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VOLUME 15 NUMBER ONE SPRING 2009

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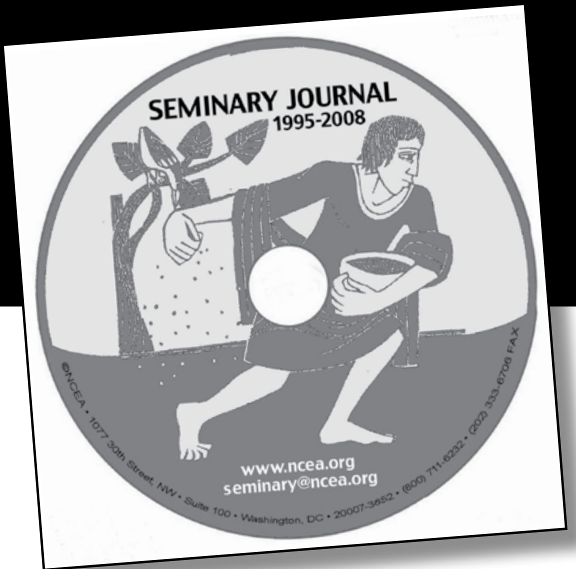
CONTENTS



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From the Desk of the Executive Director

With this Spring 2009 issue we start Volume 15 of *Seminary Journal.* I begin with a grateful acknowledgement of the generosity of our authors for making their reflections available for publication. In particular, I am grateful to Guest House for making available several papers from its summer 2008 educational program on addiction issues (e.g., Espelage, Gonsiorek, and Chiola).

Fall Issue of *Seminary Journal* to Recognize Transitions

Looking ahead, the Fall 2009 issue will feature articles marking transitions, whether through death, retirement, or changes in ministry and seminary leadership. I will be contacting you by e-mail with an invitation to submit the names of individuals from your seminary whose transitions you wish to recognize. Include a photo (JPG format) and 50-100 words of testimonial copy.

To Preach the Good Word Well

Several important projects of the Seminary Department are moving ahead. The foundation that is funding the "Preach the Good Word Well" grant gathered representatives from several of its funded groups for a two-day meeting in New York City in April. Participants shared information about their projects and then engaged in a lively conversation about preaching. We are exploring ways to work together to promulgate our findings to the whole church.

The DVD we are making is in process, with the script almost finalized. The DVD is aimed at homiletics professors for use in the classroom while teaching preaching to seminarians, deacons, and others. It includes six homilies given by priests around the country and features the findings of our research, in which we asked lay people what they think makes for good preaching. The project will wrap up and the DVDs will be available in September 2009.

Psychological Assessment of Candidates for the Priesthood

In June, a writing committee from the Psychological Assessments project will gather in Washington to write a draft of the final report. The surveys are all in and the results tabulated by CARA, our research partner. For more than a year, we have been surveying seminary rectors, diocesan vocation directors, and religious vocation directors about the methods they use to assess the psychological health of applicants to the priesthood. The final report will be published by NCEA in October 2009.

NCEA Convention in Anaheim

Keynote speakers Bishop Gerald Kicanas of Tucson; Immaculee Ilibagiza, a Rwandan genocide survivor; and Cardinal DiNardo of Galveston-Houston gave excellent talks that were well-received by the 8,000 convention participants.

The Seminary Department sponsored eight workshops in Anaheim. We are grateful to all our workshop presenters for generously contributing their time and effort. The workshops were Lay Presiding: Leading Prayer with Style and Grace by Kathy Schmitt, M.Div., the Seminary Department's own administrative assistant; In Fulfillment of Their Mission: A Discussion of the Duties and Tasks of Ministry by Father Mark Latcovich, Saint Mary's Seminary, Wickliffe, Ohio; Education as Ministry and Evangelization by Father Tom Dragga, Borromeo College Seminary, Wickliffe, Ohio; Multicultural Formation for a Multicultural Church: A Panel Discussion on International Priests for Schools and Parishes with Father Leon Hutton, Dr. Aurora Mordey and Sister Leanne Hubbard, all of St. John's Seminary, Camarillo, California, and moderated by Father Tom Dragga; Seven Ways to Promote Intercultural Communication with International Priests and Seminarians by Kathy Akiyama-Kim, Mt. Angel Seminary, St. Benedict, Oregon; The Promise to Protect and Pledge To Heal: Child Protection in the Catholic Church by Mary Jane Doerr, USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection; and two workshops—Peacemaking Dialogue: A Four-Step Process and Transforming Us vs. Them Thinking—by Ken Preston of *Pace e Bene* Nonviolence Service, Oakland, California. All our workshops were aimed at a general audience and were generally well-attended. Next year's convention will be in Minneapolis–St. Paul April 6-8.

Seminary Journal Collection on CD

As noted earlier, 2009 marks the 15th year in the publication of *Seminary Journal*. This archive of articles published now exceeds 500. To make this wealth of material on ministry and priestly formation more widely available, the entire collection has been converted to PDF files and placed on a single CD. This collection of articles is searchable by key words, title, and author, and can be printed.

NCEA Member price is $60 each; Non-Member and Subscribers-Only, $75 each. A special offer for individual *Seminary Journal* subscribers: Save $5 when you purchase a DVD if you renew your 2010 subscription at the same time.

CDLN Summer and Fall Activities

The Catholic Distance Learning Network (www.catholicdistance.org) funded by the Wabash Center (www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu) will complete its third year of training this summer and will have provided more than 40 professors within 15 Catholic theological institutes and seminaries with an 8-week online course on online teaching and learning. The project coordinator is Dr. Sebastian Mahfood, associate professor of intercultural studies at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri (314) 792-6395, mahfood@kenrick.edu.

The aspect that makes the Catholic Distance Learning Network (CDLN) unique among other online certification programs is its provision of face-to-face instructional designers to work alongside the faculty members undergoing training during their time in the online course. The faculty who receive certificates are then eligible to offer an online course open to all students enrolled in the member theological institutes and seminaries. The process of their receiving transfer credit back into their own institutions is treated in the same way as residential cross-registration.

Those preparing to undergo training this summer include Rev. James McIlhone (Mundelein Seminary, Chicago); Dr. Andrew Trew (St. Mary Seminary, Cleveland); Dr. Dennis Demes, Rev. Glen Porthier, and Dr. Emilio Chavez (St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, Boynton Beach, Florida); Rev. Richard Henning (Seminary of the Immaculate Conception, Huntington, New York); and Rev. Donald Henke (Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis).

Following the summer training workshop, the Catholic Distance Learning Network will offer on its Web site its eighth online workshop on the relationship between technology and pedagogy as it affects theological education. The August 2009 workshop will specifically concern the cultivation of learning communities and student associations within distance learning programs and will be developed by Dr. Mary Beckmann, program director of the Catholic Distance Learning Network, and Mr. David Harrison, president of the Holy Apostles College & Seminary Alumni Association.

In the fall of 2009, four courses will be offered through the Network, including "The Book of Revelation: Exegetical Studies" taught by Rev. Tommy Lane (Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland), "Inter-Religious Dialogue from a Catholic Perspective" taught by Dr. Cynthia Toolin (Holy Apostles College & Seminary, Cromwell, Connecticut), "Islam through Catholic Eyes" taught by Rev. Michael Witt and Dr. Sebastian Mahfood (Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri), and "Preaching in the Public Square" taught by Rev. Daniel Harris (Aquinas Institute). These courses are offered free to all students in participating schools within the Catholic Distance Learning Network.

Check our Web site for more information on current activities and upcoming programs: www.ncea.org/departments/seminary.asp.

Brother Bernard F. Stratman, SM
Executive Director
Seminary Department

Calendar of Events

NCEA Seminary Department

2009

- **May 26-28**
  National Association of College Seminaries
  St. Joseph Seminary, St. Joseph, Louisiana

- **June 5-12**
  Institute for the Preparation of Seminary Formation Staff
  St. Patrick Seminary, Menlo Park, California

- **August 17-19**
  J.S. Paluch Vocation Seminar
  Embassy Suites O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois

- **August 19-21**
  Executive Committee Meeting, NCEA Seminary Department
  Embassy Suites O'Hare, Chicago, Illinois

- **September 24-26**
  National Seminary Convocation Hosted by the Midwest Association of Theological Schools and NCEA Seminary Department
  Marriott, Schaumburg, Illinois

- **September 27 – October 1**
  National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors
  Jesus Christ the Great High Priest
  Sheraton Inn, East Rutherford, New Jersey

2010

- **September 12-18**
  Joint Assembly: NCEA Seminary Department and National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors
  Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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Guidelines for Professional Ministers in a 21st Century Ecclesial Community

Rev. Arthur J. Espelage, OFM, J.C.D.

Setting a context:

1. Our focus is not on surfacing and discussing past problems but finding and creating solutions for today and tomorrow. The tempters that need to be avoided in our discussion are: money, power, control, resolution-revenge.
2. The priesthood is in transition. There are forces at work in our Catholic Church exerting strong pressures on the priestly ministry. There is concern among the people of God about arrogation of power. There are concerns about moral leadership. For example, the willingness exists in both the church and society at large to air stories and allegations of clerical sexual misconduct. Concerns also are being voiced about fiscal responsibility of church officials such as pastors and bishops.
3. Any solution in the future must be a collaborative venture involving input from "above" and "below" by ecclesiastical authority and ecclesiastical subjects. Being responsible and responsive means the ability to preach and to listen.
4. As we create guidelines, a multi-disciplinary approach is most useful: human resources, canon and civil law, education-formation, scriptural-theological contributions as well as our philosophical heritage.
5. Ultimately our goals must fall within the benchmarks of being healing, reconciling, and restoring of confidence.

Sticking to the Code May Not be Enough but is a Good Place to Start!

Laws cannot address each and every aspect of human life. The popularity of *Pirates of the Caribbean* sets forth a popular saying and opinion in American culture: "The code of the Pirates [Priests] is more like guidelines, you know." Guidelines seem more acceptable to people, as they are easier to revise or discard in the face of specific local needs. As with a human body, bones need to be held together by tendon and sinew, fastening a variety of muscles covered with nerves and skin for strength, flexibility, and appearance so that the human person can function to meet a variety of needs. Laws, like bones, need guidelines and policies for flexibility, fluid movement, and the ability to respond to various needs.

A code is a systematic compilation of laws. The criminal code refers, for example to the penal laws of the jurisdiction. In the Catholic Church, we speak of the *Code of Canon Law,* including both procedural laws, defining and describing how actions take place, and substantive laws, which describe structures and persons. Laws determine matters to a specific point, but they go no further.

Consider, for example, the laws requiring scrutinies. A scrutiny comes from the Latin *scrutinium*, which is a searching study, an inquiry, an inspection as a sort of searching look or a closer watch of a person or item.

The canons on scrutinies in the Catholic Church focus on candidates for ordination and for office before either ordination or installation takes place. The act of discernment of the suitability of persons for orders is termed a "scrutiny" in canon 1051. This process must be carried out at each of the four major moments in the formation of priests and permanent deacons: admission, the ministries of lector and acolyte, the diaconate and the priesthood. The issue of scrutinies appears in present and past Vatican documents: the Instruction *Quam Ingens* of 1930 and the Instruction *Magna Equidem* of 1955 as well as the November 28, 1997, circular letter "Scrutinies Regarding the Suitability of Candidates for Orders" by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (Prot. n. 589/97). As the Congregation notes: "The initial selection of candidates...should be done with care, since it is not rare, that once this first step has been taken, that seminarians advance towards the Priesthood with the attitude that each subsequent stage is a consequence and necessary prolongation of the first (cf. Canon 241, §1)."

"Once an ordinary has selected and ordained an individual, the code falls silent about further 'scrutiny' of an individual priestly or diaconate ministry."

In the past a judgment for suitability for ordination included a judgment as to his suitability for the priestly ministry. Once an ordinary has selected and ordained an individual, the code falls silent about further "scrutiny" of an individual priestly or diaconate ministry. With the effects of the national scandal which broke in 2002, priests and deacons have had to absorb shock and sorrow the same as lay Catholics as well as deal with the tensions of stress of increases in their workloads, the uncertainties of closings and mergers of parishes, and the responses toward clergy by a people enraged and bruised by the disclosures coming to light.

Many a bishop found an individual priest or deacon suitable for ordination, but now his priestly ministry may be problematic as he interacts with the people of God. Under present universal law there are no scrutinies for performance reviews, evaluations of professional and/or sacramental ministry with respect to effectiveness, nor any requirements mandating continuing education credits. These l*acunae* are regrettable.

Changing patterns of power are taking place in the institutional church. Complaints are voiced that Catholic priests have not been sufficiently accountable to the people they serve. Parishioners have often felt powerless. Since Vatican II, there has been a slow shift in power from hierarchy to laity with parish councils, lay pastoral ministers, and consultation with lay men and women with expertise. Catholic laity will not tolerate priests who sexually molest children or hesitancy on the part of hierarchy in dealing with child abuse.[1] Groups among Catholic laity have their own agendas and are committed to having a seat at the table where they hold that power.

In this climate of change, the Code of Canon Law offers bishops only a few legal remedies to encourage or to mandate personal reform when clergy problems arise. Understanding and interpreting these legal laws and remedies is confusing for most Catholics and at times even for canonists. Penal laws tend to be the activity of last resort for authority to deal with an alleged offending member. The effectiveness of such activity in a pluralistic society may at times be questionable.

Penal laws in general are governed by cc. 6, §1, n. 3; 18; 15, §2; 87, §1; as well as canons 1401, n. 2; 1399; 1313, §§ 1-2. Canon 1311 states the church has an innate [*one based on its nature and not derivative from any human power*] and proper right [*exercised in its own name rather than for another higher authority*] to coerce offending members of the Christian faithful with penal sanctions. Unlike the 1917 code, the present code does not define terms such as ecclesiastical delict that prompt the exercise of such coercive power.[2] The law envisions a number of different sanctions. *Medicinal penalties or censures* [cc. 1331-1335] which are to cure the guilty member; *expiatory penalties* [1336-1338] which are to punish the member;[3] *penal remedies* to prevent some delict; and *penal penances* to substitute or to increase a penalty [1339-1340]. These last two are more properly used to preclude ecclesiastical delicts or address problematic, yet non-delictual, disciplinary situations.

Particular penal law falls under cc. 1315-1318. Infra universal church authorities, particularly legislators, enjoy expanded legislative and administrative penal discretion to be exercised with restraint according to canons 1316-1318. Green writes: "Only those with legislative authority can establish their own penal laws or penalize violations of divine or higher level ecclesiastical laws lacking a distinctive sanction [1315, §1]."[4] The type of penalty being discussed here is a *ferendae sententiae* that is determined in the law establishing it, or an indeterminate *ferendae sententiae* penalty determined by the competent penal authority after a formal process [e.g., c. 1365].

The issuance of penal precepts in canon 1319 can be problematic.[5] The canon reflects a cautious approach to the establishment of penalties. A precept envisions a more particularized situation than does a law's more generalized focus. It focuses somewhat more on a private good than the common good and by being personal rather than territorial in character. A precept takes cognizance of the particular circumstances of the potential offender. For example, an administrative authority [c. 134] may order an individual or a group to do or cease doing something under threat of a penalty for noncompliance [cc. 35, 49]. A bishop might threaten a priest with suspension for continuing partisan political activities [c. 287, §2]. Administrative authorities should impose penal precepts cautiously and only after careful deliberation. The code cites canons 1317-1318 on moderation in establishing penalties and special care in threatening *latae sententiae* penalties, especially censures such as excommunication.[6] "The code forbids precepts threatening indeterminate penalties because these depend too much on the will of the superior and hence may unduly jeopardize the rights of an alleged offender. Even more notably, the code prohibits precepts threatening perpetual expiatory penalties because of their irrevocable implications, e.g., deprivation of an office [c. 1336, §1, 2]."[7]

Moreover, two norms are common to both penal law and to penal precepts, cc. 1327 and 1333, §2. These two norms impact directly on the ability of ecclesiastical authority using legal remedies on problem individuals.

Even the more specific issue of the coercion of a member of an institute of consecrated life through penal precept by a local ordinary [c. 1320] may sound good, but application seems more confined to cc. 678; 573-746. Application is going to raise more problems than bring about the reform or the punishment of the offending member.

Particular penal laws are interpreted in accord with c. 13 so that they bind only in the territory where they are inflicted. If the laws are personal, however, they follow the person when they leave a territory. Sometimes it is unclear if the provision of a particular law is territorial or personal.

As penal laws, these various approaches are often viewed by offenders and the people of God more as coercive measures than as reforming-healing measures. In a pluralistic society, coercive measures seem to have only marginal success. Accused people consider less the common good and focus on individual liberty, their personal good. They tend to follow their own path. Similarly, the offending member may have any one or more of the problems reported by treatment givers, which makes them less likely to react and respond to penal measures in a positive and productive way.

"In a pluralistic society, coercive measures seem to have only marginal success."

"Policies" and "guidelines" of a diocese or religious community seem better placed to meet changing patterns. Technically, these often are particular laws, but many people do not realize this. Their drawback is that guidelines and policies are based on a presumption that all will embrace and follow the policy or guideline in a particular situation. Likewise, there is a presumption that these policies or guidelines are practical and useful in a situation. Recall, for example, the humorous examples in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* where the characters easily dismiss the "Code of the Pirates."

Twenty-first century popular perceptions seem more amenable toward guidelines and policies as opposed to the creation and imposition of laws. The latter are perceived as applicable to all and admit of no deviation. Guidelines and policies, on the other hand, have connotations of more specific application and easier dispensation. Neither word appears in Black's Law Dictionary. "Guideline" is a noun that has seen use since 1785. Originally from the word *guida*, meaning to look after, to know more, it was a line by which one is guided as (a) a card or rope to aid a passer *over a difficult point* or to *permit retracing a course*; (b) an indicator of outline (as by a government) of policy or conduct.[8]

The word "policy" speaks more of prudence or wisdom in the management of affairs. Two usages may be pertinent to our discussion. Policy can denote a definite course or method of action selected from alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions; or policy can denote a high-level, overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures, especially of a governing body.

Perceptions suggest that both take into account what might be termed a personal good before the common good. Both seem more historical in that they take into account specific aspects of life and attempt to weigh and organize responses in ways that consider alternatives and focus on determining what is most acceptable in a particular case.

Prevention vs. Remedy, or Remedy vs. Prevention?

Creating either policies or guidelines, however, presents leadership and community with a first task. Are these items to prevent future transgressions first and primarily, or are they to serve as a remedy when a problem arises or a transgression is alleged? The basics of "who," "what," when," where," and "how" may be different depending on one's focus. Moreover, to quickly jump to the conclusion that any policy or guideline should do both makes the process even more complicated in my opinion.

> **"'If anything, the health and nourishment of the people of God hinges greatly on the health and nourishment its ministers maintain for themselves, and taking care of oneself in whatever way necessary is an important component of better, richer and more fruitful service.'"**

Our goal in the Catholic Church is to create and maintain a sound and healthy clergy. In *Whispers in the Logia*, Rocco de Paloma states an important piece of advice. "If anything, the health and nourishment of the people of God hinges greatly on the health and nourishment its ministers maintain for themselves, and taking care of oneself in whatever way necessary is an important component of better, richer and more fruitful service."[9] There are some realities that will impact on the development of policies or guidelines to meet this goal.

First, Bing Crosby & Barry Fitzgerald are dead! These two media types of Catholic priests, one young, good looking and energetic and the other sweet and old, a grandfather example, do not exist! No perfect priests exist in real life, but expectations for priests remain high. In one survey 80.9% of active lay Catholics and 87.5% of priests surveyed felt that a priest's moral conduct is to be better than other people's conduct.[10] Presently, we are still determining and learning what are the long-term effects on bishop-priest-laity relationships as a result of the clergy scandals of the last five years.

Second, resources are limited. The question might be debated by leadership and community as to whether it may be more beneficial to place emphasis upon remedy or prevention. Remedies often seem "messy" as personal elements become entwined with applying the guideline or the policy. Just as no two persons are exactly alike, so also no two problems easily lend themselves to the easy remedy by the exact same steps of a guideline or policy. If the conclusion tips toward prevention, then seminary-formation issues arise. Most major seminaries are four-year programs already loaded with remedial courses as well as core components for priestly ministry. Should there be education in the dynamics of ministry at the seminary or formation levels, or should we presume that ordinary formation will provide this expertise? There are no easy answers given our present resources.

Third, there are "winds of change!" While many are certain that these come from the Spirit, I wonder at times. Sometimes the language is strident, and it is difficult to evaluate if someone wants either a "voice at the table" or "my way or the highway!" Writing either guidelines or policies in such a climate may prove challenging!

Looking First at Remedy

Three issues seem central to any examination. One is the issue of treatment programs. The second is the fact that remedy is difficult to achieve. The third is the problem of *fumus* (smoke) when an accusation is made.

The efficacy of treatment is a topic of discussion among many people. On the extremes, some hold that psychotherapy never works and others that it brings about individuals who are completely healed. According to one noted psychologist, "in reality, psychological treatment works extremely well in some circumstances, fairly well in others, and sadly, at times, has no effect at all."[11] Using Saint Luke Institute in Silver Spring, Maryland, as an example, Stephen Rossetti provides the following numbers. "Looking at the over five thousand priests and religious who have come to Saint Luke Institute about eighty percent have returned to an active and productive ministry."[12] Later he comments, "Another fifty-five to sixty percent of our clients have improved in varying degrees. These clients are on the road to recovery, have markedly gotten better, and they have a long journey ahead of them. Finally, there are about ten percent who have not improved in treatment at all."[13]

Being neither a professional psychologist nor therapist, a canonist who looks to structures and actions as indicative of success-failure, comes to the following learning. Two factors seem to affect treatment outcomes. The first is the client himself or herself. Is he or she motivated to want to get better, to make significant life changes? The second factor is the type of problem a client brings into treatment. Again, Rossetti points out the following:

> Many diagnoses have high success rates. Depression, for example, is very treatable with the advent of newer classes of anti depressant medications and recent cognitive-behavioral treatments.… We also find that many compulsive behaviors, such as sexual behaviors, Internet addictions and spending problems respond well to treatment…. One diagnostic area that is resistant to change are the personality disorders. Individuals who enter treatment with narcissistic or borderline personality disorders, for example, will not exit therapy with "easy-to-get-along with" personalities.[14]

If we look for "keys" for success rates, the following items might be considered important. First, the individuals must maintain continuing motivation to continue healthy living patterns. Other individuals find a key factor is ongoing participation in a 12-step program. For others, the return to a supervised environment where they are gainfully employed and supported is a key factor to their continuing success of recovery. Finally, addressing issues of continuing motivation, participation in continuing education programs, and maintaining an environment where one is periodically supervised and evaluated can be items of immense value to priests and religious as preventative measures before problems set in.

Remedy, however, is more difficult to achieve today. The reform of the offender is a difficult purpose to control. The difficulty lies with the community, which must make up its mind what it really wants: expiation, or removal, or reform, or discouragement of potential criminals. Easy resolution is a problem. As Lon L. Fuller pointed out, "there is as yet no communicable science of rehabilitation, no certain way of measuring the prospects of success in individual cases, and no procedure yielding a confident measure of success."[15] The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states clearly that the "primary effect of punishment is to redress the disorder caused by the offense."[16] Canon 1341 of the *Code of Canon Law* stipulates that the purpose of penalties is "to repair the scandal, restore justice, reform the offender." Scandal in the teaching of St. Thomas is something less right in word or action that furnishes an occasion for the spiritual ruin of someone.[17]

St. Thomas poses the question of whether it is just to inflict a punishment that is eternal for something perpetrated in a brief moment of time (*Summa Theologiae*, 11-11, q. 66, a. 5 ad 3). In the opinion of Michael Carragher, OP, "the question acts as a foil to illuminate the interplay between *an agent* and *the gravity of the action performed*."[18] Carragher points to St. Thomas' focus on the will or the voluntary nature of an action and the reality that "pre-mediation obviously involves not merely time but concentration and planning."[19] As St. Thomas would express it, the criminal's psychological and spiritual stance is diametrically opposed to the requirements of community, God, and others. He has freely chosen this option of going against God's wishes in a serious measure.[20]

"The old common sense adage is that 'where there is smoke there is fire.' In real life, this may or may not be true."

The existence of *fumus* (smoke) is another item that often makes actual remedies even more difficult. This is an item of great importance in the day-to-day life of the institutional church. The dynamics of an accusation need to be understood by both clergy and laity. The old common sense adage is that "where there is smoke there is fire." In real life, this may or may not be true. About the most one can say is that the presence of *fumus*, or smoke, indicates a need to investigate to discover the source of the *fumus*. Investigation, however, is not a simple task, and those in authority need to rely on professional expertise to establish the facts in a particular situation.

The facts, that is, what one actually did and said, may be the only way to handle *fumus*. The *Code of Canon Law* provides some useful norms in an attempt to establish the facts. With respect to someone accused, canon 1728, §2 is foundational: "The accused is not bound to confess the delict nor can an oath be administered to the accused." If the accused would make a declaration, the code offers canons 1548, §2, n.1; 1552 and 1558-1565 as helps to establish his or her facts. Similarly, the code offers provisions for the examination of witnesses in canons 1558-1571 and for their trustworthiness with canons 1573-1573. These rules may not be perfect, but they do help establish what a person "did," as no one can prove a negative, i.e., what they did not do.

Looking at Prevention Measures

A. Developing Best Practices, a Partial Solution

Best Practice is a management idea which asserts that there is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive, or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc. Best Practice idea maintains that a desired outcome can be delivered with fewer problems and unforeseen complications. The notion of a Best Practice is not new, and history is filled with examples of people who were unwilling to accept an existing standard as the best way to do anything. Think of a standard as a kind of plumb line so that the standard must be "what is possible" and not "what somebody else is doing." The notion of Best Practices does not commit people to one inflexible, unchanging practice; rather, it is a philosophical approach based on continuous learning and continual improvement.

Best organizational practices is a common-sense approach to regulation as best practices balance the goals and needs of the organization, its workers, and the community in which the organization is located. Thus, the best practices of a large urban metropolitan diocese may differ in significant respect from small rural country dioceses, but both need to follow a set of best practices which are appropriate to their geographical and physical resources. Such practices regulate personnel administration, pastoral planning, management by objectives, and other forms of administration required by a particular diocese.[21]

B. As a Community or Organization

Catholic canon law provides norms and guidelines for the ministerial workplace with its provisions regarding temporal and human resources. Canons 1273 to

1289, for example, set forth a number of provisions with regard to the administration of temporal goods. Administration in this context refers to "those actions or sets of actions which are directed to preserving church property; improving property or resources; managing the collection and distribution of income from a variety of sources, including offerings of the faithful and return on investments. It also includes keeping accurate records and properly reporting income and expenses."[22] The Code is less useful in enhancing and improving people-to-people relationships in the institutional church. There is a place for other resources to point out the people needs of the ministerial workplace.

Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord is one of the newer resources; it correctly points out that the diocese and the parish provide the most immediate resource, but it points out that creativity also can come into play. Clusters of parishes or diocesan associations can come into play when centralized diocesan support is not in place.[23] Other resources might be state Catholic conferences or regional associations of diocesan human resources. On the national level, there is the National Association of Church Personnel (NACPA) or the National Association of Lay Ministry (NALM), which provide a variety of information and services.

Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord highlights six human resource areas that are highly significant for present and future ecclesial ministry.

1. *Recruitment and selection:* Posting job descriptions along with a written position description is one of the more important methods for recruiting new ecclesial ministers. De Lambo points out in his study that "half or 50.8% of lay parish ministers, for example, learned of their present ministry position through direct contact and recruitment by the pastor or other parish staff."[24] In 2005, 83.8% of ministers have a written job description, which is up from 74.3% in 1990 while almost six in ten lay ministers (58%) report working under an employment contract.[25] No two Catholic parishes are exactly the same. Job descriptions or position descriptions for clergy would highlight the particular strengths and weaknesses of a particular parish as well as its current and long-term needs.

2. *Orientation and support:* Every organization exists within a culture and a history particular to itself and its mission. People new to any organization need time to become acquainted with their environment. Similarly, accommodations are sometimes needed to support an otherwise qualified individual in the workplace, as for example, individuals with disabilities. Most of us hear stories of parishes learning to adapt to a new pastor by watching his every move to figure out his priorities. Would not it be more beneficial for all concerned for new pastors, or even existing pastors, to hold "town meetings" among the parishioners to acquaint themselves of matters particular to a parish community?

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3. *Regular performance appraisals:* When conducted in the context of the mission of the parish or the diocesan organization, written reflections on one's own performance and the feedback from a supervisor and/or colleague provide valuable documentation with respect to strengths and achievements as well as weaknesses and deficiencies and the subsequent steps for improvement. Among our parishes today, the old maxim from the Reformation often seems to hold sway: "*Cujus regio, ejus religio!*" (Whoever rules, follow his religion!) Few pastors have formal evaluations of their ministry other than the canonical visitation of the bishop, which tends to deal with temporal matters or problem matters. A number of self-appraisal evaluation instruments currently exist among other professional organizations which easily might be adapted to the professional church minister. The Canon Law Society of America, for example, uses the Executive Coordinator's job description as the core elements for self-appraisal to which are added other commonly asked questions. The completed self-appraisal serves as focus for conversations for affirmation and/or growth between the Executive Coordinator and the Board of Governors.

4. *Compensation:* Compensation packages for salaries and benefits vary from one geographic region to an-

other depending on the financial situation of the diocese and local cost of living.[26] Canons 230 and 231, however, address the issue of decent remuneration for lay ecclesial ministers.[27] The *CLSA Commentary* comments that provisions for a just family wage that respects the standards of civil law and meets the necessities of the person's family apply to both men and women in church service; it is a *ius* or right recognized by church law.[28] Among developing issues, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* highlights the "portability of benefits"[29] and "expectations about time given to ministry" as matters to still be determined with respect to compensation. For clergy, compensation also may be an area for exploration and consideration. The publicity surrounding clergy and thefts of parish funds in the last year or so raise a number of questions as to why these thefts occurred and how financial accountability might be better provided. Clergy salaries or financial compensation in the Catholic Church traditionally are low in comparison to Protestant and Jewish counterparts. Some people may argue that there are other benefits such as housing, food, and car allowances, but these often are not recognized by parishioners or the general population. Within the ranks of the clergy, it is conceivable that some develop a sense of entitlement that "justifies" fiscal mismanagement.

5. *Transitions and terminations:* While De Lambo's studies point out that most lay ecclesial ministers consider their ministry, a "lifetime church ministry," people do move from one diocese to another. Exit interviews preserve the best of one's ministerial efforts while "outplacement and severance assistance can make the time of transition less stressful for the individual."[30] Most pastors and priests move to new parishes every six or nine years on schedules pretty well set in a diocese. The last year is normally one of transition for the old pastor and apprehension on the part of parishioners on who will succeed.

6. *Grievance procedures:* Today's civil society is extremely litigious, and it should be no surprise to anyone that resources for dispute resolution are effective remedies to reduce tensions that might lead to voluntary departures and dismissals.[31] More importantly, such grievance procedures have a positive impact on improving morale among all employees and supervisors. What grievance procedures exist at a parish or deanery level when the people of God are aggrieved by a pastor's style or activity? It would seem most advantageous to have some intermediate body to deal with this matter before calling the chancery or the bishop's office.

C. Implementing Personal Initiatives

As an individual minister, clergy need to lessen the blurring of their private and professional life. There will always be more ministerial needs than resources, but the concept of embracing a "twenty-four, seven" priest is filled with danger. Rest, relaxation, and recreation with friends are the "three Rs" to help us differentiate this blurring. Associated with this blurring is the fact that 21st-century society will likely continue to be highly suspicious of clergy and litigious with respect to the actions of clergy that appear to be misconduct.

Most Catholics today are well aware of the sound byte: "One strike and you're out!" to which some quip: "One accusation and you're out!" Twenty-first century ministers need to realize that no one is able to prove a negative! All that one can do is demonstrate what actions one actually took. That task may seem easy, but over a period of time the details of what transpired tend to be forgotten by human beings.

1. *Physical, mental, spiritual care of self:* These are the traditional categories addressed in books on the priesthood as well as at retreats and days of recollection for clergy. Treated more often as exhortations rather than anything else, their implementation is left to the person with informal or infrequent "checks" by bishops or major superiors. Authorities may ask, for example, when was the last time you had a physical, but avoid more qualitative discussion of the priest's physical health and medical evaluations. Even fewer are the questions of the clergyman and those around him as to stress, pressures, and how he or others see manifestations of his spiritual life lived out each day. Living up to expectations of ecclesiastical authority as well as one's parishioners leaves many priests and deacons today more like the "energizer bunny" who marches hither and thither with his base drum![32]

2. *Record keeping:* Most clergy keep their schedules in both formal and informal fashions. Many of us write notes to ourselves to remember to do something on a certain day and time. Likewise, many will record their upcoming events in the popularly used liturgical calendars. But these written notes tend to be discarded. Given the fact that today one finds individuals going back 20 or more years to make an accusation, there are few priests who could validate what they were doing on

a particular day in that year. There is a value for electronic calendars that are updated on the computer. They are inexpensive, they store large amounts of information in a small space, and they may be a useful source of personal protection if one is recalled to remember a long-past incident.

