. Articles are collected through acknowledged scientific journals, and books are published by credible publishers, such as Oxford University Press (Hopkin 2015), Routledge (Fink 2009), and Penguin Group (Duggan 2007), to name a few. Documents from the official website of the Holy See has been used as well. One source from the Boston Globe (Allen 2014) is used for a discussion in the analysis chapter. This is included due to an interesting view offered by a political commentator. I have underlined that this view is an opinion, and not an undisputed fact.

Even though the sources are authentic, they need to have *credibility*. In this lies the question if we can have confidence in the information we receive. Documents could, for example, contain misleading information because the scholar wishes to promote specific interests. It is

important to consider if the documents are affected by issues of credibility (Grønmo 2004:123). In my thesis, I do not believe that this is an issue. It is hard to see what the authors and scholars of the books and papers I have used, should gain from distorting facts, or promoting one view over another. The literature I have used also covers different perspectives. Some sources may be critical of how much influence the Catholic Church has in Italian politics, while others are under the impression that the Catholic Church has less power now than earlier. Regardless of what one would think of this question, it is possible to give a good answer to how the Catholic Church has pursued different strategies to affect Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability**

In all research, it is important that the research design is of high quality. To judge the quality of the research design, we can conduct tests regarding validity and reliability. According to Yin (2003:33-39), there are four tests which are common to establish the quality of empirical social research. This includes usage in case studies. These four tests are: *construct validity*, *internal validity*, *external validity*, and *reliability*.

*Construct validity*. Gerring (2012:95-96) claims that construct validity refers to how faithful a research design is to the theory that is being investigated. It is underlined that researchers must work hard to make certain that empirical tests are bound in theory. To gain a higher degree of construct validity it is important to develop an operational set of measures for what is researched. Lack of operational measures has led to criticism of case studies, because critics claim that the researcher could collect data through subjective judgements (Yin 2003:35). There are, however, measures to increase construct validity. Yin (2003:36) lists three main tactics. The first is multiple sources of evidence during data collection. During my data collection, I have mainly relied on documents. The documents do, however, derive from different sources. Both Italian and sources from other parts of the world. This increases the construct validity. Secondly, during the data collection, the researcher must establish a chain of evidence. The third is to have key informants review the draft case study report.

*Internal validity*. Yin (2003:36) addresses two issues regarding internal validity. The first is a concern for causal case studies. Causal case studies are case studies in which an investigator tries to determine if one specific event led to another specific event. Tests for internal validity

are made to make sure the researcher does not conclude that one specific event led to another specific event, without taking into account that a spurious effect may have occurred. The second issue is the problem of making inferences. A case study has to deal with inference when an event cannot be observed. When this happens, the researcher will make an inference that a particular event resulted from something that occurred earlier. This inference is based on documented evidence or interviews which are collected as part of the case study. To deal with this issue the researcher must anticipate questions regarding how correct the inference is. By anticipating this in the research design, it is easier to deal with the issue of internal validity (Yin 2003:36). It can be difficult to achieve internal validity. Yin (2003:36) describes four ways of addressing internal validity. These are pattern matching, explanation building, addressing rival explanations, and using logic models. All occur during the data analysis (Yin 2003:34). By looking at different sources, and viewing several aspects, I attempt to achieve internal validity. When researching which strategies have been used by the Catholic Church to influence Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic, I do not only look at one specific strategy, but take into account different strategies. These are also compared to strategies used in the past.

*External validity.* The test regarding external validity deals with the problem of whether or not the findings in a study is generalizable beyond the case study (Yin 2003:37). In my case, it regards whether or not my findings on which strategies the Catholic Church has used to influence Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic, can be applied to other countries where the Catholic Church has major influence. There has been a common critic that single cases are not good for generalizing. However, where survey research focus on statistical generalization, case studies rely on analytical generalization. The researcher will try to generalize a particular set of results to a broader theory in analytical generalization (Yin 2003:37). In my thesis, a problem with external validity occurs. Italy is a unique case, and the empirical results found in this thesis is only valid in Italy. However, it is possible that the various strategies which the Catholic Church has pursued to influence Italian politics may be generalized to other countries with a Catholic majority. However, Italy is a unique country in how the Catholic Church influences politics. As stated earlier, this has to do with the location of the Vatican City. The geographical center of the Catholic Church which is located within the borders of Italy. This context separates Italy from other Catholic countries. It is, as mentioned earlier, a unique case.

*Reliability.* The objective of this test is to be sure that if another researcher would follow the same procedures as described by the researcher who originally conducted the study, and conduct the same study all over again, then the last researcher would make the same findings and conclusions. In order to allow other researchers to repeat an earlier study, the procedures from the earlier case must be documented. Reliability has a goal of minimizing errors and biases in a study (Yin 2003:37-38). It is difficult to exclude bias and errors altogether. In this thesis, I have tried to limit the possibilities of this occurring by citing all my sources. By doing this, I believe this thesis do have a large degree of reliability. Bias may have occurred because I have relied on books and research written in English and Norwegian. In the section on construct validity, I stated that I have used sources from Italy and other parts of the world. Documents that were originally written in Italian have been translated, but there have also been documents written in Italian that I have not used due to a language barrier. Because of this, bias may have occurred.

## Chapter 4: A Brief Historical Retrospective

As mentioned in the introduction, this master's thesis will focus on which strategies the Catholic Church have been using to affect Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after 1992. Before I go on with this task, a brief historical retrospective is useful to see which strategies the Catholic Church used to affect Italian politics prior to 1992. A historical retrospective will also clarify why I've chosen to emphasize the period after 1992. This chapter will encompass the strategies used by the Catholic Church between the unification in 1861 and the fall of the First Republic in 1992. Some historical context will also be provided. The most essential periods are: the time of unification, the founding of the first political party with affiliation to the Catholic Church, Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI), fascism and the Lateran Treaty, the post-war era, and the corruption scandal called *Tangentopoli*. In addition, two important referendums will also be included. This is the referendum on divorce in 1974, and the referendum on restricting abortion in 1981. The chapter is concluded with a short summary.

### 4.1 Unification of Italy to the PPI (1861-1922)

The Italian state and the Catholic Church had immediate tensions at the time of the unification of Italy. The unification of Italy implied the invasion of the Papal States. Given the different Papal States within the borders of what would be a unified Italy, it would not be possible to complete a unification without this invasion. Even though both San Marino and the Vatican City State are still independent states within the Italian borders, the Papal States combined covered a much larger area, than these. In addition, they had a larger military power compared to San Marino and the Vatican City State, even though the military power of the Papal States was not great. The founders of the Italian state may have tried to justify such an invasion. An invasion of the Papal States in the name of unification was however not a legitimate reason. In fact, when the Piedmontese army invaded the Papal states it was in violation of international law (Duggan 2007:210). During a debate in the Chamber of Deputies in March 1861, it was debated if Rome should be declared the new capital. At this point the Papal States Marche and Umbria had already been annexed and only Lazio remained. If the Italian state was also going to take Rome, that would mean the end of the Papal States. The Count of Cavour, Camillo Benso (called Cavour), who now would be inaugurated as Prime Minister,



was an advocate for making Rome the capital. In return for Rome, Cavour said that the kingdom would guarantee the Church in its spiritual mission. It would be a free Church in a free state. However, Pope Pius IX (1846-78) would not accept such a solution (Duggan 2007:243).

It was not until September 1870 that Rome was occupied by Italian forces. French troops had until then defended the pope, but as they withdrew to fight battles against Prussia, Italian forces moved in. From 1861-65 the capital had Turin, before being temporarily moved to Florence from 1865-70. In 1870, it was moved to Rome. As early as 1874 the Vatican had decreed the encyclical *Non Expedit*, which prohibited Catholics from participating in Italian national politics. By the time that Rome was occupied by Italian forces, priests were condemning the Italian government from their pulpits. This put pressure on the Italian government. In 1871, the Law of Papal Guarantees was issued. The law would separate the Church and State, and ensure protection of the Church. It would also expand the Pope's privileges equivalent to a head of state. Pope Pius IX argued that the legislation could be revoked at any time, and thus scorned the offer. Pius IX declared himself a "prisoner of the Vatican" (Killinger 2002:118). This claim was not only rhetorical. Pope Pius IX was often the target of insults on the streets (Doumanis 2001:110). The Law of Papal Guarantees remained nonetheless. The protection and privileges granted to it was generally accepted by the Vatican, while the government did not move to amend it. Italian Catholics did, despite the *Non Expedit*, participate in national politics, but relations between the Vatican and the Italian government remained strained (Killinger 2002:118-119). Pope Pius IX would continue to denounce the Italian state and remained unfriendly to it (Doumanis 2001:111).

In the 1890s Catholics formed Christian cooperatives, agricultural unions, and democratic organizations. This happened under Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903). The church leaders had at this time recognized that their opposition to the Italian state had failed (Killinger 2002:129). During the election of 1904, Giovanni Giolitti reached out to Catholic voters. The election of 1904 marked a re-entry of Catholics into active politics. Pope Pius X (1903-14), a political moderate, approved, if not urged, this (Killinger 2002:128).

The *Non Expedit* formally applied until 1919. In 1919, the *Partito Popolare Italiano* (PPI) contested its first election, with the Vatican's approval (Doumanis 2001:111-112). The PPI was organized by the Sicilian priest Don Luigi Sturzo, and won 100 seats of 508 in the 1919

elections (Killinger 2002:140). During the 1921 elections, the PPI increased its representation to 107 seats of 535 (Killinger 2002:142). When the PPI was founded in 1919, the Non Expedit ended. As mentioned above, there were many Catholics who voted and were even active in politics. This does not mean that the Non Expedit did not have an effect, but it shows that not everyone respected it. When it ended in 1919, this meant that the Catholics who had been following the encyclical of the late Pope Pius IX were now allowed to participate in politics. The immediate support that the PPI enjoyed shows that many Catholics were eager to participate in politics. They were at least eager to use their right to vote. The PPI was the only party that enjoyed the Vatican's approval. By gaining the Vatican's approval, it can be expected that the Vatican in return had a deep influence on the party.

#### **4.2 Mussolini (1922-43)**

In 1922 the Fascist movement, led by Benito Mussolini, seized power in Italy (Tintori and Colucci 2015:39). Mussolini enjoyed support from people who had a high status in the Church (Absalom 1995:128). Also, Mussolini managed to cooperate with the Catholic Church. In 1922, Mussolini received the vote of confidence from the leaders of the Catholic Church (Killinger 2002:143). During negotiations with the Vatican in 1923, Mussolini offered favors if the Church would abandon the PPI and its leader. These favors included, among other things, a guaranteed Catholic presence in the schools (Killinger 2002:145).

As early as 1926, Pope Pius XI (1922-39) was involved in secret negotiations for a concordat (Duggan 2007:484). The Lateran Treaty of 1929 reached an agreement between Mussolini and the Vatican. This normalized the Fascist regime in the eyes of many Catholics, both in Italy and around the world. The Catholic Church gained autonomy for the Vatican state, freedom for Catholic organizations, and protection of Catholic schools. Mussolini, on the other hand, received support for his government, the legitimizing stamp of the Church for the regime, and he also managed to reverse the Church's long boycott of Italian politics (Killinger 2002:151). The relationship between them was beneficial for both sides (DiMarco 2009:4). Among the most important things the Church gained was autonomy of the Catholic organization of laymen, called Catholic Action, or *Azione Cattolica* (Absalom 1995:140). More on Catholic Action will be written in the next section. The Pope also received a compensation of 750 million lire, plus 1000 million in bonds for the loss of Church property

since 1860. Catholicism was also declared the official religion of the state (Duggan 2007:484-485). The boycott of Italian politics from the Catholic Church had then lasted for almost sixty years (Killinger 2002:12). Until the Italian nation-state gained Papal recognition, the relationship between the nation-state and the Vatican ranged from estranged to hostile (Doumanis 2001:110). Following the Lateran Treaty, the relationship was not perfect, given the many differences in opinions between the Catholic Church and the Fascist regime, but it was better than it had been for a long time. The pacts were applauded internationally as diplomatic triumphs, and both the Church and Mussolini benefited from them (Duggan 2007:485).

Pope Pius XI did, however, react strongly against Fascist and Nazi attempts to invade the area of spiritual authority. This was an important area, which was naturally claimed by the Church. Pius XI attacked what he called Fascist 'paganism', after Mussolini closed Catholic Action's youth and university branches. This attack was launched in an encyclical in 1929 which gained the support of many faithful believers all around Catholic Europe (Absalom 1995:140). Even though much criticism has been directed to how the Catholic Church responded to Mussolini and fascism, the Vatican did also condemn the actions of the Fascist regime. When Mussolini imposed racial laws, Pope Pius XI denounced them as cruel and un-Christian. Despite this, the Papacy never constituted a threat which might overthrow the regime. The Papacy were however a constant reminder of how the totalitarian state was incomplete (Absalom 1995:140). Mussolini knew that the independence of Catholic Action prevented his dream of a totalitarian state. Therefore, he attacked Catholic youth organizations. When Mussolini and the Vatican reached a peace agreement, the Church emerged as the victor. The Church was allowed to continue, but only with religious activities. Nonetheless the Vatican kept expanding among the civil society, and especially with youth groups (Duggan 2007:485-486).

During the Mussolini era, the Catholic Church was directly active within politics for the first time after the unification of Italy. The PPI was affected by the Vatican, and could further on affect the people, while during the Mussolini era, the Vatican communicated directly with the Fascist regime. As mentioned in chapter 2, Nash (2000:1) writes that a Church can exert direct influence through participating institutionally in corporatist negotiations. How the Catholic Church bargained with Mussolini and the Fascist regime, is an example of how it exerted direct influence. Through institutional participation in corporatist negotiations, the

Catholic Church came to agreements with the Fascist regime. The Lateran Treaty was a result of this. After the fall of Mussolini and the Fascist regime, the Church was in need of new ways to influence Italian politics.

### **4.3 Post-War Era (1946-92)**

The post-war era opened the doors for new strategies for the Catholic Church. Before the Mussolini era, the Church had not participated in politics. It was limited how much the Catholic Church managed to affect the authoritarian state during the Mussolini era.

