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STUDY ON PRIESTLY LIFE AND MINISTRY

**Summaries of the Report of the
Ad Hoc Bishops' Subcommittees on**

**HISTORY,
SOCIOLOGY and
PSYCHOLOGY**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC
BISHOPS**



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1971

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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Introductory Note

The materials in this booklet represent in summary form the findings of three of the eight subcommittees of the NCCB Ad Hoc Committee for the Study on Priestly Life and Ministry. These summaries of the Subcommittees on History, Sociology and Psychology were presented to the members of the NCCB at the plenary meeting in Detroit, Michigan, in April, 1971. The reports presented to the bishops were reproduced in their entirety together with the text of a special progress report on the entire Study also given to the bishops at that time by Cardinal Krol, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The work of the NCCB Ad Hoc Committee for the Study on Priestly Life and Ministry is not complete. Other subcommittees are still at work. Some of them are using the findings of the three subcommittees which have already reported to the Conference. As materials from other subcommittees become available, they will be reported to the Conference members and eventually be available for publication.

Report of John Cardinal Krol

Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for the
Study on Priestly Life and Ministry

Your Eminences and Your Excellencies:

The troubled state of human life throughout the world has intensified the difficulties which normally attend the life and ministry of priests. The priest experiences the normal difficulties of average human beings and reflects in his life the problems of the general population. Additionally, he experiences the normal problem of measuring up to the transcendental demands of the priestly ministry of being a man of God among men; of being in the world, but not of it; of conforming the world to Christ, without being conformed to it; of exercising a never changing ministry, of being sensitive to the changes in the life and conditions of those whom they serve, and of being witnesses and dispensers of a life other than this earthly one.

These difficulties which normally attend the life and ministry of priests, have been augmented in recent years by the radical and rapid social and moral changes in contemporary life. The Conciliar Decree on Priests (n. 22) referring to these radical and rapid changes observes that the Holy Spirit is impelling "the Church to open new avenues of approach to the contemporary world and is also suggesting and fostering fitting adaptations in the ministry of priests."

The Church in the United States has had a record of unparalleled growth. From the days of the first missionaries, through the heavy flow of immigrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it grew to a 17.7 million Catholic population with 21 thousand priests. Because of the discriminatory restrictions introduced in 1921 and 1924, the flow of Catholic immigrants was reduced to an insignificant trickle. Since 1920, through natural rather than immigrational accretion, the Catholic population grew from 17.7 to 47.8 million and the number of priests increased from 21 to 59 thousand, for an increase of 266% in population and 295% in the number of priests. The 50 year increase approximates the total population of such countries as Spain and Poland.

Such gratifying growth did not inhibit the bishops of the United States from directing their attention to the difficulties experienced in the life and ministry of priests as a result of the radical social and moral changes in contemporary life. The bishops were eager to learn the precise nature and dimensions of these difficulties. The Conciliar documents (Church in the Modern World, 62; Bishops, 16, 17; Priests, 22) recommended the use of the findings of religious, sociological, and psychological surveys to determine current problems and needs, and to adapt pastoral care and the ministry of priests to such needs. The stream of "scientific" surveys which appeared after the Council increased rather than dispelled confusion. Some of the surveys were spotty and biased and geared to a predetermined conclusion to serve as an instrument of propaganda. Some were the work of lobbyists rather than scholars.

At the April, 1967, meeting, the Conference of Bishops directed the Committee on Pastoral Research and Practices to conduct an intensive and extensive study on the Life and Ministry of Priests. When the members of this committee completed their three-year term of office, they were constituted by the Conference in 1969 into an ad hoc committee for the purpose of completing the Priesthood Study. Since April, 1967, the full committee has met at least twice a year, and the subcommittees have according to need and convenience held many meetings. Progress reports have been made at the plenary meetings during the past four years.

To insure objectivity, the Conference directed the committee to aggregate as members and consultants, priests who would reflect the wide spectrum of views and practices current in the life and ministry of priests, and to employ agencies recognized generally and professionally for excellence and integrity. In October, 1967, the committee met with a number of priests competent in various fields, and jointly designed plans for a comprehensive study which would proceed along eight avenues: historical, doctrinal—both scriptural and theological—spiritual, pastoral, ecumenical, liturgical, sociological and psychological. Subcommittees chaired by priests of recognized competence in their respective fields and moderated by bishops of the ad hoc committee were established. Each priest chairman, with prior consultation with the bishop-moderator, was to aggregate four members and as many consultants as they considered necessary.

This plan was submitted to and approved by the Conference which allocated the very generous grant of \$300,000.00 for the study. It was

soon evident that there was a substantial underestimate of costs. Rather than return to the Conference, the committee, with the approval of the Conference President, sought and received funds from private sources, and also solicited and received, through the Conference of Men Religious, contributions from religious communities of priests.

In the progress reports made in the past, it was repeatedly affirmed that the objective aspects of the priesthood and of the priestly ministry, are not proper subjects of a popular survey. *What* the priesthood is, and what the priest *must be and do*, has been determined by Our Lord, as taught by the Church. The subjective aspect of the priesthood—how a priest is to live and work in our day to fulfill his ministry, and how he can be an effective teacher and witness of sanctity in the contemporary world—these are proper subjects of a survey. We repeat that psychological and sociological data cannot be used as a criterion of truth or as a norm of action. Such data cannot be used, as Pope Paul noted in his Apostolic Exhortation (Dec. 8, 1970), to reconstruct a Christianity cut off from the unbroken tradition which links it to the faith of the apostles. Such surveys, he said, are useful to discover thought patterns and serve as an invitation to proclaim more effectively a message which raises the mind to the level of divine realities.

It should be recalled that the questionnaires used in the surveys reflect the combined efforts of the professional staff of the research centers as well as of the full membership of the Ad Hoc Committee and its subcommittees and representatives of the religious communities of men. The questions were custom tailored to men of faith, committed to the supernatural, who believe in the cross and the resurrection, and who are dispensers of sacred mysteries radiating and resounding Christ. The questionnaires went through a series of discussions, tests and modifications before final adoption. The psychological survey was designed following consultations at a national convention of an association of psychologists. With all the intensive care given to the preparation of the sociological questionnaire, and in my opinion, the very gratifying results, following an accepted procedure, the survey report is being evaluated by a team of eminent sociologists—chaired by an Episcopalian—who were not associated in the survey.

A survey is designed to elicit a balanced and objective fund of information, without approving or disapproving any view or attitude. Obviously, some information elicited, while subjectively accurate,

may be objectively incorrect. The Ad Hoc Committee has been scrupulous in respecting the professional integrity of all involved in the study. The committee has insisted on the directives given by Pope Leo XIII when he opened the Vatican Archives—"not to dare utter a falsehood—not to fear to speak the truth." Whatever our reaction to the findings of the survey may be, we have reasonable assurance that according to the best professional procedures and standards, we have an accurate picture of attitudes and thought patterns that are current.

The total study is approaching completion. The historical section completed its work early this year. Monsignor John Tracy Ellis and his committee have worked diligently and kept their schedule. Their work is in the process of printing and publication. The sociological survey is completed and is in the process of evaluation by an independent team of sociologists. As soon as this is available, it will be sent together with the full survey report to the bishops. The psychological study is completed and as soon as copies of the full report are received, they also will be transmitted to the bishops. The doctrinal studies in scripture and theology are in the stages of completion. Other sections and avenues of the study made their contribution by submitting questions which would elicit information about liturgy, ecumenism, pastoral ministry, etc.