"We as priests do change as we grow older or mature."

3. *Learning ethical & value oriented behavior:* Many clergy will probably consider this item of personal development as already fully developed and not needing further introspection. We will say that we have the same ethical and value training instilled in us by our parents and the discipline of the seminary. And yet, we as priests do change as we grow older or mature. As we do so, are we not better able to deal with more complex ethical situations; or do we issue more "black and white" answers to such questions? Do not the values we hold central in our life as men and priests undergo some transformation? Why do people sometimes find us to be "rude" or to seem to be "arrogant" in dealing with others? Why do we seem to have more "bad days" than good ones?

4. *Maintaining professional boundaries & understanding violations:* Lots of stories exist about excuses made for social gaffs of priests such as a little too much to drink. Professional boundaries change more and more frequently in modern society due to many factors, both nationwide and local. We often hear priests say that what they said and did 20 years ago could never be said or done today. Given the seemingly increasing number of complaints arising from the people of God, perhaps it is time for clergy to look at the general issue of professional boundaries, and maybe look at one professional boundary violation.

> *Boundaries* are the limits that allow for safe connections between individuals. A boundary is that defining space which clarifies "you" and "me." Our understandings of what are acceptable boundaries grow out of our family of origin. Persons with unclear boundaries establish the "locus of control" outside themselves. They allow others to define who they are, what they think, where they go. Intimacy for this individual can easily lead to abuse if those with whom they relate prove untrustworthy. The professional is considered the person of power in the relationship. There are variable sources which create professional power: the individual's sense of personal power; societal ascription given to the position an individual occupies and/or accumulation of expert knowledge.[33]
>
> *Professional boundaries* are the spaces between the [clergyman's] power and the client's vulnerability. The power of the [priest] comes from the professional position and the access to private knowledge about the client. Boundary violations can result when there is a confusion between the needs of the [priest] and those of the client. Such violations are characterized by excessive personal disclosure by the [priest], secrecy or even a reversal of roles. *Boundary crossings* are brief excursions across boundaries that may be inadvertent, thoughtless, or even purposeful if done to meet a special therapeutic need. *Professional sexual misconduct* is an extreme form of boundary violation and includes any behavior that is seductive, sexually demeaning, harassing or reasonably interpreted as sexual by the client.[34]
>
> A *Zone of Helpfulness* is in the center of the professional behavior continuum. This zone is where the majority of client interactions should occur for effectiveness and client safety. *Over-involvement* with a client is on the right side of the continuum; this includes boundary crossings, boundary violations and professional sexual misconduct. *Under-involvement* lies on the left side; this includes distancing, disinterest and neglect, and it can also be detrimental to the client and the priest. There are no definite lines separating the zone of helpfulness from the ends of the continuum; instead, it is a gradual transition of melding.[35]
>
> The *Zone of Helpfulness* recognizes that both under-involvement and over-involvement create moral boundaries issues for health care for professionals. Behaviors at both ends of the spectrum constitute boundary crossings and inhibit therapeutic relationships. For example,

VISIBLE SIGNS OF GROOMING

Groomers often appear as:

- **CHARMING.** They exhibit a superficial charm, focused on looking good in the community. Some more prominent members of the community may engage in developing a pristine image through lots of community service activities, so they will be seen as pillars of the community. They are extremely popular; they get along with everyone. They have a smile for everyone. They can change gears automatically, and be automatically serious, if this is what it takes to get the person to like them. They are known by everyone publicly as a great guy. They are known as a good friend. The behavior is a public image, controlled to support private behavior.
- **BEING HELPFUL.** This is a specific strategy relied upon by molesters to gain access to their victims. They seem to have a knack for anticipating the needs of the adults responsible for children, knowing what others need and being available with offers to help out by babysitting, driving, doing repair work, etc., often before the adults have even identified the need for the assistance. Often overly friendly, going out of their way, without ever asking for anything in return.
- **PEER-LIKE PLAY.** Molesters play with kids at their level. Wives often see these men "as like being married to another kid," but then confusing this irresponsible and childlike behavior as a strength and evidence of their skills as fathers. Non-molesting adults, while playing with children typically maintain an adult orientation when the need arises. For example, when they are making sand castles with kids and someone starts throwing sand, they step into their role as adults and redirect the potentially harmful behavior.
- **PREFER THE COMPANY OF CHILDREN.** Many child molesters have far fewer contacts/interactions with adults than with kids. Many continue babysitting into adulthood, preferring babysitting to socializing with peers. Many do not have same-age friends, often considering a particular child to be their best friend.
- **ROUGH HOUSING AND TICKLING.** Rough housing and tickling children in the presence of other adults is a way of desensitizing the children to touch and serving to confer adult approval on subsequent interactions, since the kids knew the earlier activities had been met with acceptance by their parents. There is lots of touching, including inappropriate touch in front of adults. Sometimes when confronted, the molester will act offended and continue.
- **INSIDER STATUS.** Many molesters gain insider status almost immediately, without having to proceed through the stages of familiarity ordinarily required to become a member of the group. One strategy employed by one sex offender was to show up unannounced at a kid's birthday party. These parties are typically very busy activities, sometimes described as organized chaos. Into the mix enters the sex offender, immediately starting to play games with the kids that keep them laughing, jumping up and down waiting for their turn. Even though the adults in charge may feel awkward, how can they argue with someone who was such a hit with the kids and was at the same time helping them out? He stays and chats later with the parents. How can you appear ungracious to this sort of fellow?

> doing extra tasks in the home, as simple as this may seem at the time, leads to patient expectations that this is standard practice and creates an unrealistic view of the health care professional's role. On the other end of this spectrum is being too distant or under-involved…. The goal of the professional would be to strive for the therapeutic spectrum in the middle of this zone.[36]

"*Boundary violation* is more a process rather than a single event. Few professionals 'decide' to take advantage of an individual. Yet when professionals deny or remain unaware of their personal significance, power, or authority they will begin the process of boundary violation by misusing that power. And any time a professional exploits a relationship to meet personal needs rather than the needs of the client, the boundaries have slipped and the professional is in peril."[37] This is the standard known to society in the United States, and it will be the one applied to clergy engaged in ecclesiastical ministry.

If the clergy accusations of sexual misconduct with

> **"Serious education for future ministers in the church must set out clear and well-publicized diocesan/parochial standards of ministerial behavior and appropriate boundaries for clergy and for any other church personnel in positions of trust who have regular contact with children and young people."**

minors over the past five years have taught anything, they indicate that among the clergy are those who do not understand the concept of professional boundaries or the need to seriously address their maintenance. Sexual misconduct, as for example rape, is less about sexual satisfaction and much more about power, control, and manipulation of another. Serious education for future ministers in the church must set out clear and well-publicized diocesan/parochial standards of ministerial behavior and appropriate boundaries for clergy and for any other church personnel in positions of trust who have regular contact with children and young people.[38]

One Illustration—Grooming Leading to Misconduct

If I might illustrate this problem with a digression into "grooming" as a boundary violation which leads to more serious concerns such as, for example, sexual misconduct. Most violations are ambiguous and difficult to evaluate when they first come to light in the public forum. Boundary violations may lead to sexual misconduct, or they may not. In some cases, extreme sexual misconduct, such as assault or rape, may be habitual behavior, while at other times, it is a crime of opportunity. Regardless of the motive, extreme sexual misconduct is not only a boundary violation, it is criminal behavior.[39]

Not all boundary violations constitute grooming! Public opinion may jump to the conclusion that "he was setting me up for something," but feelings must yield to facts. The professionals understand grooming to be legally demonstrated when an act of sexual misconduct takes place, and the series of boundary violations can be cited as intended by the perpetrator to be causative of the sexual act.

Thus, grooming is the term often used to describe the process by which the offender prepares his or her victim for the sexual assault. Grooming is the way the sex offender gains access to the intended victim, and ensures continued opportunities to sexually molest. The visible signs of grooming are methods an offender uses to manipulate the intended victim and the surrounding community and gain their acceptance and trust.

Experts point out that grooming behaviors in isolation may be perfectly harmless. In combination or repeated pattern they may be otherwise. Use the following signs to alert yourself that a person may be a potential risk to have around children. At the same time, be aware that not everyone who meets some of these criteria is a child molester. The criteria should not be used to label someone, but can alert everyone to a need to supervise children more closely.[40]

There are a number of visible signs of grooming which the non professional might recognize, More importantly, professional ministers in the 21st century must understand the signs and dynamics of grooming.

At the core of the grooming process is "emotional seduction."[41] The target victim may be a child who feels unloved and unpopular; children with family problems who spend time alone and unsupervised, who lack confidence and self-esteem, and who are isolated from their peers. The target may be an impaired adult. Predators engage or "recruit" their victims in different ways; many use a combination of forced teaming and charm. A predator will usually introduce secrecy at some point during the grooming process. Later on, secrecy joins hands with threats: "If you tell your mother what happened, she will hate you." "Your story will kill her." "No one will believe you!" Or "I'll kill you." The forging of an emotional bond through grooming leads to physical contact! The first physical contact between predator and victim is often nonsexual touching designed to identify limits; an "accidental" touch, an arm around the shoulder, a brushing of hair. Nonsexual touching desensitizes the child. It breaks down inhibitions and lead to more overt sexual touching—the predator's ultimate goal.

Grooming a child for sexual abuse goes beyond professional boundary crossings and boundary violations; in fact, it constitutes a separate and distinct type of behavior! According to the Texas police Web site, "Offenders spend a great deal of time and energy in the process of grooming the child. Three distinct actions take place: First, they generally gain the child's trust and confidence to begin the process; second, they introduce the child to sexual types of touch so that the child is gradually desensitized to the touch; third, the sexual offender manipulates the child to keep the sexual touching secret." Police officials describe a variety of techniques: bribery, threats of harm to the child, threats of harm to the offender, withdrawal of affection, break-up of the family, or taking advantage of the child's innocence, i.e., "Everybody does this," or "If you tell anyone, I'll just say you were lying."[42] Interpol in a December 1, 2006 posting lists similar dynamics. "The majority of sex offenders groom their victims, this can take months, even years, and often begins with the process of grooming the parents of the child."[43] In the opinion of Interpol, the "most crucial" part of the grooming process is "to be able to control the child to the extent that he can sexually abuse him or her with the knowledge that the child will not disclose to another adult the fact that they have been sexually abused." Techniques used according to Interpol include many different ways, fear, oppression, favors, threats against either the child or their parent, making the child feel guilty about what has happened or a combination of these methods.[44]

> **"Twenty-first century ministers not only may have to deal with scrutiny of their words and actions, but may even deal with *fumus*, that is, *smoke*, concerning their activities."**

Understanding Misconduct

The word *misconduct* does not appear in the *Code of Canon Law* or the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*. Rather, the codes address the topic according to the provisions of the loss of ecclesiastical office.[45] Those provisions focus more on steps that ecclesiastical authority may take to remove one from office rather than on the actions of an individual.[46] This stance may have created in the past the false impression that an individual could conduct himself more or less as he willed with few checks and balances in how he spoke to others or conducted activities with others. Some may even have considered themselves as "beyond the law" for all practical purposes.

Civil law is clearer and focused on the individual rather than on the authority removing one from office. Misconduct in office is defined in civil law as corrupt misbehavior by an officer in the exercise of the duties of the office or while acting under color of the office; it includes any act or omission in breach of a duty of public concern by one who has accepted public office.[47]

Twenty-first century ministers not only may have to deal with scrutiny of their words and actions, but may even deal with *fumus*, that is, *smoke*, concerning their activities. Again, the age-old saying "Where there is smoke there is fire" is known to many people.

Curbing Curiosity and the Anonymous Computer/Internet

Every child learns the saying that "Curiosity killed the cat!" But even if the child knew "why," most adults forget that saying once they are of majority age. Likewise, in the privacy of their own home many have discovered the anonymity of the computer and the Internet to explore their curiosity.

On the topic of pornography and the use of the Internet, many clergy are uninformed. The Internet does not offer the anonymity that many presume. Clergy need to realize and accept that there are professional boundaries that they should not cross in the use of their computers on the Internet. Church law is not stated in the *Code of Canon Law* but certain activities certainly are considered crimes. The *praxis* of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith clearly states:

> Included also is the possession of, or downloading from the Internet of, pedophilic [sic] pornography. This type of behavior is also a civil crime in some nations. While "browsing" may be involuntary, it is difficult to see how "downloading" could be considered so, since not only does it involve making a choice or choosing a specific option, but often involves payment by credit card and the furnishing of personal information by the purchaser which can be traced back to him. Some priests have been incarcerated for possession of thousands of pornographic photos of children and youth. According to the praxis of the CDF such behavior is considered a *delictum gravius*.[48]

With respect to the use of a personal computer to visit pornographic Web sites, one may wish to consult the work of Richard Wortley and Stephen Smallbone, *Child Pornography on the Internet* published the U.S. Department of Justice: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. The over 100-page report is available on the Internet.[49] It provides information that the problem of Internet child pornography revolves around three items: production, distribution, and downloading.[50]

It may surprise some, but by visiting and viewing these sites, one has "downloaded." As Worley and Smallbone state, "Images do not need to be saved to the computer's hard drive or to a removable disk to constitute downloading."[51] They go on to state:

> In most cases, however, users must actively seek out [child] pornographic websites or subscribe to a group dedicated to child pornography. In fact, it has been argued that genuine child pornography is relatively rare in open areas of the Internet, and, increasingly those seeking to find images need good computer skills and inside knowledge of where to look. Most child pornography is downloaded via newsgroups and chat rooms. Access to websites and online pedophile groups may be closed and require paying a fee or using a password.[52]

Specific child pornography websites may be created, or child pornography images may be embedded in general pornography sites. However there is a debate about how much child pornography is available on the web. Some argue that it is relatively easy to find images. Others argue that, because of the vigilance of ISPs and police in tracking down and closing child pornography websites, it is unlikely that a normal web search using key words such as childporn would reveal genuine child pornography. Instead, the search is likely to find legal pornographic sites with adults purporting to be minors, "sting" operations, or vigilante sites.[53]

Evidence of one's visits to pornographic sites come to light when technicians examine the computers in question. They are often able to identify the log files which show who was logged into the computer and when; the modem logs which record when a computer was connected to the Internet; and web browser history entries which show a person's online activity. Technicians and others could also examine e-mail and any chat logs and other online communications.

What do these illustrations have to do with Guidelines for Professional Ministers in a 21st Century Ecclesial Community? They concretize the goals that we must set as benchmarks for healing, reconciling, and restoring confidence in ecclesiastical ministers in just these areas. Thirty-five years ago when I was ordained, I remember the only professional boundary constantly repeated by my old professor was to "keep a desk between yourself and a woman client in the parlor!" He would be speechless regarding the complexity of ministry today.

Conclusion

First, clergy may be a group "set apart" among the people of God for special designated ministry in the ecclesial community, but they are not by that ordination free or immune from human problems and difficulties that arise amid all of the people of God. Future clergy may never again have that "privileged position" among their people that the ordained held in previous generations. On the one hand this shift allows them to draw closer to walking in the footsteps of Christ in his public ministry. On the other hand, the people of God will be more and more willing to demand accountability and transparency among the clergy.

Second, collaboration among all of the people of God must translate into structures and actions that promote the common good as well as the private or individual good of members. At the universal level, the *Code of Canon Law* provides both structures and actions, but these need to be supplemented by structures and actions that meet national, regional, and even local conditions and needs. In the introduction, I used the terms "preach and listen" to illustrate being responsible and responsive. The 21st century will not be hospitable to Catholicism as an institution. Society grows more pluralistic and the transformation in communicating information allows individuals to define and determine the limits and activities of all institutions in their lives. Laws, guidelines, and policies may well be useful vehicles to persuade people that the common good of all the people of God can exist along with the individuals personal good.

"Roman Catholicism as an institution must learn from the expertise of other institutions in modern life."

Third, Roman Catholicism as an institution must learn from the expertise of other institutions in modern life. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, as the saying goes; there is a need to see how the wisdom and experience of other disciplines can be incorporated, can serve our ministers, to affirm them as persons and to support and validate their ministry. Similarly, there are other groups or organizations within the Catholic community that can contribute to this conversation.

Finally, the formulation and implementation of guidelines and policies at the local level need not wait for imposition from "above." Healing, reconciling, and restoring confidence can take place in two ways. Every individual and every group of individuals, as for example a diocese or religious community, can develop measures to remedy problems as well as formulate prevention measures. Education of those involved will be more than providing intellectual content; it will require persuasion that the measures are valuable instruments for real living in a real if imperfect ecclesial community.

Rev. Arthur J. Espelage, OFM, J.C.D., served as coordinator of the Cannon Law Society of America from 1999 to 2008.

Endnotes

1. Rossetti, 121.
2. Green maintains that CIC 2195 of the 1917 code and the canonical tradition helps to clarify the meaning of similar terms. However, the present code must always be interpreted primarily in the light of Vatican II.
3. A *latae sententia* penalty must always be expressly specified in the norm, since it is incurred ipso facto. A *ferenda sententiae*, however, may be determined in the norm or its determination may be left to the discretionary judgment of the judge.
4. Green, *New Commentary*, 1536.
5. Paragraph one of canon 1319 exempts from perpetual penalties; in the first place because censures according to their definition, cannot be perpetual, and, secondly, because the nature of perpetuity makes the penalties particularly heavy and, therefore, creation requires prior information, reflection, and objectivity, which the law is better equipped to guarantee. Paragraph two excludes dismissal from the clerical state, which it does by referring to c. 1317; likewise, c. 1334, §2, excludes the possibility of establishing a suspension *latae sententiae* without a determination or limit.
6. The rules on individual administrative decrees [cc. 48-58] and administrative recourse [cc. 1732-1739] are applicable here.
7. Thomas J. Green, *New Commentary*, 1538-1539.
8. Conduct is a similar word which originally was an act of leading escort. It has connotations of leading from a position of command; to act in a particular and especially in a controlled and directed manner.
9. Http://whispersintheloggia.blogspot.com.
10. Rossetti, 85.
11. Stephen J. Rossetti, "Will I get Better in Treatment?" *Lukenotes* 11:1 (January/February 2007).
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Lon L. Fuller, *The Anatomy of the Law* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1976), 30.
16. No. 2266.
17. *Summa Theologiae*, 11-11, 1. 43, a.1. "*Et ideo convenienter dicitur quod 'dicutm vel factum minus rectum praebens occasionem ruinae*."
18. Michael Carragher, "The *Raison d'être* of Punishment," *Processo Penale e Tutela dei Diritti nell'Ordinamento Canonico*, ed. Davide Cito (Rome: Giuffrè editore, 2005), 461.
19. Ibid., 462.
20. *Summa Theologiae*, 1-11, 87, a. 3.
21. Information on these items is often readily available at diocesan Web sites which provide information on diocesan offices as well as diocesan policies and contact persons.
22. John J. Meyers, "The Temporal goods of the Church," *Commentary*, 870.
23. For an example of one model, consult the Web site of the Diocese of San Jose in California, which has organized along many creative approaches. See http://www.dsj.org.
24. "In hiring decisions pastors value personal qualities more than extensive resumes and credentials. Pastors look for people with good relational skills, who are prayerful, experienced in ministry and share a similar ecclesiology." De Lambo, *Origins* 35:374-375.
25. Descriptions of work relationships between pastors and lay ministers is progressively more professional with the use of terms like team member, staff member, and colleagues where terms implying a subordinate status such as employee, helper or friends have declined. De Lambo, *Origins* 35:375.
26. Between 1990 and 2005, most categories of lay parish ministers have doubled their annual earnings. "Two thirds either strongly agreed (22.5%) or agreed somewhat (45.7%) that their annual earnings were adequate for their personal, family, or religious congregational needs." Of the one-third who do not find their annual earnings adequate, "nearly four in 10 (37.8%) do not believe that their parishes have the resources to compensate them adequately." De Lambo, *Origins* 35:376.

27. C. 231, § 2.Without prejudice to the prescript of can. 230, §1 and with the prescripts of civil law having been observed, lay persons have the right to decent remuneration appropriate to their condition so that they are able to provide decently for their own needs and those of their family. They also have a right for their social provision, social security, and health benefits to be duly provided." *CIC,* 69.
28. "The canon implements the Church's own social justice teaching internally to church work. It is a further specification of the general principle on employees found in canon 1286, making it clear that these principles apply as well to persons who work without contract and in a more ministerial type of service." James H. Provost, "The Obligations and Rights of the Lay Christian Faithful, *Commentary*, 170.
29. "In terms of major benefits, parishes are on par with private industry and in some instances better. With respect to medical and dental insurance, and pensions, the parishes compare favorably with the private sector; only in respect to life insurance do they fall somewhat short." De Lambo, *Origins* 35:376.
30. *Co-Workers in the Vineyard,* 44.
31. Here the Catholic Church seems prepared. See USCCB, *Procedures for Resolving Conflict* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2002).
32. There is nothing new in this particular observation which was described more than 25 years ago as a serious problem by the Bishops Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry in *The Priest and Stress* (Washington, DC: USCCB, 1982), 20-22.
33. Nancy Ellett Allison, Ph.D., "The Professional and Boundary Issues." Http://www.advocateweb.org/HOPE/theprofessionalandboundaryissues.asp.
34. Source: National Council of State Boards of Nursing (SCSBN).
35. Ibid.
36. Shelly Bolin Morton, RN, BSN, "Revitalizing Professional Boundaries Policy Into Meaningful Practice Improvement," *Home Health Care Management & Practice* 16 (June 2004), 255-260.
37. Allison, op. cit.
38. Art. 6, *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.*
39. National Council of State Boards of Nursing (SCSBN).
40. Carla Van Dam, *Identifying Child Molesters: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse by Recognizing the Patterns of the Offenders* (Philadelphia, PA: Haworth Press, Inc., 2001), 142-160.
41. Gregory M. Weber, "Grooming Children for Sexual Molestation" at http://www.vachss.com/guest_dispatches/grooming.html.
42. Http://www.texaspolicecentral.com/childsex.html.
43. "The pedophile may recognize that a family were having difficulty in managing the logistics and finances of the household and befriend them with offers of assistance, both financial and in kind. Eventually having gained the trust of the parent the offender then offers to baby sit or take the child on outings during which time he then moves on to begin the process of grooming the child victim."
44. Http://interpol.com/Public/Children/SexualAbuse/Default.asp.
45. CIC, Can. 184, §1 and CCEO, Can.
46. Antonio S. Sanchez-Gil suggests in his commentary that the law reflects the historical development of the theology on "proper pastor" found in church law. *Exegetical Commentary*, II/2: 1282-1287.
47. Gifis, *Law Dictionary*, 302-303.
48. Msgr. Charles Scicluna, "The Procedure and Praxis of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith regarding *Graviora Delicta*," Proceedings for the Fortieth Annual Conference of the Canon Law Society of Australia and New Zealand (September 18-21, 2006), 4-5.
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50. See *Child Pornography on the Internet*, 8-12.
51. Ibid., 12.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., 10.

Human Sexuality, Celibacy, and Recovery

John C. Gonsiorek, Ph.D., ABPP

This contribution is based on a plenary lecture titled "Human Sexuality, Celibacy and Recovery" presented at 7th Annual Guest House Summer Conference in Minneapolis on July 15, 2008. It has been modified slightly to make it more appropriate for a written instead of spoken format, and to incorporate relevant material from the question and answer session after the presentation.

> A large proportion of Catholic priests are underdeveloped psychologically. This does not mean they are sick, but that their growth has been arrested. Generally, they have not worked through the problems on intimacy, and their level of maturity is lower than their chronological age. They do not relate deeply or closely to other people….the spiritual life of these priests is generally of a piece with their emotional arrest. Their faith trends to be superficial and not integrated into the rest of their lives….The priesthood, the Church and their faith are used as screens and cover-ups for psychological inadequacy….
>
> *Spiritual Renewal of the Catholic Priesthood,* National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1973, p. 3

The above quote is as relevant today as it was when it was written a quarter century ago. This contribution begins to situate this discussion of human sexuality, celibacy, and recovery in the larger context of the psychological health of Roman Catholic clergy, especially as it relates to sexuality. I write as a clinical psychologist and behavioral scientist, not as a theologian. Some of the content in this contribution does not square easily with church teachings, or even contradicts them. There are some frank contradictions between what the behavioral sciences understand about human sexuality and what the church teaches. I will be as true as I can to the behavioral science research, and leave it to you to work out the implications for theology.

This article addresses mental health issues facing individual clergy, but also systemic, organizational issues. It is a great cruelty and gross inefficiency to mistake the two: to treat those suffering from systemic problems as if they had individual problems, or visa-versa. I begin with discussions of celibacy and sexuality, continue with how these affect the recovery process in clergy undergoing substance abuse treatment, and conclude with some larger systemic issues.

Celibacy

The best estimates are that at any one point in time, about 50% of Catholic clergy are behaviorally celibate. Roughly 50% are not, and are sexually active. Of the 50% who are behaviorally celibate at any one point in time, most have not been behaviorally celibate over the full course of their priesthood. 4% of this half (2% of the total) have what Sipe (1990, 1995) terms *celibate achievement*: a stable, transformative, and effective integration of celibacy spiritually, behaviorally, and psychologically. 16% of this half (8% of the total) can be termed *celibate consolidation*, in which behavioral celibacy is stable, but psychological and/or spiritual integration is incomplete. 80% of this half (40% of the total) are said to have *celibate practice*, or behavioral celibacy with minimal integration across other dimensions. Sipe's research is preliminary and easy to criticize. However, in the face of disinterest, if not active discouragement, by the institutional Catholic Church in sponsoring more comprehensive research on celibacy as it is actually lived, Sipe's figures remain the best available estimates. Loftus' review of this topic (1999) provides much thoughtful material, but no better data.

Simply stated, these are not encouraging figures about the success of celibacy. When I began working as a psychologist with Catholic clergy I made a naive error based on assumptions from my childhood experiences in Catholic grade school and a Jesuit high school. As

I worked with priests whose celibacy was a problem, I often suggested that they revisit celibacy training from seminary or consult spiritual advisors who were experts in celibacy. Without exception, these priest clients looked at me like I had grown a third eye (and not due to enlightenment, either), and at conferences with many clergy in the audience, such as this, my naïve assumption is regularly met with laughter.

“As a Catholic, I had assumed that there existed something like a training program, a reasonably viable methodology, a mechanism for developing and sustaining celibacy in Catholic clergy.”

My point, however, is a serious one: As a Catholic, I had assumed that there existed something like a training program, a reasonably viable methodology, a mechanism for developing and sustaining celibacy in Catholic clergy. I still find it incredulous that none such exists, and I am repeatedly told that this absence remains, and that formation training on celibacy is sparse at best. My back-up position given the lack of institutional resources was to suggest to priest clients that, by word of mouth, they ascertain who is viewed as doing celibacy well, who is prospering in their celibacy—in other words, to discover and learn from Sipes' *celibate achievement* group. Even this was usually fruitless, though a lucky few had limited success in finding guidance and input.

For many behaviorally celibate priests, celibacy is a void; it is primarily characterized by what they do not do. Ironically, Sipe's work on celibacy is some of the most eloquent about the impressive qualities of true and deep celibacy. Although his *celibate achievement* and *celibate consolidation* groups were only 10% of his sample, he describes celibacy for these few as vibrant, what celibacy's proponents hope it would be: an engine for spiritual growth and development. Few beyond Roman Catholic clergy aspire to celibacy, aside from monks in some forms of Buddhism. Interestingly, in this other tradition, the focus on celibacy as a vehicle to put aside desire and focus on spiritual growth is even more explicit. Ironically, there is greater flexibility in seeing celibacy as a temporary practice in these traditions, since it is seen so explicitly as a tool, not an end in itself.

Sexuality

Most research that exists suggests that non-heterosexual orientations are greatly over-represented among Catholic clergy compared to the general population. In other words, there are likely more gay and bisexual Catholic clergy than people in the general population who are gay or bisexual. For example, Cozzens (2000) estimated that 40% of Catholic priests are homosexual. While the estimate of homosexuality in the general population is difficult, a range of 5-10% for males seems likely (Gonsiorek, Sell & Weinrich, 1995).

“…the fact remains that the behavioral sciences have concluded that sexual orientation and mental health are not related…”

Our ways of understanding and categorizing human sexuality are currently in considerable flux. In coming decades, the ways we understand the sexual orientations may be radically different, with homosexualities and heterosexualities as different within class as between classes (see Gonsiorek, Sell, & Weinrich, 1995). Despite this flux, one conclusion that has strongly emerged in the past few decades from the behavioral sciences (and this is frankly and entirely at odds with church teaching) is that sexual orientation and psychological adjustment are not related to each other. While some religious organizations, including the Catholic Church, attempt to deny, misrepresent, or distort this conclusion, the fact remains that the behavioral sciences have concluded that sexual orientation and mental health are not related, and that homosexual orientations are *not* intrinsically disordered (see Gonsiorek 2004a, 2004b, 2006).

Estimates of the number of non-heterosexual Catholic clergy may well be an underestimate—a floor, not a ceiling. There is a reliable problem with self-reporting in the behavioral sciences. If you ask people to describe anything that is socially unacceptable, where they anticipate a negative reaction or feel ashamed about it, underreporting of the sensitive issue is likely. This occurs with issues both serious and trivial. So, things like illicit drug use, sexual behavior that is disparaged, and alcohol abuse are likely to be under-reported. But even with less volatile issues, such as food intake and exercise, there is a reliable tendency to distort self-reporting to match the most socially acceptable response. For example, the research would suggest that if you wrote down how much food you consumed in the past 24 hours, you will likely under-estimate your food consumption. Giving socially acceptable or expected responses is a known distortion in self-report, and the more "hot" the topic, the greater the likelihood of distortion. It is for this reason that self-reports of non-heterosexual orientations are often underestimates. Similarly, priest self-reporting about celibacy likely underestimates failures of celibacy, since those individuals who are unsuccessful in their celibacy are often uncomfortable that they are not acting as they have vowed to do.

Sexual and intimate relationships can fairly be described as the most interpersonally complex and challenging of human interactions. I include true celibacy (Sipe's *celibate achievement*) in that. The psychological tasks of developing and maintaining intimacy, and of managing sexual desire, are present whether one is celibate or not.

Celibacy and Sexually in Recovery

It is reasonably certain that active substance abuse eventually distorts and diminishes human relationships. The AA truism that people stop growing when they start abusing appears to be an astute observation. What this means is that for those individuals whose substance abuse came later in life (and there is no shortage of such people)—in middle and later age—if they enter recovery they have a base to draw on, specifically, years prior to substance abuse of non-intoxicated human relationships. Those individuals whose onset of substance abuse is early have no such base. This often creates significant additional challenges to sobriety. If one adds to this formation experiences early in life that did not encourage or allow broad interpersonal development, the challenges are greater still. This last mirrors the experience of many in the priesthood.

For those who are actively abusing substances and behaviorally celibate, it is likely that their celibacy is of the empty void variety described above; it is little more than something they do not do. Intimacy is minimally developed or withered, if earlier present. Such priests are shut down psychologically; spiritual development is attenuated or stagnant, and sexuality is disavowed. The primary relationship is with the abused substance, and there is little room for anything else.

For those clergy who are not behaviorally celibate and abusing substances, their sexual experience often involves a lack of emotional integration, or acting out a hidden sex life. Ironically, although such sexual behavior may appear enthusiastic, sexuality is usually as emotionally disavowed as in the person who is celibate and emotionally shut down. In more severe cases, maladaptive and destructive psychological coping mechanisms, such as splitting, can develop. Splitting is a mechanism in which the individual feels contradictory emotions at the same time, does not integrate them, and develops habits of doing that repeatedly.

"What begins as an avoidance of intimacy or an attempt to quash sexual feelings may spread and become a more general lack of emotional integrity and meaningful interpersonal engagement."

If part of one's life is unintegrated, disavowed, and denied, it takes considerable psychological resources to maintain that. Habits of disavowal and denial, and operating without emotional integrity, tend to become more deeply set over time and spread to other areas. What begins as an avoidance of intimacy or an attempt to quash sexual feelings may spread and become a more general lack of emotional integrity and meaningful interpersonal engagement.