After the second world war, the Catholic Church placed limits on the Left's ability to make changes. In addition to the Catholic Church, economic influence from America, and support from the USA and Great Britain also contributed in limiting the Left's ability to make changes. One of the ways the Catholic Church did this was through the Christian democratic party, *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC). Headed by among others the future Italian Prime Minister, Alcide De Gasperi, the DC was founded during the second world war (Clark 1996:294). The DC was supported by the Vatican, and grounded in a number of Catholic organizations. In this way, the DC could place limits on the Left. In fact, the DC's strongest appeal was its opposition to communism (Killinger 2002:159-160). Although the DC won a decisive victory in the 1948 elections, it did not manage to repeat this. The DC also struggled with internal conflicts. It struggled to maintain internal unity. In the 1953 general elections, the DC lost seats to the extreme Right and Left. During the 1950s, the DC looked to broaden the coalition in an attempt to bring in stability. They looked to the Left to bring in the Italian Socialist Party, *Partito Socialista Italiano* (PSI). The Vatican and the United States opposed this, making the *Apartura ala sinistra* (opening to the Left) difficult. However, during the 1960s the DC was able to open to the Left after all. This was partly due to a new papacy (John XXIII) (1958-63) who embraced liberal democracy and progressive social thought, and a new U.S. presidency (John F. Kennedy) who used his influence to soften the relationship with the Left (Killinger 2002:164-165).

After 1945, the organization Catholic Action took control over ex-Fascist youth organizations, welfare bodies and the *Dopolavoro* (an ex-Fascist leisure organization for adults). Among the things they inherited were thousands of charities, such as orphanages.

Many of these were already run by the Church. The amount of national welfare agencies the DC took over, and founded, within the twenty years after 1948, combined to a total of 193 (Clark 1996:335). Catholic Action was very influential until the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). In 1960, it had more than three million members, and played a major role in educating lay Catholics (Garelli 2007:27). As we shall see in the next paragraph, Catholic Action also fostered politicians. Some of whom would form the DC.

The DC was one of the most dominant parties in the post-war era. When it was founded, it was hardly a party at all. The DC was only a coalition of laymen from Catholic Action. Some came from the PPI as well. Others from Catholic co-operatives and Catholic unions from the pre-fascist era. Alcide De Gasperi became the leader of the DC. De Gasperi tried to win great autonomy from the Church. Its voters were predominantly religious, in that the majority of them regularly attended mass. Anti-Communism, religion, and the family, was among the most important appeals for the DC. Women represented a majority of its votes, but also inhabitants of small towns, elders, and small landowners, especially in parts of Northern Italy. The DC also supported small enterprises, co-operatives and peasant landownership. Though it was ill-disciplined and complex, the DC enjoyed great support. It was an inter-class party, and at most times a populist-, and sometimes progressive party. The DC ruled permanently from 1946. Between 1948 and 1979 the DC won between 38.3 and 48.4 percent of the votes in the Chamber of Deputies (Clark 1996:327-329). The DC was so influential and in possession of so much power that some would argue that the most important post in Italy at this time was neither Prime Minister, nor President, but secretary of the DC (Clark 1996:333). When the most dominant party in Italy had its roots in the Catholic Church, it is clear that the Vatican could influence politics through a political party. The Catholic Church gained much political strength through the DC, and the DC gained political strength because of the Catholic Church (DiMarco 2009:4).

In 1948, the DC won 48.5 percent of the votes, and 305 of 574 seats in the national election. This was an absolute majority of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. No other party has done this after the DC (Killinger 2002:161). This shows how powerful the DC actually was. When Giovanni Spadolini was elected Prime Minister in 1981, this was the first non-DC Prime Minister in 35 years. This is another example of how powerful and influential the DC was (Killinger 2002:167).

Although the DC possessed much power and influence, the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Italian state underwent some changes during the post-war era. A new Concordat was made in 1984, revising formal Church-State relations. This had not been done since the Concordat of 1929. One of the results of the new Concordat was that Catholicism ceased to be the official religion of the Italian State. Religious teaching was no longer compulsory in State schools, Church property became taxable, and State stipends for priests were phased out. Despite the fact that 90 to 95 percent of the students opted for religious teaching in schools, and that donations to priests were facilitated, the Concordat caused changes in the Church-State relations. Thus, one can say that the Church lost considerable political power (Clark 1996:405). This could be seen as a change in the Church's impact. Less impact through political parties would force the Church to think differently, and develop new strategies. If the new Concordat was a sign of less political power, the Catholic Church could develop strategies that were less concerned about making an impact through a political party, and more concerned about making an impact through people's personal lives. The reason for the changes that were made in the Concordat, have been attributed to social and political change over decades. DiMarco (2009:5) claims that this can be viewed in two ways. Either the Church distanced itself from Italy because it did not want to be linked with the changing ideals in Italy. Or, the state sought to modernize and thus distanced itself from the Church.

The DC had some connections which was worthy of criticism. Some say that the DC had close connections with both the Sicilian mafia, *Cosa Nostra*, and the Neapolitan mafia, *Camorra* (Gilmour 2011:364). To gain votes and influence in both Naples and in Sicily, these were powerful connections. Given the authority of the *Cosa Nostra* in Sicily and *Camorra* in Naples, this may have had a significant meaning for the DC. Absalom (1995:283) writes that there was a resurgence of *Camorra*, 'Ndrangheta and the Mafia (*Cosa Nostra*), after the alliance between them and the DC had been broken at the end of the 1980s. The resurgence can be interpreted as a sign of the close ties between the DC and the Sicilian, Neapolitan, and Calabrese mafia. As long as the alliance existed, the *Camorra*, 'Ndrangheta and the *Cosa Nostra* were less visible. Further on, Absalom (1995:284) writes that the mafia had been given protection from the law in exchange for control of the southern electorate.

Some would say that the DC lost many of its supporters because there were far fewer small farmers and practicing Catholics in 1980 than in 1948 (Gilmour 2011:344). In other words, the support for the DC was not as large in the 1980s as in the 1940s. From 1976 to 1983 alone

the DC went from 38.7 percent to 32.9 percent of the votes for the Chamber of Deputies (Nilsson 1987:91). Despite this, it was expected that the DC would stay in government for a long time. Some would even say that the prospects were better for the DC after the record low support in the 1983 elections (Nilsson 1987:55-56). The DC did have an upturn in the 1987 Italian general elections, winning 34.3 percent of the votes, compared to 32.9 percent in 1983. The party also won nine more seats in the Chamber of Deputies (Hine 1987:269). However, something would interrupt the reign of the DC. The next decade would see the downfall and the end of the DC.

Note that the Catholic Church did not only have political authority through the DC. The Popes has also expressed the concerns of the Church through speeches, encyclicals, encouragement, and letters to political figures (DiMarco 2009:2). Although the Catholic Church exerted substantial power through the DC, it also publicly spoke on issues which concerned it.

One of the most significant religious events in the twentieth century was the Second Vatican Council. Called by Pope John XXIII (1958-63), the Second Vatican Council took place between 1962 and 1965. The Second Vatican Council was an assembly of Roman Catholic bishops. Observers from other Christian churches and communities also took part in it. Pope John XXIII wanted to heal divisions within Christendom, change the reactionary attitude of the Church toward the world, and update and spiritually renew the Catholic Church. For over three hundred years, many Catholics had viewed the Church as a perfect society. The Second Vatican Council made Catholics view their Church differently. The need for a continued reformation was recognized by the bishops (O'Collins 2014:6). During the Second Vatican Council, four constitutions were made. The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*), Pastoral Constitution of the Church (*Gaudium et Spes*), Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), and the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*) (O'Collins 2014:6-8). The constitutions included teachings of the Catholic Church. Parts of the constitutions will be cited in the analysis chapter.

#### **4.4 Referendums During the Post-War Era**

In the 1948 Italian constitution, provisions for a popular referendum had been written. However, the law had never been approved and implemented. The DC began the process of

getting the law implemented when the debate on a law on divorce was discussed in the late 1960s. From 1972 it was possible to submit laws to a popular referendum in order to repeal or modify them (Seymour 2006:205).

Before summing up this chapter, two referendums will be given attention. The first is the 1974 referendum on divorce. The second is the 1981 referendum on abortion. These were two referendums in which the DC and the Catholic Church suffered defeats.

#### **4.4.1 The 1974 Referendum on Divorce**

In 1970, a bill introduced divorce into Italian law. Divorce became legal, although only under highly restrictive circumstances (Volcanzek 2001:356). The law was subject to years of debate before it was introduced into legislation. Restrictions on the law were also placed by the DC. After the law had been introduced, a group of Catholics formed a committee and proceeded to gather a large number of signatures. It submitted the law to a popular referendum (Marradi 1976:115). The committee was founded by Professor Gabrio Lombardi, and named the National Committee for a Referendum on Divorce (CNRD). Lombardi was a professor at the Catholic University of Milan, *Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore* (Seymour 2006:214). Although it was Lombardi and the CNRD who submitted the law to a popular referendum, this tactic was not new. This tactic had been drafted at the Bishop's Conference as early as in 1967 (Seymour 2006:205).

The referendum was feared by the secular camp. Officially, the country still consisted of 99 percent Catholic, and the influence of the Catholic Church was high. Several secular party leaders feared that the secular front could suffer a defeat. They feared the influence which appeals from both the Pope and clergy might have. The Communists feared that some of their followers would vote according to how the Catholic Church encouraged them to vote. If it had only been the DC which encouraged voters to repeal the law, there would not be a big issue. It was a different matter when the Pope and clergy encouraged people to vote in favor of repealing the law (Marradi 1976:116). Catholic organizations supported the DC in the attempt to repeal the law, and to get a referendum on the ballot which requires 500 000 signatures (Volcansek 2001:357). The CNRD gathered the signatures. It did so with the blessing of Italian bishops, and the help of a broad network of Catholic organizations. Although 500 000 votes were required to submit the law to a popular referendum, the CNRD collected 1 370



134 signatures in total. It did so with the help of other Catholic organizations (Seymour 2006:214). Although the number of signatures do not say anything of the influence of the DC, it says something about the network and mobilization potential of Catholic organizations. The factors mentioned showed in itself that there was support in favor of the referendum. In addition to this, the Communists feared that this might affect their relationship with the Catholic Church. Even though the DC was clearly anti-communist, the Communists had voted for the implementation of the 1929 Concordat into the Italian constitution in 1947. In this way, the Communists stood out from the other secular parties, and it was a part of a long-term policy of conciliation with the Catholic Church. The conciliation could now be at stake (Marradi 1976:116).

It was also feared by the religious camp, but for a different reason. With the support of Catholic organizations, the DC felt confident in that the law could be repealed through the referendum (Volcansek 2001:357). If, however, the outcome of the referendum should not go the way they wished, it could strike another blow to the DC. This could be seen as a weakness of the influence of the DC. During the campaign prior to the referendum, there were two parties which advocated that the law should be repealed. The DC, and the Italian Social Movement, or *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI). MSI was a neo-fascist party. Besides the two political parties, the Catholic Church was also advocating support to repeal the law. Bishops were much involved in mobilizing their followers. The Pope, on the other hand, was hesitant to give his full authorization in the struggle (Marradi 1976:116).

The vote resulted in 50.9 percent of the electorate, or 59.1 percent of those voting, voted “no” to repeal the law (Marradi 1976:117). The voter turnout was 87.7 percent (Uleri 2002:864). During the campaign prior to the vote, the Catholic Church had encouraged their adherents to vote “yes” on the referendum. The DC, bishops, and the clergy encouraged to repeal the law. In spite of this, the referendum was not successful, and the attempt to repeal the law did not succeed.

#### **4.4.2 The 1981 Referendum on Abortion**

The first of many referenda related to reproduction was considered in 1976. At the time, abortion was illegal in Italy. Political parties in favor of the abortion laws tried to reform it, so that the law would not be submitted to a referendum. These parties did not want to risk the

referendum to reach the people, and thus risk that it was repealed (DiMarco 2009:6-7). The DC proposed a new version of the law, but one where abortion was still defined as a crime. Debates and negotiations took place, and a new proposal was agreed upon. This new proposal stated that abortion was no longer criminal. The law was implemented in 1978 as law 194 on *The Social Protection of Motherhood and the Voluntary Termination of Pregnancy* (DiMarco 2009:7).

As expected, the Holy See was against this (DiMarco 2009:7). When the abortion law of 1978 was implemented, the Catholic Church took a personal stance against it. In addition to the political authority of the Holy See, through the DC. The Holy See promoted respect for all human life (DiMarco 2009:2-3). In this way, the Catholic Church appealed to the people by making it clear how they value all human life, and in addition, it exerted political influence through the DC.

In 1981, two referenda were held on abortion. One of them, issued by the secular side, sought to liberalize the law on abortion. The other, issued by the Catholic side, sought to restrict the law on abortion. Among the political parties, the DC and MSI supported the referendum to restrict the law on abortion. All other parties supported the referendum to liberalize the law on abortion (Bardi 1981:282).

The referendum to liberalize the law were promoted by the Radical Party, or *Partito Radicale* (PR). On the opposite side, the referendum to restrict the law on abortion was initiated by the DC, and supported by the organization Movement for Life (Bardi 1981:282). And, as mentioned, backed by the MSI. Once again, the DC supported a referendum to repeal a law on an issue that is important to the Catholic Church.

Neither of the referenda succeeded. In Italy, for a referendum to be valid a minimum of 25 percent voter turnout of the registered voters is required (DiMarco 2009:12). The turnout was 79.4 percent on both. While 68 percent voted “no” on restricting the law on abortion, 88.4 percent voted “no” on liberalizing the law on abortion (Uleri 2002:864). Although the referendum to restrict the law on abortion failed, there was a greater opposition to liberalize the law on abortion. However, the failed referendum to restrict the law on abortion was a defeat for the DC.

The referendum on restricting the law on abortion did not go in favor of the Catholic Church. After this, the Vatican has stayed away from trying to restrict the law on abortion. DiMarco (2009:13) claims that the Vatican now chooses battles they are more likely to win. How the Catholic Church has tried to affect Italian politics through referenda after the First Republic, shall be discussed in the analysis chapter.

#### **4.5 Tangentopoli and Mani Pulite**

In 1993, a corruption scandal was uncovered. The scandal involved bribes being paid by businessmen to party leaders. Among these was the leader of the Socialist Party, Bettino Craxi. The scandal is known as *Tangentopoli*, or in English, bribesville. Tangentopoli shook the foundations of the Italian republic.