For the sake of a balanced presentation, at the suggestion of a director of one of the studies, the Ad Hoc Committee, with the approval of the Executive Committee, had the director of studies prepare a summary report, which would be available to the Conference for the April meeting, and be released to the mass media. The plan was finalized and announced in a letter of April 5 to the members of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Bishops' Study on Priestly Life and Ministry has generated a great deal of interest. The announcement that the 1971 Roman Synod would consider the Ministerial Priesthood increased the popular interest and aroused the interest of the mass media of communication. This was clearly evident from the direct and oblique efforts to gain advance information. The committee, after discussions with the Conference President and Secretary, took careful precautions to see that the report would properly be made first to the bishops, and the mass media would be given the summary reports beforehand for immediate release after the bishops received the report. You may have noted that the summary reports, which formed

a part of the documentation for the April meeting, were copyrighted. The copyright and the release date were clearly and repeatedly marked on each section of the summary report. Bishop Bernardin, Father Neill and the NCCB staff took extraordinary precautions. After the reports were mailed to the bishops, one newspaper carried a story on the study, thereby placing other mass media outlets at a disadvantage. With prior consultation and approval of the Conference President, Secretary and the Office of Information, a press conference was scheduled at which all the documents and the press release which was to have been distributed on April 26, were given together with a statement of explanation to the reporters at the conference. Provisional preparations for such a premature release had been made both for the sake of the study and in fairness to those of the mass media who cooperated. Though the premature release is regrettable, it may hopefully allow the bishops of the Conference to discuss the reports of the study in a calm atmosphere.

As Chairman of a committee which during the last four years has worked diligently to carry out the charge received from the Conference, it is my pleasant duty to pay sincere compliments for the vision and foresight which led you to authorize so comprehensive a study. Your generous grant and your ever-willing cooperation in promoting the surveys, is a glowing tribute to and an irrefutable evidence of your deep concern for your co-workers. The crowning compliment to your vision is that the study which you authorized four years ago is being completed in time for the Roman Synod, convoked by His Holiness, Pope Paul VI to discuss the Ministerial Priesthood.

The Committee is pleased to submit the results of the independent study and research. It does so without any official endorsement—which would exceed its competence. It is anticipated that the reaction to the reports will be uneven. You will have the opportunity to hear the presentation of the reports and to discuss the contents with those who submitted them. Whatever may be your reaction, you will share our conviction that the dimensions of the study have not been exceeded; that they provide a mass of information of incalculable value and that they merit careful study and that they will provide a sound basis for future instructions, directives and actions.

Again we pay sincere compliments and congratulations to the Bishops of the Conference for their foresight and generosity. We express our sentiments of profound gratitude for their cooperation. We conclude with the suggestion that the Conference might well

consider the possibility of setting up a new committee to study the reports in full detail with a view of recommending possible directives for instructions and programs to enhance the life and ministry of priests in our times.

✠ John Cardinal Krol
Chairman

Report



Subcommittee on History



Subcommittee members contributing to the report:

Rev. Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, Chairman

Rev. Robert Trisco

Rev. Michael V. Gannon

Rev. John P. Marschall, C.S.V.

Rev. David J. O'Brien

The Formation of the American Priest: An Historical Perspective

By

JOHN TRACY ELLIS *

It is clear . . . that the world in its present state is the outcome of movement. Whether we consider the rocky layers enveloping the Earth . . . or the structure of languages spoken upon it, we are forced to the same conclusion: that everything is the sum of the past and that nothing is comprehensive except through its history.¹

The Catholic priest of the United States has been no exception to this universal proposition of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. It has thus been with a view of making the priests of 1971 more comprehensible to themselves and to all other men, that the five members of the subcommittee on history of the Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry have endeavored to pursue the task assigned to them in December, 1967. Among the varied factors that shape a man's ultimate character and destiny, second only to his family inheritance and ethnic background, is his education, and in the case of a candidate for the priesthood this obviously embraces the training of the spirit as well as of the mind. In other words, the kind of spiritual and intellectual tutoring a man has received during his formative years will play a major role in determining what kind of priest he will be, regardless of whether his ministry be lived out in a traditional parish framework, in education, or in the social apostolate.

In 1953 the distinguished professor of ecclesiastical history in the Catholic University of Louvain, Canon Roger Aubert, published a world survey of Catholic theology in which he found worthy of mention 114 Frenchmen, twenty Germans, five Dutch or Flemish, and one Italian theologian. Fourteen years later George H. Tavard, A.A., referred to the Aubert study and remarked that in the interval he believed that the Germans had taken the lead over the French. In

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¹ *The Future of Man*. Translated by Norman Denny (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 12.

neither case did the Americans merit more than Tavard's comment to the effect that in spite of the able specialized studies of the Franciscan Institute of Saint Bonaventure University and the noteworthy contributions made by *Theological Studies*, "the United States lagged behind . . ." ² While the evaluation of these two writers is not beyond question, the historian of the Church in this country is compelled to admit that the American record in this regard has been anything but impressive. Why? It is only the historical circumstances that can yield a satisfactory answer, as it is only the historical record that can explain the generally low state of the intellectual life among the clergy as a whole. It is that record that has been set forth in the present essay.

Obviously, space will not permit here an extended discussion of all the causes for this situation. Let a brief summary of one of the major factors suffice by way of illustration of the essay's general contents. The Church of the United States has been prevented from offering high quality education to her clergy such as they have received, for example, in recent decades in the field of Scripture, in part because of the pervading weakness that has been an inevitable accompaniment of the proliferation of numerous and enfeebled seminaries. The malaise appeared soon after the birth of the organized Church, for when certain farsighted bishops attempted at the Baltimore provincial councils of 1829 and 1833 to win assent for a central or national seminary, the effort failed. Even the opening of the Catholic University of America as a graduate school of theology in 1889, the first educational commitment within the country of all the Catholics of the land, did not stem the tide. Instead of lending support to a national seminary such as the Irish had begun in 1795 at Maynooth and the Belgians had reopened at Louvain in 1834, the senseless waste of manpower and money continued unabated among the diocesan and religious clergy with no heed paid to the interests of the Church at large. As a consequence by 1900 there were 109 seminaries—major and minor, diocesan and religious—with a total of 4,628 students enrolled, or an average of slightly more than forty-two young men to each institution. Nor did the pace slacken as the Church moved into the second half of the twentieth century, for by January 1, 1960, these institutions reached a record total to date of 525. Moreover, this development ran counter to the cautionary note sounded by Pope Pius XI in December, 1935, on the

² Aubert, "La Théologie Catholique au Milieu du XX^e Siècle," *La Revue Nouvelle*, XVII (Juin 15, 1953-October 15, 1953), 561-576; Tavard, *The Pilgrim Church* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 16.

occasion of his golden jubilee as a priest. Acknowledging that frequently it was impossible for each diocese to have its own seminary properly staffed and equipped, the pontiff urged that where this was the condition the bishops of a given region—and here the counsel was equally if not more applicable to the superiors of religious orders and congregations—“should concentrate and unite their forces in a common Seminary, fully worthy of its high purpose. . . .” He had never let pass, he said, a chance to favor and encourage efforts of this kind. “Often, in fact,” declared Pius XI, “We have suggested and recommended them.”³ Failure to heed the pope’s words with the seriousness that they deserved has proved a costly venture for the American Church that now finds herself with numerous expensive and commodious buildings whose virtual emptiness has sharpened the uneasiness and embarrassment that the Church has experienced as the depth of the current revolutionary condition in the world at large has pressed ever more insistently upon her.

Yet the history of priestly formation in the United States has not all been sketched in tones and shades as somber as these. If the 1960’s were ushered in with unmistakable signs of grave ferment among seminary faculties and student bodies that revealed how naive it would be to think that these men could remain aloof and untouched by the age in which we all live, during these same years the Church’s *aggiornamento* of our time opened the seminaries, as it did the minds of priests long ordained, to promising vistas for the deepening of their spiritual lives and the improvement of their intellectual formation. The enlightened directives of the Congregation for Christian Education made public in June, 1968, would illustrate what is meant, as the rapidly accelerating movement for accreditation of the seminaries since 1966, the year the first Catholic institutions entered the hitherto predominantly Protestant professional organization, the American Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, would likewise attest.