At the beginning of recovery, in early intervention, there are high levels of denial, shame, and emotional disengagement. The person has been sitting on a volcano for a long time, but it is becoming uncapped. For those individuals who have not been celibate the adverse consequences of the sexual behavior problems may in fact have triggered the referral. The referral may present as substance abuse, but the issue that actually got the church hierarchy to react is often a sexual problem. If this is not fully disclosed by the referral source, substance abuse treatment can be disrupted when the consequences of sexual behavior distract both patient and treating staff from substance abuse issues.

Individuals at this stage often do not know accurately discern their own sexuality, or even their own sexual history. Some could not give you an accurate history if they had a mind to—and many do not have a mind to. But even when they do, it is filtered through years of distortion.

As the person in early recovery develops initial sobriety there is a risk that the sobriety can start to become aversive. Issues about lack of intimacy and unresolved sexuality rush forward and there is no substance to cap them. The issues demand response, but this is compromised by entrenched habits of distortion and denial, little emotional integration, and often a diminished interpersonal support system.

Mood and anxiety disorders are highly co-morbid with substance abuse, and these also often begin to clearly emerge during the early stages of recovery. In the first two years of sobriety as many as a third will be diagnosed with a mood and/or anxiety disorder. It is a truism that when treating a person in recovery, one must provide safety nets to manage mood and anxiety problems—as well as problems with sexuality, intimacy, and other interpersonal problems and deficits. There can be a crisis in the early stages of recovery where these other issues become so disruptive and potentially unmanageable that sobriety itself becomes endangered. The person in recovery may feel it would be easier to start drinking/using again than to deal with so much.

For those priests who have not been celibate, their denial of past sexual behavior tends to remain strong during early treatment. This can take forms of extreme denial of clear facts, making absurd distinctions about what is and is not sexual activity, and the like. A challenge for those priests who have not been celibate is to recapture their history accurately without distortion, to see it as it is, and to integrate; it cannot be responded to and managed until it is perceived and acknowledged.

For those individuals who have been celibate, there is often in early treatment a growing desperation when considering returning without substances back to that empty void. What are they going to go back to? They are challenged to not return to an empty behavioral celibacy, but to forge a spiritually and psychologically vibrant celibacy. If they have never had that, this challenge is daunting, and as discussed above, there are few resources to assist them.

Aftercare with those who have been behaviorally celibate involves developing a profound, integrated celibacy from the ground up, one based on active unblinking awareness, that clearly faces whatever sexuality might be, that is integrated spiritually, psychologically and behaviorally, and that serves as a vehicle for spiritual practice. Such a celibacy has room for genuine interpersonal intimacy, and acknowledges and manages sexual desire without disavowal of the self. Some who have been behaviorally celibate while under the influence may question whether they really want celibacy when sober; for these, there may be basic questioning of commitment to celibacy and priestly vocation. Additionally, there is often considerable loss, isolation, and loneliness to be processed, to make sense of all those years of living in a void.

The aftercare issues for those who are not behaviorally celibate are similar but somewhat different. One of the challenges is to differentiate the behaviors that were done in the haze of intoxicated acting out versus what actually derives from an accurate understanding of their sexuality; those are often different things. This includes an undistorted recognition of past sexual behavior and an acceptance and integration of its consequences. As with those who are celibate, developing interpersonal intimacy as opposed to sexual behavior is a crucial task. These individuals often have very difficult decisions about whether they want to develop a genuine celibacy now that they have the possibility to truly attempt it. As much as they may want priesthood, some acknowledge that they do not want celibacy.

My impression from years of clinical work with Catholic clergy is that unresolved sexual issues are on a par with untreated mood and anxiety disorders as having the capability to destabilize sobriety. Effective response to relapse should always inquire if these are involved, even though priests are not easily forthcoming about these issues.

Larger Issues

The American Psychological Association recently adopted a resolution about religiously based and anti-religious prejudice (2008). The parts on prejudice are fairly straightforward, but the document also discusses the relationship between science and religion and calls for recognition of and respect for their differences.

From my perspective as a psychologist, there are features of church teaching and institutional practice that undermine the psychological stability of church clergy. Available data suggest that celibacy is not typically attained in a successful way. Only half of priests are reliably behaviorally celibate, and of the half who are, about 20% do so in a way that can be called psychologically and spiritually successful. A response is required to this major discrepancy. As a non-theologian, I do not know the answer; as a psychologist, it is not my place to tell you your theology.

At minimum, however, I suggest that if the Catholic Church takes it espousal of celibacy seriously, it do a number of things. First, thoroughly study that minority of priests who are fully and broadly successful in celibacy until successful celibacy is better understood. This strategy has been used successfully in other issues with historically low success rates. If you want to find out how to do successful long-term weight loss or lifestyle management post heart attack, find the minority of individuals who prevail in success with these goals and who continue to do so for decades. The goal is to understand the successful process and break it down into concrete steps so others can better attempt it.

> **"My difficult question to the Catholic Church is this: Where is the evidence that celibacy produces enhancement of spiritual life, or of any other aspect of functioning?"**

As someone who regularly interacts as a consultant with the Episcopal Church, I honestly do not see that vibrancy of spiritual life that is supposed to be the result of celibacy. My difficult question to the Catholic Church is this:

- Where is the evidence that celibacy produces enhancement of spiritual life, or of any other aspect of functioning?
- Is it possible that non-celibate clergy can function effectively as priests, even Catholic priests?
- Do behaviorally celibate but psychologically diminished priests function more or less effectively than non-behaviorally celibate priests who attempt emotional integration of their sexual behavior?
- What are the predictors of successful priestly functioning in relation to celibacy, and are there multiple routes to success or failure?

Until the Catholic Church encourages unbiased, broad-scale research into the actual sexual lives of its clergy and the relationship of sexual behavior/celibacy to performance as a priest, there will be insufficient information to respond to such questions. There are plenty of covertly non-celibate priests, and overtly married priests under Rome in the Uniate Church and under unusual circumstances elsewhere. Real—or at least improved—answers can be found, if the search were undertaken with integrity.

Similarly, whether non-heterosexual orientation in priests creates actual impairment of priestly functioning is also an empirical question, and one that also warrants open inquiry. My observation is that it is truly maddening to non-heterosexual priests, most of whom are having the same success or lack of success as their heterosexual counterparts, to be essentially told that they are no good or not wanted. It is especially maddening to be told in private that they are supported but then to be publicly vilified as a group. I am not suggesting as a behavioral scientist that anyone simply discard your theological traditions and do what science says. Science and religion are not the same. But I will tell you—as a behavioral scientist—that maintaining that homosexuality is inherently disordered is an untenable, false, and destructive position. When the church elects to use the terminology of the behavioral sciences, it then subjects itself to scientific methodologies and scrutiny. To go beyond theological belief and imply scientific justification when none exists is misrepresentation and fraud, incompatible with claims of moral authority.

I leave you with one more provocative question. If a vocation is a calling from God—if the priesthood is a calling from God—what is God saying when he calls so many who attempt celibacy in good faith and do not make it work, and what is God saying when he calls so many who are not heterosexual? I leave you to ponder that.

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Sexual Addiction, Trauma, and Healing

Rev. Richard Chiola, Ph.D.

This paper defines addiction within the continuum in human behavior and indicates how the physiology of the brain in particular is affected by trauma, which in turn is numbed by sexual and other addiction. The purpose of the paper is to develop an understanding of sexual addiction as a process addiction, describe how addictions commingle, and indicate why recovery is a long-term and multidimensional process.

Our dioceses and religious communities engage in a multi-phased process of assisting members for addictive behaviors and recommending remediation, supporting those entering recovery, and encouraging some to step aside from ministry for a time of intensive treatment. Later we assist them to reenter ministry while maintaining recovery, or help both the community and the person to separate and continue healing. In each of these phases we risk making "them" our goal and ignoring the communal dimensions of recovery.

This paper is limited to the interaction of trauma and addictions and the treatment of this interaction. Nonetheless, while reading this paper the pressing issues of *communio* must be kept in mind. The faith perspective that teaches conversion is not simply personal but also relational in both its initiation and effects (cf. Luke 15).

Among our religious and clergy are those who suffered from diverse traumas prior to entry. Others may have experienced trauma in formation or while in vowed or ordained life. While engaged in pastoral care we feel vicariously the trauma of those who come to us for solace and healing. We recognize trauma and pain are always both personal and communal. The same is true of recovery from addiction. Recovery is an intensely personal conversion to *the freedom of desire* but also an ongoing call to conversion for the culture of the institution of which the addict is a member.

Any conversion necessary for institutions and institutional leaders would be to understand the interaction between trauma and addictions so as to 1) assess and support processes of recovery for their members which integrate phased and multi-dimensional treatment toward *communio* and not simply personal recovery and 2) recognize and correct within their cultures trauma producing attitudes and behaviors.

"While engaged in pastoral care we feel vicariously the trauma of those who come to us for solace and healing."

Causes

Trauma comes in many forms. There has been a rising realization that sexual abuse of minors is a major cause of PTSD in adults and that a significant number of religious women have suffered from this causation. Likewise, workplace harassment, seduction, and even abuse by other members of their order have been documented as causes of adult trauma for women religious. Although not more than the population at large, these forms of trauma nevertheless have become a significant aspect of treatment for and recovery from addictions among religious women. What seems less well documented is the trauma in boys and men who are candidates for priesthood and religious life.

Consider the high school freshman who discovers his father is having an affair and tells his father that he needs to go to confession. The father continues cyclic affairs throughout the young man's seminary years and after his ordination right up to the mother's death. The priest never develops the ability to see the social consequences of his own actions and is alternately manipulating and controlled in his relationships with significant persons in his life. He uses Internet porn and is conflicted about his sexual orientation. He is particularly susceptible to being emotionally abused by his bishop.

Or in another instance, an infant's mother gives him into the care of her parents who adopt him and afterward she is known as his sister. The (grand)father is emotionally absent. The boy grows up "not knowing" the real circumstances of his parentage. As a seminarian and priest this man suffers from the inability to enter healthy relationships, becomes a workaholic, and is emotionally abusive to persons who work closely with him. Power and status are his addictions of preference. It is not difficult to see this in his careerism.

Then there is the priest whose mother died when he was eight and his father was a raging alcoholic. As a young man, he physically cared for his father and their home. As a priest, he continues to care for the old and the weak but has no insight about the negative consequences of acting out his OCD. He uses Internet porn to numb himself and isolates himself emotionally from both authorities and peers.

And in another case, a young priest sent for graduate studies is groomed, sexually seduced, and then abused by a priest who is a few years older and a student in the same program. The priest struggles to accept his sexual orientation and reestablish trust in clerical relationships. He uses masturbation and emotional distancing for self-soothing.

Or again, a boy grows up silently seduced into being his mother's emotional confidant in her battle to gain her husband's emotional support. All his life the fighting between his parents awakens him at night into a sickening ache. He continues as a priest to believe he must take responsibility for all broken relationships in ministerial settings but without being able to accept emotional support himself for fear of seduction. He uses food and compulsive television watching to soothe him while finding it difficult to relate professionally to his brother priests.

Trauma happens not just because of physical but frequently because of emotional threats to the self and one's identity. In response to trauma, a person's desire for safety and acceptance can be nailed to a chemical or other process that numbs the pain, soothes the hurt, or distances one from the fear. Gerald May defined addiction as the nailing of desire to just such an object or process.

Addiction

May (1988, p. 3) wrote, "Addiction is the flip-side of repression: While repression stifles desire, addiction attaches desire, bonds and enslaves the energy of desire to certain specific behaviors, things, or people. These objects of attachment then become preoccupations and obsessions; they come to rule our lives." "Detachment (non-attachment) seeks the liberation of desire, the enhancement of passion, the freedom to love with all one's being, and the willingness to bear the pain such love can bring" (1988, 15). As a hallmark of detachment, bearing such pain is qualitatively different than trauma pain which can become fixed and spawn addictive behaviors.

Gerald May (1988, p.14) noticed that "detachment in various spiritual traditions is freedom of desire, not freedom from desire. Authentic detachment… uncovers the basic desire for God and sets it free from [addictions]." May (1988, p.14) was convinced that addiction, while "a state of compulsion, obsession, or preoccupation that enslaves a person's will and desire," is nonetheless synonymous with the human condition. "To be alive is to be addicted, and to be alive and addicted is to stand in need of grace" (1988, p. 11).

The reason is simply that "the human brain works, learns, and grows by developing patterns that differ only in degree from major substance and process addictions. Some of these are attraction to anger, pleasing, comparison, television or aversion to anchovies, boredom, failure, and traffic" (1988, pp. 38-39). "While addictions to alcohol and drugs are obvious and tragic, everything—ideas, work, relationships, power, moods, fantasies, etc.—holds the potential to become an object of addiction." To be sure, some are more destructive than others; [but all addictions have this in common, that they] impede human freedom and diminish the human spirit" (1988, p. 39).

Trauma

Kevin Creeden (2004, p. 231) points out that the brain sets up its "synaptic connections in an activity dependent manner" over a lifetime of developmental phases and from the stimulations available in the environment. "If specific brain structures are being regularly activated by abuse and other forms of trauma then those circuits are the ones which are more firmly programmed and easily activated. The amygdala, which sends projections to all areas of the cortex, establishes an emotional bias to cognitive functions. Higher intensity stimuli, identified as indicative of reduced safety (or increased arousal), are given privileged attention. If threat and trauma persist, the brainstem and mid-brain become under-modulated and the neurobiological responses to trauma (fear/flight/freeze) become established with little influence from cortical control."

"'If specific brain structures are being regularly activated by abuse and other forms of trauma then those circuits are the ones which are more firmly programmed and easily activated.'"
(Kevin Creeden)

The DSM-IV-TR defines trauma as "intense, fear, helplessness, or horror" in relation to "the actual or perceived threat of death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or other" (PTSD, 309.81). Bessel Van der Kolk (1996, p. 163) who is one of the best known names in trauma studies very clearly states that the same event may well be traumatic for one person but not for another. Trauma is a matter of perception and reaction formation and there are multiple forms of post-traumatic stress disorders. Perhaps trauma's occurrence is most clearly indicated by the consequent intrusive thoughts and feeling that the person tries to avoid and the hypervigilance which characterizes those who suffer from PTSD.

Peter Levine's (2005, p. 8) 30 years of research led him to define trauma in terms of the overwhelming of "our ability to respond to a *perceived* threat." "Trauma is about loss of connection—to ourselves, to our bodies, to our families, to others, to the world around us" (p. 9). In fact, Patrick Carnes (1997), following van der Kolk, points out that trauma's influence varies according to the interplay between frequency and impact (or severity) and can result in delayed recognition of its consequences. "Little acts of degradation, manipulation, secrecy, and shame on a daily basis take their toll. Trauma by accumulation sneaks up on its victims"(p. 5).

This may be one of the features of clerical formation to keep in mind when taking a second look at the John Jay research data on abuse cases in the U.S. Morcotte (2008) encourages a reexamination of the social factors in the formation of abusing clerics whose reported acts peaked between 1960 and 1979.

What are the trauma bonds and reactions set up by formation itself, in addition to those a cleric experienced prior to seminary? Cozzens (2000) offers some insights into the attachment formation of seminarians and priests with church authorities and its potential for abuse. Pat and Sue Fleming (2007) on the other hand offer accounts of the abusive backgrounds out of which the abusers sprang. Trauma is more than compassion fatigue, the vicarious trauma one feels in caring for survivors of trauma. Trauma is a behavioral highjacking agent that creates trauma responses that are compulsive, continuous despite adverse consequences, and obsessive.

To understand the way trauma is itself an addiction formation, Carnes (1997, pp. 44-45) offers a post-traumatic stress index for self-assessment based on eight longitudinal ways people respond to trauma. They are:

- T-Reactions: The past invades the present experience.
- T-Repetitions: Repeating behaviors or situations that parallel earlier experiences.
- T-Bonds: Loyalty to people who are dangerous, shaming, or exploitive.
- T-Shame: Lack of self-worth because of trauma
- T-Pleasure: Finding pleasure in the presence of trauma stimuli.
- T-Blocking: Numb negative feelings that arise from trauma.
- T-Splitting: Dissociating from experience or self.
- T-Abstinence: Trauma reactive deprivation of need or desire fulfillment.

Addiction Interaction

Trauma shame is the substrata of self-judgment that underlies additional chemical and process addictions. Trauma blocking and trauma abstinence in particular are the seed-ground for addiction interaction with other process and chemical agents. Carnes (2005, p. 99) describes the neurochemistry of the interaction of these addictions as a committee process. The committee is composed of three brain members, "the triune brain."

The most primitive (mechanical, reflexive, and stereotypical in its output) is the brain stem common to us and lizards. Loosely patched to it is a second brain, that adds "primitive values, drives, and affect to the emotionless reflexive behavior of the lizard." The third member is the cortex, which evolved in mammals. "The cortex contributes the ability to formulate 'as-if' scenarios that make judgment or revision of the affective states and emotional values possible." "The cortex allows finely tuned, thoughtful control of affect (and hence lying). Controlling the balance between emotion and logical evaluation is the essence of the interactions between the cortex and primitive brain regions."

In an addiction reaction, "the highjacking agent is recognized as a novel stimulus (chemical or behavioral) followed by a learning sequence involving both implicit and explicit memory processes that embrace the brain's own reward system in the support of addictive behavior" (Carnes 2005, p. 99). Alcohol; drugs; and behaviors like sex, gambling, and spending can highjack these neural processes. They appear to do so in a variety of ways appropriate to their own chemical makeup or route of processing.

Carnes (2005, p. 98) holds that sexual addiction, like any addiction, is a brain disease; addiction highjacks the brain's mechanisms. He says that "addictive processes 'tap into' and subvert existing neural circuits that have evolved to process information about natural drives and their reinforcers." His definitions of sexual addiction, the arousal template, and addiction interaction disorder follow.

Sexual Addiction (Carnes)

"The addict substitutes a sick relationship to an event or a process for a healthy relationship with others. The addict's relationship to a mood altering experience becomes central to his life" (Carnes, 2001, p. 14). "The sick relationship is with an event or process in which the person becomes sexually aroused or seeks to avoid sexual arousal (sexual anorexia). The sexualized event or process is unmanageable and interferes with the person's life and relationships" (Carnes, 2001, p. 14).

Cybersex in particular "involves rapid escalation of amount and variety of sex; the escalation of cybersex use becomes obsessional with new behaviors becoming quickly fixated; cybersex addiction involves significant relational regression; and compulsive cybersex accelerates already addictive behavior, can result in offline sex addiction, and [even] the computer and Internet [themselves] become sexualized" (2001, pp. 84-86).

Research indicates that "cybersex has the potential for further template distortion. Usually it is about the arousal template and something unresolved. Computers and the Internet can easily accelerate the process" (Carnes, 2001, p. 91).

Arousal Template (Carnes)

Carnes (Carnes, 2001, pp. 87-92) posits that "arousal occurs in the brain…[and] there are three basic neuropathways in sex. The most primitive one, the one that evolved first, causes us to be sexually aroused by others…. Between the ages of five and eight, most of us already have formed this map about what is sexually arousing to us." The second is for attraction to the most advantageous partner. "There evolved a neurochemistry to romance that involves great arousal, intensity, and obsession. It actually creates a period of 'insanity' in which dopamine levels go up and serotonin levels decline."

The third creates a more permanent attachment. "An attachment neuropathway emerged allowing us to bond with another. Some of the most powerful neurochemicals in the brain are generated by this bonding process." These three neuropathways establish our lovemap or arousal template. "It serves as a template with which we decide whether a specific situation is arousing—and then we act on it." Fisher's (2000) research on birds is the basis for Carnes' description of these sexual neuropathways in the human brain. In addition to these pathways for arousal, attraction, and attachment, Fischer points out that the evolution of the human cerebral cortex also makes it possible for persons to make commitments and keep them.

Addiction Interaction Disorder (AID) (Carnes)

All addictions have been shown by multiple studies to access brain neuropathways. In doing so, any distinction between chemical and behavioral access is purely an artificial construct. In fact, there is enough evidence to indicate that the interaction, reinforcement, and joining of addictions to each other can be called Addiction Interaction Disorder (Carnes, 2005, pp. 85-86). Carnes believes that AID is one of the reasons that the treatment for any singly identifiable addiction 1) must include the assessment for others and 2) cannot be the sole determinate for the length of time needed to establish recovery (Carnes, 2005, pp. 112-117).

Carnes (2005, pp. 87-98) describes addictions interacting in multiple ways.

Cross Tolerance – Indicated by either simultaneous increase in addictive behavior in two or more addictions or by a sudden shift in addictive practice (extinguishing one with unusually high use of another).

Withdrawal Mediation – In which one addiction serves to moderate, relieve, or avoid withdrawal from another addiction.

Replacement – An addiction emerges after another has shown recovery but with a majority of the same emotional and compulsive features as the first, a period of time having intervened between the two.

Alternating Addiction Cycles – A patterned systemic cycling of addictions, i.e. between promiscuity and aversion. *Masking* – the use of an addiction to cover a more shaming one. *Fusion* – Two addictions always appear together. *Ritualizing* – A sequence of actions leading to addictive behavior and capable of *merging* thus leading to behaviors joining.

Intensification – Used at the same time two or more addictions make for a more potent experience either as *Partial Fusion* – when behaviors being independent some of the time or as *Fusion Dependence* – when the behaviors always occur together. Multiple Bingeing – Describes the environmental use of several addictive behaviors.

Numbing – Compulsive behaviors used to soothe or numb, often follows PTSD arousal behaviors and are thus tied to the originating trauma repetition. *Disinhibiting* – lowers inhibitions for another addiction. *Combining* – sustains a high a long as possible, e.g., sex, high-risk activities, and drugs.

Treatment

Since trauma is first a physical response before it is a mental meaning (Levine, p. 31), the originating trauma must be addressed and not just the symptoms of the presenting addiction extinguished. Phased and multiple treatment regimens are necessary because there is usually an underlying trauma that is intermingled with any addiction. Van der Kolk (1997, pp. 425-431) maintains that PTSD responds best to phased treatment. Creeden and many other authors rely on Herman's (1992) division of trauma recovery into three stages: establish

> **"'Faith-based therapy presumes that the essence of the human spirit and the origin of the highest human hopes is the created inborn desire for God felt in our longing for wholeness, completion, fulfillment, and meaning, in the desire to love, be loved, and be one with love's Source'"**

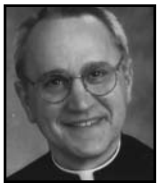
safety, engage feelings, and reintegrate into life. Carnes (2000) indicates that the period of work needed to establish a healthy relationship to sexuality in recovery from a sexual addiction is from five to seven years. This is because he recognizes the need for multidimensional therapy, which includes treatment for trauma and other addictions that reinforce, interact, and join with sexual addiction.

The critical issues for clergy/religious recovery from addictions, and from sexual addiction in particular, is 1) the person's own willingness to do the work, 2) the amount of time and resources that will be made available for recovery by the diocese or community, and 3) whether the ordinary or superior should have confidence in a recovery process unless it engages in both a) multiple addiction assessment and b) treatment regimens which address the intermingling of addictions and the healing of trauma. In addition, the answers to these questions must be framed in theological terms as conversion, which is lifelong and multidimensional. Recovery from an addiction is ultimately a reinvigoration of *communion,* and so the growth in humanity and spirit of the person in relationship to others.

"Faith-based therapy presumes that the essence of the human spirit and the origin of the highest human hopes is the created inborn desire for God felt in our longing for wholeness, completion, fulfillment, and meaning, in the desire to love, be loved, and be one with love's Source" (May 1988, p. 1). "Love, which creates us, haunts but does not enslave us. We are not determined like puppets but have the freedom to choose for or against God, love, life" (May 1988, p. 13).

Carnes (2001, p. 269) indicates that of the thousands of cases he has followed, "What their spiritual life consisted of was as important as practicing it on a regular, even daily basis. Those whose spiritual lives flourished were also usually active participants in a spiritual community." He is pointing to the spiritual dimension of all recovery. As May (1988, p. 31) puts it, "Unable to think rightly about our addictions (because of "mind tricks") or will our way out of addictions (because of a divided will), the first step to healing is to admit one's addictions, and even more important, see our addictions as doorways through which the power of grace can enter our lives."

The same is true of a community's response to trauma and addiction as doorways through which the power of grace can enter as conversion into any family or institution, including local churches and religious communities. It is not only the individual person but also our communities that need conversion to a contemplative way of being, the path to real freedom of desire that leads to God.



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Significant Markers of Human Maturation Applied to the Selection and Formation of Seminarians

Marysia Weber, RSM, D.O.

The 2008 document from the Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the Use of Psychology in the Admission and Formation of Seminarians for the Priesthood,* highlights the duty of bishops and formators to discern the suitability of seminarians for ordained priestly ministry.[1] Cited among the virtues and abilities required in a priest are a positive and stable sense of one's masculine identity, the capacity to form mature relationships, a solid sense of belonging, self-knowledge, the capacity for self-correction, the ability for trust and loyalty, and the courage to stay faithful to decisions made before God.[2] Further, the Congregation states that formators must know how to evaluate a man in his totality and speaks of the benefit of working with experts in the psychological sciences to obtain clarification on specific issues regarding the achievement of human developmental tasks.[3] Psychological expertise is intended to be at the service of the seminarian for "greater self-knowledge of himself, of his potentialities, and vulnerabilities" in the context of possible future priestly ministry.[4]

This article is intended to assist formators in that responsibility. Determining the level of affective maturity of a seminarian and his potential for growth in human formation requires that formators ask suitable questions and review the totality of the seminarian's verbal and behavioral responses. A seminarian may be more developed in one area than another. A composite view is necessary to determine the level of maturation in each seminarian.

Major theories of psychiatry and psychology depict a predictable sequence in human personality development. There are theoretical differences in the human maturational models of Freud, Jung, Erikson, and Maslow, for example, but all models contain similar characteristics that indicate increasing personal and interpersonal integration. In this article, I present six interrelated tasks that are common to all major theories of human development. The following descriptors are used to organize these tasks: the management of dependence, control, productivity, identity, healthy friendships, and spiritual fatherhood (generativity, self-sacrifice, and service). I will briefly describe each task of human development, suggest a profile of the markers that characterize a seminarian who has achieved a particular developmental task, identify markers that characterize a seminarian who has not achieved an appropriate level of affective maturity, and recommend questions to guide bishops, vocation directors, and seminary formators in their evaluation of a seminarian.

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Six Tasks of Human Development

For priests to witness to healthy celibate commitments and engage responsibly in ministry, they must have adequately addressed certain psychosexual issues.

Seminarians who have been unable, for whatever reasons, to achieve these developmental tasks place themselves at greater risk for serious interpersonal difficulties in priestly ministry. Although most human beings do not complete these developmental milestones, healthy adults have worked through these tasks so that they function effectively within society.

The following tasks of human maturation depict ascending markers of affective maturity. For example, spiritual fatherhood evolves from the achievement of the five maturational tasks that precede it. As such, you will note overlap in the markers in each task and in the questions within each set of maturational tasks.

1. From Dependence to Interdependence

This primary maturational task involves the capacity to rely on other people with a sense of trust as well as a sense of self-reliance and self-trust. Successful resolution of this maturational marker provides the basis for capacities to give and receive from others without excessive dependence or envy.[5]

A seminarian who has adequately resolved dependency conflicts is appropriately self-reliant and has a capacity to trust himself, yet, at the same time, is able to rely on and entrust himself to others. He is not threatened by the opinions and judgments of others. When people confide in him their problems, he does not entangle himself in their challenges but appropriately offers and seeks counsel. He also perseveres through the ordinary frustrations of life.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian has adequately resolved dependency conflicts:

- Is the seminarian appropriately self-reliant with a capacity to trust himself, yet at the same time able to rely on and entrust himself to others?
- Does he exhibit adequate physical and psychic interpersonal boundaries?
- Does he have respect for others' privacy?
- Does he have a capacity to engage in interdependent activities with peers?

In contrast, a seminarian struggling with conflicts of dependency has difficulty making everyday decisions without excessive amounts of advice and reassurance from others. In order to compensate for his sense of inadequacy, an emotionally dependent seminarian will avoid responsibility. He may exhibit excessive anxiety or a quick temper. A seminarian who is deficient in this developmental task may be a "people-pleaser" who can feel alienated from others due to his anxiety or anger about "not measuring up." He may try to "make up" for what is lacking in himself by excessive ingratiating behaviors. He also may exhibit problems with interpersonal boundaries, going to excessive lengths to obtain support born of emotional neediness and lack of self-confidence in judgment or abilities. Psychodynamically, this is called "engulfment." In other words, the person attempts to incorporate another person into his "self" in a struggle to become a "whole" person.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian exhibits emotional dependency:

- Are the seminarian's relationships needy and emotionally charged?
- Do his relationships terminate in frustration because of his neediness?
- Does he exhibit excessive ingratiating behaviors?
- Does he prefer to have others make decisions for him so as to avoid responsibility?
- Does he exhibit problems with interpersonal boundaries?

2. Control and Authority

This developmental task is the basis for evolving personal autonomy, capacity for self-determining behavior without a sense of self-doubt, lack of ambivalence, and capacity for cooperation without either excessive submissiveness or willfulness.[6]

A seminarian who is mature in his interactions addresses his emotional conflicts through direct expression of his feelings or thoughts. He is motivated to prevent the build up of frustration resultant from emotionally conflicted situations. He does not require that he get his own way in order to be successful. He has the capacity to engage in interdependent activities with peers and authority figures. This interactive style often elicits cooperation from others. People who exude a strong personal presence do not intimidate the mature seminarian. He is able to differ with other people without dismissing those with whom he disagrees. He acknowledges his feelings of discomfort, but does not act out on them. He is empathic but does not assume others' feelings and behaviors.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian can exercise self-control and relate maturely to authority figures:

- Does he express directly and non-manipulatively his thoughts and feelings?
- Is he aware of both his sexual and aggressive

impulses?
- Is he able to manage and articulate strong feelings in ways that are responsible, consistent, and respectful?
- Is he able to delay gratification for a future or greater good?
- Can he accept a difficult situation and function within it?
- Has the seminarian attained a level of comfort with himself?
- Has he achieved the capacity to differ with others' opinions without dismissing those with whom he disagrees?
- Is he comfortable in the presence of authority figures without antagonism or withdrawal from relationship?

In contrast, a seminarian who is impulsive and in conflict with authority figures utilizes manipulation as a means of controlling others. He can be rigid and engage in power plays, such as intimidation or angry outbursts. Alternatively, he may be excessively compliant, exhibiting a lack of personal autonomy and initiative. As a consequence of his self-doubt, he assumes an ambivalent posture of suspicious vigilance to guard against being hurt in relationship. Also, a seminarian externally may appear compliant, yet internally he is filled with rebellion and critical judgment.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian is impaired in exercising self-control and relating to authority figures:
- Does the seminarian exhibit a lack of personal autonomy and initiative?
- Does he exhibit ambivalence and self-doubt?
- Does he lack a capacity to cooperate with others?
- Does he utilize intimidation, threats, criticism, or angry outbursts to manipulate and devalue other people?
- Alternatively, is he excessively compliant?
- Is he rigid and lacking a capacity for flexibility in interactions?
- Is he frequently in conflict with authority figures?
- Does he lack the capacity for appropriate delayed gratification?

3. Productivity and Performance

Besides the positive effects of the prior maturational tasks, the task of productivity and performance provides a sense of healthy pride and self-competence derived from performance. Resolution of this task of human maturation sets the stage for an evolving sense of self in relationship to other people.[7]

"A seminarian who has achieved this developmental task prefers to work with others and is viewed by his peers as a 'team player.'"

A seminarian who has satisfactorily achieved the markers for this developmental task derives a healthy sense of pride and self-competence from his work, which contributes to enthusiasm in his work and an evolving willingness and capacity to work in collaboration with other people. At this point, he is developing mature social skills and forming loyal, trustworthy alliances. A seminarian who has achieved this developmental task prefers to work with others and is viewed by his peers as a "team player." He has the capacity to realistically anticipate and plan for future potential difficulties. He is open to others' ideas and seeks harmony while appreciating diversity.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian experiences personal fulfillment through collaboration:
- Does the seminarian exhibit a healthy sense of pride and self-competence from his work?
- Does he have well-developed social skills and the capacity to form loyal, trustworthy alliances?
- Does he have a capacity for balancing harmony and diversity?
- Does he experience a heightened sense of fulfillment through collaboration with others in ministry?
- Does he encourage those with whom he is working to search for the good in others' ideas?

Inferiority and inadequacy are common experiences for a seminarian who struggles with the maturational goals of productivity and performance. He does not feel competent or valued in his efforts and is critical of others and himself. He lacks joy in authentic self-giving. A seminarian's need to prove his adequacy leads to "burn out," as he realizes increased labor does not substitute for his impaired self-esteem. A seminarian who experiences these limitations demands frequent affirmation.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian has deficiencies in tasks of productivity and performance:

- Does he feel incompetent or undervalued?
- Is he excessively critical of others or himself?
- Does he lack a sense of joy in authentic self-giving?
- Is he bothered by feelings of inferiority and inadequacy?
- Does he exhibit apathy or "burnout" when his work performance does not compensate for his low self-esteem?