A drive for fundamental change in the political system was mobilized. In Milan, a series of investigations started, which was called *mani pulite*, or in English, clean hands. The scandal would include several party leaders besides Craxi, including Giulio Andreotti and Arnaldo Forlani from the DC. One-third of the members of Parliament would eventually be involved during the *mani pulite*. Even though the scandal came as a shock to many Italians, corruption associated with politicians was not something new. Already in the late 1970s president Giovanni Leone had to resign due to corruption. Leone was a DC politician (Gilmour 2011:364). In other words, the DC were no strangers to corruption among party members.

The Tangentopoli scandals revealed how political power had been abused, specially by the party leaderships. This led to two things in particular. The destruction of the old parties, and a change in the post-war political system. When making a new constitutional reform, an important aspect was the electoral system. Proportional representation (PR) guaranteed an equitable representation, both also made majority government impossible. Because of this, party leaders in this corrupt system would trade favors for power. Referendums were submitted to move Italy from PR at all levels of government. The referendums of 1991 and 1993 gained a large majority of the votes, thus replacing PR with winner-take-all elections in local governments, and three-fourths of the seats in Parliament (Killinger 2002:169-170).

Following the Tangentopoli scandal, the DC was dissolved in 1994 (Gilmour 2011:365). The DC had maintained supremacy for more than forty-five years (Killinger 2002:168). After the biggest Christian party was dissolved, other parties with a Christian profile tried to gain support. No other party succeeded in getting the same support as the DC once had.

Tangentopoli brought an end to the DC era of Italian politics. It also meant that the Catholic Church could no longer influence Italian politics through a political party with the same amount of impact. The attempts of other Christian parties showed that a new party would not have the same influence. After the second world war, the Catholic Church could influence Italian politics through the party system, and the DC. Developing strategies to influence Italian politics is something the Catholic Church had been doing throughout the post-war era. However, their most effective way of influencing Italian politics had been through the DC. After Tangentopoli, they had to rely on other strategies.

#### **4.6 In sum**

The Catholic Church and the Italian state did not have a good relationship at the time of the unification of Italy. A unified Italy would mean the end of most Papal States. Pope Pius IX was unhappy about this. In 1874 the Vatican decreed the Non Expedit, which forbade all Catholics from participating in Italian national politics. The Law of Papal Guarantees was issued in 1871. The Church and State were separated, but this law also ensured protection of the Church. Even though the Pope's privileges were extended to the equivalent of a head of state, Pius IX scorned the offer and declared himself "a prisoner of the Vatican".

The Non Expedit formally applied until 1919. In 1919 the PPI contested in its first election. PPI had the Vatican's support, and thus the Non Expedit ceased to apply.

During Mussolini's Fascist regime, the Church and government reached an agreement in the Lateran Treaty. Both the Church and Mussolini gained from this. The Church got autonomy for the Vatican, and more freedom and benefits for Catholic schools and organizations. In spite of this, the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Fascist regime was not unproblematic. Mussolini would later try to place limits on the Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church openly criticized regime politics, like for example the racial laws. Nonetheless, the relationship between the Italian state and the Catholic Church was more

stable than it had been since unification. This period was the first time the Catholic Church was directly active in politics since the time of the unification.

After the second world war the Catholic Church affected politics through the DC. The DC had the support of the Vatican. It was largely successful and maintained supremacy for more than forty-five years. Through the DC, the Catholic Church could affect policy and to a large degree set the political agenda. At one point, in 1948, the DC won an absolute majority of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies, which no party have done later. This shows the great support the party enjoyed. Criticism can be voiced due to unfortunate connections to the mafia and corruption among party members, but the DC were very influential nonetheless. Between 1962 and 1965, the Second Vatican Council took place. Roman Catholic Bishops, and observers from other Christian churches and communities took part in it. Four constitutions were made during the Second Vatican Council. Among other things, these included the teachings of the Church. In 1984, a new Concordat was made. This revised formal Church-State relation. With the new Concordat, Catholicism ceased to be the state religion. During the 1980s the support for the DC both decreased and later rose. Despite a decreasing support for the DC during the early 1980s, scholars were optimistic about its future. It was expected that the DC would have a great amount of electoral support for a long time. However, things changed in the early 1990s.

Two laws on issues that are important to the Catholic Church were subjected to popular referenda during the post-war era. The first was the 1974 referendum on divorce. In 1981 the second law was subjected to referendum. This was the law on restricting abortion. Both referendums failed to repeal and restrict the laws, despite being promoted by the DC and the Catholic Church.

When the corruption scandal known as Tangentopoli was revealed in 1993, this led to the end of the DC. Several leaders of the party were involved in the scandal. However, corruption was not a new thing within the DC. DC president Giovanni Leone had to resign in the 1970s, due to corruption. Tangentopoli and mani pulite led to electoral reforms. The old PR system was abolished. The scandals also led to the dissolution of several of the old parties, including the DC. In 1993 the second republic began, and this is where my thesis will have its focal point.

## Chapter 5: Analysis

So far in the thesis, we have looked at a brief historical retrospective for the case of Italy and how the Catholic Church has influenced Italian politics from the time of unification to the fall of the First Republic. The following chapters put forth theories on the subject, and described the applied method for the research. In this chapter, the analysis will be conducted.

The analysis will focus on three strategic ways in which the Catholic Church influences Italian politics. First, through party politics. Second, through Catholic organizations and movements. Third, through popular referenda.

### 5.1 The Catholic Church and Party Politics

In the chapter where we looked at which ways the Catholic Church influenced politics prior to 1992, the DC was an essential part of the post-war era. After the DC dissolved there was uncertainty of how the Catholic Church would react in terms of influence through party politics. Would the Catholic Church try a different strategy, or hope to influence a new party in the same way? The DC dissolved, and its members spread, but which parties did the former DC politicians join? In this part of the analysis I will discuss the road ahead for the DC politicians, which parties followed the DC, and *Lega Nord*'s attempt to gain support from Catholic voters. Then I will discuss why the Catholic Church can no longer be a major influence through political parties, and what the consequences of this is.

#### 5.1.1 The Road Ahead for the DC Politicians

Following the dissolution of the DC, the party split into several different parties. The Social Christians called *Cristiano-sociali* (C-S) contested in the 1994 elections in the *Progressive Alliance* coalition. They would later join several other parties to found the Democrats of the Left or *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* (PDS). The PDS along with Verdi (the Greens), *Lista Dini* (Dini List), and *Popolari*, made up the Olive Tree (*Ulivo*) coalition. *Popolari* was made up of the PPI which was the largest successor of the DC, Romano Prodi who ran as an independent candidate, the Democratic Union or *Unione Democratica* (UD), and the South Tyrolean People's Party or *Südtiroler Volkspartei*. The Olive Tree was headed by former DC

politician Romano Prodi (Newell 2000:32:36-37). I will go more in depth about the Olive Tree coalition later in this chapter.

It seems that the Catholic Church did not try to support former DC politicians at all costs. If a former DC politician had political views which were not consistent with the Vatican, their background as a DC politician was seemingly useless. Former DC politicians could not expect to be endorsed by the Vatican, exclusively because of their DC background. An example of this is Romano Prodi. Prodi and his relationship to the Vatican will be discussed more in depth, later in this chapter.

The PPI was the largest remnant of the DC, following its dissolution. While the name is the same, it does not have anything to do with the PPI founded in 1919. Except that the PPI which succeeded the DC was also a Christian Democratic party. But the party must not be confused with the one which was founded by Don Luigi Sturzo in the pre-fascist era (Donovan and Gilbert 2015:394). Following the first republic, the PPI was considered the successor party of the DC which was dissolved in 1994. With a new electoral system, the PPI faced a strong competition on both the Left and the Right. The new electoral system used winner-take-all elections in local governments, and in three-fourths of the elections for Parliament. This replaced the old PR system. The new electoral system guaranteed a better representation for the small parties. Thus, it was impossible to form majority governments (Killinger 2002:169-170). As mentioned, the PPI faced competition on both the Left and the Right. The DC had been located in the center, and so was the PPI. In the new electoral system, coalitions formed on the Left and the Right. The coalitions in the 1994 general elections were the Alliance of Progressives, or *Alleanza dei Progressisti*, on the Left, and the Pole of Freedoms, or *Polo delle Libertà*. Even though the PPI joined the coalition Pact for Italy, or *Patto per l'Italia*, there was no room for a coalition in the center.

Single-member constituencies were now being used. Although the PPI won a fair share of the votes, they won few seats, due to single-member constituencies. The poor results were predictable, but still a defeat for the party (Hopkin 2015:327-8). The low electoral support for the PPI was not unexpected. When the expectations became reality, it was clear that the Catholic Church could not influence Italian politics through a political party in the same way as during the First Republic. If the Church still had its mind set on doing this, it was at least certain that the PPI was not the way to go. Without the PR electoral law of the First Republic,

the political challengers of both the Left and the Right were too big. The theory of Duverger's Law says that single-member districts produce two-party systems. During the 1996 general elections there were not two grand parties, but two grand coalitions (in addition to the smaller Lega Nord) which competed for seats in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. These were the *Polo delle Libertà*, led by Silvio Berlusconi, and the Ulivo, led by former DC and PPI member Romano Prodi (Hopkin 2015:329-30). The PPI lacked electoral support, and did not succeed in the elections. One of the main reasons for the lack of success for the PPI was that it did not try to join neither the Ulivo, nor Polo delle Libertà.

As mentioned above, some members of the DC formed the PPI in 1994. PPI and Pact for National Renewal or *Patto Segni* (Pact) would form the coalition named Pact for Italy, or *Patto per l'Italia* (1994-1996) (Newell 2000:31-32 and 207-208). *Patto Segni* would only contest in the 1994 general elections, where it won 4.6 percent of the votes (Berntzen 2013:273).

In 1994, the right-wing of the DC formed the Christian Democratic Center, or *Centro Cristiano Democratico* (CCD). During its first election, in 1994, the CCD joined the lists of Forza Italia (FI). In the elections of both 1996 and 2001, the CCD and the Christian Democratic Union, or *Cristiani Democratici Uniti* (CDU), had a joint list for the elections. It won 5.8 percent of the votes in 1996, and 3.2 percent of the votes in 2001. The CCD and CDU formed the Union of Christian and Centre Democrats, or *Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e di Centro* (UDC) in 2002 (Berntzen 2013:274-275). We shall take a closer look at the UDC later in this chapter.

### **5.1.2 The legacy of Catholic political parties and coalitions after 1992**

After the dissolution of the DC there were two small successor parties that appeared to be able to contest elections. This was from 1995, and in particular from 2001-08.

The formation of the Olive Tree coalition in 1995 led to a split in the PPI. Rocco Buttiglione formed the CDU instead. Former DC member Gerardo Bianco led the PPI into the Olive Tree coalition. Romano Prodi put himself as the leader of the Olive Tree coalition. In the 1996 elections, he managed to mobilize support from progressive Catholics, and the coalition brought together the parties of the center-left (Newell 2000:206). From 1996 to 2001, the



Olive Tree coalition was in government. In the 2006 general elections, the Olive Tree Coalition won 31 percent of the votes, and was in government once again (Berntzen 2013:272). The Olive Tree coalition had several leaders who served at different times, and the coalition gave the center-left a banner to gather around until the foundation of the PD in 2008 (Donovan and Gilbert 2015:394).

The PPI was a principal successor to the DC. In 2001-2 the PPI was fused with other minor centrist parties, which were more or less Catholic. These were the Italian Renewal, or *Rinnovamento Italiano* (RI), *I Democratici*, and the Union of the Democrats for Europe, or *Unione Democratici per l'Europa* (UDEUR) (Berntzen 2013:275). This became the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom (*Margherita-Democrazia è Libertà*). In 2008-9, the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom fused with the post-communist Democrats of the Left, or *Democratici di Sinistra* (DS). Together, they cofounded the Democratic Party, or *Partito Democratico* (PD). With the forming of the PD, the Margherita-Democrazia è Libertà abandoned its Catholic identity. Following the Tangentopoli scandal, the PPI, as mentioned above, was the principal successor to the DC. Despite this, it took 14 to 15 years before the party would abandon its Catholic identity. Although it was now expanded (Donovan 2015:194-5).

Even though the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom gained some political power as a part of the Ulivo coalition in 2001, the ideology of the DC's successor party faded away. The shift from the PPI's original Catholic identity, to the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom began to dissipate the Catholic identity. This identity was completely erased with the founding of the PD. This could be an indication of the changes in Catholic parties, and Catholic politicians in Italy after the First Republic. Even though the PD did not, and does not, have a Catholic identity, several of its leaders are devout Catholics, and several of them are former DC members. As for example Matteo Renzi and Dario Franceschini. In addition to having Enrico Letta, a former DC politician, in the Prime Minister position from 2013-2014. It seems as even though the Catholic identity is absented from the PD, a large number of its members are Catholics. I will go further in depth on the changes in political Catholicism later in the chapter.

The UDCs forerunners were the CCD which was formed in 1994, and CDU which was formed in 1995. Both CCD and CDU had formerly been allied to Silvio Berlusconi. In 2007,

the UDC gained their independence when they refused to join Berlusconi's new party, the People of Freedom, or *Il Polo della Libertà* (Pdl). In 2008, the UDC allied with other fragments, with whom most were Catholic. These parties became the Union of the Centre, or *Unione di Centro* (UdC). The UdC was the only political formation to gain parliamentary representation in 2008 which were not allied to neither the PDL nor the PD. Further on, the UdC had to make a choice on how it would identify itself. The UdC attempted to form a new Catholic party. This gained the interest of some ministers, successful Italian business and financial leaders, and a significant group of Catholic interest group leaders. Despite the interest of these influential leaders and ministers, the attempt to form a new improved Catholic party was not as successful as it may have hoped. The Catholic hierarchy chose to give only limited support. This support was also ambiguous.

Another way the UDC sought to gain votes, was through the government of Mario Monti. Monti's Civic Choice list, or *Scelta Civica* (SC), allied with the UdC in 2012, because of his decision to seek electoral legitimation as a political leader. At this point, the UdC was a clearer centrist party. A single list was presented in the Senate to overcome the 8 percent threshold. The list was presented under Monti's name. As a result of the 2013 Italian general elections, 19 senators were elected from the SC. Among these 19, only two were from the UdC. Pierferdinando Casini was one of these. Casini had been an important figure, and the de facto leader of the Catholic center-right since 1994. The UdC didn't fare better in the Chamber of Deputies. A distinct UdC list was presented. This was squeezed to just 1.8 percent of the vote. The 1.8 percent gave the UdC eight seats in the Chamber of Deputies. To form an officially recognized group in the Senate, ten are required. In the Chamber of Deputies, 20 are required. This meant that the UdC was eight too few in the Senate, and twelve too few in the Chamber of Deputies. As a result of the defeat in the 2013 Italian general election, the UdC was too small to form an officially recognized group in either Chamber. This meant an end to a distinct Catholic presence in the Parliament (Donovan 2015:194-95).