Above all, the Catholic Church of the United States in the person of her bishops, priests, religious, and laity has been learning in a gradual and often painful way how to live with mystery. The Church herself is a mystery, and her constituents must learn that part of that mystery adheres in the question to which there is no answer, as they must become reconciled to the fact that the neat solutions that may

³ *The Catholic Priesthood. Encyclical Letter (“Ad Catholici Sacerdotii”) of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI* (Washington: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1936), pp. 44-45.

have served a simpler age will not suffice for the complicated and tormented time in which men of the late twentieth century are called to live. The situation, embracing as it does every Catholic—bishop, priest, religious, layman and laywoman—has been analyzed by many thoughtful minds, but for those whose immediate task it is to shape the spiritual and intellectual formation of the Church's future priests amid the baffling and bewildering circumstances in which men must now move, the matter has rarely been expressed with greater clarity and directness than by Denis E. Hurley, O.M.I., Archbishop of Durban, when he declared:

Church authority will not solve this problem alone. There is no going back to the old idea that ready-made solutions can be handed down by authority. Authority's function is to set up the conditions in which a solution can be sought by the Church, that is, the community. In most cases there will be no final solution, only a continual attempt to adjust oneself to a perpetually evolving situation. This is certainly true of the methods of priestly training that will have to be fashioned in the near future to meet the crisis of relevance, loneliness and authority.⁴

⁴ Introduction to *The Experience of Priesthood*, edited by Brian Passman (Wilkes-Barre: Dimension Books, 1968), p. xvi.

Bishops and Their Priests in the United States

By

ROBERT TRISCO *

The purpose of this essay is to describe the successive efforts of American bishops and priests to alter the laws and customs regulating their reciprocal relations. Their initiatives were for the most part directed to giving the priests of a diocese these four benefits: 1) a voice in the selection of their bishop; 2) a share in his authority through the creation of a chapter of canons or a board of consultors; 3) security of tenure through the appointment of irremovable pastors; and 4) the protection of strict judicial procedures in case of accusation of serious misdeeds. In the opinion of many priests these objectives could be achieved only by introducing the canon law of the universal Church into the United States instead of the special arrangements which had been permitted from the beginning because of the missionary status of American Catholicism.

A connected narrative of the principal events of more than purely local significance to this movement is presented. It begins with the American priests' obtaining the privilege of electing their first bishop in 1788 and ends with the enforcement of the Code of Canon Law in 1918. It traces the advances and counter-movements through the correspondence of bishops and priests with one another and with the Holy See, through the deliberations and decisions of provincial councils in Baltimore, Cincinnati, Saint Louis, and New York and of the plenary councils of Baltimore, through the impartial reports to Rome of official foreign visitors (Archbishop Gaetano Bedini in 1854 and Bishop George Conroy in 1878), through the publication of books, booklets, and periodical articles, through the newspaper campaign for "priests' rights" in 1868-1870, and through the directives and decrees of the congregations of the Roman Curia.

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The study shows that the greatest amount of satisfaction was given to the clergy in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. At the behest of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide a commission of investigation was set up in each diocese to examine cases of priests according to prescribed rules and thus to diminish the number of complaints and appeals previously sent to Rome (1878), and certain priests were allowed to submit a *terna* in view of filling a vacancy in the see or naming a coadjutor; a board of consultors was organized to advise the bishops in certain matters; and some pastors in each diocese were declared "irremovable" in the canonical sense of the term (all in 1884). The ways in which some of these concessions were circumvented and withdrawn in the early twentieth century are then set forth. At the end an attempt is made to characterize the attitudes of the bishops and priests toward each other, to seek the fundamental reasons for their disagreements, and to point out the relative strengths and weaknesses, as well as the common assumptions, of both sides during the period studied.

Before and After Modernism: The Intellectual Isolation of the American Priest

By

MICHAEL V. GANNON *

The Fathers of Vatican Council II, in their Decree on Priestly Formation (1965), directed that candidates for the priesthood in theological seminaries be made knowledgeable in the major fields of contemporary secular thought, philosophical and scientific, so that they would be, as it was said, "properly prepared in dialogue with the men of their own day."¹ Since the date of that decree numerous other directives from the Church's leadership have encouraged both seminarians and ordained priests to form close, friendly contacts between themselves and the intellectual community at large.

This counsel many clergy of the United States have followed during the past five and a half years, in graduate education, workshops, seminars, and study weeks, as well as in a wider range of reading than that sought after by American clergy in the pre-conciliar days. But this new and varied association with learning has not been accomplished without strain. Particularly the middle-aged and older priests have found it difficult to incorporate secular learning into a clerical intellectual tradition which, until very recently, was wont to regard much of that same learning as, if not deviously wrong, unnecessary or useless for a priest to know. This contrary tradition has so prevailed in the history of the American priest since the inauguration of the Church here in 1790 that even those clergy who achieved intellectual distinction in given fields—and one may mention such names out of the present century as Francis E. Gigot, John B. Hogan, William J. Kerby, Edward A. Pace, John M. Cooper, Peter Guilday, John A. Ryan, Thomas Verner Moore, John LaFarge, Gustave Weigel,

* Monsignor Gannon is pastor of Saint Augustine Church and associate professor of religion and history in the University of Florida at Gainesville.

¹ Walter M. Abbot, S.J., and Joseph Gallagher (Eds.), *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: America Press, 1966), p. 450.

and John Courtney Murray—cast their lights for the most part in magnificent isolation from the ongoing American intellectual experience.

During the nineteenth century the priest confronted the emerging American nation with principles, points of view, and practices that ran directly counter to the popular experience: he represented institutional immutability in a land committed to change; unbending theological doctrine to a people accustomed to doctrinal compromise and adjustment; a complex and relatively inflexible intellectual system to men whose minds refused to be clamped in place, a negative approach to mammonism, divorce, sexuality, and other moral problems which most Americans seemed content on leaving to heaven or to the courts; and a curious devotional apparatus which, the American Protestant ethic held, took men's time and energy away from their God-appointed industry, enterprise, and manifest destiny. By all these criteria the priest seemed to other thoughtful Americans, and frequently to himself, to be out of step with the ongoing national ethos.

Intellectuals there were among the clergy, but the intellectualism in which they were formed and which they themselves evidenced was such as to restrict rather than expand the mind, to seek simple preservation and elaboration of antique truths rather than their creative development; to promote a defensive style of apologetics rather than open historical criticism; to build fences instead of bridges. It was an intellectualism fairly bristling with non-intellectualism, and its name was "scholasticism"—not that neo-scholasticism which was fostered in the Thomistic revival of Pope Leo XIII, nor that academic scholasticism which even today commands the respect of Protestant and secular scholars in the Medieval Academy of America and elsewhere, but that artificial, gerrymandering scholasticism composed by syllogisms piled Ossa on Pelion, frozen into textbook form, and memorized by unnumbered seminarians. It was the attitude of mind which in 1938 led a priest-educator to declare that one cannot be a possessor of truth and a pursuer of truth at one and the same time, "attempting the impossible task of being Catholic in creed and anti-Catholic in culture." He concluded: "In sum, then, research cannot be the primary object of a Catholic graduate school, because it is at war with the whole Catholic life of the mind."² That

² George Bull, S.J., "The Function of the Catholic Graduate School," *Thought*, XIII (September, 1938), 364, 378.

war has now concluded, but for many middle-aged and older priests the peace is an uneasy one.

To a larger extent than historians of American Catholicism have, perhaps, realized, the condemnation of Modernism in 1907 by Pope Pius X was the chief contributing force to the separation of American clerical thought from American thought generally during the present century. It is clear from recent researches that by 1910 a decisive pall had fallen over intellectual activity in the teaching and, *a fortiori*, the pastoral priesthood of this country. The clergy was overcome by a *grand peur*. A gradually enveloping dread of heresy settled over episcopal residences, chanceries, seminaries, Catholic institutions of higher learning, and parish rectories. Security, safety, conservatism became national imperatives. Free intellectual inquiry in ecclesiastical circles came to a virtual standstill. Contacts with Protestant and secular thinkers, never very many in the first place, were broken off. It was as though someone had pulled a switch and the lights had failed all across the American Catholic landscape.