4. Adequate/Inadequate Sense of Self

This maturational task is foundational for an emerging sense of self that includes a curiosity without embarrassment, initiative without guilt, and mastery not only over objects and persons in the environment but also over internal processes and impulses. The resolution of this maturational task gives rise to powerful internal sources for regulation of impulsive drives and their direction to constructive ends. With the attainment of a more focused sense of self in the world and clearer self-definition, the capacity for fidelity emerges; that is, the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of inevitable contradictions. The capacity for fidelity is the cornerstone of an adequate sense of self. Role confusion occurs when an individual is unable to formulate a sense of self and belonging.[8]

A seminarian who has achieved an adequate sense of self has a sufficiently developed ego, is able to acknowledge his strengths and weaknesses, and demonstrates realistic problem-solving skills. He has the capacity to form relationships in a mature manner; he is not preoccupied with his own needs. This seminarian possesses the capacity to weather multiple stressors and disappointments while maintaining a clear sense of his dignity.[9] He embraces suffering in his own life and empathizes with people who are suffering. Above all, he demonstrates capacity for fidelity to his faith and the courage to make decisions according to his faith.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian has achieved an adequate sense of self:

- Does he have a mature and consistent sense of who he is called to be?
- Is he faithful to the vocation he is identifying with?
- Does he understand suffering in his own life and respond accordingly?
- Is he compassionate with others who are suffering?
- Does he demonstrate realistic problem-solving skills?
- Does he exhibit the capacity to commit himself to persons he is guiding rather than be preoccupied with himself?
- Is he maturely able to address self-denial, loneliness, and celibacy?

"A seminarian who is unsure of himself relies heavily on the role he plays to define his value and sense of personal security."

A seminarian who is unsure of himself relies heavily on the role he plays to define his value and sense of personal security. Struggling to "find" himself, he may also be envious of others, which can flare into aggressive impulses or patterns of isolation. When contradictions in values or morals present themselves, he lacks fidelity and courage necessary to make decisions in accordance with the Catholic Church he is called to witness to. Inordinate pleasure-seeking behaviors such as overeating, alcohol abuse, or sexual activity may be present.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian has an inadequate sense of self:

- Does the seminarian rely heavily on the role he plays to define his sense of personal adequacy and security?
- Does he have to "prove" his adequacy by his performance?
- Is he ambivalent about his sexual orientation, moral values, or commitments?
- Is celibacy a burden for him?
- Does he lack a capacity for fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church?

5. Capacity/Incapacity for Healthy Friendship

This task is a developmental period during which a person integrates and consolidates previous attainments in psychosexual development and establishes decisive patterns for future adaptive functioning.[10]

A seminarian with healthy maturational markers of friendship is able to form relationships that are responsible, respectful, and marked by integrity. He does not focus on his emotional turmoil but instead invests his energy in problem solving or bringing a situation to a positive conclusion. In stressful situations, he reflects on his own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in order to better understand himself and other people's reactions to him. A seminarian who demonstrates capacity for healthy friendship is able to respond to the challenges of relationship as a normal part of human bonding. At the same time, he is comfortable with solitude.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian has capacity for healthy friendships:

- Is he motivated to develop a more accurate view of himself?
- Does he address stressors by expressing his thoughts and feelings directly?
- Is he well liked by others?
- Can he forgive others and seek forgiveness for personal shortcomings?
- Is he able to form relationships that are responsible, respectful, and marked by integrity?
- Is he comfortable with solitude?

A seminarian who is in conflict about friendship has a poor self-image, demonstrates tendencies toward emotional upheavals, and blames others for his difficulties. He is more focused on being viewed as good rather than striving to grow in virtue. He alternates between idolizing certain individuals when they satisfy his needs and disliking them if they do not meet his needs. This seminarian is ambivalent about his moral values and commitments.

Questions to assess whether a seminarian has impaired capacity for healthy friendships:

- Does he have satisfying relationships with adults?
- Is he self-focused?
- Are his interpersonal relationships characterized by superficiality?
- Does he blame others for his difficulties?
- Is he manipulative?

6. Spiritual Fatherhood (Generativity, Self-Sacrifice, and Service)

Generativity at this level of human maturation is primarily concerned with establishing and guiding the next generation. The term generativity applies not so much to rearing and teaching one's offspring, but reflects a protective concern for all the generations and social institutions. Generativity encompasses productivity and creativity as well. Having previously achieved capacity to form healthy friendships, the person now broadens the investment of his sense of self with friends to include concern for a group or society. Through generative behavior, the individual experiences a measure of satisfaction in the role and responsibility of mentoring as he or she transmits knowledge and skills.[11]

"Having previously achieved capacity to form healthy friendships, the person now broadens the investment of his sense of self with friends to include concern for a group or society."

A seminarian who demonstrates a capacity for spiritual fatherhood has primary concern for the welfare and enrichment of others. He is free of the need to be at the center of attention and is not afraid of self-sacrifice. A seminarian with the potential for spiritual fatherhood has a disposition to minister to the needs of others rather than be admired and affirmed for the work he accomplishes. Personal enrichment results from his service.

Questions to assess a seminarian's disposition for spiritual fatherhood:

- Does he exhibit a disposition for service?
- Is he enriched by his service?
- Is he willing to invest in personal commitment and dedication?
- Is he striving to be free from the need to be the center of attention?
- Is he striving for conversion from attitudes contrary to pastoral charity?
- Does he exhibit the capacity to mentor?

A seminarian who lacks a disposition for spiritual fatherhood is inclined toward self-focus. He seeks self-aggrandizement, undue affirmation, and relationships that provide him with status or human respect. He also lacks generosity. In short, a seminarian who does not demonstrate markers of spiritual fatherhood lacks the capacity to be self-sacrificing and altruistic.

Questions to assess a seminarian's lack of disposition for spiritual fatherhood:

- Is he self-focused?
- Does he prefer "privileged" work or need to be "successful" in ministry?
- Is he threatened when he shares his expertise?
- Does he seek others for what they can do for him regarding work, status, or human respect?
- Is he insensitive to what is going on around him?
- Does he lack a capacity to be self-sacrificing and altruistic?

Contribution of Psychological Services to Vocational Formation

Upon assessment, bishops, vocation directors, and seminary formators may discern a lack of maturational development in a seminarian. These patterns, if entrenched, pose significant obstacles to healthy relationships and effective ordained ministry. In these cases, the use of psychological services can be a useful guide for the seminarian in his vocational discernment.

> [R]ecourse to experts in the psychological sciences can be useful. It can allow a more sure evaluation of the seminarian's psychic state… an opinion regarding the diagnosis of-and, perhaps, therapy for-psychic disturbances. Moreover, by suggesting ways for favoring a vocational response that is freer, they can help support the development of human (especially relational) qualities, which are required for the exercise of the ministry.[12]

Assessing if the seminarian is aware of his areas of affective immaturity is important. A seminarian who exhibits significant deficits in markers of human maturation will benefit from further evaluation. What is the seminarian's willingness to address areas of woundedness that have contributed to his maturational deficits? Can these weaknesses be addressed through dialogue with the formator? Is this seminarian's psychological woundedness hindering his capacity to engage in priestly formation? What is an acceptable amount of time for the seminarian to engage in psychotherapy? What is the benefit of interrupting the seminarian's formation process to allow for therapy outside the seminary? What criteria will determine the seminarian's suitability for priestly ministry after a course of psychotherapy?

The seminarian's willingness to offer consent to share the results of the psychological consultation with his formators is necessary to ensure the bishop's confidence in the seminarian's suitability for ordained priestly ministry. At the same time, the psychological consultation can only proceed with the seminarian's previous explicit, informed, and free consent.[13] If the seminarian refuses to give consent for psychological evaluation, the formators are not to force the seminarian's will in any way. "Instead, they will prudently proceed in the work of discernment with the knowledge they already have, bearing in mind canon 1052.1.[14]

Conclusion

The decision to accept and form a man for the priesthood is a complex responsibility. Guiding seminarians in their process of affective maturation and developing their intellect and will so they can participate in Jesus' mission requires faith-filled human formation. The *Program of Priestly Formation* states:

> The Church continues to place the highest value on the work of priestly formation.… Our apostolic origins, which bind us in communion with the Lord and his mission, motivate those who engage in the ministry of priestly formation, underscore the urgency of their task, and remind them of their great responsibility.[15]

The challenge, then, rests with bishops, vocation directors, and seminary formators. They have the responsibility to share information, model behavior, and call seminarians to accountability.[16]

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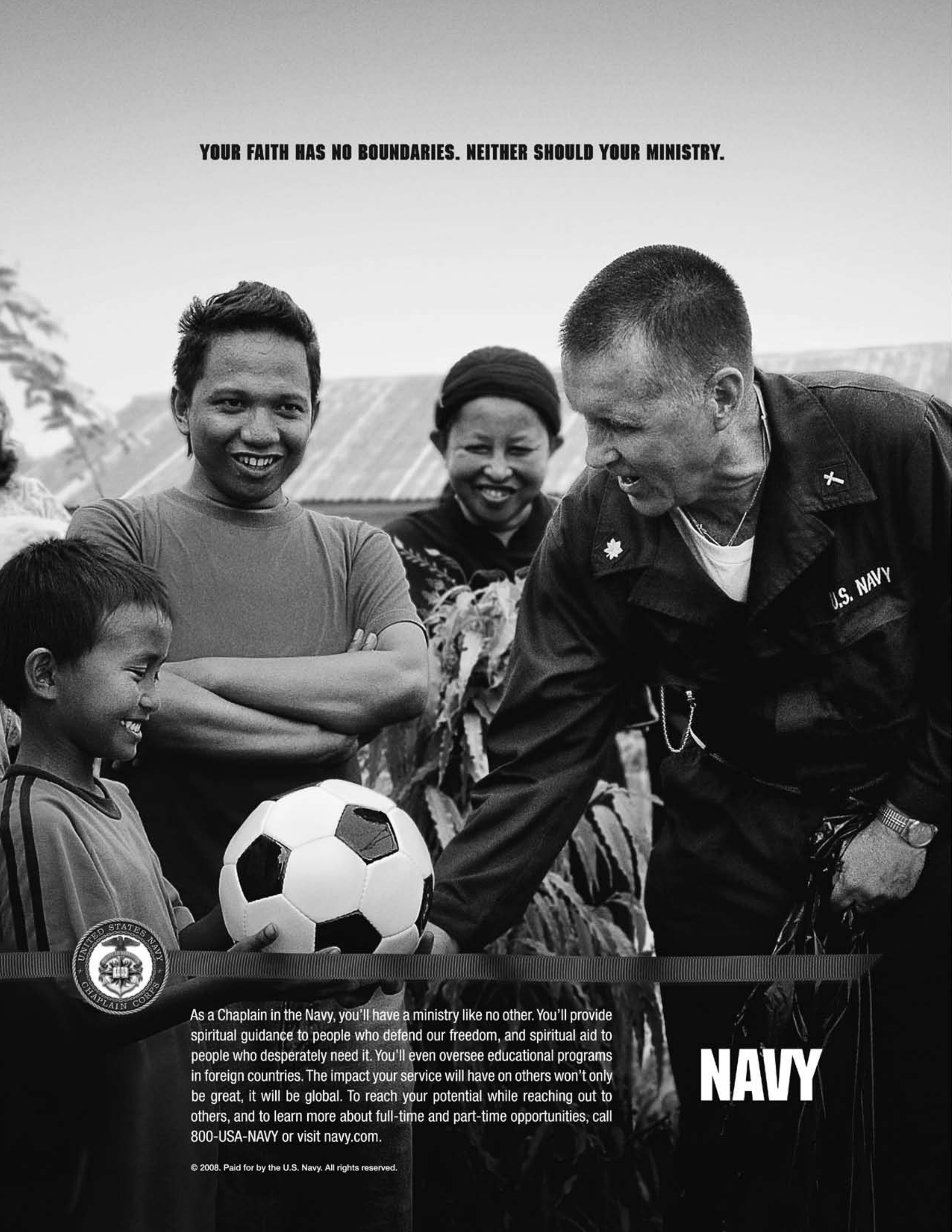
Endnotes

1. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the Use of Psychology in the Admission and Formation of Seminarians for the Priesthood,* June, 2008, #2.
2. Ibid., #2.
3. Ibid,. #4.
4. Ibid., #15.
5. Benjamin James Sadock, M.D. and Virginia Alcott Sadock, M.D., *Kaplan and Sadock's Synopsis of Psychiatry*, ninth edition (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2003), 201.
6. Ibid., p. 201.
7. Ibid., p. 201.
8. Ibid., p. 214.
9. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the Use of Psychology,* #2.
10. Sadock and Sadock, p. 201.
11. Ibid., p. 214.
12. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the Use of Psychology*, #5.
13. Ibid., #12.
14. Ibid., #12.
15. Committee on Priestly Formation of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Program of Priestly Formation*, fifth edition (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006), #9.
16. Sacred Heart Mercy Health Care Center sponsored a seminar titled *The Priest: Man of Communion* for bishops, seminary formators and diocesan vocation directors in 2006 and 2007, at which an earlier draft of this paper was presented. I am grateful for suggested revisions to this article from the following persons: Sister Mary Prudence Allen, RSM, Ph.D.; Rev. Kevin Huber, D.Min.; Sister Joseph Marie Ruessmann, RSM, J.C.D.; Sister Mary Judith O'Brien, RSM, J.C.D.; Very Rev. Msgr. Thomas Casserta, D.Min.; and Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted, D.D.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English Skills for Informal Communication and Academic Fluency

Kathryn J. Akiyama-Kim

Increasing numbers of international seminarians arrive at U.S. seminaries expecting to complete their degrees in a timely fashion so they can serve in U.S. parishes or return to their communities abroad as quickly as possible. Although many possess sufficient English skills for informal communication, most lack academic English fluency—the ability to contribute effectively in classroom discussions, to write coherent, thoughtful philosophical or theological papers, to give intelligible oral presentations and homilies, to critique, to analyze, to synthesize, to debate. Most of the underprepared will land in English programs intended to provide opportunities to gain academic English skills.

Some are eager to acquire higher levels of English, yet others attempt to escape from the work this entails. Regardless of motivation, all will confront the inescapable fact that English forms the bedrock necessary for any intellectual, human, spiritual, and pastoral training of any consequence in U.S. seminaries. Without academic English fluency, international seminarians cut themselves off from all of the myriad chances to prepare for the teaching, preaching, and spreading of the Word of God at the seminary, and after ordination they may twirl in ethnic eddies, incapable of providing significant insight, leadership, and direction to U.S. parishes.

The challenge in creating academic English programs for seminarians is partly due to the variables represented by background, age of onset of English language, native language, and identity.

Background

Some seminarians are professionals—doctors, lawyers, businessmen; some have studied at seminaries in their own country, others have university degrees, and some have experience in religious communities. Although all may not have acquired a great deal of academic English, many have attained sophisticated levels of knowledge and expression in their own countries. Since these seminarians already have acquired the language, thinking, and behavior necessary to function at higher intellectual levels, they can more easily bridge their knowledge to the acquisition of academic English. These seminarians usually are more motivated to improve their English because they know the "lay of the land," so to speak, which lends an urgency to their goal of attaining the academic English skills necessary to complete their degree programs.

Others have double duty. These are the seminarians who were educated to only the middle or high school levels in their own countries, who were shuffled back and forth between countries, leaving gaps in education, or who were sheltered from linguistic and intellectual development in both their native and the English languages while living in ethnic enclaves in English-speaking countries. After exiting English programs, they must continue to acquire academic English while attempting increasingly complex intellectual tasks—no small assignment, especially when maneuvering within the packed seminary schedule. These students require much more support from faculty, tutors, and academic support services throughout the degree program.

Age Matters

Age at onset of English language training matters. Those lucky enough to begin English study with competent native English-speaking professionals between the ages of 0-8 in an English-speaking country with full integration of family, social, community, and aca-

> **"While the other language skills, such as listening, reading and writing, can be improved dramatically, pronunciation skill development requires inordinate amounts of time, dedication, and commitment."**

demic networks in the English language will have native English pronunciation. Unfortunately, most English language learners exposed to native English phonemic systems *after* the onset of puberty will have an indelible accent, especially for those who arrive in an English speaking country after the age of 17.[1] While the other language skills, such as listening, reading and writing, can be improved dramatically, pronunciation skill development requires inordinate amounts of time, dedication, and commitment.

Most international seminarians initially, and for some a considerable length of time, studied English with non-native speakers of English. Thus, most of them arrive at the seminary with some degree of accent.

Native Language

Not all students with English language needs are created equally, even if they were all to arrive in the U.S. at the age of 17 with the same level of previous English language training, academic experience in their native languages, motivation, intelligence quotient, psychological factors, and the same support systems. One's native language determines the ease or difficulty of English language acquisition based on the similarity or disparity of the features of the language (e.g., pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, writing system). Native speakers of Spanish, French, and Italian, for example, learn English much more easily than native speakers of German, Hindi, Indonesian, or Malay. Native speakers of Hebrew, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, and Vietnamese experience even greater difficulty acquiring English. Those who speak Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean have the greatest difficulty acquiring English and require the most time to reach the same level as their counterparts.[2]

Identity

The degree of openness to U.S. American culture affects the degree to which international seminarians will acquire English. Some international seminarians see themselves as missionaries from their own countries and identify little with U.S. culture and society. English acquisition is regarded as a means to the priesthood, not a means to augment one's linguistic and cultural identities. Other international seminarians regard the acquisition of English as the opportunity to become linguistically, culturally, and intellectually enriched. Some heritage speakers who feel marooned between cultures and languages move toward one language, either English or the mother language, to resolve tension in their identity. How one views oneself relative to the sociocultural elements tied to the acquisition of English determines one's commitment to this arduous process.

First Attempts

Beginning in the 1980s, Mount Angel Seminary atomized language acquisition by dividing material into reading, writing, speaking, listening, and pronunciation classes, each with separate goals and objectives disconnected from those of other ESL classes. This was a national model, backed by second-language research and pedagogical practices and applauded by those who wished to isolate the complexities of the language into manageable and attainable parts.[3]

These skills-based curricula attempted to train discrete areas of language skills, analogous to the isolated muscle training offered by the machines in a weight room. The hope was that the entire body of language ability would become fit and ready. The problem (expressed in terms of the weight training analogy) is that students didn't develop the balance skills that one learns on free weights, for example, or the application skills that one learns by playing sports, or the endurance skills that one learns from aerobic activities. As a result the skills-based curriculum, or what we could call the weight-room machine approach to language learning, presented three new challenges: 1) "hurry sickness" or lack of motivation; 2) academic unpreparedness; and 3) community isolation.

Seminarians trudged through the ESL program, straining to finish and finally emerged into the so-called "real" seminary courses. Their ESL courses presented vocabulary, writing, reading, speaking, and pronunciation using ESL texts on a wide variety of topics, but none related to what they would be doing at the seminary. The "real" courses to them treated religion, philosophy,

> **"Since they believed they were not engaged in 'authentic' study, they fulfilled assignments haphazardly, spending as little time as possible on papers, projects, and pronunciation improvement."**

literature, theology, preaching, history, and spirituality. Since they believed they were not engaged in "authentic" study, they fulfilled assignments haphazardly, spending as little time as possible on papers, projects, and pronunciation improvement.

The second challenge regarded academic unpreparedness. The stand-alone model constructed its entrance and exit criteria, curricula, texts, and pedagogy on the premise that ESL students can be coached/ trained to a particular level of language acquisition acceptable for university courses and then dropped off at the steps of the university program, with no further ESL support. Often TOEFL scores (Test of English as a Foreign Language) determined "graduates," with administrators and professors of the academy, seminary, or other institution expecting students to perform successfully thereafter. While TOEFL scores provide valuable information about a student's readiness for work in higher education, their significance erodes considerably among those who cram specifically to "pass" the TOEFL. And some ESL program graduates who honestly achieved the exit score on the TOEFL, worked hard in ESL classes, and made significant gains found themselves floundering in mainstream seminary courses. The TOEFL exit score had opened the door to the academy for them, but it did not provide the means to succeed in it.

Further complicating the problem was the social isolation they faced. ESL students were not assigned a formation or academic level based on their previous academic training or experience, but simply designated "ESL" students and given the same formation director. Since they shared no academic classes, no academic designation, and no formation level with anyone outside of the ESL program, ESL students were cut off from all other academic, formation, and social events, relationships, and interactions of the seminary. Although some ESL students strove to gain the skills they needed for academic success, many felt like prisoners serving time for their lack of English, cut off from "normal" society, held hostage by a negative assessment of their language ability rather than placed according to their potential and need for full membership in the broader seminary community.

Rationale for Revision: The English Program Today

By 1997, the non-native English speaking seminarians represented roughly 40% of the total population; many of those enrolled in the program questioned the lack of curricular integration, the formation/academic level assignments which created social isolation from other seminarians, and the lack of motivation they felt about attempting to acquire such a complex and difficult language as English. After a careful analysis, we made a number of significant changes over the years, relying on a new team of professionals to revise the mission, direction, and implementation of a rapidly evolving program. Since revisions began, the non-native English-speaking population also has risen, and now encompasses candidates for the priesthood from American Samoa, Argentina, Columbia, El Salvador, Hungary, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Philippines, Western Samoa, South Korea, and Tanzania, and Vietnam. While the seminary has seen a dramatic influx of international students, its population of ethnic racial American seminarians has increased as well. Sixty four percent of MAS seminarians represent international and ethnic racial U.S. American students.

> **"International priests will need to meet the demands of parish ministry by effectively teaching, preaching, and spreading the Word of God, mandates clearly outlined in the Program for Priestly Formation."**

With the globalization of its student body, MAS has responded by comprehensively integrating the two-year English Communications Program (ECP) into undergraduate and graduate programs of study with particular emphasis on courses and training to improve pronunciation/speaking and academic reading/writing skills. International priests will need to meet the demands of parish ministry by effectively teaching, preaching, and spreading the Word of God, mandates clearly outlined in the Program for Priestly Formation.

Link Program: First Year College Classes

At the undergraduate level, language and content courses are linked to English acquisition courses in an attempt to accelerate a more comprehensive, holistic acquisition of academic English. Seminarians acquiring English enroll in two courses at once: the content course (such as Logic, Reading Literature, or Philosophical Anthropology) and its Link course. The Link courses are not tutorials but build the reading, writing, critical thinking, listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills to succeed in the academic coursework. In some cases, college and English program professors teach in each other's courses, offering students the benefits of two professors' areas of expertise instead of one.[4]

At the graduate level we created a theologically linked writing course to respond to the needs of graduate non-native speakers of English. This course can be repeated as the theologian faces academic assignments of increasing difficulty.[5]

Literature Component

Literature courses are offered to intermediate-level students to prepare them to explicate biblical writing but also to provide rich sources of language, culture, and story. The study of literature offers numerable opportunities to link the development of writing, reading, speaking, listening, and pronunciation skills with the exploration of classic literary texts.

Speech and Pronunciation

While some international seminarians may resist the mandate for improved writing skills, pointing to the advantage of using behind-the-scenes tutors for repair work, poor speaking and pronunciation skills cannot be masked. Every insufficiency in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary is revealed the minute a seminarian opens his mouth.

The English program offers speaking and pronunciation training through classes, tutors, and individualized cutting-edge training in phonetics, accent reduction, and computer-assisted pronunciation training steered by individualized pronunciation plans. Through the International Phonetic Alphabet, students are trained to recognize and produce the English sound system and sound patterns. Both college and school of theology professors work closely with the pronunciation professor and pronunciation tutors to coordinate and enhance pronunciation training.[6] Pronunciation courses carry credit as electives.

Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

Students who require training in English language skills are given individualized learning plans (IEP) to help them meet seminary English language standards in speaking, pronunciation, and writing. Information folded into the initial plan is pulled from test scores, application items, interviews, and admissions board meetings. Although the IEPs outline the specific process by which students can meet seminary English standards, students themselves are responsible for meeting the standards through their own hard work, motivation, and initiation.

English Program Reports

Each semester, bishops, vocation directors, academic advisors, and students receive detailed feedback in three critical skill areas: pronunciation, speaking, and writing. Data for these reports are provided by faculty currently teaching English-needs seminarians. Additionally, field education supervisors who oversee English program students in ministry offer feedback in critical areas of speaking and pronunciation.

Formation and Academic Level Assignments

Each international seminarian in the English program is assigned to the formation and academic level at the time of admission. Thus, English program seminarians are expected to participate in all formation and academic activities, meetings, and events pertaining to their particular levels. This change alone has improved cohesion within levels as well as better morale among those studying English.

Academic Services

To support seminary standards in speaking, pronunciation, and writing, the English language program draws on a number of other programs. At present, under the direction of English language faculty, the services of the Writing Center, the Academic Skills services, the Pronunciation Center, the English Conversation Partners Program,[78] and the Active Listening Project and Library serve both native and non-native English speakers.[9]

Testing Requirements

The seminary has dramatically revised its testing requirements. Currently, we require English language testing information from two instruments: the TOEFL iBT and the OPI. The TOEFL iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet Based Test) is a new version of the paper- and computer-based TOEFL and offers improved assessment of a candidate's ability to communicate in an academic setting in four integrated areas: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The TOEFL iBT is believed to be the best instrument of assessment regarding a candidate's capabilities in the academic setting.[10]

Admission into Mount Angel Seminary with English language curriculum requirement is earned with a TOEFL iBT score of 47. Direct admission into the undergraduate and graduate programs with or without English communications course recommendations is earned with a TOEFL iBT score of 71.

The OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) is a face-to-face or telephonic conversation with a trained interviewer that measures a person's verbal fluency across four categories of criteria: functions/tasks, contexts/content, accuracy, and text type. An individual's score is determined by measuring performance according to the criteria set for the nine proficiency levels determined by ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) as described in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking.[11] The OPI provides information on speaking aptitude as well as pronunciation ability.

> **"Research and experience show that seminarians who are non-native speakers of English require a long-term commitment to improving their English language skills."**

Discussion

Research and experience show that seminarians who are non-native speakers of English require a long-term commitment to improving their English language skills. As academic content becomes more challenging, from English courses to first-year college courses to up-per-division philosophy, literature, and religious studies courses to graduate-school courses in theology, Scripture, preaching, and ministry, linguistic demands rise dramatically. Students must be ready and willing to write papers of increasing difficulty, decipher texts which gain complexity, deliver talks and homilies that become more thought-provoking, and minister to increasingly diverse and varied populations.

Just as seminarians should dedicate themselves to long-term English study, so should all seminary faculty commit to augmenting the work of English language teachers through increased integration of skill development with content training. Seminary language programs must be integrated with other programs (intellectual, human, spiritual, and pastoral formation) so students can draw on the skills, aptitudes, and approaches necessary to teach, preach, and spread the Word of God upon ordination.

While Mount Angel Seminary does an excellent job providing explicit instruction to non-native English-speaking seminarians through its English Communications Program and instruction and support beyond the years spent in the English Communications Program through the collaboration of all faculty and administration, some challenges remain.

One: The shortage of priests presses some bishops to move seminarians through training programs as quickly as possible, and some non-native English-speaking seminarians want to rush through the English Communications program and subsequent studies. It is very important to educate both students and their superiors about the difference between survival oral skills and academic language proficiency, the commitment needed for overall English acquisition, and the broad language needs seminarians have for both academic success and future parish work. Wise bishops realize that short cuts don't help and that their international candidates will need not only adequate time during their college and seminary days, but also additional summer training.

Two: A second challenge is plagiarism. Although all seminarians are versed in the importance of academic integrity, some international seminarians choose plagiarism as a coping strategy. Anecdotal experience suggests that a disproportionate number of plagiarists are non-native speakers. Whether they are in too much of a hurry to take the time to improve their writing skills or they don't take seriously the implications of their infraction, these plagiarizers ruin honest chances to become fully literate and articulate in the English language. To remind students of the importance of completing work on one's own efforts, the seminary has adopted strengthened guidelines for addressing plagiarism.

"Far less time remains available solely for language study, which is not an optimal language acquisition environment for the beginning ESL student."

Three: Another challenge regards the breadth of the English Communications Program. Over the years, MAS has been asked to establish a beginning ESL level. Although the seminary has seriously considered offering such, it has always returned to the same conclusion: Beginning ESL students are better served in general academic ESL programs where they gain all-round skills in English communication and cultural fluency, meet people at their same elementary level, and benefit from all the cultural experiences a general program can offer. They also enjoy more time devoted to language training—time for more classes; time for homework; time for fieldtrips, home stays, cultural events; time to meet with tutors and other assistants; time to meet with instructors during office hours and at special ESL program events and activities; time to become acculturated to the U.S. American lifestyle. Once in the seminary, students are expected to participate in all aspects of seminary life, in addition to the language courses and assignments. Far less time remains available solely for language study, which is not an optimal language acquisition environment for the beginning ESL student.

Four: A final challenge regards that which lies beyond the required language training for all English language needs-assessed students. Mount Angel Seminary strives to form interculturally fluent seminarians to prepare them for the globalization occurring in parish communities across the United States. Ministry in a Multicultural Church, a required course for all undergraduate, pre-theology, and theology students, and Intercultural Communication are examples of the culture offerings at Mount Angel Seminary.

International priests are expected to communicate intelligibly in their mother tongue. Those highly educated in their home countries are better prepared than those with limited education in their native language as well as U.S. born heritage speakers. Additional instruction in their mother tongue may be necessary for them to develop the solid bilingualism they need for credible leadership. This is an additional burden that must be juggled in their studies.

Mount Angel Seminary has a strong English communications program to support the growing number of non-native English-speaking students. Its strength lies in the impressive collaborative efforts among all who participate in the intellectual, human, pastoral, and spiritual formation programs represented through both the college and the school of theology: one of the fine examples of the seminary's vision of communion ecclesiology at work. We recognize that ongoing and broad-based teamwork is essential to invite our non-native English-speaking seminarians to realize their full potential in answer to their calling to the priesthood.

Kathryn J. Akiyama-Kim is associate professor and director of the English Communications Program at Mt. Angel Abbey and Seminary, St. Benedict, Oregon.

Endnotes

1. See Elissa Newport's "Maturational constraints on language learning" in *Cognitive Science* 14: 11-28, 1990 as noted in Steven Pinker's *The Language Instinct* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994), 291.
2. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Source: Liskin-Gasparro, Judith E. "How Long Does it Take?" ETS Oral Proficiency Testing Manual. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1982.
3. H.D. Adamson (*ESL Students' Use of Academic Skills in Content Courses*. English for Specific Purposes, Vol. 9: 67-87: 1990. Pergamon Press) notes how findings in the 1960s such as the Coleman report (Coleman, J.S., Campbell, E.Q., Hobson, C.J., McPartlang, J., Mood, A.M., Winfield, F.D., & York, R.L. *Equality of educational opportunity*. Washington, D.C.: Department of Healthy, Education and Welfare, Office of Education. 1966) demonstrated that ESL students did not fare well in regular, mainstream courses of school curricula. In my opinion, these kinds of studies influenced ESL educators to develop the "stand-alone" ESL programs that populated the country in the latter half of the twentieth century, and which continue to be upheld by some. The stand-alone ESL programs were attempts to improve the "sink or swim" philosophy set forth for many non-native speakers of English attempting to succeed at U.S. academic institutions of higher learning. Immersion was considered the best strategy among many educational administrators, with serious consequences for ESL learners of that period. Some learned to swim, but many sank or in their floundering, promoted the fossilization of certain aspects of English language acquisition, such as pronunciation, writing, or vocabulary.
4. Professor Frank Engel piloted the first College Link course with philosophy professor Mark Woolman. Over many years, this team built a wonderfully collaborative partnership, teaching in each other's classes, sharing research, and inviting student participation in the process. Professor Engel has contributed in many other ways to the College Link program, including research, faculty training, and additional course development: Reading Literature (with Dr. Creighton Lindsay, Literature) and Philosophical Anthropology (with Dr. Jeffery Nicolas, Philosophy).
5. Dr. Katherine Kirsch, dean of the Undergraduate Program, has currently taken on the challenge of designing and implementing this important course.
6. Professor Edward Zawaski's work on the Pronunciation Program, the Speech Link course, and the Active Listening Project and Library has ensured that seminarians have multidimensional services to improve their oral and aural skills.
7. Our Conversation Partner Program was created to give students an informal arena to practice pronunciation and speaking skills through regular conversation. Volunteers are drawn from staff, faculty and seminarians. The feedback from many of these volunteers indicates a true sense of ministry in helping our students reach their pronunciation goals. While still in its infancy, this program is very popular.
8. Through her work on the Conversation Partners Program and the Pronunciation Program in general, with tutors, tutor training, and curricular consultation, Mares Hartung contributed greatly to the refinement of this area of the English Program offerings.
9. Please see the 2007-2009 Mount Angel Seminary catalog online at http://www.mountangelabbey.org/seminary/catalog.html.
10. The TOEFL iBT can be taken at any of a number of test sites in the U.S. and all over the world. Information and registration updates can be found at www.ets.org/toefl.
11. For a complete description of the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking*, visit the ACTFL site at http://www.actfl.org.