Although small, the UdC had represented a Catholic presence in the Parliament from its foundation and until the 2013 general election. After the 2013 general election, Catholic presence went from small to non-existing in the Parliament. Especially given that also the PPI had merged with other parties into the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom, and eventually the PD. The PD had no Catholic identity, as mentioned above. In the 2013 general elections, the

UdC won 1.3 percent of the votes (Berntzen 2013:280). And, as mentioned above, did not win enough seats in either Chamber to form an officially recognized group. Even though the UdC has had low political influence in the Parliament after the 2013 general election, the party has not been dissolved. Nor has it abandoned its Catholic identity.

The UdCs representation in the Parliament gives a glimpse of how much the Catholic Church can affect politics through political parties. A quick comparison shows us that even if we compare a year in the DC-era in which the DC had low support, it is still much larger than the support the UdC enjoyed in the 2013 general elections. In 1983, the DC won 32.9 percent of the votes for the Chamber of Deputies (Nilsson 1987:91). The UdC, in comparison, won 1.8 percent of the votes for the Chamber of Deputies in the 2013 general elections (Donovan 2015:194-95). Prior to the Tangentopoli scandal, the 1983 general elections were the election with the poorest results for the DC. Yet, when the DC won 32.9 percent of the votes for the Chamber of Deputies, this cannot be considered a defeat. Even scholars at that time were optimistic about the future of the DC. Although the results were considered poor, they were expected to rise again (Nilsson 1987:55-56). Could one hope for a rise in the results of political parties with Catholic identities today? If we briefly sum up the history of political parties with Catholic identity after 1992, we can raise the question if this is in the Vatican's interest. The DC was dissolved in 1994. Following the Tangentopoli scandal, the party could no longer exist and enjoy the success it had enjoyed during the post-war era. Its legacy was wounded too badly. The newly founded PPI, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, was its natural successor. Several members of the DC were involved in the foundation of the PPI. The PPI was also centrist and a clear Christian democratic party. However, none of the successor parties to the DC even came close to the success of the DC. This is shown in Table 1 later in this analysis.

It seems far-fetched to define the LN as a Catholic party, but because they have tried to attract Catholic voters through some political issues, I will include a section on them.

The LN is one of the parties that wished to claim the role as defenders of the Catholic identity of Italy after the dissolution of the DC. Since 1943, the DC had proclaimed that Italy should be a Christian, democratic country. This implied that Catholic principles should inspire state activities. The DC had taken up the task of defending the Catholic identity of Italy. With the disappearance of the DC, the LN was now eager to take on the task. The LN originated from

an area where the DC had enjoyed great support. This is the so-called White Belt of Italy. It comprises the northern regions of Lombardia, Veneto, and Friuli Venezia-Giulia. From the late 1990s, the LN began to pay great attention to the religious values. Their electoral manifesto from 2013 states among other things that they want freedom of education and religion, and that they support the marriage between a man and a woman. These were themes that at first looked like principals found in papal documents. If we look deeper, some of these issues had hidden motives as well. For example, the claim for freedom of religion was not a claim for freedom of all religions. The LN wanted to limit the establishment of mosques, and it has criticized organizations for having tolerant attitudes towards Muslim communities. This shows that the LN does not have a friendly attitude towards Muslims, and the claim for freedom of religion, in their view, could be considered limited to Catholicism or Christianity. Another way the LN has tried to take the role as defenders of Catholic cultural identity of Italy, is with demands for social solidarity. Once again, the hostile attitudes towards Muslims and migrants, and accusations on how migrants who receive social services keep needy Italians from benefiting from the same, show that these are not unequivocally Catholic values. The Catholic values would not exclude migrants from social services, or blame them for using social services at the expense of Italian citizens (Bolzonar 2016:458-9).

According to Bolzonar (2016:459), there are two reasons why the political use of Catholic values by the LN does not seem consistent with the political Catholicism promoted by the DC. The religious arguments used by the LN are used to reach goals of non-religious value. To a large degree, this includes gaining votes. Bolzonar claims that the religious symbols are used for profane reasons, and set aside from their religious context. One can read this as the Catholic values themselves are not promoted to defend the Catholic identity of Italy, but to gain votes for the LN. The second reason is that while the Catholic Church pointed out the Catholic ideal of a universal social solidarity, the LN opposed it. Particularly in the case of immigration. The LN on the one side was against the acceptance of migrants, while the Catholic Church on the other side blamed Italian politicians for not devoting enough attention to the suffering of migrants. Bolzonar concludes by claiming that the Catholicism of the LN in the political arena is a spurious form of Catholicism. This form of Catholicism will only pay attention to Catholic conservative ideals which will help the LN gain votes.

The LN is not in any way a successor party to the DC. Nor is it a party with endorsement from the Vatican. In addition to its aim of gaining more autonomy for the northern regions,

the LN can be defined as a populist party, more than a Catholic party. It is reasonable to expect that the promotion of some of the Catholic values exist for gaining votes. Not to become a new Catholic party with the support of the Vatican. The LN does not promote itself as a Catholic party either, but seems to attract some Catholic voters.

Before moving on to the discussion of why the Catholic Church can no longer be a major influence through political parties, a table will be presented with election results for some chosen parties and coalitions. The table is meant for a comparison of how many percentage of votes the DC gained in 1992, and how many percentage the parties which followed gained in the next two elections. The table shows election results up until 2013, and in this way, we can look at the results from all of the successor parties. FI is included for two reasons. First, the CCD joined the lists of FI during the 1994 Italian general elections. Second, because of the close ties between the Vatican and Berlusconi which we shall see later in this chapter. Lega Nord is included because it has to some degree promoted Catholic values, and it seem to attract Catholic voters. The PD is also included. Both because it is a successor to the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom, but also because of the role of Matteo Renzi, whom will be written more about. Data is collected from Berntzen (2013:273-275). The numbers represent the percentage of votes won by the party. The results of the Catholic parties are written in bold.

By looking at the table, we can see how the PPI never managed to come close to the number of votes gained by the DC. FI/PdL has gained over 21 percent of the votes in every election since 1994, with especially good elections in 2001 and 2008. We can also see that the PD won 25.4 percent of the votes in the 2013 election, making it the second largest party after the Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S), which is not included in the table (Berntzen 2013:274). It is clear that the Catholic parties such as the PPI, the CCD/CDU/UDC/UdC, and Patto Segni, has had low electoral support. Especially when compared to the DC. The PPI won just over 11 percent of the votes in the 1994 general election, but as mentioned earlier, it resulted in few seats due to single-member constituencies. After this, the Margherita-Democracy is Freedom is the only party with Catholic affiliations which has won more than 10 percent.

Table 1. Election results from 1992 to 2013

	1992	1994	1996	2001	2006	2008	2013
DC	<b>29.7</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
PPI	-	<b>11.1</b>	<b>6.8</b>	-	-	-	-
Patto Segni	-	<b>4.6</b>	-	-	-	-	-
CCD/CDU/UDC/UdC	-	-	<b>5.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.8</b>
FI/PdL	-	21.0	21.0	29.4	23.7	37.4	21.6
LN	8.7	8.4	10.1	3.9	4.6	8.3	4.0
Margherita- Democracy is Freedom	-	-	-	<b>14.5</b>	-	-	-
PD	-	-	-	-	-	<b>33.2</b>	<b>25.4</b>

### 5.1.3 Why the Catholic Church Can No Longer Be a Major Influence Through Political Parties

As mentioned earlier, the Catholic Church had a major influence through political parties between 1945 to 1992. Before moving on to the next part of this analysis, we shall look at some major reasons why the Catholic Church can no longer be an influence on Italian politics through political parties, to the same degree that it was from 1945 to 1992.

Following the Tangentopoli scandal, several major structural changes were made in the Italian political system. Thus, making the transition from the First to the Second Republic. Compared to the post-war era, from 1946 to 1992, some attributes of the Italian party system had changed. During the post-war era, there were a high number of political parties, with great distances among them. The DC occupied the center throughout the period. And the competition for the executive was closed. After 1992, there were changes in the party system. Even though the party system became increasingly fragmented, two large pre-electoral alliances emerged. These alliances integrated the new moderate successor parties to once extremist parties. For example, the Italian Communist Party, or *Partito Comunista Italiano* (PCI), was succeeded by the Democratic Party of the Left, or *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* (PDS). The PDS had closer ties to social-democratic parties. In addition, the Communist Refoundation Party, or *Partito Rifondazione Comunista* (PRC) was also a

successor to the PCI. However, the PRC was substantially smaller than PDS. The center once occupied by the DC was now empty. And between 1994 and 1996, closed competition for the executive ended and open competition began (Mershon 2015:145).

Devout Catholic politicians are not bound to join Christian democratic parties. This differs from the DC era. In the DC era, most Catholics who were active through political parties, and at the same time regularly attended mass, were members of the DC. The other grand parties, were the communist party (PCI), the socialist party (PSI), and the Italian Social Democratic Party, or *Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano* (PSDI). During the governments of the DC, the party formed coalitions with several other parties. If a devout Catholic were to enter the political arena, it was more natural for that person to join the DC. Especially considering that the PSI and PSDI were often in coalition with the DC anyway, although they enjoyed less support. After the dissolution of the DC following the Tangentopoli scandal, and after the dissolution of the PPI, this has changed.

With the two large pre-electoral alliances that emerged after 1992, there was a greater competition for electoral votes. A strong center was no longer present. Following the dissolution of the DC, several new Catholic parties were founded. But at this point none of them could even be compared to the DC in neither power nor size. This could be one of the reasons why Catholic politicians were no longer eager to join Catholic parties. The large alliances may have been more attractive to Catholic politicians. This may have been more attractive to young politicians than to the ones that were a part of the DC. Romano Prodi, for example, joined the PPI after the dissolution of the DC, even though he joined other non-Catholic parties later.

Romano Prodi has arguably had the most influential political career of the DC politicians who made a transition to other parties following the Tangentopoli scandal. Following his career in the DC, Prodi was a member of the PPI from 1994 to 1996. Later, he varied from being independent from political parties to being a member of the Democrats (*I Democratici*) and later the Democratic Party, or *Partito Democratico* (PD). During this time, Prodi has served as Prime Minister on two occasions. First from 1996 to 1998, then again from 2006 to 2008. During both terms, he was a part of the Olive Tree coalition. The first term, however, Prodi was not affiliated to a political party. During the second term, Prodi became an official member of the PD. Prodi was not, however, an official member at the start of his time in

office. Despite being a former member of the DC, Prodi did not enjoy a great deal of support from the Vatican.

Young Catholic politicians who entered the political arena after the Tangentopoli scandal, do not seem compelled to join a Catholic party. Matteo Renzi is a perfect personified example of this. Renzi is a Catholic who regularly attend mass (Diotallevi 2016:485). Renzi is the secretary of the PD, and served as the Prime Minister of Italy from 2014 to 2016. He is described as a Catholic politician. Yet he does not make appeals to a clear Catholic ideology. This has been described as a symptom of this era (Bailey and Driessen 2016:422). Political parties with a clear Catholic ideology is almost non-existent compared to the DC era. The fact that young Catholic politicians do not consider it natural to join a party with a clear Catholic ideology, is not a positive sign for the future of Catholic parties. But this does not mean that the Catholic Church cannot affect politics through politicians.

If we take a better look at Matteo Renzi, it is interesting to see how he identifies with a lot of the typical Catholic values, with some exceptions, but still represents a center-left party. Renzi is described as a progressive, yet not someone who only theorizes things. Being in favor of civil unions of same-sex couples, Renzi has taken a different path than the Catholic Church on this question. This conflicts with the opinions of the Catholic Church as well as Pope Francis. Renzi's government also backed a bill to speed up divorce. We cannot say that this is something that Renzi personally fought for, but the bill was criticized by the bishops in Italy. At the same time, Renzi has personal values and political opinions that can easily be identified as Catholic values. Renzi has encouraged politicians to embrace simpler lifestyles. Also, Renzi argued that the state has a responsibility to help the poor, and called for more liberal immigration laws. This is similar to values and opinions which Pope Francis has expressed during the years of his papacy. According to political commentator Ernesto Galli della Loggia, Renzi focuses on concrete challenges, he is both efficient and compassionate, kind and simple, and open to the ideas of others. Galli della Loggia has an interesting view on how this may be the only kind of Catholicism that is capable of being translated into politics in today's Italy, the era of Pope Francis (Allen 2014). This can be interpreted as to say that party political Catholicism is not possible in Italy today. The opinion of one political commentator cannot be considered an undisputed fact, although it gives us a point of view which is worth discussing.



Given the situation of the Catholic parties in Italy today, it appears as though individual Catholic politicians can affect politics at least as much if they are not members of a Catholic party, as if they are. Young Catholic politicians seem comfortable governing without being a member of a party with a clear Catholic ideology (Bailey and Driessen 2016:422). Some scholars have suggested that the demise of the DC made it possible for the ideological influence of political Catholicism to spread to all parties. In doing this, it would result in a larger influence of Catholic ideals on Italian politics than what the DC itself ever had (Bailey and Driessen 2016:424). The influence of Romano Prodi in the Olive Tree, and the PD, is an example of this. Renzi, as mentioned above, is also an example of this. A Catholic politician such as Renzi can influence the non-Catholic PD with elements of Catholicism. This does not mean that the PD will have a Christian democratic ideology, but political Catholicism will no longer be centered around one large Christian democratic party, as it were in the DC era. Instead of having one Christian democratic party of the size of the DC, with so to speak the only influence of Catholic ideals, Catholic politicians spreading across several parties means that Catholic ideals can be included in Italian politics from different parts.