Now that the lights have gone on again the American priest has been encouraged to become involved with the thought as well as with the action of the world about him. He is to be alert, aware, and open to all things of the mind. He is able to tolerate uncertainty and to assign to its proper place what is tentative, provisional, or ambiguous. Without losing his sacred, or hieratic, function, he is to know and to contribute to the intellectual ferment of his times. What is needed of him, said the decree of Vatican Council II, is that he be a man who understands what John Ireland, Archbishop of Saint Paul, meant when he said eighty-two years ago:

This is an intellectual age. . . . By intellect, public opinion, the ruling power of the age, is formed. The Church herself will be judged by the standard of intellect. Catholics must excel in religious knowledge. . . . They must be in the foreground of intellectual movements of all kinds. The age will not take kindly to religious knowledge separated from secular knowledge.³

³ *The Church and Modern Society. Lectures and Addresses* (Saint Paul: Pioneer Press, 1905), I, 92.

Diocesan and Religious Clergy: The History of a Relationship, 1789-1969

By

JOHN P. MARSCHALL, C.S.V.*

The internal ruptures between religious orders, bishops, and diocesan clergy, like any tension within a family, have obscured common ties of ministry and charity. During Vatican Council II the Superior General of the Society of Mary, Joseph Buckley, S.M., spoke plainly to the issue that for centuries had lay buried beneath the simmering conflict between diocesan and religious clergy. Father Buckley was quoted as saying, "Religious priests in active life are closer to diocesan priests than they are to contemplative Religious." He added that, "Bishops want to exercise a greater authority over Religious in their diocese. Religious are worried about this. But we Religious might as well face up to the fact that some of our habits irritate the diocesan clergy. . . ." ¹

The Catholic Church in the United States has not been exempt from the centuries-old drive to maintain unity and good order. The ingredients of controversy have been the recruitment of seminarians, pastoral jurisdiction, and control of monies within the diocese ranging cross-country from Baltimore and New York to Portland and San Francisco. Incidents have involved bishops reflecting the sentiments of one man who would, "suffer no man in my diocese that I cannot control," ² as well as religious who would have agreed with the leader of a large religious group who predicted, "woe to Catholicism, if the number of Irish bishops increases in the United States; schism will come from that. . . ." ³

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¹ Vincent A. Yzermans (Ed.), *American Participation in the Second Vatican Council* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967), p. 437.

² The Most Reverend John Hughes, D.D., *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, Last Series II (1874), p. 84.

³ Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Louis: Jesuitica Missouri Province, John Elet, S.J. to John Roothan, S.J., St. Louis, January 14, 1850.

American bishops have long coped with the problem of sharing deliberative policy-making power with major superiors of religious orders. At the same time, religious have chafed under what some considered to be the unrestricted power and arbitrariness of their local ordinaries. Instances of religious congregations “milking” a parish or a city for funds to be used outside the diocese understandably have led diocesan clergy to guard “plum” parishes for themselves. Sometimes religious have self-righteously flaunted their academic degrees, while some diocesan clergy have regarded religious as natural competitors rather than cooperators in the priestly ministry. It is not altogether without precedent that religious orders have used their foreign superiors or the Congregation for Religious as a buffer between themselves and their local ordinary, while some bishops have expressed the fear that increased independence of religious groups would lead to “all order in the Church of God (being) turned to chaos.”⁴

The issues of authority, jurisdiction, and numerical supremacy have produced conflicts which, enlarged upon by fertile imaginations, feed the legacy of fraternal suspicion, narrow pride, or a myopic view of the pastoral care of souls. At the same time, examples of cooperation continue to be lost with the memories of dying men. Acknowledging the errors and misunderstandings of the past as well as the disparate means of pursuing the same pastoral goals, may yet lead diocesan and religious priests to more intensive mutual counsel, trust and integrity.

⁴ Archives of the Archdiocese of Newark: Drawer 25, copy, December 15, 1877, in Carl Derivaux Hinrichsen, “The Diocese of Newark: The Episcopacy of Michael Augustine Corrigan, 1873-1880,” *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, LXXVII (March, 1966), p. 21.

The American Priest and Social Action

By

DAVID J. O'BRIEN *

The vocation of the priesthood has always been understood in one way or another in social terms, although for many years social action was regarded as a distinct and often minor part of the priest's responsibilities. In the United States the priest played a key role in a social action movement which was shaped by the demands of the American situation, where the Church was composed of a minority of the population and was regarded by many with suspicion, and by the needs and aspirations of the Catholic people themselves. Because the bulk of the Catholic population was composed of poor, working class immigrants and their children, the priest often was overwhelmed by his pastoral responsibilities. Yet, for the same reason, those responsibilities were broadly defined to include such matters as education, development of language skills, intervention with public agencies, employment services, and a host of other tasks by which the priest could aid his people's adjustment to the American situation.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the Church started organizing on a more professional basis her many social and charitable agencies, leading to the development of priest-professionals skilled in particular aspects of social problems, who often directed parochial institutions to which pastors referred people in need. At the same time, organized social action programs aimed at reform of the nation's economic institutions were developed, often with clerical leadership. Inspired by the social encyclicals of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI, the social action movement sought to eliminate the underlying causes of poverty and distress with which Catholic charitable agencies had to deal. Toward this end the leaders of Catholic social action first tried to organize a national Catholic instrument for social reform, then to develop through Catholic Action a solid program for reform which would involve all levels of the Church. The greatest successes of this movement came in the

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years immediately before and after World War II when such organizations as the Young Catholic Students, Young Catholic Workers, the Christian Family Movement, and the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists organized laymen to combat social evils with clerical guidance but yet with a large degree of autonomy. This style was especially successful in the Archdiocese of Chicago, a pattern that assigned the priest the particular task of training lay apostles through the liturgy, religious education and formation, and stimulation of organization, an indirect role suited to an increasingly Americanized middle class Catholic population no longer in need of the kind of direct aid and leadership characteristic of earlier immigrant parishes.

In recent years this position has, in turn, come under criticism from several directions. The statements of Vatican Council II on the Church and her relation to the modern world seemed to many to suggest the need for direct action to combat injustice by all Christians, priests and laymen, so that many clergymen felt impelled to take a direct role in movements for peace and justice. From quite another direction many felt the need for the Church as an institution to become directly involved in the struggle for freedom and equality of urban minorities, using her resources and influence to aid efforts at community development rather than awaiting the initiative of laymen. Finally, the war in Viet Nam, climaxing several years of national turmoil over questions of race and poverty, led many priests to question seriously the moral legitimacy of American institutions and to examine with equal seriousness the role of the Church in American society. The result has been more profound divisions over the social role and responsibility of the clergy, divisions originating in and deepened by the continuing controversy over the structure and mission of the modern Church and the character of modern American society. Yet the pastoral concern which underlay the work of urban pastors and priests dedicated to social service and social reform, remains a firm foundation on which to rediscover an important and valuable role for the priest in the social action for the future.

Report



Subcommittee on Sociology

Subcommittee members contributing to the report:

Rev. Andrew Greeley, Chairman



Summary: American Priests, A report of the
National Opinion Research Center prepared for the
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

NOTE

The accompanying material is intended only as a preliminary introduction to NORC's report *American Priests*. It consists of an introduction, briefly describing the goals and methods of the report, brief summaries of most of the chapters, a selection of tables chosen to illustrate some of the summary statements, and the concluding chapter of the report. Necessarily such an introduction lacks the complete documentation, explanation, and technical nuance that would be most satisfactory from the viewpoint of the social researcher. The tables in particular are presented as *illustrations* of the material to be found in the complete text of the report. NORC cautions all readers that full explanation and interpretation of these tables should be based on a careful reading of the complete text of the report. Furthermore, NORC wishes to note that there are 150 pages of methodological explanation and justification in the complete text; the report can only be evaluated after these pages have been read.