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Ongoing Formation in Moral Theology: Saint Alphonsus Liguori and the Priests of Today

Rev. Earl K. Fernandes, S.T.D.

A bishop is overheard saying: "If you want to know when a priest stopped reading, just look at his book shelves." A pastor mentions, "I would love to have gone to that lecture, but there's just no time." A priest, pondering a sabbatical, says, "I would love to go on sabbatical, but I can't take the time away from the parish." The first-time pastor relates, "I'm so overwhelmed. I'm trying to get my legs under me. How can they expect me to show up at one of these junior clergy sessions?" The recently ordained complains, "I just had five years of seminary. I don't need any more. I want to celebrate the sacraments and be with the people. These ongoing formation sessions are just a big waste of time."

A common denominator in these comments is that ongoing formation is undervalued. Of course, the undervaluing of continuing education contradicts an ecclesial imperative present in the recommendations of the Council of Trent, Vatican II, and the popes since Vatican II.[1] Father James Rafferty contends that a disposition "that fortifies a priest's fidelity to the grace of ordination is a commitment to ongoing formation. The disposition interiorized through self-motivated, lifelong formation is the attitude of the pilgrim on the journey to the heavenly kingdom. The pilgrim rests but does not lose sight of the overall destination."[2]

It is not that priests do not place any value on ongoing formation. Many believe that given time constraints and workload in an age of fewer priests, ongoing formation is low priority. Nevertheless, ongoing formation, especially in the area of moral theology, remains essential to the celebration of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation and to giving pastoral guidance to parishioners in need. Saying "I didn't have time to brush up on my moral theology" does not help the parishioner in front of you.

> **"Saying 'I didn't have time to brush up on my moral theology' does not help the parishioner in front of you."**

In this article, I hope to demonstrate the urgent need for ongoing formation in the area of moral theology, especially as directed toward the confessional. First, the article will present case scenarios that will help the reader to think about the practical value of ongoing formation. After considering concrete cases, the article will highlight the value of ongoing formation by examining the models of the confessor proposed by Saint Alphonsus Maria de Liguori.

The Case for Ongoing Formation: Specific Examples

Some concrete examples demonstrate the urgent need for ongoing formation.

Case 1:

A woman walks into the confessional and says that she is very pro-life. She cannot stand abortion. There is a fertility clinic in town that was going to "dispose of frozen embryos." She decided to "adopt" these embryos and have them implanted, so at least they would not be destroyed or experimented upon. She says, "The babies are growing fine, Father, but I started to wonder if I did the right thing. The church teaches that the means used are sinful. Did I sin because the process wasn't natural?

Father, don't the ends justify the means in this case? I mean, isn't a lesser evil to choose this route than to have them destroyed? Did I sin, Father?"

Case 2:

A couple comes to your parish. They are Catholics and have two children. Their marriage is in trouble. In fact, they have filed for divorce. Early in their marriage, they were having trouble conceiving, so they attempted *in vitro* fertilization. Now that they are splitting up, they ask: "What should be done with the frozen embryos? Who gets them?"

Case 3:

A man comes to you for confession. He admits that in his youth, he was promiscuous. Finally, he settled down with a young Catholic woman. He and his wife have three children together. He is 30 years old. He describes his marriage as good. Breaking into tears, he says: "Father, I hate to admit it, but when I was on a business trip, I visited a prostitute. I don't know how I got myself into that situation. How could I do that to my wife and kids? Father, after I got back, I went to see my doctor. My HIV test turned up positive. What do I tell my wife? Do I have to tell her? Could I use a condom so I don't infect her?"

Case 4:

A woman comes to the office to see you. If priests had favorite parishioners, she and her husband would be near the top of your list. They come to Mass every day, teach in your RCIA, have degrees from a Catholic college, and have two small children who are polite and well behaved. The wife begins, "Father, thanks for meeting with me." Then she breaks down in tears. "Father, we're in trouble in our marriage. We try to do what the church asks of us. We practice NFP, but when they say we should 'cuddle,' sometimes it's just hard to stop there. It's causing problems, Father. I'm so tense. I have lost all desire for sex, but my husband still wants sex. Sometimes I feel like I'm being used as a thing. Father, you probably don't know this, but the past two years, I had two miscarriages. I just can't get pregnant again, but I don't want to go on the pill and my husband doesn't want to use a condom. Father, can you help me?"

As a priest-confessor, do you know the principles involved in solving these cases? Are you familiar with recent theological opinion in medical-moral theology? Concretely, a person or a couple is in front of you, looking for a word of advice, comfort, consolation, and direction. What will you say? Perhaps, a recently ordained priest has tackled some of these bioethical issues, but the more distantly ordained might never have faced these questions. Would you be in your office saying, "If only I had read that two page issue of *Ethics and Medics*!!!"?

> **"Technological and biomedical advances are outpacing our ethical reflection upon many pressing issues."**

Technological and biomedical advances are outpacing our ethical reflection upon many pressing issues. The principles learned in moral theology in seminary may be just as valid today as they were 5, 10, 40, or 50 years ago; however, the application of those principles to ever-more technical matters is becoming increasingly difficult. While our ethical reflection may not keep pace with technological advancement, this does not dispense the priest from giving *some* ethical reflection to such issues, even if the most difficult cases are referred to moral theologians. In many professions—law, medicine, nursing, education—it is expected that those in the particular field will participate in continuing education programs and acquire continuing education credits. There are consequences for those who do not (such as loss of licensure, demotion, reduction in pay) and rewards for those who meet the standards. These are standards of the "professional" community.

There are also standards for the Catholic community. Being theologically well educated is important from a professional point of view, but it is also important from the vocational point of view. It is precisely because of the priest's identity that he should be held to an even higher standard than other professions, for he represents Christ the Head of the Body.[3] In

Pastores Dabo Vobis, John Paul II describes a vocation as a "gift whose purpose is to build up the Church and to increase the kingdom of God in the world."[4] The priest who is well-educated and well-formed in moral theology is positioned to assist families and penitents in their situation, which often appears to be a minefield. The manner in which the priest assists the family will reflect on his priesthood and on the church and will affect the lives of his flock. The *Program for Priestly Formation* reminds formators, priests, and seminarians:

> The process and the journey of the ongoing formation of priests is both necessary and lifelong. Its purpose is not only the spiritual growth of the priest himself but also the continued growth of his mission and ministry.[5]

Preparation for priestly ministry, especially for the sacrament of reconciliation, requires not only prayer and virtue, but also intellectual formation, which has a reciprocal relationship with spiritual formation.[6] "Am I prepared?"

"The resolution of cases or correct moral principles *alone* will not meet the needs of a parishioner who longs to hear the compassionate word or who needs to know that his or her priest can empathize."

"Am I prepared?" also should be considered from the point of view of human and pastoral formation. The resolution of cases or correct moral principles *alone* will not meet the needs of a parishioner who longs to hear the compassionate word or who needs to know that his or her priest can empathize. The priest exercises his ministry to help someone continue his walk with God. Consider the parable of the Good Samaritan. Does Jesus tell the parable to teach his disciples how to resolve cases (Intellectual Formation) or to teach his disciples to act with compassion (Integrated Formation)? Formation in ministry is a larger concept than mere intellectual formation. "Am I prepared?" is a question that requires an "Integrated" answer.

The Case for Ongoing Formation: Saint Alphonsus and the Models of the Confessor

The value of proper preparation for the exercise of the priestly office, especially in the confessional, is highlighted throughout the Catholic tradition. An overlooked doctor of the church who wrote about the necessity of ongoing formation is Saint Alphonsus Maria de Liguori (1696-1787), patron of confessors and moralists.

The moral theology and confessional practice of Alphonsus must be placed within a historical context. During the 6th session of the Council of Trent (January 12, 1547), the Council Fathers affirmed the existence of the sacrament of penance and distinguished it from baptism. In the 14th session (November 25, 1551), the Fathers defined the essence of the sacrament; determined its form and quasi-matter, the acts of the penitent (contrition, satisfaction, and confession of sins). They required formal integrity of the confession of all mortal sins that could be recalled after a thorough and diligent examination[7] and reiterated the precept of annual confession that had been imposed by Lateran IV (1215).

To carry out their global program of reform for the church, the Fathers knew that worthy and competent clerics were needed; therefore, a great concern of the Council was the formation of priests. With this in mind, the decree on the erection of seminaries occupies a place of prominence. One of its principal goals in dealing with the theological formation of future priests is "the administration of the sacraments, above all (*maxime*), that which seems opportune for the hearing of confessions."[8]

The Council mandated that seminaries offer a course of study in which practical questions were of principal importance. The study of moral theology was exclusively ordained toward preparing priests to hear confessions fruitfully. The practical and utilitarian character, almost "professional," was imprinted on the teaching of moral theology. Little by little, teachers and moralists developed manuals to teach cases of conscience.

These manuals were limited in scope to the practical resolution of cases of consciences to help the priest to determine whether a mortal sin had been committed and to make determinations in the exercise of the priest's judicial office whether a sin was mortal, whether sufficient sorrow was present, whether absolution should be given, and what a suitable penance might be. Unfortunately, these manuals neglected key subjects such as the beatific vision and the central role of the virtues in the moral life. They tended to be concerned more with law than with character and growth in holiness. Morality was seen as a matter of fulfilling the law rather than living a fruitful life.

The manuals remained the main way of teaching moral theology in the 18th century when Alphonsus exercised his pastoral ministry. In the changing world of his day, he invested a lot of intellectual energy into the preparation of instruments that might help the confessor in the ministry of reconciliation.[9] Alphonsus knew very well that the manuals of the previous eras were insufficient instruments for priests as spiritual guides for their people. The world was changing and priests with faculties for confessions needed to adapt to these changes.

His moral theology is the fruit of his mature thought. When he wrote his *Theologia Moralis*, he was more than 50 years old and had been ordained for 20 years, having previously worked in the "world," hearing legal cases of people from all walks of life. He viewed his writing and intellectual activity as an extension of his pastoral activity. In his works, there is always a reference to experience and to concrete situations and actual conditions; he weaves together pastoral and theological concerns. In 1748, Alphonsus published his first version of the *Theologia Moralis*, which was really a commentary on Bussenbaum's manual of moral theology. In 1755, he published a second edition, which was his own thought. There would be seven further revisions of his *Theologia Moralis* in his lifetime. In the second edition of his *Theologia Moralis*, Alphonsus inserted his *Praxis Confessarii*.[10] In this work, he describes the confessor as having four offices: father, physician, teacher, and judge.[11] Each office shows the need for ongoing formation.

Alphonsus presents the priest as *father*.[12] Alphonsus' experience hearing confessions as a young priest led him to move away from the rigorism he had learned from François Genet's manual of moral theology to a more moderate and merciful position. In this sense, his ongoing formation occurred through his pastoral ministry. He writes that to be a credible father, the priest must strive to show charity, must be a person of prayer and virtue, and must be patient. These are the characteristics of a good father. The priest is a father who welcomes the repentant son in Luke 15. The confessor as father should not immediately send the unprepared penitent away or try to frighten him; rather, he must encourage him through his words to true sorrow.

Just as parents must listen to their children, so also the priest-father should listen to the penitent. Too often confessors want to talk but do not listen. Listening helps to discern the work of the Spirit and helps the penitent to discern it too. To listen is a gesture of poverty; it is to look at the issue from the point of view of the "other."

The priest is a *physician*.[13] When a physician conducts an examination, the patient's medical history is critical. Attentive listening and dialogue are essential to discovering the root of the illness, whether physical or spiritual. The physician or priest acknowledges that there is a sick person in need of medical or spiritual attention. Sin is an illness that needs a cure—the *saving truth*. It is not enough to say the truth; one must articulate this saving truth in a way that pierces to the heart and is clear to the penitent, so that the patient may take the spiritual medicine. This highlights the need for ongoing formation in speech, rhetoric, and persuasion.

It is also useful to think of the standards set for physicians today. Keeping current with the latest medical literature and techniques is required of the doctor and expected by the patient. Which of us would make an appointment to see a physician who had done no further study since medical school? The priest-physician must have a regular *aggiornamento* or he might be guilty of spiritual malpractice.

The priest is a *teacher*.[14] He must be learned, not only in theology, but also in other disciplines such as law. If the priest is ignorant, he cannot teach a saving truth. He needs more than knowledge of principles; he has to address the concrete situations of daily life. In his *Dignity and Duties of the Priest*, Alphonsus explains why ongoing formation in moral theology is necessary:

> The science of Moral Theology requires knowledge of many other sciences, and embraces an immense variety of matter. It is also most difficult, because different decisions must be given, according to the different circumstances of the cases that occur; for, a principle by which a case involving a certain circumstance may be decided will not answer for the solution of another case containing different circumstances.
>
> Some disdain to read the works of the moralists, saying that to hear confessions is enough to know the general principles of Moral Theology, by which, they add, the particular cases may be resolved. I answer: It is certain that all cases must be decided by means of certain principles, but there is great difficulty in applying to particular cases just principles of solution. This the moralists have done. They have labored to explain the principles by which many particular cases may be resolved. Besides, at present there are a great number of positive laws contained in the bulls and decrees of Pontiffs, as well as in the ancient canons, and which a confessor is obliged to know. Of these laws he who neglects to read Moral Theology shall scarcely be able to acquire competent knowledge.[15]

While he does not deny that one needs "less knowledge to hear the confessions of a simple person than of a curialist, shopkeeper, ecclesiastic and similar types of people; and less knowledge to hear confessions in a village than in a city," this does not exempt the confessor from proper preparation. Alphonsus holds as indispensable that the confessor know how far his jurisdiction extends; how to distinguish venial sins from mortal sins, at least those of common occurrence and which questions to ask; the circumstances of the sins, at least those that change the species; what constitutes the proximate occasion of sin; what induces the obligation of restitution; what kind of sorrow and resolve are necessary; and finally which remedy should be given in order to help the penitent out of his sinful habit.[16]

Continual study also helps the confessor (and his penitents) to avoid errors in practical living. Alphonsus warns that "any confessor who dares to hear confession without sufficient knowledge is certainly in a state of damnation. God Himself condemns him: *Since you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you from my priesthood (Hosea 4, 6)*."[17] Moreover, even if the confessor has studied something once, moral theology requires constant review and study. He writes:

> The facets of this science are so many and so varied that even if he has studied much, he will easily forget them after a period of time because some things that he should know will happen so seldom. For this reason, he should review his moral theology over and over.[18]

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Finally, the priest is *judge*.[19] Interestingly, Alphonsus lists this last, though as a former lawyer, he would have been well suited to emphasize the judicial office. The Council of Trent refers to the priest as judge.[20] Alphonsus acknowledges the confessor as judge but cautions that "just as the judge is bound to hear the reasons of the parties and to examine the merits of the case and finally to give sentence, so the confessor must first inform himself of the conscience of the penitent; he must examine his dispositions, and finally give or deny absolution."[21] To make an informed judgment, the priest must be committed to studying moral theology, coming to a greater knowledge of the human condition and the conscience of the penitent. This does not happen simply in virtue of ordination; rather, it happens through study and praxis of the moral life and the sacrament. In making a judgment about the morality of an act, the confessor must consider the object of the act, the intention, and the circumstances, which vary from case to case. The confessor needs to make an informed judgment under the influence of prudence to help the penitent.

In the modern day, the priest must contend with a declining number of penitents in a post-modern society. The opportunities to exercise these offices as confessor may be less frequent today than in Alphonsus' era; however, the roles of father, physician, teacher, and even judge are still applicable to priestly ministry in general and to the priest's character. Ongoing formation of priests and the roles highlighted here are necessary not only to make priests better confessors but to make them better persons.

Toward a Solution to the Case of the Necessity for Ongoing Formation

The first part of this article proposed cases to emphasize the necessity for ongoing formation. None of the cases was particularly easy to solve. The fundamental question was: Am I prepared? The second part of the article examined the fourfold office of the confessor and the need for ongoing formation according to the mind of Saint Alphonsus. In both parts, the case has been made that ongoing formation is necessary and urgent, particularly in the area of moral theology and for the practical needs of celebrating the sacrament of penance. Recognizing the urgent need yet limited time available to clergy, an attempt can be made to propose some solutions to priests, directors of continuing formation, vicars for clergy, and bishops.

Make better use of those sessions that are already required. Priests do not want more requirements in an already busy schedule. It is important to use required time wisely. Clergy gatherings, such as diocesan convocations, can be utilized for practical formation such as ongoing formation in moral theology. Some dioceses already have had convocations to educate clergy about the theology of the body. Diocesan convocations are not the only venue for making better use of "required" ongoing formation. Many dioceses require "junior clergy" to attend formation sessions; having these sessions of a pastoral and practical nature can go a long way to helping younger clergy place a higher value on ongoing formation. This would be especially true in learning about finance and administration.

Solicit the input of the parish clergy. Clergy should be asked to identify what they believe the pressing needs in pastoral situations to be or where they feel they are in need of further training. These topics should become the priorities in ongoing formation.

"Perhaps having clergy work together under the leadership of a qualified guide to solve tough cases like those offered in this article would be a useful exercise for ongoing formation in moral theology."

Use different taxonomies of learning in formation sessions. Often an ongoing formation session takes the form of an extended lecture or all-day series of lectures. Perhaps having clergy work together under the leadership of a qualified guide to solve tough cases like those offered in this article would be a useful exercise for ongoing formation in moral theology.

Have "Best Practices" or Professional Ethical Codes for Clergy…and hold the clergy accountable. Many dioceses do not have best practices or ethical codes for clergy. Having professional standards with respect to theological knowledge is essential. It is essential for many other professions. Why should the clergy be exempted? Many dioceses suggest annual ongoing formation hours and an annual retreat, but seldom are the priests held accountable. Is there any reward or incentive for those who participate in ongoing formation or any consequence for those who routinely disregard ongoing formation? Bishop Gettelfinger is right to call for a renewed theological reflection on the relationship between obedience (the bishop's requirements) and accountability.[22] One wonders if the people of God are well served by confessors or homilists that are granted faculties, who make little effort to continue their education.

Institutes for ongoing formation should become a priority. Many sabbatical programs assist priests in ongoing formation. Many priests do not take advantage of these programs. Even when sabbatical programs are utilized, they are utilized only by those who are "eligible." The priests who do not qualify or cannot make use of such programs need an alternative. Perhaps diocesan or even regional seminaries, which already have qualified faculty and facilities, could establish ongoing formation institutes that would be compatible with their structures and other programs. This would be a more viable option for clergy, particularly if the ordinary sets clear expectations.

While this list is not exhaustive, it can serve to further discussion on how to address the urgent need for ongoing formation.

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Endnotes

1. For example, John Paul II wrote of the necessity and urgency of ongoing formation in the Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* (*I Will Give You Shepherds*) (Washington, D.C: United States Catholic Conference, 1992), 72: "Ongoing formation helps the priest to overcome the temptation to reduce his ministry to an activism which becomes an end in itself, to the provision of impersonal services, even if these are spiritual or sacred, or to a business-like function which he carries out for the Church. Only ongoing formation enables the priest to *safeguard with vigilant love the 'mystery' which he bears within his heart for the good of the Church and the good of mankind*."
2. James Rafferty, "Prologue," in David Toups, *Reclaiming Our Priestly Character* (Omaha: IPF Publications, 2008), xxvi.
3. John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 72-75.
4. Ibid., 35e.
5. USCCB, *Program for Priestly Formation,* 5th ed., (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006), 368. All citations from the PPF refer to article numbers.
6. Ibid., 136.
7. Council of Trent, Session XIV, 25 November 1551, *De Sacramento Poenitentiae*, canon 7, *DS* 1707.
8. Council of Trent, Session XXIII, 14 July 1563, canon XVIII.
9. Angelo Amarante, "Pratica del confessore per ben esercitare il suo ministero," *Studia Moralia* 45 (2007): 349-350.
10. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Theologia Moralis*, 4 vols., ed. Leonardus Gaudé (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1912). The second edition of the *Theologia Moralis* included the *Praxis Confessarii*. The citations that follow refer to the version that appears in volume 4 of Gaudé, which was last reprinted in 1953. The passages which refer to the models of the confessor are all taken from chapter one; the numbers correspond to the article numbers from that chapter.
11. Ibid., c. 1, n. 2.
12. Ibid., c. 1, nn.3-5.
13. Ibid., nn. 6-16.
14. Ibid., nn. 17-18.
15. Alphonsus Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest*, vol. XII, in *The Ascetical Works,* transl. Eugene Grimm (Brooklyn: Redemptorist Fathers, 1927), 273-274.
16. Alphonsus Liguori, *Praxis Confessarii*, c. 1, n. 18.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., nn. 19-20.
20. Council of Trent, Session XIV, 25 November 1551, *De Sacramento Poenitentiae*, canons 9-11, *DS* 1709-1711. Absolution is a judicial act according to the canons. In chapter 6 of the decree, the Council of Trent uses "*ad instar actus iudicialis*" to describe the *analogous* nature of the judicial office.
21. Alphonsus Liguori, *Praxis Confessarii*, n. 19, 538.
22. Gerald A. Gettelfinger, "The Role of Bishops in Relation to Seminaries," *Seminary Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 39.

Teaching Human Resource Management to Seminarians

David B. Couturier, OFM Cap

At the time of ordination, seminarians are ready to preach, to teach, and to celebrate the sacraments. But for many of them, the pastoral administration of parishes remains a mystery. This is so, even though increasing numbers of them will become pastors within a few years, if not within a few weeks or months, of their ordination. The days of a long apprenticeship as associates under several seasoned pastors are quickly coming to an end and these newly ordained need more than time to learn the skills required of those who will lead our complex Catholic parishes.[1] Because of this, St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore has shifted its focus in pastoral formation from the training of future *associate* pastors to that of future *pastors*. The change is significant. St. Mary's now emphasizes the spiritual competencies and emotional intelligence required for priestly *leadership* and provides advanced pastoral leadership training to its seminarians, from the very start of seminary life. Before discussing the specifics of the program, a clearer understanding of the changing context of American ministry is in order.

The Changing Context

It is clear that those ordained to the priesthood in the 21st century will exercise their ministry in a changed and significantly more challenging ecclesial context. The American Catholic population continues to grow, even as the number of active and available priests continues to decline, in some places precipitously.[2] New models of parish staffing are emerging, with the twinning, clustering, and merging of parishes and with a greater number of lay ministers and foreign priests joining parish staffs. There are new professional managerial standards required in parish finances, personnel management, organizational development, and physical stewardship.[3] Pastors are charged with oversight responsibility and must provide a safe environment for all God's children. These factors will challenge the newly ordained in specific ways. They will need to work more efficiently and with greater attention to pastoral administration and collegial forms of ministry.

> **"They will need to work more efficiently and with greater attention to pastoral administration and collegial forms of ministry."**

Catholic immigration into the United States continues at a very high level. Waves of new immigrants are coming from Eastern Europe, Latin and Central America, Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, bringing with them the rich traditions, the multiple languages and the varied cultures of the world. Today's priest must be aware of the pastoral diversity in culture, spirituality, ecclesiology, and liturgical styles manifested in parishes today and know how to manage the sometimes-turbulent waters of intercultural living. He must also attend to the tragic forms of economic disparity that often hide below them, as well.[4]

The pressures on a smaller number of Catholic clergy will be significant. The widening pastoral demands of leadership and administration will need to be balanced with the requirements of pastoral care and counseling for individual members of the church. Statistics show that American Catholics are the best educated Christian denomination in the nation. This will require a form of preaching and a method of theological reflection that can nurture, nourish, and evoke a critical Catholic social consciousness in our Catholic communities, even at a time when studies show that a specifically Catholic identity is weakening. We live in a world where the demand for the protection of human rights and the tolerance for religious pluralism grow. After years of corporate and institutional scandals, society now expects even higher standards and measures of accountability, transparency, and ethical behavior in institutions that promote the common good. Priests can no longer expect an exemption from public scrutiny of their leadership. They need to understand how to become trusted public figures and witnesses of priestly integrity, in communion with their bishops and presbyterates.[5]

These changes in demographics, models of pastoral ministry, pastoral standards, cultural context, economic disparity, and pastoral diversity all signal a unique challenge and a new context for pastoral formation in the seminary. Increasingly they point to a form of pastoral ministry that is more public and communal in nature.

The Need for a New Model of Pastoral Formation

During the last 40 years, seminaries in America have relied on methods of pastoral education that highlighted the theological and ministerial skills needed by individual priests and ministers to provide care and counseling in church settings. Field education and clinical pastoral education provided opportunities for seminarians to experience a wide diversity of pastoral situations and to reflect critically on the Gospel challenges they posed for those seeking to serve in the church. This model of pastoral education offered generations of seminarians a professional method by which to understand the dynamics of human suffering in context and to respond personally and sensitively to them, from within the Christian tradition. Pastoral formation relied on critical incidents, individual development, personal insight, verbatim reports, and theological reflection as ways of promoting the care and counseling of God's people.[6] The focus was clearly on the personal development of pastoral ministers.

More recently, there has been a renewed interest in seeing and positioning the congregation as the primary context and agent of care for the people of God. Attention is being paid to the communal aspects of pastoral care and the multiple ways that ritual actions, liturgical practices, shared stories, and the experience of a corporate mission heal, sustain, reconcile, and lead the Christian community in its journey of faithful discipleship. In this way, a bridge is created between the dynamics of personal conversion and those of social transformation.[7]

The changes proposed in the redesign of pastoral formation programs are meant to highlight this turn toward the social and communal. We wanted to build a program of pastoral education that is consistent with the emerging theology of *communio* and that stresses the distinct role that the pastor plays in forming an evangelizing community of presence and witness, of proclamation and catechesis, of prayer and contemplation, of liberation-social development and inter-religious dialogue.

> **"St. Mary's Seminary made the parish the focal point of its pastoral formation."**

To do this, St. Mary's Seminary made the parish the focal point of its pastoral formation. Seminarians were expected to understand and appreciate its dynamics of prayer and prophecy and to learn by experience and theological reflection how parishes grow and how they corporately express, by their worship and service, God's care for the people and the people's care for one another.

For this reason, every course at St. Mary's Seminary and University must have a defined pastoral purpose and an expressed pastoral outcome, enumerated in the syllabus. Professors are asked to demonstrate and students will be asked to learn how theological insights and doctrinal truths illuminate the journey of God's people and meet the demands of life in the present. Seminarians will be asked to pay attention to the stories and dynamics of local communities of faith and to relate these questions, concerns, hopes, and anxieties to the work of their theological courses.[8]

Seminarians are introduced to the study of parishes from the beginning of their seminary training. Basic forms of ministerial service are followed by guided theological reflections on parish dynamics. These exercises constitute an introduction to a new skill base of pastoral diagnostics.[9] Seminarians are asked to pay close attention to the ritual actions, liturgical practices, communal bonds, and corporate mission expressed in the various parish communities to which they will be assigned. It is hoped that the experience of multiple and diverse communities of faith will encourage an appreciation for the ways that congregations/communities are the primary context and agent of care for the people of God.

Of primary concern is the realization that today's seminarian must leave the seminary prepared to lead complex communities of faith in a collegial manner. They must know how to guide, inspire, and form their staffs and be pastorally present to those in need, understanding all the while the various systems (pastoral, catechetical, educational, financial, and administrative) that make up today's modern parish.

Key Concepts of Pastoral Formation

Three key concepts shape this new program:

- The parish is the experiential forum or **learning laboratory** for pastoral formation. The seminary is the center for theological reflection and assessment of a seminarian's pastoral formation.
- The goal of pastoral formation in the seminary has to be to **train potential pastors.** The newly ordained will not have the luxury of multiple parochial assignments and exposure as an associate to various pastoral styles before assuming a pastorate themselves. Some will be assigned as pastors immediately; others will become pastors relatively soon. Therefore, the seminary must provide opportunities whereby seminarians learn the dynamics of parish life, its administrative and leadership demands, with as much exposure to the diversity and complexity of parochial life as possible.
- Because parochial ministry in today's church is a collegial endeavor, seminarians will be asked to join the parish as a **pastoral learning team**. Under the leadership of the pastor and the coordination of the deacon, seminarians will be asked to take on distinct learning roles in the parish and gather on a bimonthly basis to discuss what they have learned and how pastoral theology becomes operative in a parochial setting. Specific attention will be paid to the training of seminarians in basic principles of team development, collaboration, and conflict management at staff levels.

Human Resource Management

There are two significant pieces to this advanced pastoral leadership training program for seminarians. The first is education in the basic principles and practices of human resource management in parishes, and the second is training in the fundamental skills and tools of parish financial management. We concentrate in this article on the former.

"Recently, Ippolito, Latcovich and Malyn-Smith identified a total of 72 skills needed by priests in the fulfillment of their ministries, even at the novice level."

Recently, Ippolito, Latcovich and Malyn-Smith identified a total of 72 skills needed by priests in the fulfillment of their ministries, even at the novice level.[10] Among these competencies are those directly related to human resource management, such as employing and managing a parish staff, participating in the hiring process, writing job descriptions for parish staff openings, maintaining a healthy work environment, making personnel decisions following principles of good stewardship and gospel values, reviewing contracts and evaluating employees on a regular basis, mediating conflict among parish staff, providing for the supervision of staff, and empowering staff to develop their full potential.[11]

Human resource management has been defined as "the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets: the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives."[12] Among the processes that come under this function are: workforce planning, recruitment, orientation (or "onboarding"), skills management, training and development, administration of compensation and benefits, time management, personnel cost planning, and performance appraisals.

Recently, concern has been raised about the education that seminarians get in this vital area of personnel administration. The concern comes in two forms. The first is that a too-business-like approach to pastoral administration weakens the spiritual and theological foundations of ministry and could entice priests to equate business efficiency with pastoral effectiveness. David Sawyer recently demonstrated why models of church management must move beyond the traditional organizational development frames to include the congregation's stories of faith, since "(T)he congregation's stories are often windows into the active movements of God in the congregation, and they indicate the openness to the future that God desires for them."[13] Sawyer's critique reminds us that the bottom line of human resource management must always remain God's will and God's action in the community of faith. The study of human resource management in parishes must be set within a theologically sound and faithful ecclesiology. The absence of a solid understanding of the parochial mission and its relationship and fidelity to the bishop's office would skew the proper alignment of the task, role, and authority critical to good organizational functioning.[14]

The second concern is usually expressed in this way—business management is the province of the laity who should be recruited to take over the function of human resource and financial management in the parish. Training seminarians in these areas takes precious time away from their formation in theology, spirituality, and liturgy. It distracts us from the "real" task today—preparing the laity for leadership in the church. In other words, it would be best to leave these mundane matters to the laity who are better equipped and more theologically suited for these concerns.

"Clearly, business management shouldn't define the priesthood, but leadership or governance is part of the threefold *munera* of the priesthood."

John Paul II stated the true concern well: "Liturgical and personal prayer, not the tasks of management, must define the rhythms of a priest's life, even in the busiest of parishes."[15] He is correct. Management must not define the rhythms of a priest's life or obscure his primary spiritual relationship to the parish. However, at the same time, we ought not forget the proper role that priests play in the local community. When all is said and done, priests are configured to Christ in a distinct way at ordination—"*repraesentatio Christi capitis*," representing Christ as head of the body, which is the church. The priest presents to the people a special form of Christ's love. The Code of Canon Law says the same thing in another way, that the pastor is responsible for the administration of the temporal goods of the parish and it is he who must render accounts to the faithful concerning the goods that have been given to the church.[16] Clearly, business management shouldn't define the priesthood, but leadership or governance is part of the threefold *munera* of the priesthood. Pastors must accept the modern challenges of parochial leadership that includes oversight, direction, and management of the human and financial resources of the local church community. If men are going to be appointed the leaders of parish communities (and they will be), the question before us is whether or not they will be ready to assume the tasks that come with unifying and directing complex parochial systems.