Bolzonar (2016:450-451) proposes that there has been a Christian democratization of politics in Italy. There has been a Christian democratization of social coalitions, liberal-oriented parties, and the Lega Nord. This is shown by the incorporations of Catholic values in their ideologies. Studying this provides insight into the structural transformation on both political Catholicism and Italian politics. After the demise of the DC, there has been a transformation in the identity of existing political parties. Bolzonar claims that the persistence of Catholic values in society, in addition to among other things the transformation of identities of political parties mentioned above, has led to a Christian democratization of politics in Italy. It has also changed political Catholicism in Italy.

This leads us to another question. Is Catholic party politics a thing of the past? Is it no longer possible for the Catholic Church to make a major impact on Italian politics through political parties? Some scholars will claim that the collapse of the old party system have radically changed the relations between the Catholic Church and Italian politics, which were established in the post-war era (Livi 2016:400). I will concur that the structural changes made from the First to the Second Republic radically changed the relations between the Catholic Church and Italian politics. Even though the Catholic Church can still influence Italian politics through political parties, this will be, and has been, more difficult in the Second

Republic than the First. In addition to being more difficult, it does not seem as something the Catholic Church is interested in. As mentioned in the chapter 2, when addressing the Polish episcopate in 1993, Pope John Paul II said (Nash 2000:7) that:

“the Church is not a political party nor is she to be identified with any political party; she is above them, open to all people of good will, and no political party can claim the right to represent her”.

## **5.2 Catholic Organizations and Movements**

Religious organizations, movements and interest groups are some of the channels through which the Catholic Church can affect politics. Through organizations and movements, the Catholic Church can affect politicians, and try to set an agenda for political causes of importance to the Church. As mentioned in chapter 2, interest groups can give support to political parties (Warner 2000:98). It is clear that this is something the Catholic Church did during the post-war era. During the post-war era, the Catholic Church supported the DC, which made a great impact on the power and influence of the DC on Italian politics. This again gave the Catholic Church great influence on Italian politics. As mentioned in the previous part of the analysis, the Catholic Church does no longer support political parties in the same way as during the post-war era. This can partly be explained by the institutional changes made in the transition from the First to the Second Republic. But what strategies does the Catholic Church use to affect Italian politics after 1992? In this part of the analysis, I shall write about how the Catholic Church has affected Italian politics through religious organizations, movements and interest groups.

As early as in 1982, Pope John Paul II recognized that Catholic movements were central to containing a drift toward secularization (Santagata 2014:441). This shows that Vatican influence through Catholic organizations is not a new phenomenon. In the historical retrospective chapter, I wrote about the Catholic organization of laymen called Catholic Action. Catholic Action has influenced politics in several respects throughout the history of Italy. During the Fascist regime, Catholic Action was a constant reminder to Mussolini that his totalitarian regime was incomplete. Catholic Action gained more influence after the second world war. Originally, the DC was, as mentioned earlier, mainly a coalition of laymen

from Catholic Action. It increased in both numbers and influence, up until the time of the Second Vatican Council. This shows that Catholic organizations has been influential in the past as well. Even though the Catholic Church could influence Italian politics through the DC during the post-war era, it has also used organizations in the civil society. As shown in the historical retrospective chapter, the Catholic Church was even expanding among the civil society during Mussolini's regime. Even though it is not a new phenomenon, I will discuss how the Catholic Church has used Catholic organizations, interest groups, and movements, to a larger degree after the fall of the First Republic, compared to earlier in the history of Italy.

After the transition from the First Republic, there was no longer a clearly identifiable Catholic party. At least none which could compare to the DC. The PPI, which was the natural successor of the DC, could not rally enough electoral votes to gain enough political power to make a great impact. Instead, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, many Catholics were divided in how they cast their votes. Many Catholics voted for Prodi, while many others voted for Berlusconi. Some scholars argue that in the absence of a clear Catholic party, the Catholic Church changed its strategy. From now on, the Catholic Church would no longer use a political party to influence politics and affect policy making, as it did during the post-war era. Instead, the Catholic Church adopted a strategy of a much more public voice, than during the post-war era (Bailey and Driessen 2016:420-421).

There is an impressive number of Catholic-inspired associations and initiatives, acting in the political arena as interest groups (Diotallevi 2016:489). It is not granted that all of these associations and initiatives fosters political ideas. In addition, these associations and initiatives will vary in how much they will push to affect Italian politics. Some to a much larger degree than others. Nonetheless, a large number of Catholic-inspired associations and initiatives are active in the political arena, and they exert influence. It can also be argued that the Vatican will exert influence through these associations and initiatives. The influence that the Vatican has on Catholic-inspired organizations should not be underestimated.

### **5.2.1 Communion and Liberation**

When reading about influential organizations connected to the Catholic Church, there is one religious movement that regularly appears. This is the Catholic movement *Comunione e Liberazione*, or Communion and Liberation (CL). The CL was founded in 1954 by Luigi

Giussani. It spread quickly throughout Italy after being formed in Milan. It is a movement, as the CL itself defines it, because it does not have the form of a structure or organization (Rondoni 2000:18).

It is not only local in Italy. At the time of the CL's thirtieth anniversary, it had spread to 18 countries (Rondoni 2000:136). By the year 2000 it was present in 70 countries in the world (Rondoni 2000:18). In this thesis, I shall focus on the CL in Italy, but this shows how large the movement is worldwide.

Since 1954, the CL has become widely known as an important Catholic movement with high influence. During the last 15 years, the political power of the CL has significantly increased. The CL is involved in activities over a broad spectrum. They range from grassroots meetings to service provision and business activities (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:133). It has been described as a Catholic movement that intends to enhance its political and professional presence in society (Garelli 2007:27).

One of the reasons why the CL has such a great influence is because it is deeply rooted at the local level (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:133). When the movement is rooted at the local level, it reaches a broad range of people. Some people may trust leaders of such movements more than they trust politicians. And thus, a movement such as the CL can enjoy more trust and influence among people when it is rooted at the local level, instead of only having close ties to politicians. If the Catholic Church attempts to influence politics, or people's vote in the case of a referendum, it is desirable that it could do this on several levels. A movement such as the CL could in such cases be very useful.

In the chapter which looks at the historical background of Italian politics, the Non Expedit of 1874 was mentioned. The Non Expedit prohibited Catholics from participating in national politics. The CL claims that Christians should engage in society, both actively and critically (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:133). In 1919, the Non Expedit formally ceased to apply. The CL represents a change of attitudes with regards to how the Catholic Church, and Catholics, view their role in society in terms of involvement. This especially applies in political matters. Not

that the CL in any way has been responsible for that change, but it is a clear example of how the involvement of Catholics in politics has changed. Catholics are not only involved in party politics, but actively engage in movements as for example the CL. For Catholics to engage actively in society is, as mentioned before, something that the CL sees as a responsibility. This is in line with how the CL has always viewed politics as a natural field of Christian commitment. That is the way they have, and always had, a political engagement (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:143).

The political role of religious organizations was almost exclusively connected to the DC during the First Republic. Through civil activism in society, by mobilizing Catholics in both public and political life, and through commitment, religious associations supported the party (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:135). After the DC dissolved, the political focus of religious organizations was at a crossroad. They could either continue to give support to a Catholic party, or choose different ways of affecting politics. Unlike during the First Republic, not all religious organizations opted for the same way to play their political role. The CL seized the opportunity to gain influence through a political party in the wake of the First Republic. When Forza Italia became the largest party following the 1994 election, the CL seized an opportunity. FI had grown very popular with its charismatic leader, Silvio Berlusconi. However, the FI lacked organization and political leaders at the local level. The CL took advantage of this. In the aftermath of the First Republic, some of the political leaders of the CL had gathered in the CCD. The CCD was a small party consisting of former DC members. The party did not, however, have an alliance, and its electoral strength was weak. Two months prior to the regional elections in 1995, the CL allied with FI. The CL promoted Roberto Formigoni as candidate for the presidency in Lombardy. The Polo della Libertà coalition won the regional election in Lombardy and Formigoni became president of Lombardy. Formigoni and CCD, the party which the CL endorsed, winning the presidency can to a large degree be credited to the cleverness of the CL to ally with FI. Through skilled local leaders and activists, the CL was able to fill in the organizational weaknesses in the coalition, and in turn win the presidency of Lombardy. This in turn made it possible for the CL to make its key issues among the coalition priorities (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:135). As mentioned in the second chapter, interest groups vary in how, and what kind of, support they give to political parties. They may endorse candidates, or the party itself (Warner 2000:98). Prior to the 1995 regional elections, the CL chose to support CCD and promote Formigoni as

president of Lombardy. In this, they succeeded.

Through the Polo della Libertà, CL members in CCD could influence politics, and affect policy making. But this is just one example of how the CL has operated. Through relationships with politicians in the CCD the influence of the CL grew. The CL also gained a great amount of influence through lobbying activities with political parties within the center-right coalition, as for example FI (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:135). This is an example of how the Catholic Church can affect Italian politics through a Catholic movement. The CL itself is not a political party, but it has close ties with politicians within political parties. In addition, it has a restrained relationship with political parties whom they influence through lobbying activities. By having close ties with politicians, and through lobbying activities with political parties, the CL can exercise a major influence on Italian politics. Giorgi and Polizzi (2015:134) claims that the CL's annual meetings is one of the most important public moments of the movement. Both high-level public and political personalities are invited to these meetings. This shows the broad network of the CL, and demonstrates how far their connections reach. Because the CL is not only deeply rooted at the local level, but their connections reach up to high-level politicians and public figures, it can influence on different levels.

As mentioned above, the influence and political power of the CL has grown over the past 15 years. Could this be an indication of the shift in strategies by the Catholic Church, from influencing politics through party politics to other arenas? The growth of the CL is an evidence that Catholic organizations and movements play a relatively larger role after the fall of the First Republic, compared to the post-war era.

The CL wishes to make a statement of their religious identity in society (Garelli 2007:29). Already in the 1970s they were changing the debate from debating issues related to forms of political actions, to those which concerned faith as a form of social identity (Santagata 2014:440). By focusing on faith as a form of social identity, it can be argued that this affected the shift in how Catholics operate in politics. With this focus, it may have been the case that

politically active Catholics became more aware of how they can influence regardless of which political party they are affiliated with. A realization that they are not obliged to join a political party which has a clear Catholic identity, but that they can be devout Catholics, and still be active in a party without a clear Catholic identity.

The relationship between the Vatican and the CL has generally been close. In 1982, the CL received pontifical recognition. This was viewed as a confirmation that Pope John Paul II (1978-2005) liked the movement (Santagata 2014:440-441). At the time of its thirtieth anniversary, Pope John Paul II addressed the CL. Pope John Paul II was full of praise in his address. His address was mainly directed towards the work which the CL did to promote the Gospel of Christ. But still, Pope John Paul II recognized that the presence of the CL was ever more consistent and meaningful, not only in the Church of Italy, but also in the various countries where they began to spread. In addition to the work of spreading the Gospel, Pope John Paul II also gave them credit for opening to diverse situations. The call for commitment in collaboration with other movements in the Church, in addition to bishops and parish priests, shows a mutual desire for collaboration between the CL and the Church (Rondoni 2000:131-137). Even though the CL has grown significantly in both influence and political power over the last 15 years, we can see that its collaboration with the Vatican has existed for a long time. As early as in 1977, Pope Paul VI (1963-78) blessed the Florentine university students of the CL, and the founder Luigi Giussani (Paul VI 1977). In addition to Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI (2005-13) addressed the CL numerous times (Communion and Liberation 2011). And most recently, Pope Francis addressed the CL on its fiftieth anniversary. This took place on St. Peter's Square (Pope Francis 2015). As we can see, the CL has had ties with the Vatican for a long time. These ties have seemingly only grown closer each year. Pope Francis' address to the CL on St. Peter's Square can be a symbol of this. First and foremost, the different Popes have given the CL credit for their evangelical work, but as we have seen, this is not the only arena in which they engage.

The CL has been critical to the secularist idea that faith should be something private and individual. Christians should be active in society, without fear of being critical. Over the last 15 years, the CL has had a great deal of success, and has had increasing power and visibility

(Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:133-135).

### **5.2.2 Conferenza Episcopale Italiana and Ruinismo**

*Conferenza Episcopale Italiana* (CEI) is the Italian Episcopal Conference. The CEI and its presidency, which I will discuss in depth later, had a clear papal mandate. It could be argued that the CEI had closer ties to the Vatican, than the CL, based on its papal mandate.

From the time of the third National Ecclesiastical Meeting in Loreto in 1985, the CEI received more power and influence than ever before. It was based on a papal mandate, and assumed leadership to a greater extent than what had previously been seen assigned to an inter-diocesan institution by official ecclesiology. This was something new in Italian ecclesial, and social, history. The leadership of the CEI adopted several new policies to play this role. This included a strong leadership at the national level of the Catholic religious authority structure, in addition to the great expansion of this authority. By doing this, they incorporated sectors which were in principle assigned to the lay apostolate. It particularly assumed exclusive control of interactions with political and, above all, state officials. Even though it did not have a political offer, the CEI leadership played an important role on the political market. Some scholars would describe them as the strongest clericalist group in Italy of all time (Diotallevi 2016:500).

Camillo Ruini studied at the Pontifical Gregorian University, and his career began in the Church of Emilia. During his study, he made contacts with important members of the DC. In Emilia-Romagna, Catholics were in a minority in the political arena, but Ruini was not unknown to Church leaders (Santagata 2014:441). This can be due to Ruini's connections.

The term Ruinismo refers to the era when Ruini was president of CEI (1991-2007). In 1986, Ruini was appointed secretary of CEI, and this was the beginning of Ruinismo (Santagata 2014:442). After having served as secretary for approximately five years, Ruini was appointed president of the CEI in 1991. Ruini remained president until 2007. As mentioned earlier, the Catholic Church changed its strategy after the dissolution of the DC. The strategy now adopted, included a more direct, public, and political voice from the Catholic Church. Some scholars have referred to this phase as the Ruinismo. One of Ruini's tasks was to



defend specific Catholic values. The values that Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI termed *valori non negoziabili* (non-negotiable values) (Bailey and Driessen 2016:421). The task given to Ruini shows what Bailey and Driessen (2016:421) claims is a more direct public voice from the Catholic Church. After the dissolution of the DC, no political party is entrusted with the task of defending non-negotiable values. The task is entrusted to the Cardinal, and president of the CEI, Camillo Ruini. This is an example of how there has been a change in the ways in which the Catholic Church tries to affect Italian politics. Important tasks are no longer given to political parties, but rather to political movements and organizations. The CEI is one of them. How the Catholic Church and the CEI operated in cases such as the referendum against assisted reproduction, will be discussed in the next part of the analysis.