The Purpose of the Research

This report is a description and analysis of the life and ministry of Roman Catholic priests in the United States of America. While it is intended to provide material for policy-making decisions, it is not oriented toward policy recommendations. In order to emphasize this point, we distinguish the following steps between the completion of data collection and policy decisions:

1. *Description*

In the first phase, the sheer raw facts that have been collected in the research project are presented. It will be reported, for example, that 3 per cent of the diocesan priests in the country are either certainly or probably going to leave the priesthood in the near future. No attempt is made to explain this phenomenon; the phenomenon itself is merely described. The first part of all the subsequent chapters in this report will be devoted to description.

2. *Analysis of Explanation*

In the second phase, an attempt is made to discover the underlying reasons behind the phenomenon. For example, an effort will be made to find out why 3 per cent of the diocesan priests in the country were preparing in 1970 to leave the priesthood and why another 10 per cent were uncertain about their future, as will be evident later in this report. This issue—along with many others to be treated in the present volume—is extremely complicated. No simple, one-factor explanation can be found. However, among the causes that will be discovered for the inclination to leave the priesthood is having “modern” religious values. But the analysis simply does not stop with the description of such a relationship. Whenever possible an attempt will be made to “explain the explanation.” It might be asked, for example, whether “modern” values relate to a feeling of loneliness and whether this, in turn, relates to a propensity to leave the priesthood. As long as such “explanation of explanations” can be substantiated by the data in hand, we remain in the second phase. However, when it becomes impossible to substantiate a secondary explanation by the data, we pass to the third phase.

3. *Speculation*

In this phase, certain suggestions are made that might provide explanations of puzzles uncovered in the data, but such suggestions have no substantiation in the existing data. Thus, one member of the NORC research team has suggested on several occasions that the principal change in the priesthood in the last decade is that now it is possible to leave the priesthood but that discontent was strong a decade ago and may have been even stronger than it is at the present time. Speculation is interesting; it adds spice and variety to a report; and it is part of the craft of the social researcher. However, since there was no survey taken ten years ago, it cannot be said whether clerical morale is better or worse now than it was a decade ago. Hence, the speculation cannot be substantiated. We shall periodically engage in speculation in the course of the present report, but the reader may be assured that such speculation will be labeled as such.

4. *Recommendations*

In this phase, someone, after carefully inspecting the data, may suggest to policy-makers what appropriate decisions might be based on the explanations, analyses, and speculations in the report. When this phase is entered, research as such is finished. While research findings may strongly indicate that certain courses of actions would be appropriate, they cannot command such courses of action. All the researcher can say, for example, is that the absence of a specific change is likely to heighten a problem within the group studied. Beyond that, his competency as a researcher cannot go. He may make recommendations under pressure from a client, and there is nothing wrong with such recommendations so long as it is clear that when the researcher begins to make recommendations, he ceases to be a researcher and instead becomes a consultant. He is expressing his own personal opinion, however well informed and expert that opinion might be. In the present report, given the nature of the subject matter being studied, there will be no recommendations.¹

5. *Policy Decisions*

Even if a researcher has been cajoled into making recommendations, it does not follow that simply because his recommendations have arisen from his research, they must automatically be accepted.

¹ In other NORC reports an occasional chapter of recommendations is added, but this is generally at the insistence of the client. See Spaeth and Greeley (1970).

In the final analysis, the role of policy-maker and researcher are distinct, except in the rare instance where one man occupies both positions. Since none of the NORC staff are members of the American ecclesiastical hierarchy, that combination of roles is excluded in the present instance. However skillful his research, and however wise his recommendations, the researcher realizes that policy-makers must consider factors other than those on which his competency bears. He may think the policy-maker has erred, but unless he misunderstands his own function, he has no right to assume that research automatically dictates either a policy decision or the methods of implementing that decision. The best the researcher can hope for is that his efforts become an important input both in the making and execution of policy. If he claims any more, then trouble and confusion are likely.²

Such a view of the research enterprise is implicit in any NORC report. It is made explicit in the introduction to this report because the NORC research team is well aware of the controversial and sensitive areas into which it has probed. We realize that our data could be used to provide ammunition for both sides of an important policy debate in the American Church. It is legitimate, of course, to use data in a policy debate as long as it is not torn from its context. But data in their proper context generally reveal that reality is gray. NORC specifically rejects the use of its empirical data in such a way as to argue that specific policies have been "scientifically proven." We are aware that in certain other countries, Catholic sociologists have on occasion argued that the wisdom of policies has been "scientifically" validated by social research. We reject both this notion and any use of the data in this report to support such a notion. This is a research monograph, not a series of policy recommendations, and much less a political treatise.

The Phases of the Research Project

We distinguish six phases in the research project: (1) preliminary, (2) data collection, (3) data processing, (4) construction of indices, (5) analysis and preparation of the report, and (6) review of the report.

1. *Preliminary Phase*

Work on NORC Study 5029 began on March 1, 1969. During the preliminary stage, the first step was the design of the study. In this

² On this subject, see Moynihan (1969).

step, the general subject, "Life of the Ministry," was developed into somewhat more specific categories, such as morale, relationships, spirituality, attitudes and values, and future plans. Some determination was also made on what general groups of respondents were to be surveyed. It was decided that in addition to a sample of diocesan and religious clergy in the United States, questionnaires would be sent to all the bishops and major superiors in the American Church, and a somewhat modified questionnaire would be sent to a sample of "resigned" priests.³

The next step was the specification and the operationalization of variables. In this step, the research staff asked itself what specific and concrete aspects in the life and ministry of the priest it was to observe through the means of its questionnaire. What are, for example, the various dimensions of "morale" and how might they be measured? Two of the dimensions that we decided upon were "occupational satisfaction" and "psychological well-being." The first of these variables was operationalized through the work-satisfaction index of Patricia C. Smith and her colleagues (Smith, Kendall, and Hulin, 1969); the second through the "happiness" index developed by Norman M. Bradburn (1969).

This early phase of the project was substantially complete by the summer of 1969, and the research team turned to the construction of the questionnaire—seven drafts in all. It was reviewed and revised both by the survey team and by senior colleagues at NORC. A penultimate draft of the questionnaire was pretested with a sample of 150 respondents, and after further consultation with NORC colleagues, the final version was prepared. (A separate modified questionnaire for resigned priests was also pretested with a sample of 100 resignees.) The final form of the main questionnaire was ready in November of 1969.

Through the entire preliminary effort of project design and questionnaire construction, constant consultation was in progress with NORC colleagues, with officers of various priests' organizations, with members of the Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee for the Study of the

³ The term "resigned" (or "resignee") is viewed in this report to describe those who have withdrawn from the active ministry. While this is a word that seems least objectionable to such priests, it must be emphasized that its use in the present report is entirely neutral and implies no theological or moral judgment either for or against those who have resigned.

Life and Ministry of the Priest (a whole day's consultation was devoted to the penultimate draft of the questionnaire), and with a special panel of consultants appointed by the sociology subcommittee of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Study of the Life and Ministry of the Priest. Members of this committee are Reverend Robert McNamara, S.J., Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Loyola University of Chicago; Professor James J. Vanecko, Department of Sociology, Brown University; Professor Donald Warwick, Harvard University; Monsignor George Higgins, United States Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C.; and Reverend Joseph Fichter, Divinity School, Harvard University. Other sociologists who were consulted were Sister Marie Augusta Neal, S.N.D., Emmanuel College, Boston; Dr. Edgar Mills, Ministry Studies Board, National Council of Churches; and Professor Jeffrey Hadden, Tulane University. The NORC team is grateful for the help of these distinguished scholars, but it goes without saying that these scholars should in no way be considered responsible for the design, the questionnaire, or the final report.