To help in that preparation, administration and leadership courses, along with a series of advanced-level workshops, have been designed to prepare seminarians in a holistic and theologically sensitive way. Beginning in their first year of theology, seminarians learn the skills of what we call "pastoral diagnostics," a theologically founded and organizationally precise method of understanding local church dynamics. Through a series of 23 exercises spread across their first year of pastoral ministry, seminarians learn how to understand and apply what they are learning in their fundamental and foundational theology courses in the parochial context. They learn how sin and grace, faith and reason, immanence and transcendence, revelation and redemption are woven into the fabric of how Catholic parochial communities come together Sunday after Sunday. The distinct "operative theologies" of local parishes become the springboard for the seminarians' learning-parish team meetings, at which they learn from excellent pastors how they make decisions and bring the Gospel to bear across the whole tapestry of parish-based ministries.

In their second and third year of theology, seminarians are challenged to see how congregations are the context of pastoral care and counseling, as well as the true forum for adult and child faith formation.

In their fourth year, deacons lead their parish-learning teams and get to practice how to develop, motivate, and encourage a small staff of fellow seminarians in ministry, under the supervision of the local pastor. This leadership is reinforced in two courses provided to fourth year seminarians: pastoral administration and pastoral leadership.

It is during two consecutive summers that seminarians are provided with advanced training in human resource and financial resource management in parishes through workshops designed together with experts in the respective fields of interest.[17] A list of the topics covered gives evidence of the breadth of learning developed by our seminarians.

Topics Related to Human Resource Management in Parishes

- The Pastor as Human Resources Leader

- The Church and Best Practices in Human Resources – Principles of Christian HR Leadership
- Basics of Employment Law and the Church
- Parish HR Administration: The Hiring Process
- The Healthy Church Workplace
- Personnel Policies and Practices in Parishes
- Compensation and Benefits
- Conflict Management in Parishes
- Terminating the Employee Relationship: Performance Appraisals, Voluntary and Involuntary Terminations
- Special Topics: New Pastors, Schools, and the Employee Crisis

Topics Related to Financial Management in Parishes

- Financial Management Roles in the Diocese and in the Parish
- Reading Parish Financial Statements
- Parish Reporting
- The Budgetary Process
- Balancing the Parish Budget
- The Role and Work of the Finance Committee
- Payroll and Record Keeping
- Internal Controls, Accountability, and Transparency
- Fundraising and Stewardship

Each of the above topics is filled out with solid management principles, aligned with Catholic social teaching, and explored in case studies drawn from real-life parish experiences.

Teaching HR to Seminarians

Proposing that seminarians learn the basic skills of human resource management was a gamble when it was first discussed. We didn't know whether seminarians, more accustomed to the intricacies of Christological debates than to the intrigues of employment law and performance appraisals, would take to the concerns of HR. We were especially concerned that so-called "traditionalist" seminarians might find the topics somehow spiritually "beneath them," or so-called "progressive" seminarians would reduce pastoral leadership to business management. Our concerns were proved unfounded.

Today's seminarians are sensitive to the complexities of contemporary parish life and increasingly aware of the expectation that they function in ways that are theologically smart, accountable, and transparent. Seminarians who have attended our workshops, no matter their own theological leanings, have told us how much they appreciate the practical application of solid church teaching to parochial life. The use of case studies, drawn from real-life parish experiences, helps our seminarians see how Catholic social teaching and canon law come alive in situations closer to home, at the parish level.

"Today's seminarians are sensitive to the complexities of contemporary parish life and increasingly aware of the expectation that they function in ways that are theologically smart, accountable, and transparent."

Seminarians benefit from learning the legal and moral intricacies of hiring and firing and become more sensitive to the pastor's role in following and implementing diocesan financial and personnel policies. An added benefit of our HR work with seminarians is that it provides a new point of contact and conversation between seminarians, their diocesan offices, and their pastors. Several seminarians have written and told us how they have brought their HR binders and handouts back to their home dioceses and shared what they learned with their pastors or priest friends. Seminarians are learning first hand how complex are the systems that make up a parish today and how important the role of the pastor is in leading his staff around a unified, coherent, and faithful parochial mission.

Last year, St. Mary's Seminary and University became the first seminary in the country to be designated a "Partner in Excellence" by the *National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management*. This national organization of clergy, religious, and laity has developed a set of "best practices" in church management at the diocesan and parochial levels, helping leaders of Catholic organizations, from parishes to hospitals, develop practices and procedures that encourage accountability, transparency, solidarity, subsidiarity, and the application of the highest ethical standards, in keeping with Catholic social teaching. Over the past few years, seminarians were taught how to use the NRLCM's 55 standards of excellence in parish settings. They have proven to be a worthy benchmark of best practices in contemporary parish planning.

Experience tells us that seminarians are indeed ready and capable of engaging the issues of human resource management at the parish level. When combined with a holistic, theological approach to parish life, seminarians gain a greater appreciation for the complexities of modern congregations, but in a way that fleshes out what they are being taught in their systematic and doctrinal courses. This new parish-based learning moves us beyond the individual-centered "critical incident-critical insight" methodology of most pastoral formation programs today. It brings us to the threshold of a model of pastoral education that integrates "communio theology" and the structural dynamics emerging in our complex organizational parochial systems, keeping the pastor's role critically and theologically central to the development of parishes in the 21st century.

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Endnotes

1. There has been a 25% decrease in the number of associate pastors in the last five years, cf. David B. Couturier, "Formation Advising in Seminaries: The Impact of International Enrollments," http://www.ncea.org/departments/seminary/FormationAdvising.asp.
2. Dean Hoge reported that the Catholic Church in America grows at the rate of 9 to 11 percent per decade, cf. "Challenges Facing Priesthood in America," *Origins* 37:44 (April 17, 2008), 709-711.
3. The National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management (NLRCM) has recently published 55 "Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for Catholic Parishes" (2008). St. Mary's Seminary & University is one of a handful of Catholic institutions selected to be a "Partner in Excellence" by the NLRCM.
4. David B. Couturier, "Seminarians and Globalization," *Seminary Journal* 13:1 (Spring 2007), pp. 71-78.
5. David B. Couturier, "When Religious Leadership Fails: The Psychology of Administrative Scandals," *Human Development* 28:1 (2007), pp. 5-11.
6. Charles E. Hall, *Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement,* Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, Inc. 1992.
7. David B. Couturier, *The Four Conversions: A Spirituality of Transformation* (South Bend, IN: The Victoria Press, 2008).
8. Nancy T. Ammerman, ed., *Studying Congregations* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998).
9. David B. Couturier, *Studying Parishes and Pastoral Dynamics: Learning the Skills of Pastoral Diagnostics* (Baltimore: St. Mary's Press, 2008).
10. Joseph Ippolito, Mark A. Latcovich, Joyce Malyn-Smith, *In Fulfillment of their Mission—The Duties and Tasks of a Roman Catholic Priest: Assessment Project* (Washington, DC: NCEA, 2008).
11. Ibid., 40-41.
12. Michael Amstrong, *A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice, 10th ed.* (London: Kogan Page, 2006), p. 3.
13. David R. Sawyer, *Hope in Conflict: Discovering Wisdom in Congregational Turmoil* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2007), p. 21.
14. Couturier, *The Four* Conversions, pp. 176 ff.
15. "Priests, Their Life and Ministry," address to the bishops of Michigan and Ohio on their *ad limina* visit, 21 May 1998, *Origins* (18 June 1998), p. 74.
16. CIC, canons 519, 528-530, 1287.
17. We designed the Human Resource Management workshop with the lead presenter, Dr. Carol Fowler, Director of Personnel Services for the Archdiocese of Chicago, and the Financial Management Workshop with the Sellinger School of Business at Loyola College in Maryland.

Online Teaching and Learning: On the Road to Developing Distance Learning Standards for Communities of Learners

Rev. Sergius Halvorsen, Ph.D., Sebastian Mahfood, Ph.D., and Mary Beckmann, Ed.D.

Online education has seen tremendous growth over the last several years and continues to expand at a faster rate than originally predicted (Carr, 2000; Royer, 2006; Allen & Seaman, 2007; Mossavar-Rahmani, Larson-Daugherty, 2007). Improved learning in online classes, and in some cases a more profound and higher excellence of instruction in face-to-face classroom teaching, is due to the expansion of online education (Smith, Ferguson, Caris, 2001; National Education Association, 2008).

Studies show that because of the rapid expansion, an interest has been generated in more closely inspecting the value and effectiveness of online instruction. One weakness of online learning is retention of students, which is considerably lower in online courses than in face-to-face courses (Diaz, 2002; Royer, 2006; Allen & Seaman, 2007). Low retention is a concern for online education because high dropout rates could be construed as indicative of the low quality of education (Diaz, 2002). Poor course management; lack of course structure; and student concerns of isolation, belonging, and lack of connectedness are cited as the reasons for low retention (Herbert, 2006).

Standardized instruction for online learning would not only improve retention by offering consistent, high-quality learning for students, but it would also assist learners to become self-directed and self-disciplined. In addition to addressing retention and the above concerns, standardized instruction would benefit faculty by establishing a protocol for high-quality course content and highly effective course management.

Distance Learning Essential Student Rights

The first generation of distance learning courses in the Internet era was comprised of essentially "correspondence courses on steroids" that used email as a faster and cheaper alternative to traditional surface mail. With the marked improvement in digital technologies available to consumers (personal computers, webcams, camcorders, MP3 Players, CD and DVD, and the things that have followed) and the widespread availability of inexpensive, high-speed, broadband Internet access, digital communication became an increasingly multimedia experience. No longer were people limited to text messages as a way to interact with one another, but animations, audio, graphics, Web sites and interactivity combined to produce an experience which in so many ways emulated a face-to-face encounter that the sum total of these virtual interactions has come to be called cyberspace.

> **"Second generation distance learning courses offer teachers and learners—inhabitants of cyberspace—an opportunity to create and nurture vital communities of teachers and learners."**

Coined by science fiction author William Gibson in his 1982 story "Burning Chrome," cyberspace is a rather remarkable term inasmuch as it implies that the sum total of multimedia communication between millions of people worldwide actually constitutes an inhabitable space.[1] As the highly interactive, multi-sensory online experience has become the norm, computer literate students have begun to expect a learning experience more engaging than the first generation of distance learning courses. As educators began to recognize that Internet-based technology could enhance the learning experience, the second generation of distance learning courses emerged. Second generation distance learning courses offer teachers and learners—inhabitants of cyberspace—an opportunity to create and nurture vital communities of teachers and learners.

In every community, whether a town, a nation, or a distance learning course in cyberspace, certain basic rights or conventions for interaction enhance the "quality of life" for everyone in the community. Because teachers and institutions establish the "ground rules" for learning communities, they bear the primary responsibility for maintaining an environment that is conducive to establishing and maintaining their vibrancy. In order to better accomplish the objective of cultivating dynamic and healthy learning communities in cyberspace, we propose that distance learning programs adopt the following Distance Learning Bill of Rights.

Each distance learning student has the right to

1. a syllabus that clearly indicates its expectations for student work, including assignments, papers, exams, and class discussions along with their relative weights;
2. access required reading materials either through books that are in print—preferably in the most current edition—or via download;
3. purchase all reading materials for a course for no more than $100;
4. receive acknowledgement of all communication within 48 hours (when professors are on vacation, they should have auto-reply);
5. receive narrative evaluations from the professor on each of their major assignments within two weeks of the due date so that they know how they are progressing and can implement critical feedback in subsequent work; and
6. review the syllabus along with a list of required texts, no less than four weeks prior to the beginning of each semester.

Most of these rights may appear to be basic common sense, or common decency, and some may question why they are necessary at all. Yet, most teachers, learners, and administrators of distance learning programs will attest to the fact that such basic rights are not automatically afforded to students. Many reasons exist perhaps as to why this is so, but the most obvious is that students who are not in regular face-to-face contact with professors can be easily ignored, not because of any ill-will on the part of teachers, but as an unfortunate side effect of the fact that students who are "out of sight" can be "out of mind." The primary objective of these basic rights is to ensure that students benefit from regular, meaningful contact with their instructors. For a learning community to thrive, students should never have the experience of being "lost in cyberspace." Beyond the primary objective of maintaining contact between teachers and learners, the basic rights ensure that distance learning students are afforded the same level of accessibility to necessary learning materials and academic accountability as their colleagues in the face-to-face learning communities.

> **"Many distance learning programs consist of many first-generation courses that are little more than correspondence courses conducted via email."**

Many distance learning programs consist of many first-generation courses that are little more than correspondence courses conducted via email. Performing substantive revision on existing courses is not the easiest task. Professors who may have grown accustomed to the relative simplicity of first-generation courses also may be reluctant to engage and embrace the new technologies and learning paradigms that characterize second-generation courses. These essential student rights, however, help to establish the basic objectives of the second-generation courses. Once these objectives are established, then the use of new technologies may more easily follow since they allow the professor to provide the second-generation learning experience more easily. In other words, it is our hope that the essential student rights serve as a transformative instrument.

The Necessity for Rubrics

The purpose of assessing student work is to provide formative feedback and to evaluate and guide student action. In addition, assessment provides instructors with a method to determine if learning is taking place and if the learning is meaningful. A variety of methods to assess student work exists, one of which being the use of a rubric.

Rubrics are basically scoring guides with a set of expectations listed in grids. Each grid is assigned a numeric point value and the criteria within the grid are linked to specific course goals. When presented at the onset of a class, a rubric will make certain of proper communication between instructor and students regarding course objectives, expectations, and criteria.

The word rubric is originally derived from the Latin word, *rubrīca,* or red ochre or red chalk. Certain passages in liturgical missals were printed in red to indicate what should be read aloud, thus the origin of the word "rubric." In academia, a rubric refers to a set of rules, procedures, or protocols to establish a manner of conduct or direction. Students may be well aware of course curriculum goals, but students also need direction on how to relate to, or display, those goals. Rubrics offer guidance and direction and assist students with focusing on the end product.

Although creating a rubric is time consuming for instructors, the time spent grading student work is cut significantly if the rubric is an effective rubric. To be effective, a rubric must contain detailed explanations of clearly stated evaluative criteria. Criteria should be easy to read and understand and match course goals so students will understand what they are supposed to be learning and instructors will understand what they are supposed to be grading. Effective rubrics should be comprehensive and contain clear expectations. A rubric should clearly state intended course goals and objectives and never leave students confused about outcome directives. A basic rule for creating a rubric is if a learning objective is going to be assessed, it should be an element within a rubric, and the intended outcome should be examined and explained closely. Each grid within a rubric should be appropriate for the goals of each assignment that is to be assessed. An effective and high-quality rubric should show instructor and student, at a glance, assessment procedures and evaluative criteria.

To assure that both instructors and students benefit from a rubric, an instructor might consider creating two rubrics—one to use for grading and one containing student-friendly wording. For example, an instructor might use the word "participation," and know exactly to what grading criteria this refers. Students, however, may need a more basic and detailed explanation such as "post at least ten discussions." The wording an instructor uses in a grading rubric might necessitate creating a more basic rubric for student use. If a student has to take time to decipher the wording of a rubric, the rubric may be thought incomprehensible and will not be used, or the student might require numerous phone calls or emails to the instructor asking for clarification.

A variety of rubric generators and pre-made rubrics are available online. A word of caution when tempted to take the easy route and use a pre-made rubric. The time it takes to edit a pre-made rubric, to assure a perfect match between course goals and rubric criteria, might take longer than creating one from scratch. Often pre-made rubric criteria do not match course goals, and this results in a lack of clarity in student expectations. Unclear expectations will lead to frustrated students and to a frustrated instructor because submitted work will not match grading criteria.

"For those just beginning to think about learning communities, it may be helpful to consider three different levels of community: course, institution, and mission."

Learning Communities in Cyberspace

For those just beginning to think about learning communities, it may be helpful to consider three different levels of community: course, institution, and mission. The first level is a community of teachers and learners that is formed in the context of a single course. The course-level community consists of students who all share a common interest in the subject matter, and have all completed the necessary prerequisites for that course, along with the teacher or teachers who possess expertise in the course material. The second level is a community of learners within a particular institution. The institution-level community could include students at different levels of degree completion, as well as from different degree programs. Additionally, it would include teachers from different disciplines, along with administrative staff who work with the students. The third level is a community of learners who are united by a shared mission. The mission-level community of learners would include teachers, learners, administrators, and professionals of all skill levels who are united in accomplishing a single mission. This is not to say that course or institution level communities do not share a mission; rather, it is to say that there are communities that transcend the formal bounds of a particular course, or a particular institution, and are united by a shared mission. The diverse community of teachers and learners nurtured through the work of the National Catholic Bioethics Center is a good example of a mission-level community. In all of these instances, distance learning and the technology that facilitates it play a vital role in enabling learning communities of all types to exist in ways that were never before possible.

Teaching and learning environments constructed in cyberspace enable participants to engage with one another without being in physical proximity. This is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing because persons who otherwise would never have an opportunity to learn from one another form vital learning communities. The depth and influence of online communities is evident in a recent commentary by Ayelet Waldman who tells how members of her online community intervened to save her life during an episode of suicidal depression.[2] Such a level of community among individuals who otherwise would never interact with one another is certainly a blessing. On the other hand, however, the curse of cyberspace is that the absence of physical proximity can lead to interactions that are hurtful. A particularly notorious example of this is the recent case of cyber-bullying in which a vindictive mother tormented a young girl by posing as a young male admirer, only to cruelly end the bogus relationship by writing, "The world would be a better place without you." Shortly thereafter the girl took her life.[3] As Sebastian Mahfood has written in his recent article "Love and Responsibility: the Personalization Principle in Cyberspace," cyberspace makes it frighteningly easy to objectify others. Even if the most egregious forms of abuse never occur, teachers and learners need to be constantly on guard to avoid situations that quickly poison learning communities in cyberspace.

"In a face-to-face learning environment, teachers and learners have at their disposal the wide spectrum of non-verbal forms of communication."

In a face-to-face learning environment, teachers and learners have at their disposal the wide spectrum of non-verbal forms of communication. This, however, is only rarely the case with distance learning. In a face-to-face environment, a professor might say something that really confuses a student. Usually, extreme confusion is displayed through a distinct look of confusion or frustration. Seeing this, the professor can immediately inquire as to the nature of the confusion and then offer a clarification. In a more extreme instance, a teacher might offer a piece of constructive criticism that touches a nerve of a student, provoking anger or embarrassment. Anger and embarrassment also are easily detected through facial expressions, and in this case the teacher can quickly apologize, clarify, or otherwise make amends. Similar situations can arise between colleagues in a classroom, or in a study group. Yet, teachers and learners in a distance-learning context do not have the benefit of immediate non-verbal responses to gauge how they have been understood. Thus, it is essential that members of learning communities in cyberspace cultivate a heightened sensitivity to how they are perceived by others through digital interactions. Moreover, every effort should be made to nurture open lines of communication so that when misunderstandings arise, they can be quickly identified, addressed, and resolved.

Because of the often faceless character of cyberspace, the formation of learning communities in courses offered entirely online is essential to establishing a sense of *presence* among the participants, who include the course professor and the learners coming together around the materials that comprise the content of the course. In face-to-face teaching and learning environments, learning communities often are formed campus-wide and involve targeted groups of stakeholders within the institution focusing on a variety of learning goals. Professors of disciplinary content courses pair up with curriculum support professors and residential life advisors to form communities of learners that focus on, for example, research methods specific to, say, anthropology operating within a holistic social context. Clusters like this can exist in conjunction with other clusters so that a given administrator, faculty member, or student may be involved in several learning communities simultaneously.

Each learning community, then, may have a specific purpose, but all of them have a common purpose, which is, according to Nancy Shapiro and Jodi Levine in *Creating Learning Communities: a Practical Guide to Winning Support, Organizing for Change, and Implementing Programs* (1990), to "intentionally seek to transform the learning environment" (180). The transformation that is being pursued is one that engages students as active producers of their teaching and learning environments and inculcates within them a drive for lifelong learning that is reasonably supported by broad-based skill sets that will enable it.

Online teaching and learning, however, is different from face-to-face teaching and learning in the sense that online courses often are offered as self-contained entities rather than as part of a larger communal network more readily apparent to persons required to be in the same place at a common time, and this provides a significant challenge to the formation of learning communities in distance learning programs.

Because of the emphasis on enabling students to become producers of their teaching and learning environments, learning-community formation may be effective in the graduate programs of major seminaries and theological institutes. Learning-community models already exist, in fact, within seminary formation environments even if they are not called by that name. Rev. Paul Rothschild at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis, for instance, facilitates a program of theological reflection that engages transitional deacons in ongoing dialogue with first-, second-, and third-year theologians over critical incidents experienced during their supervised ministry. Rev. Edward James Richard, dean of students at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, engages in dialogue three times a year the professors involved in teaching each student cohort for the purpose of garnering a comprehensive understanding of each student's performance within the program. The outcomes of these meetings that identity student strengths and areas for improvement are then provided to the students at their regular formation meetings through their formation advisors. This process enables goals to be put in place in preparation for advancement within the program, and all faculty responsible for any given student endeavor to assist that student better through a more focused response to the student's activity within the academic courses in which he is enrolled.

> **"The key to realizing the potential of the learning community format, though, lies in pursuing it with greater intentionality than currently may exist within seminary programs."**

Even some of the courses offered within Kenrick's program, such as marriage preparation, have the foundation for a broad-based learning community through their interdisciplinary character that brings various faculty and guest speakers into contact with the students. The key to realizing the potential of the learning community format, though, lies in pursuing it with greater intentionality than currently may exist within seminary programs. Models have to be discussed and structures put in place through the coordinated efforts of the various administrative, faculty, and student committees that would normally be responsible for diffusing innovation within a given program.

For the seminaries and theological institutes that enjoy stand alone distance learning degree programs, the development of learning communities not only is crucial to the process of accreditation through the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), but also is essential in its own right to the holistic formation of the students who will constitute them. At present, all ATS-accredited schools that administer distance learning degree programs must require a student to be in residence at the seminary or approved extension site for at least one-third of his or her time in the program. The way this has been translated in practice is through a division of course credits so that an institution offering, for instance, a 90-hour Masters of Divinity degree, might make it possible for students to complete their face-to-face work in short residency bursts of one- or two-week intensive on-campus courses for which student housing might be provided.

If a learning community is to be created within a structure of this kind, however, it has to be actively promoted during the offsite, asynchronous portion of a student's time in the program. Some ways of doing that might involve the nurturing of a student-life association with various student committees and faculty sponsors, the development of a student-managed writing center or technology support service, or the promotion of social or academic fraternities and sororities. The idea to strengthen the teaching and learning environment in this way taps into the rich diversity that any program of study naturally draws to itself in order to meaningfully harness for the collective good the various gifts possessed by each member of the learning community.

For learning communities to be successful, they have to be structured not only by the needs of the program but also through the input of representatives from each program's stake- holding groups. Face-to-face models of effective learning communities may be translated into cyberspace for adult learners with a success ratio that is usually proportionate to the amount of institutional support received through such activities as faculty advising, administrative sponsorship, financial assistance, and the like. The students within the program, though, need to enjoy a formative role within any learning community that seeks to mobilize their participation. Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut, for instance, has two entirely online master of arts degree programs in philosophy and theology, and it sponsors one student organization, the Dead Philosophers Society, which is entirely student driven. The Society has about four dozen members who assist in providing persons enrolled in those two programs with a sense of community outside the courses that they share in common. Opportunities abound through the Society to help students network with one another across courses for mentoring purposes, project collaboration, and the like, and such opportunities can be intentionally structured within the program through advising schedules that emphasize necessary prerequisites, course clusters that bring complementary courses together for the purpose of sharing keystone or capstone projects among them, and other things.

This is where the institution has a correlative opportunity to facilitate the work of the Society by bringing its members into its academic committees, especially those concerned with programs, policies, and resource

> **"By engaging distance learning students as broadly as possible within the active life of the on-campus community, seminaries and theological institutes that have stand-alone online programs demonstrate that they value the gifts their students bring to the community, an event that increases both student retention and academic outcomes."**

acquisition. On-campus lectures and workshops should be made available to online students via the media in use to facilitate their courses, and this can be done most easily with a live or recorded video stream adjacent to a live chat room or asynchronous discussion board. By engaging distance learning students as broadly as possible within the active life of the on-campus community, seminaries and theological institutes that have stand-alone online programs demonstrate that they value the gifts their students bring to the community, an event that increases both student retention and academic outcomes.

For the seminaries and theological institutes that participate in online consortia like the Catholic Distance Learning Network (CDLN), which was created in part through a grant from the Wabash Center, an opportunity exists for them to strengthen themselves by working to strengthen others. At present, 14 seminaries and theological institutes are a part of the CDLN, each offering courses open to any fulltime students interested in such topics as theology and science, inter-religious dialogue from a Catholic perspective, early Christian methods and models for spiritual direction, Psalms as Christian prayer, the ethical and religious directives for health care institutions, and liturgy and the art of ritual—to name a few. The kinds of courses the Network has offered, then, are special interest electives themed on the idea of a global vision initiative that takes into account evangelization/inculturation, ecumenism/unity, interfaith dialogue, and authentic human development.

Each of the courses, therefore, is contextualized within a structure devoted to diversity both in the kinds of content each offers and in the kinds of students each attracts, and this enriches in significant ways the teaching and learning environment each is able to form. While the courses have become a regular part of a given institution's academic program, the tendency may be for the institution to treat them as anomalies within the greater breadth of its institutional focus, which means that they might become islands inhabited by students from two or more seminaries whose only experience of one another is within the context set up through the course template. Were this to happen, the possibility exists that each course could be treated merely as a correspondence course without any real intentionality on the part of the professors to form viable learning communities among the students within them.

The Network guards against this possibility through an introductory training program of its course professors that seeks to be reasonably comprehensive in its covering the importance of community formation in online courses, but it is up to the course professors themselves to establish structures that foster group work, student presentations, and meaningful discussion board interaction. The institutions that sponsor these courses may use the opportunities they provide to collaborate more closely with the institutions from which they are receiving their cross-registered students in order to match their capacities to others' needs and their needs to others' capacities. In short, viable learning communities ought to transcend the individual courses within which they are contextualized for the general amelioration of the larger communities of which they are a part.

Nuts and bolts basics on the formation of learning communities ought to be studied by all administrators and faculty in undergraduate and graduate theology programs, especially since the resources and methods by which to do so are plentiful in a filtering-age society that enables billions of megabytes of information to be sifted through in seconds. Some basic lessons that the authors have learned through their experience in online teaching and learning environments include the following:

- While the primary agenda of first generation online courses often entails fine tuning a given course's development, learning community formation ought to at least be sought so that first

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generation students does not get too short-changed because of a professor's trying to find his way. Naturally, learning community formation should be the primary agenda of second and subsequent generation online course offerings.

- Students ought to be consulted in a formative way over the duration of an online course offering, and this entails seeking their interests and recognizing their diversity before forming them into groups, providing them opportunities to choose among the kinds of accountability exercises they would like to pursue as demonstrations of their developing mastery of the subject matter, and structuring discussion boards in such a way as to invite not only their reflections on the course materials but also their initiative in introducing new materials to the life of the course.
- Any given learning community in cyberspace ought to serve as a bridge to real-life learning communities. In the case of self-contained distance learning programs like the ones hosted through Holy Apostles College and Seminary, coursework should encourage active community participation on the part of the students in their own affinity groups. In the case of consortial distance learning programs like the Catholic Distance Learning Network, coursework should encourage active community participation on the part of the students within the seminaries and theological schools from which they come.

Institutions that participate in distance learning initiatives will likely be able to add their own basics to this short list and are invited to do so at www.tteg.org, the Web site of the Technology in Theological Education Group (TTEG), the newest affinity group to form within the Association of Theological Schools. The readers of this short article already have, by virtue of their having arrived at this point in the document, formed what Benedict Anderson has called an "imagined community" comprised of all persons with an interest in this particular topic. To actualize that imagined community, we need only to come together with greater intentionality in the formation of a learning community capable of making use of the kind of synergy that new participants are able to bring to it, which is why TTEG sponsors an open membership policy. The development of viable learning communities is both micro- and macrocosmic, and the best ones are, consequently, both narrowly and broadly conceived.

Conclusion

Online theological learning is convenient and cost effective, but students must identify online studies with quality instruction and not merely take courses for the convenience and flexibility that online learning offers. The impact of having standardized instruction for online theological studies would be improved teaching and learning that would lead to cohesive teaching practices for the online community in general and ultimately improve retention.

Low-cost yet high-quality required reading material, clearly defined and well-written syllabi, and timely meaningful feedback from instructors would comprise standardized instruction. Standardized instruction also may benefit course instructors by offering a protocol for successful course management, thus making teaching online more effective and enjoyable.

With standardized instruction, students will be engaged and focused, interact often with the instructor, and not experience feelings of isolation. Students will build upon knowledge and keep knowledge current and dynamic with a protocol for online learning. In sum, it takes a learning community to make online learning successful. This is brought about only by instructors who realize that it is not technology alone that makes a quality online course, but its appropriate use within the learning environment.

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The Public Witness of the University and Seminary in the 21st Century

Rev. Drew Christiansen, SJ

This article was a lecture delivered at Memphis Theological Seminary, September 18, 2008, for the inauguration of Jeffrey Gros, FSC, in the Distinguished Professorship in Historical and Ecumenical Theology.

Introduction by Brother Jeffrey Gros, FSC: In the years after the Second Vatican Council, seminaries and universities developed consortia to witness their commitment to the unity of the church and to better serve ecumenical formation. Memphis Theological Seminary, an ecumenical ministry of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, entered into the Memphis Consortium in 1970 with Christian Brothers University (Catholic), Rhodes College (Presbyterian), and Le Moyne Owen (American Baptist/United Church of Christ). It hired its first Catholic faculty in 1974, and developed a Roman Catholic Studies program in collaboration with the Catholic diocese. Among other new programs it inaugurated a Distinguished Professorship in 2006.

Father Drew Christiansen, SJ, editor in chief of *America* magazine, former staff person of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Social Development and World Peace and teacher at Notre Dame University and Jesuit School of Theology, Berkley, gave two lectures to inaugurate Brother Jeffrey Gros, FSC, as the first holder of this professorship. This is the second of these lectures delivered September 18, 2008, devoted to the role of the seminary and the university. Dr. Lance Forsdick, president of Christian Brothers University, introduced Father Christiansen. The full document, with both lectures and responses, is available in the *Memphis Theological Seminary Journal,* Volume XLV, 2010.

The seminary and the university have common bloodlines. Time and again schools of religious training have given rise to colleges and universities. In the 13th century, cathedral schools grew up alongside the traditional monastic schools, which, in turn, gave rise, in

"The seminary and the university have common bloodlines. Time and again schools of religious training have given rise to colleges and universities."

major centers like Paris, Bologna, and Oxford, to universities. Again, in the 16th century, the Jesuit colleges, which began as seminaries, rapidly were transformed into colleges (and later universities) in which lay and Jesuit students undertook their studies together. Similarly, the shift from seminary to college in the United States is memorialized along many back-country lanes named "Seminary Road" that today lead to one-time denominational colleges that are now free-standing, liberal arts institutions. Early college curricula were those of students for ministry. Yale College, for example, was founded to train students for service of church and state. Similarly, for 80 years Georgetown University trained young Jesuits alongside lay students, until the scholastics training grew so long because of their role as instructors to the other students, that in 1869 a freestanding seminary was established in Woodstock, Maryland.

Despite their common origin, the relationship between the seminary and its parent church and newer institutions of higher learning has not always been a harmonious one. The monasteries resisted the rise of the cathedral schools, not only because they drew away their most promising pupils and with them their families' do-nations, but also because the pedagogy of the cathedral schools, as the monks saw it, was less devout, focusing more on classical literary studies for their own sake and less on their use in preparation for *lectio divina*, the prayerful reading of Scripture.

Later the universities, particularly Paris and Oxford, promoted scholastic theology which honed dialectical debating skills that the monks and later the 16th-century Reformers regarded as antithetical to religious appropriation of the Scriptures and the articulation of a biblically based faith. In the Middle Ages, similar developments took place even in the most gospel-based reform movements. Saint Francis, to take an outstanding example, wanted his Little Brothers (Friars *Minor/Fratres* Minores) to know no book but the gospel, but within a generation Franciscan professors were expounding some of the most radical theological and political ideas in Europe, contending against secular priests and Dominican friars who followed more traditional systems of thought. So, the evolution from the seminary to the more secular university has a long, oft-repeated history.

Jesuits and the Book of Nature: Unforeseen Consequences

The path to the secularization of higher education, however, was not always a progress from a clerical to a lay institution. In 16th century France, for example, the Jesuit colleges were instruments of evangelization. Students organized themselves into Sodalities of Our Lady, known today as Christian Life Communities, and they frequently extended the reach of the Jesuits in evangelizing the provincial cities where the colleges were located. At the same time, their curriculum, which embraced "learning both human and divine," held within it the seeds of the Enlightenment.