Before the years of Ruinismo, an objective was to maintain a Catholic political unity. Ruini had a different view on this matter. Ultimately, there was a change of perspective in the case of whether or not to try to maintain Catholic political unity. Ruini recognized that the fragmentation left after the dissolution of the DC could make CEI more influential, and increase its scope of action. In addition to getting rid of the formula of Catholic political unity, Ruini developed a new media strategy. This included a newspaper, a television channel, conventions and cultural events. Through this there were two things in particular which occurred. The CEI grew in strength. Media operations helped the CEI gain more power. It became more visible, and thus more influential. In addition to this, the size and strength of the CEI was identified with Ruini, who was president, and not the secretary general (Melloni 2015:420-21). Ruini's development of the media strategy resembled that of Berlusconi. Not in scope, but they both increased their visibility and influence by using the media. Berlusconi to a much higher degree than Ruini, but this was a clever move from Ruini nonetheless. Through it, he increased the power and influence of the CEI, and at the same time established a strong association between the CEI and himself.

During the 1990s, Ruini and the CEI considered Berlusconi, and right-wing politicians, to better guarantee public visibility for the Church. Particularly on the non-negotiable values. By doing this, they gave right-wing politicians the chance to be *defensor fidei* (defender of the faith). A task, which I mentioned in the previous part of the analysis, similar to the one the Lega Nord wished to claim. Even though Berlusconi and the right-wing was given a chance to take on this task, they were not fitting to the principles of the Catholic Church. And neither was the LN. The main contender to Berlusconi was Romano Prodi. Not only was Prodi a

skilled politician who held the Prime Minister position in two different periods, but also an exemplary Catholic. Prodi also had a background in both the DC and the PPI. This was not an easy task. In addition to this, Ruini tried to reduce the communication within the CEI. By weakening the communication within the CEI, it can be argued that it would be an easier task for Ruini to gain support to promote Berlusconi and the right-wing. An unconditional support from Pope John Paul II made these tasks achievable (Melloni 2015:421). Ruini succeeded in ensuring the downfall of Prodi's government in 2008. There was a political clash between Ruini and Prodi (Diotallevi 2016:505). Prodi was occupied with issues concerning institutional reform and health, while Berlusconi supported issues that was important to the Catholic Church (Livi 2016:404). It was, for example, Berlusconi's government that in 2004 introduced the law on assisted reproduction (Santagata 2014:445). Berlusconi opposed abortion, assisted reproduction, and he promoted the traditional family. These were some of the non-negotiable values. This led the Vatican to support Berlusconi over Prodi (Bailey and Driessen 2016:421). This shows how strong the influence of Ruini, and the Ruinismo were. Prodi, a devout Catholic, lost the support of the CEI in favor of Berlusconi, a liberal, populist with no political background prior to 1994. Berlusconi would in many ways be viewed as an opposite to Prodi. Prodi had an academic background, he is a family man, and one with few controversies during his political career. Berlusconi was a business man, and his political career would be marked by many controversies. There are many examples of the influence of Ruini. One on them is how he persuaded the CEI to support Berlusconi over Prodi. This also shows his strong impact and persuasive skills.

Diotallevi (2016:486) states that one of the key elements of Ruinismo was the mobilization of Catholic representatives in both the Camera dei deputati (Chamber of Deputies), and the Senato della Repubblica (Senate). These were frequently mobilized on single issues. Unlike the support of the DC, these representatives can be mobilized to affect issues regardless of whether these issues have been proposed by the Left, Right, or Center. Whereas the DC as a party had the support of the Catholic Church, during the Ruinismo the support can be given regardless of parties. In this way, the Church does not need to support the Left, Right, or Center, but can defeat majorities on both the Left and the Right. As exemplified with Matteo Renzi in the previous part of the analysis, there are many Catholics in the Italian political arenas. This does not only apply in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. At every administrative level, there is a high number of Catholics among the locally elected. With the Catholic Church no longer supporting a single Catholic party, but rather mobilizing Catholic

politicians, it can be argued that the Catholic Church can affect politics on a broader level. Instead of previously affecting through the DC which was a centrist party, the Catholic Church can influence politics through politicians on the Left, Right, and Center. And the Catholic Church can make a great influence through mobilizing Catholic politicians at the local administrative level as well.

In 2013, Pope Francis appointed Nunzio Galatino as Secretary General of the CEI. This has widely been seen as ending the Ruinismo period (Bailey and Driessen 2016:421). Even though Ruini's presidency ended in 2007, it was not until the appointment of Nunzio Galatino as Secretary General of the CEI that it was regarded that the Ruinismo period had ended.

### **5.2.3 Catholic Movements, Organizations and Interest Groups' Influence on Italian Politics**

The influence of both the CL and the CEI increased after the First Republic. Without the presence of a single Catholic party, it can be argued that the increasing influence of these movements are linked with the absence of a Catholic party. We can see a correlation between these two. The dissolution of the DC and the end of the First Republic made way for Catholic movements, organizations and interest groups to be more influential. The influence of the CEI can be linked to the appointment of Ruini as president as well.

Several time periods throughout the history of Italy, the Catholic Church endorsed a Catholic party. However, grand Catholic parties such as the PPI of 1919, and to a larger extent, the DC, no longer exist. Instead, Catholics are represented in all parties. Both at the national, and the local level. In this way, there is a broader representation of Catholic interests in Italian politics. Political Catholicism does no longer exist in the same way as it has done in the post-war era. Instead, Catholic politicians are represented to a larger degree across parties, and Catholic movements, organizations and interest groups are used to affect Italian politics to a much larger degree than during the First Republic.

Some scholars claim that the Catholic Church has left the party for the pulpit (Diamanti and Ceccarini 2007:45). It can be difficult to say if this is true. But it seems clear that Catholic organizations, movements and interest groups are being used to a much larger degree to affect Italian politics, than during the post-war era, and even before that. It can be argued that

throughout the history of Italy, Catholic movements, organizations and interest groups have never played a larger role in Italian politics than after the fall of the First Republic.

### **5.3 Referendums**

In the previous parts of the analysis, we have viewed how the Catholic Church have affected Italian politics through political parties, politicians, and religious organizations, movements and interest groups. The Catholic Church has also worked strategically towards different policies. An example of this is how the Catholic Church work with referendums regarding the non-negotiable values. Referendums increases the potential of churches to act politically (Fink 2009:84). The Italian constitution allows for popular referendums (Fink 2009:86). It was, however, first implemented in 1972. As shown in the chapter 2, referendums may be used in attempts to overturn already passed laws (Fink 2009:84). Referendums can also be used as a threat to influence policy-making. In this analysis, however, I shall focus on how the Church has attempted to use referendums in overturning, restricting, and maintaining laws. To clarify, to maintain a law in this case means to stop a referendum from overturning an existing law. This applies to the referendum in 2005 to overturn the law on assisted reproduction. The reason for the focus on these referendums is grounded in that these are the referendums that has been most vital to the Catholic Church. The referendums were submitted on the law on divorce in 1974, the law on abortion in 1981, and the law on embryo- and stem cell research in 2005.

This part of the analysis examines how the Catholic Church has worked to affect the outcome of these three referendums. In particular, we shall go in depth of two cases during the First Republic, and one case after the First Republic. By doing this, we can compare the strategies the Catholic Church has used within this specific field after the First Republic.

The three cases are concerned with the non-negotiable values. In each section, it will also be clarified why these cases are of such big importance to the Catholic Church.

#### **5.3.1 1974 Legalization of divorce**

The first referendum that will be discussed, is that of the 1974 legalization of divorce. There are several reasons why this case was of grand importance to the Catholic Church. First of all, there are theological reasons. It is spoken of divorce several places in the Bible. To name one, Jesus speaks of divorce in Matthew chapter 5 verses 31 to 32. Family is an important value for the Catholic Church, and one of the non-negotiable values. Even though the term "non-negotiable values" did not exist at the time. Second of all, politically- and historically based reasons. In the 1860s, civil marriage was introduced to parliament. Civil marriage distinguished itself from a marriage in the Catholic Church in several respects. While a marriage in the Catholic Church is considered a holy sacrament, a civil marriage was blessed by the laws of Italy (Seymour 2006:11-12). As a result of the Lateran Treaty in 1929, civil marriage was overturned (Seymour 2006:161). The Lateran Treaty stated that cases regarding annulment of, and dispensation from, marriage should be handled by ecclesiastical tribunals (Volcansek 2001:357). The law on divorce in 1970 would undermine the Lateran Treaty. I will not discuss these reasons any further. A theological discussion on divorce, and a discussion of the meaning of divorce related to the Lateran Treaty, and the influence of the Church, could be discussed for pages in itself. However, this is not relevant for the research objective of this thesis.

In 1974, the DC enjoyed great support, as they did during most of the post-war era. Despite this, the 1974 referendum would mark a defeat for the DC. It was also a defeat for the Catholic Church, who wanted a different result. The case of the 1974 referendum was mentioned in chapter 4. It will be addressed more briefly in this section, compared to the 2005 referendum.

As mentioned in the previous part of the analysis, it is not a new phenomenon that the Catholic Church influences Italian politics through Catholic organizations. In chapter 4, the National Committee for a Referendum on Divorce (CNRD) was mentioned. The CNRD took the initiative to gather signatures in order to submit the law on divorce to a popular referendum. It managed to gather the signatures with the help of other Catholic organizations. There was a large network of Catholic organizations at the time. However, the idea of submitting the law to a popular referendum was not a new one. Even before the law on divorce was introduced, this strategy had been drafted at the Bishops Conference in 1967. This was also mentioned in chapter 4. Although it was the CNRD that took the initiative to submit the law to a referendum, the DC lay down the groundwork. At the time of the Bishops

Conference in 1967, the law of referendums had never been approved. Although a provision for popular referendums had been written in the constitution. The DC was immediately involved in the strategy drafted at the Bishops Conference. It was the DC who pushed for the law of referendums to be approved. In 1972, the law of referendums was approved. The idea was, in line with the strategy of the Bishops Conference, that a referendum would be used if a law on divorce was introduced. Seymour (2006:205) claims that this reflected the hierarchy of the Church, and how convinced the DC was that the majority of Italians was opposed to divorce. We have seen that the CNRD, in collaboration with other Catholic organizations, and with the blessings of the bishops, gathered the signatures in order to submit the law on divorce to a popular referendum. I would argue that despite this, the Catholic Church used the DC to influence politics. The DC lay the groundwork, making it possible to submit the law to a referendum in the first place. It would not be possible for the CNRD to submit the law to a referendum if the DC had not pushed for the law on referendums to be approved.

Within the DC, a committee responsible for designing a strategic response to the proposal of the law on divorce was founded in 1969. The committee was coordinated by Giulio Andreotti. At that time, Andreotti was the president of the DC's parliamentary group. Andreotti would later serve as Prime Minister in three different terms (1972-73, 1976-79, and 1989-92). Andreotti was one of the biggest opponents against the law on divorce (Seymour 2006:206). The process of repealing the law thus begun before the law had passed. It is clear that the DC did much to repeal the law, with one of their most profiled politician leading the battle.

Leading up to the vote of the referendum, the Catholic Church and the DC tried to mobilize voters. The DC had the support of the Catholic Church, and the Church could in turn use the DC to influence the political arena (DiMarco 2009:4). Influencing the voters through the DC was one of several strategies used by the Catholic Church. Bishops were also much involved in trying to influence the voters. The DC had a political platform to influence their voters. They could appeal to their regular voters. At the 1972 general elections, the DC had received 38.8 percent of the votes cast. This amounted in almost 13 000 000 votes (Clark and Irving 1972:218). Because the DC enjoyed so much support, they had a major influence. With almost 38.8 percent of the electorate, it was beneficial for the Catholic Church to influence voters through the DC. However, this was not enough. As mentioned above, bishops were also much involved. The Pope, on the other hand, was hesitant to give his full authorization in the effort (Marradi 1976:116). There may be different reasons for why Pope Paul VI was

hesitant in the effort. It may have been because it was not common for the Pope to enter the political scene in such a direct way. However, the Pope did speak out publicly against divorce before the law had passed. The Pope also spoke against divorce to organizations and the ecclesiastical court (Seymour 2006:199).

Even though the Pope was hesitant to give his full authorization in the effort to repeal the law on divorce, the Vatican tried to prevent the law proposal in different ways. These examples occurred before the law had passed. Seymour (2006:208) writes of two moves that were particularly influential. The first was a diplomatic note to the Italian ambassador in the Holy See. The second was on the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Lateran Treaty. This was a papal address which occurred at St. Peter's. There, the Pope addressed the Senate, and said that a divorce law would wound the harmony between the State and the Church. This shows how the Catholic Church tried to address the Senate and representatives of the Italian state directly.

Leading up to the vote of the 1974 referendum, the Church used what Nash (2000:1) calls direct and indirect influence. Indirect influence through the bishops, clergy and Pope. Despite the large electoral support for the DC, many Catholics supported socialists or communists in the 1960s and 1970s (Melloni 2015). This shows that the DC by itself could not reach out to all Catholics. After all, it was a political party with ties to the Catholic Church, and not religious leaders. The indirect influence through the clergy, bishops and Pope, was therefore crucial to gain more support. This was an attempt to influence individuals. Indirect influence and appeals by the Pope and clergy was also feared by most of the leaders of the secular parties. As mentioned before, many Catholics supported the communists. In the face of a referendum, the communists now feared that many of their Catholic voters would be loyal to their religion instead of their class. For those Catholics who supported the communists, it was now a question of where they stood on a principle issue. Not on whether or not to support the DC (Marradi 1976:116). Direct influence came through the close ties between the Catholic Church and the DC. Through the DC, the Catholic Church could affect the voters of the party.

Both the Pope and the secretary of the DC, Amintore Fanfani, expected the law to be repealed (Melloni 2015:417). This made the outcome of the referendum an even more devastating defeat. In the case of the 1974 referendum, it was not issued by the Catholic Church but by the DC. For the DC, the failed referendum was a sign that it could not mobilize voters on this

issue. This came as a surprise because the outcome of the referendum was contradictory to the vote alignment given by the parties (Uleri 2002:868).