While the questionnaire was being designed, constructed, and pretested, the NORC sampling department was preparing and drawing a sample of the American clergy. Although it would have been relatively easy to draw a simple random sample of the American clergy, such a sample would have seriously impaired the staff's capacity to analyze not only individuals but also institutions such as dioceses and religious communities. Therefore, the sample that was actually drawn is a multistage probability sample that not only represents accurately the American priesthood but also makes possible the analysis of certain subinstitutions within the American Church.

A further activity during the preliminary phase of the project was the preparation of a lengthy bibliography on the subject of the life and ministry of the priesthood. (This bibliography has not been included in the present report because of space limitations.)

2. *Data Collection*

One of the major problems encountered in the survey was experienced in the data-collection phase. We had assumed that the mailing service of *The Official Catholic Directory* could provide accurate lists of the names and addresses of the diocesan clergy in the U.S. However, careful examination of the lists obtained for a number of

large dioceses revealed inaccuracies, in many instances as high as 20 per cent. We therefore determined that *The Directory* lists could not be relied upon without undergoing the risk of substantial problems in attempting to obtain a high response rate, to say nothing of an accurate representation of American clergy. It therefore became necessary to seek lists of names and addresses of clergy from the individual dioceses and religious communities that had fallen into the sample. Generally speaking, the cooperation of dioceses and religious orders was excellent, although in some instances this cooperation required that the institution revise its own somewhat outdated lists.⁴ Compiling an accurate list of the potential respondents and drawing the sample from that list caused a three-month delay in mailing the main questionnaires to active priests; the first wave went out in December, 1969, and the second wave in early 1970. The resignee questionnaire did not have its first mailing until July, 1970. The response was excellent for a mail survey of the present kind but the inevitable delays in the data-collection process prolonged the field work into the end of the summer of 1970.

3. *Data Processing*

Preparation of the data for analysis began almost as soon as questionnaires arrived in NORC's mailroom. We presume that the reader of the present report is not interested in the mysteries of "editing," "coding," and "card punching." It is sufficient to say that the transfer of answers from the questionnaires of over 6,000 respondents to IBM cards (fourteen for each respondent) and thence to magnetic tapes and to discs is an immense, complicated, and time-consuming task in which many things can go wrong and almost always do.

4. *Construction of the Indices*

The fourteen decks of IBM cards contained over six hundred items to which the members of the sample had responded. Many of these items were designed in such a manner that they could be combined into indices which would represent not so much single answers as response patterns which, in their turn, would correspond to attitudinal or behavioral constellations. While many items were written with an *a priori* assumption that they would highly correlate with one

⁴ All human organizations have a difficult time keeping accurate lists of the names and addresses of their members. One university that we know of does not even at the present time have a complete list of all its faculty members.

another and thus become part of the indices, it was still necessary to establish empirically that such correlations existed. September, October, and November of 1970 were devoted to this task. More than six hundred items in the questionnaire were reduced through the construction of indices to approximately two hundred variables.

5. *Analysis and Preparation of the Report*

The fall and winter of 1970-71 were devoted to the actual analysis of the data in preparation for the writing of this report. The method of analysis and presentation will be described in the next main section of this chapter.

6. *Review of the Report*

As the first draft of the chapters emerged from NORC's steno pool, they were reviewed first by members of the study staff and then by senior colleagues at NORC, in particular Paul B. Sheatsley and Joe L. Spaeth. This review process was extremely important in the preparation of this report because it provided members of the study staff with the perspective on their work that can frequently be lost during long immersion in the project. It also guaranteed them that whatever biases of their own may have crept into their analysis could be taken into account and eliminated.

A word must be said on the subject of "bias." In the language of controversy, an "objective" researcher is one whose findings agree with what the controversialists hope research will discover, and a "biased" researcher is one whose findings disagree with what the controversialists hope will be reported. In fact, there is no such thing as an unbiased researcher, particularly in the controversial and delicate matters under study in the present project. The wise social researcher does not pretend that he does not have feelings, hopes, inclinations, and expectations of his own, frequently rooted in the very depths of his personality. However, his training as a researcher teaches him how to take these biases into account in order to make sure that they do not interfere with the competency of his analysis. He also realizes that his reputation as a social scientist depends to a considerable extent on his ability to neutralize his own biases. In addition, if he is part of a major social science research center, he and his colleagues at the center realize that their collective reputation depends on the objectivity of his analysis.

The various members of the staff for this study of the life and the ministry of the priesthood have their own biases, ambivalencies, ambiguities, and uncertainties. In some instances, these cancel out one another. In other instances, however, the advice and counsel of their non-Catholic colleagues has been vigorously sought with the precise purpose of making the present report as professionally competent as possible. We are therefore confident that the present volume is as unbiased as the collective efforts of a major social science center with thirty years of history behind it could possibly guarantee.

Chapter Summaries for American Priests

Each chapter in the report was basically divided into a descriptive and an analytic section, although in a few chapters these sections were combined. Starting with Chapter 3, summaries of the contents of each section were presented in the form of responses to a series of hypothetical questions, which are given below.

Chapter 3—Education and Vocation Decision among the Clergy
Descriptive and Analytic Sections:

1. *Is it true that most American priests have entered the seminary in early adolescence with practically no social experience with women?* About three-fifths of the American priests had at least graduated from high school before entering the seminary. The majority of priests had some dating experience, and one-quarter of those fifty-five and under had dated two or three times a month or more before they entered the seminary.

2. *Are resigned priests likely to have more education than those who remain in the priesthood?* Those who have already left the priesthood have had more advanced education than those who remain in it, a phenomenon that cannot be explained by age. However, the amount of advanced education does not predict a propensity to plan to leave the priesthood among those who are presently active priests.

3. *What do priests think of their seminary experience?* Most priests think that the seminary prepared them at least moderately well for their work as priests, though substantial majorities are critical of the seminaries in a number of important matters. There is widespread agreement in all age groups that the seminary failed to prepare them for the task of dealing with people.

4. *Does the age at which a young man entered the seminary, or the dating experience he had before he entered, predict any of the attitudes and behavior he exhibits in later life?* There is no correlation between age at entry and any of the subsequent variables considered in our study, and there is only one moderate correlation between dating experience and subsequent attitudes and behavior.

Descriptive Section:

1. *Has the priesthood interfered with the emotional development of the men who have entered it?* There is no evidence to support such a conclusion. Young priests score higher on measures of self-actualization than college students and compare favorably with Peace Corps volunteers. Might these younger clergy have had even more development toward self-actualization if they had not entered the priesthood? In the absence of data collected on them before they entered the seminary it is impossible to answer this question.

2. *Have the "self-actualizers" left the priesthood, as has been asserted in the popular press?* Not all those who have left have high scores on self-actualization and not all those who have high self-actualization scores have left. There are many with rather low scores on the POI who have departed from the priesthood and many with rather high scores who are still in it. However, it must still be said, subject to further analysis, that there is a correlation between a high score on the inner-directed scale and resignations from the priesthood even when a comparison is made between resignees and actives in their own age category.

3. *Are there certain special emotional problems in the priesthood?* Insofar as the rather limited analysis in this report can testify, the principal emotional problems that are distinctive to the priest are the inability to be sensitive to one's own needs and feelings and particularly the capacity to accept one's own aggressive impulses.

4. *Are there certain special strengths in the personalities of priests?* One very definite strength is apparently the priest's capacity to take a constructive view of the nature of man. In addition, priests demonstrate relative strength in their ability to affirm their own self-worth and to accept themselves for what they are in spite of weaknesses and deficiencies.

5. *Do priests have excessively dependent personalities?* We could find no evidence of excessive dependency among priests when we compared priests forty-five and under with test norms (leaving aside the moot point of whether test scores can be expected to decline with age). When mean scores of priests of the same age as the normative groups were compared with the mean norms, there were only minor differences, most of which suggest that, if anything, the problem of the priest is lack of a capacity to cope with aggressive feelings rather than an excessive need for dependency.