Along with some Protestant divines and pious lay scholars of the day, they believed God's revelation is found in the Book of Creation as well as in the Bible. For that reason, their programs of study included mathematics, optics, astronomy, and the natural sciences. Leading philosophers, like Descartes and Voltaire, were students of the Jesuits, leading some historians to trace the origins of the Enlightenment's trust in nature to the program of studies in the Jesuit colleges of France. We don't know what would have happened had the early Jesuits survived to respond to the Enlightenment at its peak, because between 1756 and 1773 they were suppressed at the instigation of atheist ministers in the Bourbon governments of Portugal and France. When the Society was restored in 1814, in a penitential and self-protective mood the 19th century Jesuits adopted a rationalistic philosophy and theology without ties to the natural sciences and taught a classical literary curriculum akin to that of the British private schools and the German *gymnasia.* Engagement with the Enlightenment learning was replaced by ideological repudiation of Enlightenment philosophy and political theory.

"The more influence business culture has on higher education, the less fundamental choices of administration, faculty, and students have to do with learning and witness."

Only in the late 20th century, after the 32nd General Congregation in 1965-66 did Jesuit education undergo a genuine rebirth. Of course, like many other denominational colleges and universities, Jesuit institutions in the United States experienced a move to professionalization, specialization, and commercialization. At the same time, however, the old evangelizing goals emerged in a new way, with Jesuit schools responding to the challenge of 20th century atheism—both theoretical and practical—with the formation of "men [and women] for others." I'll have more to say about that development later. For now, it is sufficient to identify the common origins of the seminary and university and the patterns of their divergence.

Contemporary Consequences

One the *preparation evangelica* gave rise to specialized forms of learning about which believers differed and which in part gave rise to the Reformation. And, though the two streams do overlap, in the second the study of the natural world to better understand the works of the Creator and give him glory resulted in a science (mostly) devoid of God. Those two patterns, however, bear especially on the principal subject of these lectures, that is, "witness." For while the purpose of the seminary is explicitly to prepare men and women to proclaim the Gospel to all creation and witness to it by their personal and communal lives, the witness of the university is more implicit: *to explore the glory of God* *in creation (and culture), to offer the witness of faith in specialized fields of learning, and to promote the betterment of humanity in a public extension of Christian love.* Two factors, however, affect the capacity to witness through professional and advanced religious studies in our own day. First, whereas academic study reaches back to affect learning in the seminary, whether biblical studies, Christian ethics or pastoral counseling, higher education, with its specialization and market mentality, is more and more resistant to religious learning. Whereas a generation or two ago Christian scholars and intellectuals were a major presence in university and intellectual life, today they are likely to be exceptions. Those who grab public attention tend to be political activists whose reliance on learning is frequently small. Second, the mass media, especially the digital media, "pancake" religious knowledge into a thin veneer of pieties and formulaic answers to hot-button issues that defies the influence of learned religion. As a result, young people, whether they are Evangelical or Catholic, Jewish or Hindu, seem as Christian Smith has argued, a common "Moralistic, Hedonistic Theism." So, Christian witness in the academy faces twin challenges:

How do Christian colleges, professors, and students overcome the hyper-specialization and segmentation of today's multiversity and the market-driven priorities of both administrators and students to make institutions of higher learning an environment more receptive to Christian witness and Christian learning?

How do scholars and schools through their learning and teaching witness to the world in the face of the homogenized and reduced-fat religious understanding processed by the media? How, in other words, can learning penetrate a communications culture overrun with images, sound bites, and hot-button issues?

"There is a sense in which readiness to witness without looking for results is fundamental."

Called Solely to Fidelity in Witness?

Some may object that indifference is a recurrent reaction of "the world" to the Gospel. "We are called to witness," as my late colleague John Howard Yoder used to say, "not to be effective." There is a sense in which readiness to witness without looking for results is fundamental. Jesus himself seemed to invoke that axiom with his missionary instruction to "shake off the dust" of a town that did not welcome a disciple. But, fidelity is not only shown in failure; it is also shown in persistence, in repeated efforts to share our faith despite the difficulties.

In the case of higher education that means inventing and re-inventing our institutions, experimenting with new developments, and adapting old ones. The Jesuits were not originally known for their educational ministry. As John O'Malley writes, they were originally "a holiness movement" promoting religious renewal, but they quickly discovered the fruitfulness of their colleges for "the progress of souls," not just for their students, but also for the students' families and the cities in which they lived, and so the colleges quickly spread throughout Europe.

Collegium?

I have cited two dynamics in higher education that make it increasingly difficult to make the academy a congenial venue for Christian witness: specialization and commercialization. Specialization is almost as old as the university itself, with the very first universities specializing in medicine, law, theology, and philosophy. Generally, however, entrance into the specialized studies required completion of a common curriculum (*quadrivium* and *trivium*). In the mid-19th century, John Henry Newman could still propose that the goal of the university was to integrate knowledge, and through the mid-20th century the liberal arts curriculum, though variously designed, was still the backbone of higher education. Today it is the exception, with business and technical programs outpacing even the science and engineering programs that accelerated the segmentation of higher education. This fragmentation has been aggravated by the growing dominance of graduate and research priorities over undergraduate teaching on the part of faculties.

Some years ago, my friend Dan Callahan, one of the pioneers of bioethics in the U. S., relayed his advice to one of his boys about choosing a college. "What you want," he told his son, "is a place where you'll have stimulating conversation." The point was driven home to me some years ago when I was hearing end-term oral exams from a course I taught at the University of Notre Dame. On concluding one exam, I asked the student, one of four roommates who had taken the course, none of whom had been particularly outspoken in the class room, "How is it you and your roommates did so well?

He responded, "Oh, Father, it was eight o'clock in the morning. But when we went to breakfast we argued about the class until lunch." It was one of the best compliments I ever received from a student.

We Jesuits used to tease that our universities were undergraduate colleges with professional schools attached. It was a bit of self-deprecation, but we might be better off if that were still the case. There is no replacement for the *collegium* where there can be real intellectual exchange among students and between students and faculty. The same specialization which subsumes undergraduate education to graduate school models, spurning Whitehead's maxim that education begins in "romance," proceeds through specialization and ends in "generalization" (the integration of knowledge as Newman called it), is an obstacle to witnessing in higher education (see Whitehead's Idea of Education). While there is an important place for the scholar-scientist within advanced studies, like Justice John Noonan or geneticist Francis Collins, who witness to faith at the forefront of their fields, it seems to me that the potential for Christian witness is greater in the college years before specialization and socialization to a certain profession or career has begun.

Students need to appreciate that rationality is more than instrumental reasoning and that they can think about matters of importance and reason about faith. Youth and early adulthood are life-stages when the mind is at once learning to think and to search for meaning, and one of the great fallacies of our age is to believe those two tasks cannot be connected. In a recent Religion and Education issue of *America*, a Fordham professor tells how a young Muslim woman found his introductory religion class a spur to mature faith. "I have gone to mosque every week. Everyone there always had answers," she related to the professor. "In your course," she told the professor, "I have come to think of God and God's place in my life in a whole new way…but now I don't know what to think of my religion."

College study had opened up a whole new way of being religious to Fatima. That is not to despise other ways of being religious. As Whitehead said, there should be room for religion at every temperature. Or, as St. Ignatius Loyola advised, when a penitent is motivated solely by fear of hell and eternal damnation, don't take that away. But, where there is capacity for progress in faith, that progress ought to be encouraged.

In a similar way, an emphasis on undergraduate education also should allow for an appropriate return to the moral formation of students. In general, I am critical of the tendency to outsource moral education to ancillary agencies within the university: campus ministry, justice and peace centers, service programs, and so on. Inevitably undergraduate activities which lack the backing and involvement of a wide group of faculty will affect a smaller segment of the student population and have diminished influence on them. So, not only courses in ethics, but also an academic atmosphere where ethical issues are important to faculty in other fields is vital to the witness of the academy. Of course, it is not just learning to think about morality that counts, it is also the faculty's modeling of what it is to be a conscientious professional that matters, both in serving as a public-minded citizen and in living the Christian life.

Freedom from the Market

It is commonplace to hear complaints about government being too large and encroaching on the rest of life, but that assumption is out of date. For decades now, the economy has been swallowing up the rest of society. As Alan Wolfe has noted, there are three domains to our social world: government, economy, and civic society. For decades now, the economy has been dominating the other two domains. Journalism is a prime example. Once we relied on newspapers and broadcast media to hold malefactors, whether in government or business, in check, but journalism under new ownership has become an extension of entertainment business, and the main function of entertainment is not to entertain, but to make money. My brother, who is a successful small businessman, wonders why in the eyes of business schools a profit of ten percent is considered negligible. If his firm makes ten percent profit, he considers it a good year. But if a newspaper makes 20% profit, it has to squeeze its editorial and production staffs because the profit is too small. While those anticipated profit margins are not yet a problem in colleges and universities, the business sector has begun to infiltrate the university as well; and as administrators absorb more and more the business ethos, higher education becomes a less congenial environment for Christian witness. In the time available, I can only sketch the problem, but let me try.

Wilson Miscamble has described the commercialization—he calls it "corporatization"—of the university. The process includes the competition for research and foundation grants, the scramble for status in magazine ratings, the adoption of business models by administrators, and, I would add, the increase in business majors and the expansion of business schools within universities. The problems commercialization presents to Christian higher education are profound. Can the university serve both God and Mammon? Above all, commercialization affects the underlying ethos of the campus. The more influence business culture has on higher education, the less fundamental choices of administration, faculty, and students have to do with learning and witness. For example, if recruitment emphasizes career preparation, then more and more the expectations of employers and professional associations will dictate the curriculum. In such a context, the space for broader intellectual exploration will be lacking or, at the very least, discouraged. One can't understate the disposition of faculty to focus narrowly on their own interests. There may be opportunities in the commercialized campus for religion as a supplemental, devotional activity, but where a broader intellectual culture with its concern for the full humanity of the student is absent, the cultivation of sensitivities open to Christian witness will be reduced. Fewer students will be evangelized and evangelized in depth. The risk is that the university reinforces the values of the surrounding business culture and makes the professed Christian values of our schools optional extras.

The Academy and Witness in the Digital Age

I spoke in my first lecture about some general challenges of witness in the Digital Age: identifying those who share our values but not necessarily our faith, finding ways to deepen the religious capacities of those formed by the digital revolution, and utilizing digital and other means to promote community and communion in the church. The key question for the academy as I noted earlier is: How does the academy witness in a communications culture that feeds on a flux of images, sound bites, clashing opinions, and hot button issues?

The academy sometimes used to be called "an ivory tower," a phrase that conjured up the monastic origins of the college and universities. It was a place apart where scholars could pursue their interests undisturbed and with near-religious, and often downright religious, seriousness. As the French philosopher Simone Weil argued, the first virtue of study, as of the spiritual life, is attention. Whether it is mastering a geometric proof or translating Homer, school study demands attention.

In some respects, the day of the solitary scholar, like Galileo or Newton or Linnaeus, is past in contemporary science, where networking is increasingly essential to research. Nonetheless, research and problem solving still require sustained and solitary attention for which the buzz of the blogosphere, the busyness of the Web, and the 20-second cable-news story ill prepare students.

Another feature of learning that I haven't seen duplicated online is mentoring, which I mean in a rather broad sense of apprenticeship, where one learns the informal skills of a discipline, what Michael Polanyi called "connoisseurship." Polanyi, of course, was referring to the development of advanced skills, but I think it applies equally to the first real awakening of the mind, in the stage of education Whitehead called "romance." Part of the romance is the subject matter itself and the encounter with the great thinkers of the past and present, but equally important is active engagement between the mind of the teacher with those of the students exploring a topic together. I have not taught, I confess, in a wired university. While I can imagine it is useful for many things, for example the submission and correction of papers, it is hard to imagine it replacing the interpersonal learning situation.

"Without the face-to-face engagement of believing teachers and scholars, in which the student or fellow scholar feels the urgency of the question and the value the witness places on oneself, what one believes and how one comes to believe, the academy ceases to be a suitable forum for witness to the Gospel."

Finally, what do the diminishment of attention and the eclipse of student-teacher interaction have to do with witness in higher education? Without attention, as I suggested earlier, our spiritual capacities remain buried and the capacity to respond to witness is diminished. We no longer can distinguish between passing opinions and the wisdom that satisfies the soul. Without attention, our ears are itching for the latest opinion and our hearing for the Word of God is impaired. Similarly, without the face-to-face engagement of believing teachers and scholars, in which the student or fellow scholar feels the urgency of the question and the value the witness places on oneself, what one believes and how one comes to believe, the academy ceases to be a suitable forum for witness to the Gospel. "Deep speaks to deep," the Psalmist says. The shared élan for learning becomes the vehicle for sharing faith. Christian witness in the academy is not so much a matter of dogmatic pronouncements and combative debates, though the academy as well as the church has had its share of those devices, but, like the monastery of the past, it is the spiritual place where teachers, students, and the community of scholars discover and rediscover that the love of God and the love of learning are one.

The Spirit of Witness

I have referred earlier to the notion of witness as testimony under trial where faithfulness and perseverance, and not effectiveness, count. The rationale for witness in the academy I have proposed is perseverance in reaching those who are still to hear the Word. There is a kind of moralistic, purer-than-thou reading of perseverance, however, one that looks down on the institutionalization of witness that the Christian academy represents. Institutionalization is not inevitably an enemy of the Spirit. The Acts of the Apostles after all is the record of the expansion and institutionalization of the early church. At its best it can serve to widen and deepen the Spirit's influence in the world. At its worst it is subject to corruption, but so, as we have repeatedly learned, is the radical, charismatic prophet. But the fundamental reason we don't need to worry about the success of our witness, though we should rejoice and give praise to God when it occurs, is that the witness is not ours, but that of the Spirit within us that bears witness. For "the Spirit of truth [guides] us in all truth" (Jn. 16:13).

Rev. Drew Christiansen, SJ, has been editor-in-chief of the national Jesuit weekly *America* since 2005. From 1991 to 1998, he headed the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Office of International Justice and Peace, and from 1998-2004 he continued to serve as counselor for international affairs to the USCCB with special responsibility for the Middle East. From 1998 to 2002, at the request of the Holy See, he organized and staffed a coalition of bishops conferences working in support of the church in the Holy Land.

A New School in the NCEA: The Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

Rev. Richard J. Clifford, SJ

June 1, 2008, three educational institutions, two at Boston College in Chestnut Hill and one in Cambridge, joined forces to become the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry (STM). The first new professional school at BC since 1952, the STM consists of Weston Jesuit, the Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry (IREPM), and C21 Online (offering courses for adult education and faith formation). IREPM, founded in 1971, brings seven full-time faculty members, 125 academic-year students, and 350 Summer Institute students. Weston Jesuit, its first 40 years spent in the Boston suburb of Weston and its most recent 40 in Cambridge, brings 17 faculty members, 220 students, the journal *New Testament Abstracts*, a substantial endowment available to all 300 STM students, and 90,000 volumes for the library of 250,000 holdings.

The STM's distinctiveness lies in its *combination* of strengths: It is both a professional school of Boston College and one of its departments, Weston Jesuit, is an ecclesiastical faculty that welcomes priest candidates and laity. The STM faculty of 25 educates clergy and lay people together for ordained and lay ecclesial ministry. The STM offers a full slate of theology courses and provides a comprehensive formation program for all ministerial students. And the Jesuit tradition and spirituality are strongly represented by 10 Jesuit professors and 55 students. All of this takes place within a vibrant Catholic and Jesuit university. Unusual, too, are further Boston College resources: the Theology Department, residing in the College of Arts and Sciences to serve doctoral and undergraduate students, and the other professional schools with which the school has degree programs (education, nursing, social work, and management). Another resource is the Boston Theological Institute (BTI), a consortium of nine theology schools or departments, comprising one of the most impressive arrays of theology professors, students, and libraries in North America.

"The STM offers a full slate of theology courses and provides a comprehensive formation program for all ministerial students."

Why did Weston Jesuit come to Boston College?

So momentous a change required long preparation. A decade ago, the 10 U.S. Jesuit provincial superiors directed Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge and Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley to explore an alliance with a Jesuit college or university. In fall 2004, Father William Leahy, SJ, president of Boston College, made a formal proposal that WJST re-affiliate with Boston College and join with IREPM and C21 Online. (The two had been affiliated from 1959 to 1971 for the purpose of awarding BC degrees.) Father Leahy had a clear goal (a strong school of divinity, comprising IREPM and WJST, for BC and the church) and a good sense of timing (newly available property from the Archdiocese of Boston). Equally supportive of the move was Weston Jesuit's president, the late Jesuit Father Robert Manning. As one might have expected, such a sweeping proposal divided the faculty, some opposing it on the grounds that the school would lose its autonomy and small-school ethos, and others embracing it as providing new opportunities to serve and greater resources for lay students. Prolonged debate eventually created a consensus. By March 2007, all approvals had been given—by the Chancellor (Jesuit General Superior Peter Kolvenbach), the WJST and BC boards, and the Jesuit Conference (the 10 provincial superiors).

Degree Programs

The STM offers an extraordinary range of degree programs. (Its non-degree programs are provided through C21 Online and the Continuing Education program.) Housed in the IREPM department are the M.A. in Pastoral Ministry with diverse concentrations, master's degrees and certificates with the Lynch School of Education, a Ph.D. in Theology and Education with the Theology Department, and dual and joint degrees with other BC professional schools. The renowned Summer Institute, housed in IREPM, runs for six weeks in June through July. Weston Jesuit houses the M.Div., M.T.S., M.A. in Spiritual Direction, and Th.M. As an ecclesiastical faculty, Weston Jesuit also offers the S.T.B., S.T.L., and S.T.D.

The Mission

Uniting three robust educational entities requires a strong and widely shared mission statement. It had to incorporate the best features of each entity, yet represent freshly and accurately a new institution. In April 2008, faculty members and chief administrators of IREPM and WJST listed the values and goals of the new school to instruct the drafting committee. After two spirited meetings, the drafting committee in a third meeting reached surprisingly rapid consensus. Both faculties endorsed it and the president of Boston College approved it. Here are excerpts.

- The school's mission: "the fostering of Christian faith and the promotion of justice and reconciliation"
- Its students: "Jesuits and other candidates approved for ordination studies, women and men for lay ecclesial ministries and for service rooted in faith"
- Its commitments: "the Catholic theological tradition, rigorous academic inquiry, interdisciplinary study, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, and the engagement of faith and culture," and permeating these, "a community that is contemplative, critical, and collaborative"
- Its inspiration: "the Ignatian tradition and the rich diversity of its students and faculty communities"

Governance

The STM has two departments (Weston Jesuit and IREPM), chaired, respectively, by J. Randall Sachs, SJ, and Thomas Groome. Weston Jesuit houses BC degree programs (M.Div. and M.T.S.) and, as an ecclesiastical faculty, canonical degree programs (S.T.B., S.T.L., and S.T.D.) conferred by the Holy See. (Weston Jesuit's legal name is the Ecclesiastical Faculty at Boston College.) The dean has dual responsibilities. As the dean of STM he is responsible to the University through the president, and as the dean of Weston Jesuit he is responsible to the Holy See (Congregation for Catholic Education) through the chancellor (the superior general of the Jesuits). Members of the Weston Jesuit department of the STM are appointed by the president of Weston Jesuit, who is also president of Boston College.

Our Goals as a School

Our primary goal is to nurture the basic relationships that define a Catholic university-based divinity school to the University and to the church.

> **"A school of theology and ministry, nonetheless, belongs on a university campus, but it must realistically face the challenges of such a stimulating location."**

1. *The STM's Relationship to the University*

Theology and ministerial formation were components of Europe's universities from the beginning, although the reforms of the Council of Trent relegated much Catholic ministry preparation to the seminary. A school of theology and ministry, nonetheless, belongs on a university campus, but it must realistically face the challenges of such a stimulating location. One instance of the kind of challenge the STM will face occurred in American Protestant ministerial education. The American colleges, where young men in the 17th to the 19th centuries trained for Protestant ministry, grew into universities, posing the question of where ministerial education fitted in the new and broader context. Yale historian Jaroslav Pelikan stated the challenge provocatively: "Faculties of divinity were often retained in universities of this kind; but historically some of these could be dismissed as professional schools without any role within the university as defined by the arts and sciences, whereas others achieved such a role in the university at the cost of their Christian particularity and of their professional mission as schools for the ministers of the Church."[1]

Are such losses—a "role within the university," "Christian particularity," and "professional mission"—inevitable also for the STM in a Catholic university? I do not believe so. STM faculty members, administrators, and students desire to remain united with their Catholic congregations. Further, the Catholic theological tradition is safeguarded, on the one hand, by the magisterium, and on the other, by the traditional Catholic connecting of theology and praxis. The STM's clear and strongly affirmed Catholic identity in fact helps it to be whole-heartedly ecumenical and embrace the Boston College mission statement affirming "different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life."

2. *The School's Relationship to the Church*

A school of theology and ministry serves the Catholic Church not only by its research and preparation of ministers, but also as a professional school that challenges as well as serves the "profession," i.e., the church. The STM can do this, less by providing neat answers to contemporary problems than by suggesting new possibilities. I see three pressing challenges that the STM can help the broader church to address: handing on the faith; helping lay people, especially women, find their place; and assisting Hispanic Catholics.

(A) *The Challenge of Handing on the Faith to the Next Generation.* If there is one worry common to all Christian parents, it is the seeming indifference of the younger generation to their faith tradition. The STM can offer help. Surveying modern religious education practices, the late Cardinal Avery Dulles concluded that the method called "shared Christian praxis"—rooted in experience and reflection, aligned with Scripture and tradition, and designed for action—was the most balanced and effective.[2] This model was developed by professor Thomas Groome at IREPM and it is taught in the STM.

(B) *The Challenges of Helping Women to Exercise Their Gifts.* The three major monotheistic faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—took shape in a world where men generally had the public roles and women the domestic ones. Today, the Catholic Church, like these other religions, struggles to adapt to a world where women enjoy public roles and offer their talents to the community. How should we interpret this development? I suggest we frame the discussion in the stunning growth of lay ecclesial ministry (the bishops' preferred term) in the Catholic Church. In his widely used *Theology of Ministry,* Thomas O'Meara, OP, concluded, contrary to what one might infer from the declining number of clergy, that the Catholic Church actually is experiencing an unparalleled surge in ministerial energy, a phenomenon that began even before Vatican II. Lay ministry has risen so naturally and quietly from the grass roots that only relatively recently has it become the object of explicit reflection.

"I am confident that the candidates for ordination, whom we teach here, will draw vitality from their lay ministry friends."

But lay ecclesial ministry is changing forever the face of ministry in the Catholic Church. One can compare similar energy bursts in history: the martyrs in the early church, the monasteries in the Middle Ages, mendicant orders and lay men's and women's communities in the 13th century, missionary orders in the 16th and 17th centuries, lay people's and sisters' administering of church institutions in Europe in the 17th to the 19th centuries. At present that energy seems to be entering the church through lay ecclesial ministry, and it seems to recover the multiple charisms of the early church. Historically, such energy bursts have not killed off other growths, but have made them grow. I am confident that the candidates for ordination, whom we teach here, will draw vitality from their lay ministry friends.

(C) *The Challenge of Enabling the Rapidly Increasing U. S. Hispanic Catholic Community to Put Down Roots and Share its Gifts.* Of Catholics born since 1983, two in five are Hispanic, and within 20 years, some demographers predict, well over half of U.S. Catholics will be Hispanic. Seventy percent of Hispanics self-identify as Catholics.

Instead of encouraging separate Hispanic parishes, the U.S. bishops added Spanish masses and services in non-Hispanic parishes, preferring integration to separateness. The result has avoided ethnic enclaves, but it also has caused unsettling transitions as clergy and congregations try to accommodate to a new culture. The STM is well positioned to prepare pastoral leadership for the new communities, for it has two professors of Hispanic theology and ministry as well as a Hispanic ministry program with 32 students and the promise of more through special recruitment efforts.

In conclusion, the School of Theology and Ministry proudly reflects Boston College's commitment to provide superior theological education and formation for ministry in the United States and around the world. We look forward to continuing our service to the Catholic Church in educating priests and lay ecclesial ministers for years to come.

Rev. Richard J. Clifford, SJ, is the academic dean of Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

Notes

1. *The Melody of Theology: A Philosophical Dictionary* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988) 263.
2. "Historical Models of Catechesis," *Origins* 37.22 (Oct. 11, 2007) 347-52.

The Parish as a School of Prayer

Deacon James Keating, Ph.D.

Christ came among us to show us the way to the Father. In fact, we learned by his life that he is the way (Jn 14:6). This truth from revelation evokes awe and wonder in those who allow the mystery of Christ to reach their hearts. The normal setting for such an encounter with Christ is deep within the heart but in the context of parish sacramental life. The possibility of such an encounter in its simple accessibility to all persons could not be greater proof of God's love for us. His love is ever near and salvation is accessible not arcane or burdensome. And yet, the intimacy Christ offers is oftentimes only partially accepted. Why are some Catholics seemingly satisfied with only a superficial relationship with Christ?

The Culture of Distraction

The answer to this question is a deep mystery, a mystery wrapped up in our fallen nature, in our penchant toward negating the spiritual in favor of the "worldly," the immediate, and the distracting. We live in a culture of distraction—addiction to technological entertainment, impatience with all manner of suffering or limit, a thirst for immediacy, an obsession with lust, a craving for speed, a decadent voracity for food. In receiving this culture within our minds and affect we receive only anxiety. Due to our sophistication in technology we have more leisure but, unfortunately, no rest. Why? Simply put, when the culture of distraction defines us we become more filled with the self, the ego. Everything becomes measured on the scale of usefulness to and entertainment for *the self*. Intrinsic value is jettisoned for utilitarian value. The culture of distraction bequeaths to us a profound loneliness, which is the scent of dead and dying things. At the heart of our times is a continual anxiety because we are fighting for our lives…for our lives to be lived out of our souls and not out of the immediate needs of the moment. What is most pathetic, however, is that we think we are living meaningful lives simply because we are busy, a busy-ness that is in truth only our distracted egos avoiding spiritual substance.

"What is most pathetic, however, is that we think we are living meaningful lives simply because we are busy, a busy-ness that is in truth only our distracted egos avoiding spiritual substance."

If intimacy with Christ is ever to define our lives and form our characters then we must accept the antidote to this culture of distraction. Such an antidote is already at hand…it is the life of the parish emanating from the mystery of the sacraments. And at the core of this life is the simple yet frequently resisted key to ending our feverish cultural pace: prayer. Rest is found only in communion with God and others.

Christ is accessible to us from within the heart and from the within the heart of the parish, the sacraments, but that doesn't mean that such accessibility is not without its obstacles. Since we are a culture addicted to immediate distractions, to turn within and listen to the Sacred Heart speaking to our human heart will require spiritual transformation. In this conversion there will be some pain or suffering. Once we begin to turn toward a life of interiority and away from our previous lives of "enjoying" distractions we will resist the turn since these former values are now threatened. In other words, our previous habits of finding consolation in the culture of distraction will not go gently away. Due to this spiritual struggle prayer may not at first seem attractive. It might be a place of struggle where the memories of past cultural consolations push against the promise and hope of the peace that is coming in communion with Christ. This struggle is a sign of a necessary purification of will, desire, and memory. Prayer resists having the value of immediate gratification imposed upon it as it prepares us to receive a deeper and longer lasting value.

Prayer is one of the most longed for realities and therefore, perhaps, one of the most romanticized realities. In truth prayer is a commitment of the will as is any act of love. We commit ourselves to prayer when we desire to know him who is its object. Prayer is a way of living fully, it is being fully alive, a way of engaging reality with mind, heart and will. Prayer welcomes the transfiguration that accompanies our commitment to love God from within the human heart in the context of sacrament and parish community. In time this life will carry consolations but to desire communion with the Holy is to first enter a foreign world. This world beckons us by way of our own restlessness, our own attempts at radical independence from God and the misery that follows such ill-fated choices. From within our misery, our emptiness, we hear the call to ecstasy. Such misery gives rise to our questions about life's meaning, about our own individual choices, and our use of freedom. When we receive prayer as the gift that it is we welcome its fruit which is peace, an interior life in regular, if not constant, communion with the divine. To enter prayer then is to begin a life of hope.

"The priest is to be our spiritual master, the one who teaches us that life is a prayer."

The Priest as Spiritual Teacher

This process of purification is to occur in parish life under the guidance of priests who are committed to relinquishing their own ego in favor of a consciousness that welcomes an ever deepening receptivity to the Word. The priest is to be our spiritual master, the one who teaches us that life is a prayer. As John Paul II encouraged, "Your first duty as pastors is not projects and organizations but to lead your people to a deep intimacy with the Trinity."[1] From such a priest we learn to receive grace and to make ourselves available to the Paschal Mystery, not as a theological idea but as the very principle of living.

While acknowledging the demands of contemporary parish life, a challenging question for pastors still arises: Who is going to transform the parish into a school of prayer if he does not? An even deeper question can be put forward to pastors: Will you know the depths of happiness as a priest if you do not become a teacher of prayer? What was the sacrifice of wife and family for if not to offer your life so that others may enter the deepest of intimacy with God? Prayer life, to emphasize what was said above, is NOT natural to us. We need grace to enter the struggle to commune with God and leave distraction and sin behind. "If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth" (Col 3:1-2). Such thinking does not alight upon us as an easy habit and so the urgency to find teachers of prayer becomes self-evident. If the priest is to become a teacher of prayer what might he begin to ponder to assist him or his delegates in taking the parish in the direction of becoming a school of prayer?

Initiating a School of Prayer

First, the pastor ought to make the call to his parish to enter a life of prayer from out of his own spiritual conversion, one that has marked his identity and ministry. At minimum the call ought to emerge from his own desire to deepen whatever level of intimacy his prayer life has achieved thus far in his priestly life. The authenticity of the call and the passion which commits the pastor to make this call continual, and not episodic, will be key to the success of creating parishes as schools of prayer. This does not mean that the pastor teaches or preaches in an autobiographical manner. Rather, he draws his passion to teach about the saints' prayer or liturgical prayer or *lectio divina* from the power of his own conversion. He draws attention not to himself but to the interior life and its fruits.

Second, understanding the parish as a school of prayer is not idiosyncratic but comes forth from the mystery of Christ himself whose very presence ignited a rush of desire in the apostles, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk 11:1). In our day Pope John Paul II encouraged parishes to become schools of prayer.

> Yes…our Christian communities must become *genuine "schools" of prayer,* where the meeting with Christ is expressed not just in imploring help but also in thanksgiving, praise, adoration, contemplation, listening and ardent devotion, until the heart truly "falls in love." Intense prayer, yes, but it does not distract us

> from our commitment to history: by opening our heart to the love of God it also opens it to the love of our brothers and sisters, and makes us capable of shaping history according to God's plan.[2]

Third, consider in the quote above how the pope had to quell the fears of some believers who hold that prayer is a rival to ministry. On the contrary, prayer doesn't distract us from service, it is the origin of Christian charity, it is the sustenance of Christian charity, and it is the power of Christian charity. These unfounded fears that prayer undermines service actually create a profound contradiction in the heart of Christians. To name prayer as the foe of service is to name it as the distraction of our age, when in fact prayer is the cure for the unanchored mind that haunts the present culture. Such fears about prayer crop up in ecclesial environments that have become overly politicized. It is as if the parish's social ministry is born from political ideology rather than from the heart of Christ.

No ministry of service is fruitful unless it flows from prayer. That is, no ministry will move the minister, and those whom he or she serves, toward salvation if it does not found its acts of charity upon communion with the Savior. Of course non-praying people can serve the poor, teach, run hospitals, and fight against attacks on the unborn, the elderly, and minorities. By which I mean that such good work can reach a utilitarian end—mouths are fed, lessons are learned, and people are healed, but it does not reach its evangelical ecclesial end. In ministry Christ is to become explicitly known. In such ministry knowledge of Christ would be received by both the minister and those who benefit from such a commitment of service. Communion with Christ IS what distinguishes ministry from good deeds, and justifies a parish putting its resources into such benevolence. In fact, today, when Catholic universities, hospitals and other Catholic agencies are downplaying their explicit Catholic identity in favor of the codes of pluralism, tolerance and hospitality it redounds to the parish to keep the explicit nature of belief in Christ alive.

Few, if any, other institutions within the church will teach prayer or are as free to do so today as is the parish. And so, to call the parish a school of prayer is not to undermine its public mission but instead it is to establish this mission upon the only enduring reality in any and all service…the community's love of Jesus Christ as a response to his enduring love. To this end the pastor guides the parish to cherish the vital role that prayer plays in the public role of parish life.

"This form of communication will heal, convert, release gifts, and deepen contemplation in the parishioners because it comes from the docility of the pastor toward the Spirit."