Not all Catholics were in favor of the referendum. Catholics such as Pietro Scoppola and Giuseppe Alberigo was against the referendum. They believed that it was wrong to defend a theological principle such as this through civil law (Melloni 2015:417). It is likely that not all Catholics supported the referendum on divorce. For some it could be because they wished to get a divorce, or know someone who wished it. Based on the views of Scoppola and Alberigo, some Catholics may also have opposed the law because they do not believe it is right to defend a theological principle such as this through civil law. It can be argued that this group of Catholics would be more affected by the call of the Pope, bishops, or clergy, than that of a political party such as the DC. This group could also be more inclined to change their view by persuasion of a Catholic organization, compared to the persuasion of the DC. The CL, for example, was more concerned of faith as a form of social identity instead of political action. Despite this, the role of religious organizations during the First Republic was almost exclusively connected to the DC (Giorgi and Polizzi 2015:135). Even though Catholic organizations could affect the voters who opposed the law on matters such as those of Scoppola and Alberigo, they were likely connected to the DC.

As mentioned in the historical retrospective chapter, there was another party in addition to the DC, which supported the referendum. The neo-fascist MSI. In the parliamentary debates, the MSI had also voted against the implementation of the law, and thus took the same stance as the DC (Marradi 1976:116). By encouraging its voters to vote in favor of repealing the law, the MSI could be offering support to the Catholic Church and the DC. However, the relationship between the DC and MSI was troubled. In 1960, the DC had tried to govern with the MSI. This was a disaster. Fernando Tambroni, Prime Minister in the that government, was forced to resign after four months in government. In 1972, Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti (representing the DC), and the DC secretary general, Arnaldo Forlani, rejected that the MSI could enter a center-right coalition. Indeed, it seemed as though the DC did not trust the MSI any more than they trusted the PCI (Clark and Irving 1972:214-215). This shows that even though the MSI and the DC took the same stand, in the parliament and the referendum, concerning the law on divorce, a collaboration did not exist. More votes in favor of the referendum may have been gained because of the MSI. During the 1972 general elections, the MSI won almost three million votes, or 8.7 percent (Clark and Irving 1972:223). Despite how



much support the MSI had among the voters, it is improbable that the Catholic Church tried to influence politics through the MSI. In this case, it would be to win votes in favor of the referendum.

Based on theory, it would not be unlikely if the referendum had passed, instead of being defeated. Fink (2009:81-82) claims that the more religious the adherents of a church are, the more they are willing to act politically for religious causes. This makes the mobilization potential higher. In addition, Catholic adherents are often more religious than Protestants. The Catholic Church in Italy has many adherents, and its adherents are religious. It can be questioned why the referendum failed in spite of this. Empirical observations give us another perspective on mobilization potential. We cannot state that the mobilization potential of the Catholic Church is equally high regardless of the religious cause. For its adherents, some issues may be more personal than others. Therefore, we can say that mobilization potential is dependent on issues (Fink 2009:82). This is supported by Uleri (2002:871), who hypothesizes that the influence of parties is lower on ethical issues, such as divorce. In the case of the referendum on divorce, adherents could wish for a divorce themselves, and therefore refrain from voting in favor of the referendum (Fink 2009:82). Note that this may go the other way around as well. The Catholic Church can mobilize non-adherents for other issues. Research on embryos, for example, which will be discussed later in the analysis. Not all issues will affect the Church to act politically (Fink 2009:82). But there have been Catholic mobilization for referendums that are not based on theology. In 2011, two referendums were issued which served Catholic interests. These were on repealing the privatization of Italy's water services, and the operation on nuclear power plants in Italy (Bailey and Driessen 2016:422). I have not discussed these referendums, as they are not a part of the non-negotiable values. Thus, they are harder to compare to the past, and I will argue they are not as important issues to the Catholic Church.

### **5.3.2 1981 Referendum on Abortion**

In the eyes of the Catholic Church, life starts at the moment of conception. And from this moment, life must be safeguarded. This is specifically mentioned in the *Gaudium et Spes*. One of the constitutions made during the Second Vatican Council. The *Gaudium et Spes* states that “from the moment of its conception life must be guarded with the greatest care while abortion and infanticide are unspeakable crimes” (Paul VI 1965:51). Article 27 in the

Gaudium et Spes states that abortion, among other things, is opposed to life itself, and that this is an infamy (Paul VI 1965:27). This shows how important the case of abortion is to Catholics and to the Catholic Church. Involvement from the Catholic Church to repeal the 1978 law on abortion therefore came naturally.

Using a referendum in an attempt to repeal a law is not a strategy which is limited to political parties and the Catholic Church. The strategy can also be used by other interest groups (Immergut 1992:31). Although the DC initiated the 1981 referendum, they gained support from the organization Movement for Life (Bardi 1981:282). Indeed, it was Movement for Life that promoted the referendum to restrict the law on abortion (Uleri 2002:864-866). The Catholic Church was not pleased with the law either (DiMarco 2009:7). In addition to exert influence through the DC, the Catholic Church also expressed the concerns of the Church through the encyclicals of the Second Vatican Council, through speeches, and letters to politicians (DiMarco 2009:2).

Pope Francis frequently speaks about abortion, and the value of life, and has addressed Movement for Life several times. In spite of this, former Movement for Life president, Carlo Casini, has said that the Catholic Church has been hesitant to take the question of abortion into the political arena (DiMarco 2009:14-15).

We can see that in the case of the 1981 referendum on abortion, the Catholic Church once again used both direct and indirect influence. Direct influence once again came through close ties with the DC. The DC was the largest party in Italy, and during the 1976 Italian general elections it won 38.7 percent of the votes (Berntzen 2013:273). Through the DC, the Catholic Church had close ties with politicians in state positions. This occurred at the institutional level. As Nash (2000:1) states it is where direct influence occurs. Indirect influence was exerted through among other things, the encyclicals written during the Second Vatican Council. Through the encyclicals written during the Second Vatican council, and through speeches, the Catholic Church could influence individuals and the laity.

### **5.3.3 2005 Referendum on Assisted Reproduction**

A new law which would later be challenged by a referendum, and gain great attention from the Vatican, was presented in 2004. The law was concerning regulations on assisted

reproduction. Some of the reasons why this was of big importance for the Catholic Church, are the same as in the case of abortion. Life starts at the moment of conception, and from this moment, life must be guarded. In this way, embryo research is wrong in the eyes of the Catholic Church. The law on assisted reproduction involved several things, as aforementioned embryo research, which concerns the non-negotiable values.

At the time of the legislation, most countries in Western-Europe had regulated assisted reproduction. Indeed, the law does give access to assisted reproduction, but there are limitations on who it can be given access to. It can only be given to heterosexual couples. They must be of a fertile age. A donor is not allowed to provide sperm- or egg cells, and the couple may therefore only use their own sperm- and egg cells. In addition, the woman must have all created embryos implanted. Both healthy and diseased. The access to assisted reproduction in Italy is the most restricted in Europe (Fenton 2006:73-74). One of the main reasons for why all created embryos must be implanted is to prevent creating excessive embryos. Some would criticize the law for not allowing donated gametes. As will be shown later in this section, there are arguments as to why this is not allowed. One of them is that young women are being paid large amounts of money to be egg donors. Not allowing donated gametes can be based on an ethical argument in this respect (Sauer 2006:8). The argument can thus be presented regardless of theological views.

Prior to the highly restrictive law in 2004, Italy had free access to assisted reproduction (Fenton 2006:74). Indeed, both patients and doctors could previously expect both full access to a variety of services from those who offered assisted reproduction (Sauer 2006:8). This makes it all the more interesting as to why the referendum failed. It can be due to different reasons. I will argue that the influence of the Catholic Church is the biggest reason. However, there will be counter arguments to how much influence the Catholic Church did exert. These will also be presented. Whether the Catholic Church or another factor was the most important reason for the failure of the referendum is not, however, the main objective of this section. Yet, it will be discussed to see whether or not the strategies were effective, and to show how large the influence of the Catholic Church was. The main objective is to show which strategies the Catholic Church used leading up to the 2005 referendum on assisted reproduction, and compare it to the 1974 referendum on divorce, and the 1981 referendum on abortion.

Sauer (2006:8) claims that stories about controversial cases and debates related to assisted reproduction has been a reason for skepticism among the public. He even claims that the practitioners of assistant reproduction are largely responsible for such a law.

Divorce and abortion are two cases where the theological standpoint from the Catholic Church is clear. Yet, it can be argued that they are both cases that many Catholics can relate to. Some may have gone through a divorce, or taken an abortion. Most Catholics will at least know someone who has gone through at least one of the two. In the debate on assisted reproduction, however, comes issues that are less familiar to most people. Issues that easily draw skepticism. These issues include cloning, stem cell research, sex selection, and designer embryos. Cases of young egg donors being paid large amounts of money have also been an issue. An increasing use of fetal reduction is also a direct consequence of assisted reproduction (Sauer 2006:8). Another issue that easily draw skepticism is the impregnation of women who are past the age when they can have children naturally. The age restriction was also a direct cause of the work of Italian doctor *Severino Antinori*. Antinori used in vitro fertilization to impregnate a woman who was 62 years of age (DiMarco 2009:16). While it is easy to think of assisted reproduction as a means to help couples that cannot have children of their own, the list above represents a different view. It can be argued that if someone is in favor of helping couples have children by use of assisted reproduction because they cannot have children of their own, it does not necessarily mean that they are in favor of allowing them to select the sex of the baby. Selecting the sex of the baby, or designing embryos, could be viewed as a way of tampering with the embryos, and therefore less tolerated.

Fenton (2006:75), on the other hand, claims that the law is interesting in more than one way. Not only is the law interesting because of how restrictive it is compared to other European countries. It is also interesting because it demonstrates the interaction between law and interest groups. In this case, interest groups means the Catholic Church. Fenton claims that the law is of great importance because Catholic doctrine has been very influential in designing it. The law also shows that national identity, heritage, and cultural perspectives, can be decisive on ethical and moral issues. Sauer (2006:8) also claims that the Catholic Church promoted a change in the law on, and research related to, assisted reproduction. DiMarco (2009:2) says the law was in favor to the Church.

When the law on assisted reproduction passed in 2004, the center right government had support from parts of the opposition. The coalition in government at this time was the House

of Freedom, or *Casa delle Libertà*, led by Silvio Berlusconi (Berntzen 2013:281). It consisted of Forza Italia, the National Alliance, or *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN), the Lega Nord, the CCD and the CDU (UDC from 2002), the New Italian Socialist Party, or *Nuovo Partito Socialista Italiano* (NPSI), and the Italian Republican Party, or *Partito Repubblicano Italiano* (PRI). The politicians of the opposition who supported the law on assisted reproduction were mostly Catholics (DiMarco 2009:15). As discussed in the first part of the analysis, Catholics are no longer centered in one large Christian democratic party as they were in the DC during the post-war era. Catholic politicians are now spread across parties on both the Left, Right, and Center (Diotallevi 2016:486). The example shown here represents how the Catholic Church has successfully managed to use new strategies to influence Italian politics. When a law proposal, on a subject in which the Vatican is passionate about, is subjected to a vote in the Senate, it is not only a matter of Right versus Left. But the center-right government gained votes from the opposition. The opposition is not only the Left, but the far Right as well. As mentioned, most of the members of the opposition voting in favor of the law were Catholics. The strategy of the Catholic Church in terms of having Catholic politicians spread to all parties can thus be proven to be successful in this case.

As shown in chapter 2, and earlier in this section of the analysis, empirical observations show that mobilization potential is strongly dependent on issues. We have seen that it can be difficult for the Catholic Church to mobilize its adherents to vote in favor of a referendum to repeal the law on divorce. This is due to many Catholics who are either divorced, in a difficult or abusive marriage, or for other reasons have a different view on divorce than the Catholic Church. In other cases, as mentioned, the Catholic Church can mobilize not only most of their adherents, but also many non-adherents. These are issues that may challenge people's moral beliefs. The law on assisted reproduction is an example of this (Fink 2009:82). In the eyes of the Catholic Church, a human being is a person from the moment of conception, and so it must be treated. From this moment, the rights of the person must be recognized. The first one is the right to life. This includes the treatment of embryos. Embryos must be treated the same way as a person. It must also "be defended in its integrity, tended and cared for, to the extent possible, in the same way as any other human being as far as medical assistance is concerned" (Ratzinger and Bovone 1987:30). Not all Catholics do necessarily agree with the Catholic Church on this view, but many will do. In the eyes of many Catholics, the human being is a person from the moment of conception.

Non-adherents may also share this view. Even for the non-adherents of the Catholic Church who do not share this view, they may still be opposed to liberal laws on assisted reproduction. This is due to different reasons. For example, the reasons mentioned earlier. Impregnation of women who have passed the menopause is something unnatural, and one does not need to be a Catholic to think so. Selecting the sex of the baby, designing embryos, and stem cell research may easily draw skepticism among non-Catholics as well. Many non-adherents to the Catholic Church would think of it as unethical to use excessive embryos for research purposes. The argument of not using donated gametes, as mentioned above, is also something people can be opposed to, regardless of religion. One of the main reasons for this is the fear that young women will be tempted to donate eggs, and in return be paid a large fee. This could especially be tempting to poor women, and many non-Catholics as well as Catholics would find this unethical. Cloning a human being can for some people draw fascination. Among others it will draw skepticism and despise. It is something unfamiliar, and to be skeptical of it is not only reserved to Catholics. Non-adherents to the Catholic Church can easily draw skepticism on this as well. The empirical observations provided by Fink (2009:82) on how mobilization potential of the Catholic Church is issue-dependent, can in this case be supported. This does not, however, show which strategy the Catholic Church used. But it shows that the Catholic Church was able to mobilize both adherents and non-adherents, as we shall see in the results of the referendum later.

The strategy of the Catholic Church was different in 2005 compared to the 1974 and 1981 referendums. In 1974, the DC, with support from Catholic organizations, attempted to repeal the law through a referendum. As shown in the historical retrospective chapter. The DC was confident that it would pass with the help of Catholic organizations (Volcansek 2001:357). During the campaign, the Catholic Church had urged people to vote “yes” on the referendum, to repeal the law. Bishops and the clergy also encouraged people to vote in favor of repealing the law. As we saw, this did not go the way they hoped. In 1981, the Catholic Church had already taken a stance against the law on abortion. When the law passed in 1978, the Holy See was determined to promote respect for all human life (DiMarco 2009:2-3). Once again, as in 1974, the DC had the support of the Catholic Church, and this time it also had the support of the organization Movement for Life. But once again the referendum failed. Regarding the 2005 referendum on assisted reproduction, the strategy had changed. It was no longer a strong Christian democratic party which led the campaign against the referendum. Indeed, while a strong Christian democratic party was absent from the Italian political spectrum, the president

of the CEI, Camillo Ruini, was very much present. Ruini defended the values in which Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI termed non-negotiable. This included opposition to assisted reproduction. It also promoted the traditional family (Bailey and Driessen 2016:421). One of the restrictions in the law on assisted reproduction was that only heterosexual couples could receive assisted reproduction (Fenton 2006:73). Single mothers and homosexual couples are not allowed to receive assisted reproduction. In other words, those who are not thought of as a traditional family.