6. *Do the data in this chapter indicate that priests are the kind of men who can provide confident and vigorous leadership in times of crisis and change?* Between one-tenth and one-fifth of the clergy could be said to be “self-actualized” persons, a proportion that is probably not very different from that to be found in the general American population of college-educated males. The clergy are not neurotic misfits, but neither by and large do they seem to be the kind of men who would make charismatic leaders.

7. *Are the resignees more self-actualized than those who remain in the priesthood?* When age is held constant, the scores on every one of the personality subscales are slightly higher for the resigned priests than they are for active priests. However, there is some tendency for the resigned priests to be hyper-self-actualized and the active priests to be hypo-self-actualized; that is, some of the former display an abnormal need for independence and some of the latter tend to display an abnormal lack of independence.

8. *What are the factors in the background and training of a priest that lead to the development of the self-actualizing personality and what are the factors that impede such development?* For the answers to these questions, it is necessary to turn to the second section of this chapter to determine what factors correlate with the self-actualizing priestly personality.

9. *Did seminary training cause a diminution of the capacity of priests to have intimate friendships?* It would be hard on the basis of our data to respond in the affirmative to this question. While the mean score of the Catholic clergy on capacity for intimate contact is only somewhat above that of the non-self-actualized group, so are the mean scores of every comparison group on which we have data; and the mean score of young priests is actually higher than that of young Catholics in colleges.

Analytic Section:

1. *Is it true that those who entered the seminary later or who had more education since ordination are more likely to be emotionally mature?* There is no evidence in our data to support either of these possibilities.

2. *Did the priesthood attract young men whose social class, family background, or childhood experiences made them less likely to be autonomous than the typical American male?* There is no evidence in our data that this has occurred.

Chapter 5—The Spiritual Life of Priests

Descriptive and Analytic Sections:

1. *Do priests still pray?* Most priests still pray, though the young pray less than the old, a phenomenon that may have been true of the young at any time in the history of the priesthood and not unique to the present time. (Table 5.2)

2. *Do most priests still say the breviary?* Only about two-fifths of them still honor the complete obligation, with the older priests more likely to do so than the younger.

3. *Do priests still have religious experiences of mystical or quasi-mystical contact with God?* More than half report a frequent sense of being in the presence of God. This religious experience is only slightly related to age and seems fairly equally distributed in all groups of the clergy, save for those who come from tense family backgrounds.

4. *Is there a relationship between frequency of prayer and frequency of mystical experience?* Given the fact that one would expect these two variables to be closely related, it is surprising to report that the positive correlation is only a modest .29. In other words, only about 9 per cent of the variance in the frequency of mystical experience can be explained by the frequency of prayer. The traditional theological position that mysticism is a "given" which cannot be directly pursued receives some confirmation from this finding.

Chapter 6—Attitudes and Values among the Catholic Clergy

Descriptive Section:

1. *Are the clergy turning away from orthodox Catholicism?* There is little evidence that doctrinal orthodoxy is being abandoned by priests, though some formulations are less enthusiastically endorsed by the younger clergy. What seems to be happening, rather, is a turn toward new emphases, with the traditional ones being maintained, though to a lesser extent among the younger clergy. (Table 6.5)

2. *Is there a perception of confusion and uncertainty within the Church?* There is some feeling of confusion and uncertainty—perceived more by the bishops than by the clergy. But it would not be appropriate to say that anomie is seen as being widespread in the Church.

3. *Is support for the Church's position on sexual morality deteriorating?* There seems little reason to doubt that support among the clergy for the Church's teaching on birth control and divorce is waning. The change in birth control attitudes can be documented by our data, and the position on divorce is remarkably different from the traditional one. On the other hand, there is little evidence of a change in position on either premarital sex or abortion, though the younger clergy are somewhat more sympathetic to premarital sex and a substantial segment of priests think that the abortion issue ought to be carefully investigated.

4. *Did the encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* obtain the consent of the majority of the American priests?* The overwhelming evidence is that it did not. (Table 6.17)

5. *Are bishops more "conservative" than their priests?* Insofar as the labels "conservative" and "liberal" have any meaning at all, we can say that on matters of religious attitudes and sexual morality, bishops tend to be even more "conservative" than the clergy over fifty-five, while on matters of ecumenism and social action, bishops tend to be even more "liberal" than the clergy under thirty-six. (Table 6.31)

Analytic Section:

1. *Is there a generation gap among the clergy?* If by generation gap one means a clean break that divides the clergy into two separate groups, there is no such gap. What we find, rather, is a generation "slope" with each ten-year age category being more "modern" in its religious attitudes and more "liberal" in its sexual morality than its immediate elders. If one just compares those under thirty-six with those over fifty-five, there is obviously a gap and not a slope, but the priesthood as it exists in reality is not made up of just these two groups.

2. *Is age by itself the main cause of attitudinal differences among the clergy?* We are not able to explain variation on the "modern" values index by demographic, educational, or socioeconomic backgrounds. Hence, insofar as our measures allow us to find other explanations besides age, we must say that age seems to be the principal cause of differing attitudes. Some explanation can be found in the greater tendency to "inner-directedness" among the young but the direct path between age and "modern" values is $-.50$, while the indirect path through "inner-directedness" is only

—10. Whether the more conservative attitudes of older priests result from growing old biologically or from different kinds of cultural and generational experiences is not a question that we can answer with certainty from our data. However, if the former explanation is the case, one would then predict that as they grow older, the young clergy will assume the same attitudes that the old have now. As this seems rather unlikely, the second explanation may well be preferable.

Chapter 7—Structure and Power in the Life of a Priest

Descriptive Section:

1. *Do priests want to abolish the institution of a strong bishop?* All the evidence is that they do not. Even the younger priests cast a majority vote for a strong bishop. (Table 7.3)

2. *Do the clergy want a considerable decentralization of power and decision-making influence in the Church?* There can be very little doubt that they do. Hence, one must conclude that priests view ecclesiastical power as an expandable rather than a fixed pie—giving someone a larger piece does not mean that others must get smaller pieces.

3. *What is the most popular new locus of power?* The priests' senate seems to be the one most frequently mentioned.

4. *What is the bishops' view of the centralization of power?* On a theoretical level, some bishops, who are aware of their own very great power, are apparently willing to agree with decentralization of decision-making. However, on the specific topics considered, there is little change from the proportion describing the actual centralization to the proportion describing what might be an ideal centralization. In practice, then, bishops do not seem to be greatly dissatisfied with the way decisions are made in the Church.

5. *Is there serious conflict potential between bishops and priests?* Given a situation where there is disagreement between leadership and followers on both the practical distribution of power and the helpfulness of structural reform, in which there is in fact a heavy concentration of power in the hands of leadership, and finally in which there seems to be a widespread tendency to ignore unpopular regulations, it would be a mistake not to see considerable potential for serious conflict.

6. *Is there any particular institution that might be the subject of conflict?* The priests' senate seems to be a highly controversial institution. Priests think it has little power and ought to have more; bishops as a group seem to think that it has quite enough power.

7. *Is there a tendency for priests to ignore rules they don't like?* At least on liturgical matters, there does seem to be such a tendency.

8. *What reforms in the Church are most popular with priests?* A married diaconate is the change that receives the most support; 70 per cent or more of the priests also favor an impartial system of appeals, some married priests, election of the Pope by bishops, and election of bishops by priests. (Table 7-13)

9. *Are priests in favor of closing Catholic schools?* They are not. A very large majority do not think this would be a helpful change. Even among the younger clergy, there is majority support for parochial schools.

Analytic Section:

1. *Who are most likely to be dissatisfied with the present state of Church structure?* The young, those from tense families, those with inner-directed personalities, those with low scores on religious experience, and those with "modern" religious values are the ones most likely to be dissatisfied.

2. *Is it merely the fact of being young that makes the young unhappy with the power and structural situation?* The relationship between youth and dissatisfaction seems to be the result of different attitudes and values about what the Church and religion are.