Fourth, due to the nature of parish life today the pastor may want to focus his limited time to teaching his diaconal or religious education staff to become teachers of prayer. Directly with his people, then, the pastor may want to contemplate using the pulpit in new and powerful ways to evoke within parishioners a commitment to prayer. As St. Peter Eymard noted, "The preacher is a man who prays out loud."[3] In other words, the homily ought not to be a time for information about Scripture but it ought to be a living *lectio divina*, an expression of the intimacy the pastor has with Christ, the Word. In so doing the pastor allows the pulpit to become an arena for the Spirit's movement. This intimacy with Christ that possesses the pastor is not the kind that causes embarrassment for the congregation as when spouses give too much detail about their own feelings for one another. Instead this intimacy informs the homily in a way that leaves the congregation more interested in Christ then in the homilist. This form of communication will heal, convert, release gifts, and deepen contemplation in the parishioners because it comes from the docility of the pastor toward the Spirit. It would seem that the day is long passed for homilies to be only expressions of the critical historical method learned in seminary class. Instead, the homily needs to be a testimony to the living God. Hopefully, due to papal encouragement,[4] the historical critical method will be seen simply as a tool and not the exclusive way of intelligently approaching the scripture for homily preparation.

The parish will not become prayerful by simply having the homilist lead the people in recollections about past history or the intentions of the scriptural authors (e.g., homilies that are pulpit instruction on the political realities of Jesus' day, the variegated kinds of religious leaders and their roles, the reduction of the supernatural to the natural or superstitious, etc.). So, if other matters press at the pastor and he cannot be the direct teacher of prayer, then he can guide the whole process by use of the pulpit, and by training the trainers of prayer. In this way he can be seen to encourage the people's prayerfulness and complement the adult faith formation already happening in the parish.

Keeping Prayer Simple

Most believers would rather do most anything else than pray. This is our pathetic state: to disdain that which is the fount of our joy. Therefore, it is best to follow a simple approach to prayer, one that is teachable to all. St Peter Eymard, parish priest, lays the groundwork for such an approach. Note, however, that this simple approach to prayer while accessible to all manner of parishioner is hardly without depth. In fact, from the following statement by Peter Eymard one could catechize on prayer for many an hour.

> In your prayer, seek to nourish yourself on God, rather than…humbling yourself. To do this: nourish your mind with the truth personified in God's goodness towards you…his personal love; here is the secret of true prayer. See the action and mind of God IN HIS LOVE FOR YOU! Then, in wonder, your soul will cry out… "How good you are my God. What can I do for you? What will please you?" There is the fire of the furnace.[5]

At the depths of the mystery of prayer is this profound truth received by Eymard: "What must I do? I must give myself to Jesus Christ and serve him BY THIS GIFT, the holocaust of self…. 'I want not what is yours but you'" [says the Lord].[6]

Eymard evokes a familiar pattern within his simple form of prayer, that of call and response. God comes to us first and calls to us, inviting us to attend to his loving presence. We respond to God in prayer in and through Christ, who is the Open Door through which all of God's children can walk to encounter the Father's love.[7] In coming to the Father in prayer we not only receive his presence but we receive our mission in life. One can only really pray, have communion with God, from within obedience to one's mission.[8] So, this implies that the pastor must teach not only the virtue of *receptivity* to God's loving presence but also its sister virtue, the skill of *discernment*. Once we are open to God's love, we can then distinguish between interior movements born of unpurified desire and movements that carry the call of God to deeper intimacy and mission (vocation). And so the parish is called to school its people in three movements of prayer.

1. Parish members are to learn how to *receive* spiritual nourishment from God's love.
2. Parish members are to learn how to *discern* the mission that such a love gives to each member.
3. Having fully received a mission, parish members now allow their prayers to arise from within their *enacted fidelity* to it.

Receptivity leads to *discernment* which leads *to mission* which leads to *the holocaust of the selfish ego* and the ever *deepening intimacy between one's self-offering to God and God's reception of this offering as his own gift to the one who prays.* [9] At the depths of the mystery of prayer is this profound truth received by Eymard: "What must I do? I must give myself to Jesus Christ and serve him BY THE GIVING, the holocaust of self…. 'I want not what is yours but you'" [says the Lord].[10] What can pastors learn about prayer, and how to teach it, from this powerful description of its nature? Let's look now, in some detail, at Eymard's constitution on prayer.

A Simple Blueprint for Prayer

> In your prayer, seek to nourish yourself on God, rather than…humbling yourself. To do this: nourish your mind with the truth personified in God's goodness towards you…his personal love; here is the secret of true prayer. See the action and mind of God IN HIS LOVE FOR YOU! Then, in wonder, your soul will cry out… "How good you are my God. What can I do for you? What will please you?" There is the fire of the furnace.

"This food is simply the reality of God as he presents himself to our minds as truth and our wills as goodness itself."

God will do most of the work in developing our character into one that is constituted by prayer. Prayer itself will humble us, its demand for time, its internal sufferings in the early stages of our commitment to it, its various graces that instruct us in our own weaknesses and God's generosity. Primarily we are called to feed off of prayer; time with God is to become our food. This food is simply the reality of God as he presents himself to our minds as truth and our wills as goodness itself. In receiving such our intellect is enlightened and our desires purified and inflamed anew by the Spirit, who is the divine encounter. Eymard counsels that this is the "secret" of prayer: to receive the love of God.[11] With this "secret" we are near the heart of what ignites a parish to become a spiritual community. Of course no pastor can manufacture or conjure receptivity in his people toward the goodness of God's love, but he can intercede for his people to be open to such, describe what such means, give testimony that such is not simply possible but DESIRED by God. God wants to reach his people in and through the life of the parish. Finally, the pastor may also offer personal sacrifices interceding that his people will receive the love of God by his own fasting, prayer, and works of charity.

A contemporary of St Peter Eymard, St John Vianney, once noted, "There will come a time when many will be so tired of men that they will not be able to hear about God without crying." Bishop Bagnard (present day bishop of the diocese where the Cure D'Ars lived) said, "I believe that it is in our time now that people are longing for God and that we, as priests, have to bring them to Him."[12]

The feeling of being "tired of men" can itself be the stirring of the Holy Spirit in us. The Spirit already is moving us to find little meaning in the superficialities of our age and look for sturdier fare in communion with himself. Sometimes, then, prayer begins when the weight of human folly presses upon our consciousness: so much political division, rationalizing of sin, fear and tepidity toward witnessing for the faith. Such dead weight presses upon us and we cry out, we are "tired of men." Sometimes we are so caught up in the current age that we don't even know why we are saddened, depressed, lethargic. In due course the pastor can open the eyes of his parish by inviting its members to leave the dispositions toward distraction and false meaning behind and to instead find refreshment in receiving God in prayer. The tears that will flow are a combination of hope and regret. One regrets the choice to sin, choices that make one's life so puny, self-enclosed, and superficial. Alternately, one hopes the Father will bequeath to us a new identity, one that is defined by his providence and care become enfleshed: Jesus Christ.

Ultimately, being "tired of men" does not mean a retreat from culture; it means something more demanding: a dedication to Christ IN CULTURE. By way of the laity and their secular character, new dispositions can fill the culture with hope, joy, justice, and love, dispositions born of intimacy with God rather than those born of affection for this passing age. Eymard is clear that these dispositions will never fill the secular culture if parishioners do not let the desire of God to be with them extinguish sin.

> But, O God, Jesus is loved little…. The reason is that we love…the self all the while…. We are like a ship fastened to the shore; it floats on the water of the sea, but it does not leave its moorings; it merely bobs up and down…. O my God sever these moorings…plunge me into the sea…."[13]

To be "tired of men" can be the beginning of our intercession to God to "plunge us into the sea." We are meant to "go deep" by way of the disciplines, celebrations, and challenges of parish life. The entire regimen of parish life is ordered toward preparing us to cry out to God, "sever these moorings." All good pastors desire to take parishioners deep, to take them into the spiritual life and not leave them "fastened to the shore" of this current culture.

> **"To receive the love of God and then respond with the gift of self is the fruit of allowing the Eucharist to penetrate one's life."**

After receiving the love of God and noticing the weight of our sins in this age we then respond. "Then, in wonder, your soul will cry out…'How good you are my God. What can I do for you? What will please you?' There is the fire of the furnace." From out of the power of receiving his love in contrast to the anemia of popular culture and the fare it offers the heart realizes that it has found true food, something to really give nourishment to the soul. The heart has received the love of God in the Spirit dwelling within. As with all love once it is received we are transformed by its nature and so become like that which we have received. So we ask, "Now what may I do for you? How may I give my life to you God?" Eymard notes that this response, the oblation of the selfish self to God, is the fire, the source of our life's meaning. To receive the love of God and then respond with the gift of self is the fruit of allowing the Eucharist to penetrate one's life. The entire mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection is present in the Eucharist and each parishioner receives this mystery in Holy Communion. When subjective and communal conditions are right (that is when the individual and the community actively seek to receive the grace of salvation) then to form the human person in holiness is really the "triumph of the Eucharist."[14] Our response to Christ is to make the transformation he is working in us by way of the Eucharist and our continuing prayer to receive this mystery a dedicated public life. By the power of prayer our lives are to become a transformed public life giving witness to Christ.

At the depths of the mystery of prayer is this profound truth received by Eymard: "What must I do? I must give myself to Jesus Christ and serve him BY THE GIFT, the holocaust of self…. I want not what is yours but you" [says the Lord].[15]

The pastor aims his people toward active interiority, toward a life where the activity of prayer in the heart is as real as one's schedule dictating the day's activities, from chores, to shopping, to work, to leisure. When the parish becomes a school of prayer its members notice a shift in consciousness wherein prayer becomes as real as other activities. Prayer is not a dream or a "waste of time" or something for "introverts." Prayer is who we are becoming as we actively seek to have the Eucharist, the very mystery of Jesus' self offering upon the cross, define our lives. God is only interested in his relationship with us: "I want not what is yours but YOU." This interest in us on God's part is both consoling and frightening as we alternately seek him and seek to hide from him in our distracted modern lives. We seek him because the comfort and meaning our sins give is meager, we hide from him because it means leaving this meager, albeit habitual, food behind. Sin is a food one can come to love. Prayer is desperately needed by we who find meaning in choosing against our very welfare. From the heart of the parish a cry goes out, "Have Mercy on us." He will have mercy because his heart is configured to respond in love to those who languish in sin.[16]

Finally, we look to Mary, the Mother of God, prototype of the church at prayer. Her life indicates what God is able to do in and through us when we are totally docile to the life of the Spirit within. If the parish is to become a school of prayer, she must lead us to her spouse the Holy Spirit and we must receive this divine spouse from within our hearts thus igniting a desire for holiness. Practically, we look to Mary as she led the small group of apostles into prayer at Pentecost as they awaited the coming of her spouse upon them and the whole church. Any transformation of the parish into a school of prayer will begin in small cells of praying men and women and then, in time, flame out to larger venues. In reverencing this smallness we follow the very way of God at Pentecost. This small beginning, however, is only in the service of the hope that all in the parish will become pray-ers of great depth.

"This school has its own dean, the pastor. This dean loves prayer more than any other reality because he has given his life over to God completely and the activity of serving God's people even as he remains in contemplation."

Conclusion

The parish when fully established as itself *is a school of prayer*. It is a sacramental community open to being affected by the movements of God in love toward each and every member. This school has its own dean, the pastor. This dean loves prayer more than any other reality because he has given his life over to God completely and the activity of serving God's people even as he remains in contemplation. The curriculum of this school is elementary: Teach the people the signs of God desiring to come close (an exhaustion with "this age" and all its distractions). Teach the people to receive God's love (allow the affections to carry God's grace to the mind and will). Teach the people to discern the movements of God in the soul (to distinguish immediate passing emotions and ideas from those that carry a divine invitation to healing and truth). Teach the people how to make a self-offering to God the Father during the Eucharistic Liturgy, especially after the reception of Holy Communion (saying simply, "Jesus, take us to the Father"). Teach the people that in their own self-offering God is receiving them and in his receiving them he is giving them their greatest gift: communion with the divine. In this pattern of life a parish places prayer at its core and from this core the parish disposition changes, a change that focuses upon the mission identity of the laity, a mission built upon sharing this virtue of communion with God with the world. Such a sharing is not pious in some sentimental way, but in fact, such a sharing may ask for courage, endurance, and for one to withstand rejection. Praying is only sentimental in those who have never really encountered Christ and his words about discipleship being a cross and not simply consolation (Mk 8:34). Eymard takes us to the core of what prayer asks of us and asks our parishes to become:

> My heart must draw its inspiration from the heart of Jesus…love alone forms the mind…thought depends on love…I must be to Jesus what Jesus was to His Father…[eagerly and totally available].[17]

Appendix: Prayer

32. This training in holiness calls for a Christian life distinguished above all in the art of prayer…. We have to learn to pray: as it were learning this art ever anew from the lips of the Divine Master himself, like the first disciples: "Lord, teach us to pray!" (Lk 11:1). Prayer develops that conversation with Christ which makes us his intimate friends: "Abide in me and I in you" (Jn 15:4). This reciprocity is the very substance and soul of the Christian life…. Wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, this reciprocity opens us, through Christ and in Christ, to contemplation of the Father's face.

33. The great mystical tradition… shows how prayer can progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved, vibrating at the Spirit's touch, resting filially within the Father's heart.

Yes…our Christian communities must become genuine "schools" of prayer, where the meeting with Christ is expressed not just in imploring help but also in thanksgiving, praise, adoration, contemplation, listening and ardent devotion, until the heart truly "falls in love." Intense prayer, yes, but it does not distract us from our commitment to history: by opening our heart to the love of God it also opens it to the love of our brothers and sisters, and makes us capable of shaping history according to God's plan.

34. It is therefore essential that education in prayer should become in some way a key point of all pastoral planning…. How helpful it would be if…in parishes more were done to ensure an all-pervading climate of prayer. With proper discernment, this would require that popular piety be given its proper place, and that people be educated especially in liturgical prayer. (*Novo Millennio Ineunte,* 2001)

Deacon James Keating, Ph.D., is director of theological formation, Institute for Priestly Formation, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska.

Endnotes

1. Pope John Paul II, address to the Austrian bishops.
2. *NOVO MILLENNIO INEUNTE* 2001, n. 33; see also, John Paul II, "The Eucharist as a School of Prayer," *Origins* 28 (April 8, 1999): 729.
3. Andre Guitton, *Eymard: Apostle of the Eucharist* (Ponteranica: Centro Eucharistico 1996) p. 328.
4. John Paul II n. 9 in "Introduction," The Pontifical Biblical Commission's *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* 1993; see also, Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth,* (NY: Doubleday, 2007).
5. Guitton, p. 36.
6. Guitton, p. 227.
7. See Raymond Gawronski, *Word and Silence* (London: T&T Clark, 1995) 149.
8. Gawronski, p. 163.
9. There is a complementary method of prayer, equally simple, found in the writings of Jean Jacques Olier. We offer ourselves to God in light of our sins and ask for forgiveness, we adore Jesus before our eyes, we open our heart to him in communion interiorly, and finally we beg him to accomplish his will in our actions this day (see *Alive For God In Christ*, Proceedings, Buffalo: St John Eudes Center 1995, pp. 109-111).
10. Guitton, p. 227.
11. See also, Jean Corborn, *The Wellspring of Worship* (San Francisco, Ignatius, 2005) p.37. "The most fruitful activity of the human person is to be able to receive the love of God."
12. "Speech by Bishop Bagnard" in *The Boston Pilot*, Friday, October 20, 2006.
13. Guitton, p. 232.
14. Guitton, p. 258.
15. Guitton, p. 227.
16. For a remedy to one's own love of sin see: James Keating, "The Eucharist and the Healing of Affection for Sin" (*Emmanuel,* March/April 2007), pp. 107ff.
17. Guitton, p. 231.

Clericalism: The Death of Priesthood

by Rev. George B. Wilson, SJ, Liturgical Press, 2008

Reviewed by Rev. William A. Barry, SJ

With his usual clear and trenchant style, the Jesuit theologian and organizational consultant George Wilson names the elephant in the living room of the Roman Catholic Church that may be the biggest obstacle to its moving in a healthy way beyond the trauma caused by the sexual abuse crisis: clericalism. This book is not, however, a jeremiad but a thorough analysis and diagnosis of the problem and a down-to-earth, practical offer of how to counter its effects.

First, Wilson shows that the word "clergy" applies to a host of professions where one group becomes known for the service and/or expertise that it offers to those not of the guild, namely, "laity." Lawyers, doctors, professors, military, and ordained ministers are clergy according to this definition, and all are prone to clericalism, a kind of culture that exalts belonging to the guild over relationships and that is shared by both the "clerics" and the "laity." Wilson describes the elements of any culture and unmasks the unexamined assumptions that lurk in the minds and hearts of both the "clergy" and the "laity" in these cultures. The analysis of what any culture is like forms part of Wilson's attempt to separate the notion of priesthood from that of clergy.

Wilson, following the New Testament and the Second Vatican Council, indicates that priesthood applies first and foremost to all the baptized, some of whom are singled out for ordained priesthood. Priesthood, in this sense, refers to the call to holiness of all the baptized, a holiness that is shown in relationships of love and service between all the members. Professions (clergy) are necessary developments in any society, including the churches, but professionalization brings in its train the dangers of clericalism—dangers Wilson spells out for all professions. But it must be remembered that everyone involved in a culture where there are "clergy" and "laity" are prone to these dangers. As he writes, all of us are responsible for the cultures we inhabit.

This analysis of cultures and "clergification" leads him then to an attempt to show how clericalism functioned in bringing about the sexual abuse crisis. Wilson develops this section by using the metaphor of an unfolding drama, showing how gradually various "clergies" (priestly, legal, media) got involved and how clericalism made it very difficult for the actors in the drama to engage in helpful Christian relationships. The chapter is a *tour de force* that helps the reader to see how all of us Roman Catholics were affected and still are affected by the unfolding tragedy. As Wilson points out, trying to assign blame is no easy task where all are caught in a culture. This is not to deny that great damage was done and that some individuals were morally and criminally responsible for that damage; it is only to recognize that our desire to lay all the blame on these individuals may be a way to assuage the nagging sense of guilt many of us church members feel because we are part of the culture that enabled the tragedy.

George Wilson would not be true to himself if he left it at this analysis alone, helpful though it is. In the fifth and sixth chapters he presents practical and helpful suggestions for both the ordained and the lay members of the Christian priesthood to begin to change the clerical culture that led to our present plight. What this amounts to is summarized in the title of the fifth chapter, "Transformation: Repriesting a Clericalized Church." Basically, he calls for the transformation of a culture where clericalism prevails to one where all of us live out our shared priesthood—a very difficult, but not impossible task.

He lists principles for this process: Transformation is a shared responsibility; it will take time; it will show itself in changed behavior rather than in concepts; and it will involve conflict. The most important element for successful transformation will be for all parties to recognize their fundamental identity as Christians called to live and work together for the sake of the kingdom God is building. In the final chapter he gives practical suggestions as to how the "clergy" and the "laity" together can begin the process of transforming the present clerical culture of the Roman Catholic Church. It is fitting to recommend this book as a very helpful step toward the reconciliation needed in the Roman Catholic Church itself.

Rev. William A. Barry, SJ, is the former editor-in-chief of Human Development magazine. He is a priest of the New England Province of the Society of Jesus, an author, a spiritual director, and a lecturer.

Child, Victim, Soldier: The loss of Innocence in Uganda

by Rev. Donald H. Dunson, Ph.D., Orbis Books, 2008

Reviewed by Rev. Thomas M. Dragga

A few weeks ago I found an autographed copy of the book *Child, Victim, Soldier* written by my colleague and longtime friend Donald H. Dunson. Immediately I thought what a generous gift. After reading the book, I have to amend my thought to suggest it was a very generous gift that keeps on giving. With each page I found myself being drawn more and more into the lives and legacy of the children and parents of those abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army.

In the course of eight chapters, Donald introduces you to children who have experienced the horrors of war, the pain of abduction, torture, and sexual exploitation. While I have never met Sunday Obote, Martin, Richard Opio, Oscar, Margaret, baby Joy and so many others, Donald's courageously crafted text invites you to peer inside their experience of pain and suffering, journey with them from death and hopelessness to deep and abiding faith and new life. *Child, Victim, Soldier* not only brings you into the tragic lives of countless children, but also the wonderful life of living saints like Sister Rosemary, Archbishop Odama, mothers and fathers like Josephine who recount in graphic detail the abduction of their children into the LRA. Their detailed stories speak volumes of a condition in a part of our world that has up until this moment gone untold.

Donald Dunson boldly suggests that the story of the child, victim, soldier in Uganda has gone untold because the country produces nothing we might need or want, geographically placed in a region that provides no harm or shelter for richer lands. The story has up until this moment gone untold because its greatest commodity is simply the children. Yet, in 145 pages, Father Dunson provides the reader with griping detail that will challenge your moral compass, enrage your senses with regard to crimes against humanity, and deepen your spiritual commitment to embrace the command of Jesus Christ to "love one another as I have loved you."

Child, Victim, Soldier gently but ever so unflinchingly moves the reader to a new understanding of the land of Africa and the LRA. Holding fast to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, Father Dunson, a diocesan priest and moral theologian, provides us with a sense of the history, political issues, and the heart-wrenching real-life experiences of those who day in and day out desire nothing more than to grow up not robbed of their childhood. Father Dunson writes, "It is obvious to me that all that the children want is to sleep safely in their own homes with their parents, enough food for the day, and the promise of a chance to build a more peaceful and humane world than the one given to them in their childhood. This work, while meant to expose the reader to the conditions in a land they know not and to a people that have not been identified or popularized in the social justice circles of the parish basement meeting room, does so much more. Envious as I am at the way Don can weave words together, this book provides the reader with a spiritual sojourn that brings you from despair and anger to hope and action. A good read but an even better spiritual experience.

Rev. Thomas M. Dragga is the president-rector of Borromeo Seminary.

The Emerging Diaconate: Servant Leaders in a Servant Church

by Deacon William T. Ditewig, Paulist Press, 2007

Reviewed by Deacon Thomas J. Giacobbe

Deacon William T. Ditewig—until recently executive director of the Secretariat for the Diaconate at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and now associate professor of theology and religious studies at St. Leo University in Florida—has written extensively about the diaconate. Ditewig's latest book, *The Emerging Diaconate: Servant Leaders in a Servant Church*, is his most significant, as in it he has succinctly summarized the current state of the diaconate in the United States. Ditewig offers practical suggestions to bishops, theologians, liturgists, and formation directors while articulating some unresolved important issues in the restored diaconate. "It is a central thesis of this work," writes Ditewig, "that a significant difficulty exists in understanding the contemporary diaconate as a proper and permanent order."

Part 1, "The Present Diaconate and How We Got There," provides a concise overview of the diaconate in the United States today. Some fascinating facts emerge. For example, the diaconate is more racially diverse than the priesthood; and men coming into final formation, whether for the priesthood or diaconate, arrive with similar educations. Ditewig also provides a well-documented historical summary. He begins with the sparse biblical references to deacons, and next he summarizes the rich patristic period (circa 150-600 AD). He describes decrees about the diaconate from the Council of Trent in 1562, early 20th century experiences in Germany and France, World War II insights coming from the Shoah, and the rich history of Vatican Council II that restored the diaconate and made it a permanent order again.

In Part 2, "Toward a Theology of the Diaconate," Ditewig identifies theological themes necessary for the renewed and still-emerging diaconate. Since "Toward" is the first word in the title of this part, not surprisingly, the theology lacks a cohesive order. Instead, he lists theological themes and briefly explores them.

Because many readers of this book will likely gravitate to the unresolved issues and suggestions for the restored diaconate, this review comments on five.

> **"The restored diaconate is an evolving order and should not be restricted to the diaconate of the biblical or patristic periods."**

A Still-Evolving Order

The restored diaconate is an evolving order and should not be restricted to the diaconate of the biblical or patristic periods. Like the presbyterate and episcopate that have evolved, the restored diaconate needs time to evolve. For nearly 1,500 years, the diaconate has been stagnant, serving mainly as a liturgical formality to the priesthood; its rebirth has only begun. Rather than describing a deacon functionally, Ditewig writes, "What history shows is an order flexible in its exercise and adaptable to a variety of pastoral situations; this makes the diaconate an order pregnant with potential in meeting contemporary needs."

Roles of The Deacon

Through ordination, a deacon is constituted as a living *icon* of Christ the servant; he is "the Church's service sacramentalized," said Pope John Paul II. Because a deacon is a living icon, Cardinal Walter Kasper suggested having at least one deacon for every parish so that the sacramental nature of the parish might be complete. In other words, a parish is not sacramentally whole if it is without a priest *and* a deacon. A deacon's role, then, is more about what he *is* than what he *does*. Ditewig addressed preaching by deacons: "The early pioneers of a renewed diaconate in Germany and France, as well as the bishops at Vatican II, saw preaching as something they wanted contemporary deacons to do." Finally, in the absence of a priest, Canon 517 and subsequent Vatican documents give deacons precedence (over non-ordained persons) for a parish's pastoral care.

One-track to Two-track Hierarchy

Ditewig strongly recommends revising the one-track succession of grades in the church's hierarchy (*cursus honorum*)—deacon, priest, and bishop—a succession that appeared only as the diaconate declined beginning in the 5th century. Instead, Ditewig suggests a two-track hierarchy: deacon-bishop, and priest-bishop. Thus, eliminate diaconal ordination of seminarians studying for the priesthood, reserving diaconal ordination for deacon candidates. Theologically, a two-track hierarchy becomes a more vivid sacramental sign of Christ's presence and the church's mission: a serving church and a worshiping church. Furthermore, since deacons have been always connected directly to the bishop, an unresolved question remains: How will deacons, who participate in a non-priestly way, share in their bishop's pastoral ministry?

Changes to Diaconate Ordination

Consistent with the evolving role of the restored diaconate has been the evolving rite of ordination of deacons. The first ordination rite of the restored diaconate in 1968 was vastly improved by the second and current rite in 1990. But Ditewig discusses several major deficiencies in the current rite. For example, the essentially non-existent role of the community and assembly, failure to publicly re-commit married deacons to their sacrament of marriage while requiring commitment to celibacy (a non-sacrament) for transitional deacons, a need in the rite for more emphasis on a deacon's role to serve, and major changes to the suggested homily for the ordaining bishop.

Hierarchal Silence

Ditewig addresses the silence of the Catholic Church's hierarchy (presumably bishops) about the diaconate. He writes, "A far greater number of significant official documents have either minimized or ignored the role of the deacon. It is important to attend to this silence." In addition to words, the hierarchy speaks through actions. Including a deacon when a bishop is involved with works of charity, social justice, evangelization, or ecumenism would attend to this silence.

This book should be required reading for all students of ecclesiology—seminarians, deacon candidates, ecclesial lay ministers, and those responsible for their formation. In addition, theologians and liturgists will find *The Emerging Diaconate* a good source for their continued work. And as they continue, "a significant difficulty (that) exists in understanding the contemporary diaconate as a proper and permanent order" will gradually disappear. Then, the renewed diaconate will emerge as a true and lasting gift to the church and the world.

Deacon Thomas J. Giacobbe was ordained a deacon in 1996 for the Diocese of Metuchen, New Jersey. He serves at his home parish of St. Charles Borromeo in Skillman, New Jersey, and as a chaplain at the Somerset County Jail and the University Medical Center at Princeton. He is a retired research chemist holding a doctorate in chemistry. He and his wife Bonnie have been married for 42 years, and they have 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

The Fulfillment of All Desire

by Ralph Martin, Emmaus Road Publishing, 2006

Review by Rev. Daniel B. Gallagher, Ph.L., S.T.L.

"In order to give an ever greater eucharistic form to his existence, the priest, beginning with his years in the seminary, should make his spiritual life his *highest priority*" (*Sacramentum Caritatis,* par. 80, italics mine). These words, taken from Pope Benedict XVI's post-synodal exhortation on the Eucharist, seem to place even greater emphasis on spiritual formation than had been the case 15 years earlier in the wake of the Episcopal Synod dedicated to seminary training. At that time, the bishops simply noted that spirituality is "an *extremely important* element of a priest's education" (Proposition 23 of the 1990 Synod of Bishops, italics mine).

Indeed, without undermining the other areas of integral priestly formation, it has become increasingly apparent that the "program" of holiness articulated by Pope John Paul II in *Novo Millennio Ineunte* will be advanced only if the church's ordained ministers make their spiritual life their "highest priority." Priests will find it extremely difficult to introduce others to Christ if they have not first gotten to know him themselves. As the Decree on Priestly Training from Vatican II states, "those who are to take on the likeness of Christ the priest by sacred ordination should form the habit of drawing close to him as friends in every detail of their lives" (*Optatam Totius,* par. 8).

In this self-subtitled "Guidebook for the Journey to God Based on the Wisdom of the Saints," Ralph Martin puts our relationship with God at the core of the spiritual life. "It's about responding to the One who has created and redeemed us, and who loves us with a love stronger than death, a love that desires to raise us from the dead" (pp. 120-121). This sentence captures the "biblical worldview" shared by the seven saints who accompany us throughout Martin's book: Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Catherine of Siena, Francis de Sales, Augustine of Hippo, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Thérèse of Lisieux.

With the help of these masters, the author leads us through the three phases of spiritual growth, proceeding from the purgative to the illuminative and finally to the unitive stage. This is only a rough division, however, for Martin freely moves from one topic to the next, not hesitating to approach an important point from different angles when necessary. Pride, for example, is discussed at length as one of the main obstacles along the illuminative way, only to be reexamined again later in Part II under the more deceptive form of "spiritual" pride. The book's rather loose organization might at first seem a weakness, but the reader quickly appreciates how Martin's unencumbered and unpretentious prose makes this book extraordinarily readable.

That seems to be precisely Martin's goal. He recalls the sense of discouragement he had when he first tried to read John of the Cross's *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* as a young student. How many of us have had the same experience! Yet if we want to dedicate time regularly to spiritual reading, we should ideally have the same experience Saint Ignatius of Loyola did after reading the

"With the help of these masters, the author leads us through the three phases of spiritual growth, proceeding from the purgative to the illuminative and finally to the unitive stage."

lives of the saints: *"Quidni?"* ("Why not?") he exclaimed, echoing Augustine's *"Si illi et istae, cur non ego?"* (If these men and women, why not I?). The problem is that our desire to uncover the treasures buried within the spiritual classics is often thwarted by archaic translations, a lack of familiarity with the historical and cultural context, or—as Martin humbly admits—insufficient life experience.

This book renders those same spiritual classics marvelously accessible. We are given brief biographical snapshots of the seven saints intermittently throughout the book, demonstrating that they had no interest in formulating abstract spiritual principles, but only those that emerged from the concrete struggles of daily life. We easily identify with these men and women as they strive to overcome human weakness and conquer vice on the road to sanctity. We also learn to share their thirst for Christian perfection. The reader gradually is persuaded that holiness is not only necessary, but also entirely possible with God's grace.

Several different uses could be made of this book. It would make a fine text for an introductory course on spirituality even at the undergraduate level. It easily could be used as an *iter* for spiritual direction in the internal forum. A retreat director would find plenty of material for spiritual conferences. Most enticing perhaps is the book's potential to teach future priests how to teach others to pray. "One aspect of the priest's mission," we read in *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* "and certainly by no means a secondary aspect, is that he is to be a 'teacher of prayer'" (par. 47). Martin models the simple, straightforward language most suitable for introducing others to prayer and the spiritual life.

Martin is just as forthright about the serious need for cultivating the life of the spirit as he is about its feasibility. He offers numerous passages from the saints that address the need to counter the tepid indifference so typical of the surrounding culture. Martin formulates the opposing "worldview" in terms that completely subvert Jesus' own teaching: "Broad and wide is the way that leads to heaven and many are traveling that road. Narrow is the path that leads to hell and hardly anyone is traveling that path." (p. 68)

This book demonstrates that for all its narrowness, the road to sanctity and authentic human fulfillment is nonetheless navigable. Martin neither pretends that it is without its potholes and bumps, nor overlooks the peace, joy, and beauty to be discovered along the way. He has skillfully arranged a cornucopia of the most brilliant passages from the great spiritual masters into a modern-day guidebook for anyone thirsting for a deeper relationship to the Triune God through simple, daily prayer and the practice of Christian charity—for in these alone is our joy complete.

Rev. Daniel B. Gallagher, M.A., Ph.L., S.T.L., a priest of the Diocese of Gaylord, currently serves in the Secretariat of State at the Vatican. He assists with priestly formation at the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

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In recognition of the 10th anniversary of *Seminary Journal*, the Seminary Department has introduced a new publication series: *The Core Elements of Priestly Formation Programs*. These collections of articles celebrate the "best practices" and wisdom and insight of a wide variety of seminary professionals and church leaders. With only a few exceptions the articles were selected from the archives of *Seminary Journal* (1995-2005). Articles included from other sources are printed with permission.

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