Diotallevi (2016:495) claims that the strategy used by the Catholic Church was in 2005 was opposite compared to the 1974 and 1981 referendums. First of all, it was promoted by a coalition of secular parties (Diotallevi 2016:495). Four million signatures were gathered by the Radical Party (PR), with the help of women's rights groups, to bring the referendum to a vote. In addition to being opposed to the law on assisted reproduction, the women's rights groups also feared that a failure of the referendum would lead to restrictions on the right to abortion (DiMarco 2009:20). The previous referendums had been promoted by the DC. Second of all, the strategy was no longer to encourage voters to cast a specific vote on the ballot, but to not vote at all. This strategy was not possible during the referendums promoted by the DC and the Catholic Church in 1974 and 1981, because in order to repeal the laws on divorce and abortion, a majority of the voters would need to vote "yes" in favor of the referendum. If the DC and the Catholic Church had encouraged voters to abstain from voting on the referendums to repeal to law on divorce in 1974, and restrict the law on abortion in 1981, the referendums would have failed. And thus, the laws would not be repealed. It would be possible in the 1981 referendum promoted by the PR to liberalize abortion laws. However, it was not a strategy the Catholic Church relied on at that time. A constitutional rule states, that 50 percent voter turnout is required for the result to be valid (Uleri 2002:863). If the Catholic Church had encouraged people to vote "no" on the referendum, it would have to depend on the majority of the voters in doing this. The result would be more uncertain, and the Catholic Church would likely be worried that history would repeat itself. Regarding the 2005 referendum, it can be seen as more strategically clever to encourage voters not to vote at all. Because the Catholic Church did not want to repeal the law, it did not need to call for a referendum. When it did not need to promote a referendum, it was not dependent on the referendum to pass. Therefore, it was possible to encourage the people to abstain from voting.

The Catholic Church thus used a new strategy in the case of a referendum on the non-negotiable values. A political party, such as the DC, was no longer advocating how people should vote in the referendum. Priests urged their congregations to avoid voting. They would remind their congregations of the respect for life which the Catholic Church promoted. Bishops were campaigning to prevent the voter turnout from reaching the necessary requirement of 50 percent. Pope Benedict XVI (2005-13) announced his personal support for the campaign (DiMarco 2009:21). The personal support of Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishop's campaign with regards to the 2005 referendum on assisted reproduction, differs from the referendum on divorce in 1974. Even though the bishops were much involved in mobilizing the followers of the Catholic Church in that case as well. Pope Paul VI (1963-78), however, was hesitant to give his full support in the struggle (Marradi 1976:116). The personal support of Pope Benedict XVI as well as the campaigns from the bishops, and the priests who urged their congregations to avoid voting, is what Nash (2000:1) calls indirect influence. Indirect influence was feared by the secularists prior to the 1974 referendum on divorce. During the campaign against the 2005 referendum on assisted reproduction, indirect influence was the main strategy to affect the voters. As mentioned in chapter 2, it is expected that how a Church intervenes in national politics is dependent on how it perceives its religious mission. It is suggested that Churches who see their role as moral and religious providers to individuals, are more likely to be indirectly influential in politics. On the other hand, Churches who see their religious mission as moral and religious guardians to a nation or society, is more likely to exert direct influence (Nash 2000:2). It can be argued that because the referendums of 1974 and 1981 occurred while Catholicism was still the State religion of Italy, the Catholic Church at that time chose to exert more direct influence. The religious mission of the Catholic Church was to be moral and religious guardians of Italy. Thus, when Catholicism ceased to be the official State religion, the religious mission of the Catholic Church changed to moral and religious providers to individuals.

As mentioned earlier in this section, there were counter arguments as to how large influence the Catholic Church had on the failure of the referendum. And whether or not the failure of the referendum can be considered a success to the Catholic Church. The law had scientific constraints. These were complex and not all voters could fully comprehend them. Voter apathy is also mentioned as a contributing factor for the low voter turnout (DiMarco 2009:21). Even in medical communities, it is acknowledged that some of the issues were too complicated for most people to understand. And thus caused voters to stay home (Manna and Nardo



2005:532). Also, some would argue that because the referendum failed due to low voter turnout, it cannot be considered support to the Catholic Church (DiMarco 2009:30). It is easy to argue against this statement, given that the strategy of the Catholic Church was to encourage people not to vote. Among those who did vote, a large majority voted in favor of repealing some or all of the restrictions (DiMarco 2009:21). In spite of this, it is very likely that Catholics who would have voted against the referendum, would rather abstain from voting, due to the urging of the Catholic Church in doing this. For non-Catholics who was opposed to the referendum, this would be a smart strategy as well. If most Catholics abstain from voting, the chances are higher for the referendum to fail. The referendum is more likely to fail if everyone who would have voted against the referendum would not vote. Despite the counter arguments mentioned earlier, I will argue that the failure of the referendum can, at least to some degree, be considered a success to the Catholic Church.

Diamanti and Ceccarini (2007:45) claim that the Catholic Church has left the party for the pulpit. By looking at the strategies used by the Catholic Church to influence the vote in the 2005 referendum, it can be argued that they are correct in their claims. A direct influence through the DC, had been changed to an indirect influence through the Pope, bishops, and priests. The Catholic Church exerted influence during the referendums of 1974 and 1981 as well, but the DC was the biggest promoter.

A clear Vatican involvement in Italian politics was heavily opposed by the public. Those who were pro-abortion protested and was alarmed that Pope Benedict XVI was personally involved in the political arena and encouraged people to boycott the vote. DiMarco (2009:21) says that many saw the referendum as a test of the influence of the Catholic Church in Italy. Further on, DiMarco (2009:24) claims that although some supported both the law on assisted reproduction, and the attempt by the Catholic Church to uphold it, others where against the involvement of the Catholic Church in politics.

It is not a politician who has been credited for the strategy used during the 2005 referendum, but Cardinal Camillo Ruini (Diotallevi 2016:495). Because Cardinal Ruini has been given credit for this, one can credit this strategy to the Catholic Church instead of a political party. This also shows how the Catholic Church has used the CEI, and Ruini, to affect politics.

The objective of this thesis is not to discuss whether or not the strategies used by the Catholic Church, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic, has been successful or not. However, in this case it can be argued that it has been. There were about 50 million eligible voters in Italy, and only 26 percent cast their vote. As mentioned above, there are critics (DiMarco 2009:21; Manna and Nardo 2005:532) who claim that the election results of the 2005 referendum cannot only be credited to the Catholic Church. By looking at the means of how the Catholic Church urged people not to vote, however, I would argue that the Catholic Church did have a large influence. The failure of the referendum has to a large degree been credited to the Pope and the Vatican. In their urging to boycott, the referendum failed (DiMarco 2009:21). Manna and Nardo (2005:532) claim that the call for boycott by Catholic Church leaders, high ranking politicians, and Pope Benedict XVI is thought to have affected the vote. Critics will point out that no referendum has achieved 50 percent voter turnout as required, since 1995 (Reproductive Health Matters 2005:184). Despite the low voter turnout on referendums in general, it can still be argued that this was a victory for the Vatican, as they claimed. First of all, the law on assisted reproduction was a law that many were took interest in. Although some of the issues were difficult for most people to understand (Manna and Nardo 2005:532). Secondly, the voter turnout was not even close to the required minimum. It was barely half of that.

We can see here how the Catholic Church used a different strategy with regards to the 2005 referendum on assisted reproduction, compared to the 1974 referendum on divorce, and the 1981 referendum to restrict the law on abortion. The context was also different, because the Catholic Church did not want the referendum in 2005. The Catholic Church was in favor of the law on assisted reproduction and did not want to repeal it. This differs from the aforementioned referenda in 1974 and 1981. Instead of encouraging people to vote “yes” or “no” on the ballot box, the Catholic Church encouraged people to not vote at all. With only 26 percent voter turnout of the required 50 percent, the referendum failed. I have argued that this strategy proved a success for the Catholic Church with regards to the 2005 referendum to repeal the law on assisted reproduction.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

By using a comparative method, with process tracing, and longitudinal comparisons, I have studied the strategies pursued by the Catholic Church to influence Italian politics. Theories on how the Catholic Church influences politics has been presented. In addition, theories on how the Catholic Church, and to some extent religious groups in general, can influence political parties, organizations, and referendums, has also been presented. This thesis has included a historical perspective. Comparisons has been made between the period after the Fall of the First Republic, and the period from Italy's unification and leading up to the fall of the First Republic. However, the emphasis of this thesis has been on the time after the fall of the First Republic in 1992. The research question presented has been:

*How has the Catholic Church pursued various strategies to influence Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First republic?*

In 1874 the Vatican decreed the *Non Expedit*, prohibiting Catholics from participating in Italian politics. The *Non Expedit* officially ceased to apply in 1919. With the approval of the Vatican, the *Partito Popolare Italiano* (PPI) contested in its first election in 1919. The Catholic Church influenced politics through the PPI until 1922. In 1922, Benito Mussolini seized power. The Catholic Church negotiated with Mussolini and the Fascist regime, and the result was the Lateran Treaty of 1929. This goal was obtained by using direct influence through institutional participation in corporatist negotiations. In the post war era, the Catholic Church mainly influenced Italian politics through the Christian democratic party, *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC). The DC was very influential in Italian politics, and enjoyed a supremacy for more than forty-five years. After the *Tangentopoli* scandal, a new electoral system was implemented. It was no longer possible for the Catholic Church to influence Italian politics through a political party as it had done through the DC in the post war era. Thus, the Catholic Church needed to pursue other strategies to influence Italian politics.

Results of my findings indicate that the Catholic Church is less active through political parties today compared to the post-war era, but exert a more indirect influence. Here, indirect influence means that the Catholic Church affects the laity and individuals more than acquiring state positions through the political sphere. Instead of one big Christian democratic party, as

the DC was in the post-war era, Catholic politicians are now spread across all parties. This happened partially because it became more difficult to establish a new Christian democratic party that could become as powerful as the DC. But mostly it can be attributed a new strategy of the Catholic Church.

Further on, I found that the Catholic Church exerted much influence through Catholic organizations and movements. Mainly through the CL and the CEI. The CL influenced politics both through the CCD, and through lobbying activities with political parties. The CL is deeply rooted at the local level, but in addition to this it has connections to public figures and high-level politicians. Former leader of the CEI, bishop Camillo Ruini, has played a major role in both developing strategies for the Catholic Church, and influencing politics. An example of the influence of Ruini is how the Vatican chose to promote and endorse Berlusconi instead of Prodi as the Prime Minister of Italy. In addition to the CL and CEI, there are numerous Catholic, or Catholic-inspired, associations which act as interest groups in the political arena.

It is clear that the Catholic Church has used a different strategy when it attempts to influence the outcome of a popular referendum. That is, a different strategy after the fall of the First Republic, compared to the post-war era. Although bishops, and to some extent the Popes, encouraged voters to cast a vote to the laws on divorce and abortion, they did so to a much larger degree in the case of the 2005 popular referendum on assisted reproduction. In addition, the Catholic Church encouraged voters to refrain from voting in 2005. This would not be possible in regard to the popular referendums in 1974 to repeal the law on divorce, or in 1981 to restrict the law on abortion. In 2005, it was possible because the Catholic Church did not want the referendum to pass, and thus it was not necessary for the referendum to get enough votes. The Catholic Church could, however, have used this tactic in the 1981 vote to liberalize the law on abortion, which was the referendum promoted by the Radical Party (PR). However, it did not do this. At the time of the 2005 referendum, it was the Catholic Church who was the biggest advocate in encouraging people to abstain from voting. Both the bishops, priests, and Pope Benedict XVI were active in encouraging people not to vote. In 1974 and 1981, the DC were campaigning to repeal the laws.

Given the uniqueness of Italy as an empirical case, it can be difficult to use this research to generalize. The empirical results of this research are only valid in Italy, and cannot be

generalized. Yet, this research can be used to try to understand the strategies used by religious communities, interest groups, and organizations, to affect politics in different countries, although it is limited how much it can be used to generalize in this respect as well. Although the empirical results cannot be generalized, it is possible that the various strategies which the Catholic Church has pursued to influence Italian politics may be generalized to other countries with a Catholic majority.

## **6.1 Suggestions for Further Research**

Further research on the field of study will always be useful. Although I have tried to give an answer to how the Catholic Church has pursued various strategies to influence Italian politics, with an emphasis on the period after the fall of the First Republic, other aspects would be interesting to research. Both methods to give more insight to the research question, and other types of research.

In this thesis, I have used qualitative document analysis. It would be interesting to do semi-structured interviews as supplementary data collection. The semi-structured interviews would in that case be conducted on professors, politicians, and people of influence within the Catholic Church. Professors such as Renato Moro of the Roma Tre University, or professors at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. The latter has notable alumni such as Amintore Fanfani and Romano Prodi. These are only a few of those graduated from the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, who has had great political careers. Interviews with both politicians, and people of influence within the Catholic Church, could provide insights which existing research does not provide.

Strategies evolve all the time. In this research, I have attempted to map out the most important strategies which have been used after the fall of the First Republic. It would be interesting to see the role of the CEI after Ruini left the presidency. Does the CEI still exert as much influence on Italian politics after 2007?

An attempt to generalize this research would be interesting. As it would be to compare the strategies which the Catholic Church pursues to influence politics in Italy, to the strategies of religious groups in other countries.

Lastly, it would be interesting to go more in depth on each strategy. Research on how the Catholic Church influences Italian politics through lobbyism could serve as a master's thesis on its own. Given that the objective of this research was to find out the strategies used all together, and that this is my contribution to the field of study, it is limited how much in depth I could research each strategy alone. This would, however, be interesting to conduct further research on.

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