3. *Does the dissatisfaction of the young with the distribution of power indicate trouble for the Church?* It apparently does, precisely because the difference seems to be rooted in quite different values about the nature of the Church and the nature of Christianity. What we are witnessing is not merely a disagreement between those who have power and those who do not, but a disagreement among those with opposing ideologies about the nature of the reality whose power structure is the subject of disagreement. Power conflicts that are rooted in ideological differences tend to be much more serious than power conflicts among those who share the same ideologies.

Descriptive Section:

1. *Is there a "clerical culture?"* In the strict sense of the word, of course there is not, though no research was required to demonstrate this. Nevertheless, there is in our data considerable evidence to indicate strong tendencies in the direction of something that would resemble a "clerical culture." Priests are not cut off or isolated from the laity the way real subcultures are isolated from main cultures. Nevertheless, there is a strong tendency among the clergy to associate in their friendship and recreational patterns with other clergy—a tendency that is reinforced by the fact that most clergy live in houses with other clergy.

2. *Are priests without friends?* Some certainly are and others may very well be, but most priests see themselves as having close personal friends, and a substantial proportion see themselves as having many such friends, with some even among the laity. It would be a mistake to think of the clergy as entirely composed of a group of men who think of themselves as lonely and isolated, although, as we shall see, loneliness is a serious problem for some priests.

3. *Are the priests' relationships within the "clerical culture" intolerable?* Insofar as one can judge from information on priests' relationships with those with whom they live and their attitudes toward the place where they live, one must respond "no" to this question. Very small proportions, for example, report bad relationships with the pastor or the person in charge of the house where they live, but substantial proportions report "excellent" relationships with these ecclesiastical superiors. It is clearly not our intention to suggest that there is no room for improvement in the residential relationships of the clergy. Nevertheless, the fact that approximately three-quarters of the priests in the country consider the place where they live to be a "home" raises the question of whether one could reasonably expect that proportion to go much higher, given the imperfection of the human condition.

4. *Is there pressure toward change in the patterns of the so-called "clerical culture?"* There apparently is such pressure building up among the younger clergy, who are more likely both to have friends who are not priests and to be dissatisfied with the residential situation in which they find themselves. Nevertheless, a majority of the younger priests still think of the residence in which they live as a

place where they can be themselves, relax, or entertain. They also report that some of their most frequent associations with close friends are with other priests. If the so-called “clerical culture”—understood here as a strong tendency for priests to associate with other priests—is breaking up, then, at least by the measures available in this chapter, it is breaking up slowly.

Analytic Section:

What priests are most likely to feel that the relationships with the colleagues with whom they live are unsatisfactory? The young are more likely to be dissatisfied with their colleague relationships than the old, but age explains only 5 per cent of the variance in satisfaction with colleague relationships.

Chapter 9—The Work of Priests

Descriptive Section:

1. *How do Catholic priests evaluate themselves in comparison with other professionals?* Priests evaluate themselves quite highly in comparison with other professionals, although the smallest majority is found among those who think that the amount of autonomy which priests have in decision-making is comparable to the amount which other professionals have. (Table 9.11)

2. *Do priests work hard?* This is an extremely difficult question to answer since it is practically impossible to define what hard work is, but at least they work moderately long hours, with the mean hours per week in excess of 50.

3. *Do priests get satisfaction out of their work?* Religious priests are more satisfied with their jobs than diocesan priests; and among diocesan priests, the lowest level of job satisfaction is found among associate pastors, who are lower even than comparison groups in the American population. Since the associate pastors represent about half of the priests thirty-five and under and a quarter of the priests between thirty-six and forty-five, the fact that their job satisfaction is even lower than that of unskilled manual workers represents an extremely serious problem for the clergy as a profession. (Table 9.9)

4. *Are priests interested in maintaining their professional skills?* The majority of priests want updating in theological and religious studies, and a fairly good proportion keep in touch with the best in periodical and scholarly literature. Not all priests read, of course;

nowhere near a majority read the most serious journals such as *Concilium* or *Theological Studies*, but there is still considerable evidence that many priests do make serious efforts to stay well informed in the areas of their professional responsibility.

Analytic Section:

1. *Which priests are most likely to be satisfied in their work?* Even though it is hard to explain satisfaction, those most likely to be favorably disposed toward their profession are the older priests, those with more "traditional" values, those who have had mystical experiences, those who come from less tense families, and those who have inner-directed personalities.

2. *Is dissatisfaction in the priesthood caused by long work hours?* On the contrary, the opposite seems to be the case. There is a positive relationship between number of hours worked and the feeling that one's talent is being used.

3. *Are there any important differences between religious and diocesan priests?* Although there is a somewhat higher level of work satisfaction among the religious, this difference produced a correlation of only .12. On the other variables used in our causal model, no differences even this large emerged.

4. *Is work satisfaction more likely in small dioceses or communities than in large?* We could discover no relationship of this kind.

Chapter 10—Satisfactions and Frustrations in the Priesthood

Descriptive Section:

1. *What are the principal satisfactions in the life of the priest?* Presiding over the liturgy, working with people, and being part of a Christian community seem to be the principal sources of satisfaction. (Table 10.4)

2. *What are the principal problems of the priesthood?* Authority is the most frequently mentioned problem, with the difficulty of reaching people, loneliness, relations with superiors, and celibacy coming next. (Table 10.6)

Analytic Section:

1. *Why do some men experience more loneliness than others?* Young priests are more lonely than older priests, and those with less work satisfaction are more lonely than those with high work satis-

faction, but a good deal of the loneliness must still be considered unexplained.

2. *Does what we know of the personality of priests from our personality scales enable us to explain much of the loneliness? It does not.*

3. *If priests liked their work better, would they be less lonely?* There is only a relatively moderate net effect of work satisfaction on loneliness, suggesting that an increase in the amount of work satisfaction would decrease the amount of loneliness only to a very moderate extent.

4. *Does difficulty with authority contribute to loneliness?* It is impossible to postulate one as a cause of the other, but when the mutual influence of loneliness and problems with authority are held constant, loneliness contributes much more of an explanation to the desire to marry than does authority.

Chapter 11—The Morale of the Clergy

Descriptive Section:

1. *Are priests unhappy?* Quite the contrary, they seem to be happier than comparable groups of men—at least insofar as happiness is measured by our indicators of psychological well-being. (Table 11.3)

2. *Is the decision to resign preceded by a decline in psychological well-being and followed by an increase in it?* This pattern does indeed seem to occur, at least insofar as our “dummy” model is able to indicate. There is also some evidence of a return to more normal levels of psychological well-being several years after resignation.

3. *Are resigned priests less happy than those who remain in the priesthood?* Again, insofar as our indicators are valid measures, they are not any less happy, and indeed are more happy than typical American males of the same educational background and age.

Analytic Section:

1. *Why are some priests happy and others not happy?* Religious experience, work satisfaction, and favorable comparisons with other professionals seem to be the principal components of high morale for priests. Thus, if a priest feels that he is in contact with God

and likes his work, then his morale "balance of payments" is likely to be very satisfactory.

2. *Are young priests more or less happy than older priests?* Younger priests have both higher positive affect and higher negative affect but the "balance of payments" for both young and old is such that there is no correlation between the affect balance scale and age.

3. *Is loneliness an important cause of low morale among priests?* It appears to be. When all other variables are held constant, the "pure" contribution of loneliness to negative affect explains 7 per cent of the variance.

Chapter 12—The Celibacy Issue

Descriptive Section:

1. *Is there a strong desire among the Roman Catholic clergy to marry?* The answer to this question is in the negative. Only about one-fifth of the diocesan priests and one-tenth of the religious priests say that they would either certainly or probably marry if they could. Even among those under thirty-six, two-thirds indicate that they would not either certainly or probably marry if they could do so. (Table 12.4)

2. *Do priests strongly support and expect change in the celibacy regulations?* The answer to this question is a clear affirmative. More than half the priests are at least somewhat in favor of the change, and approximately three-fifths expect the change. Three-quarters of those expecting a change think it will occur within the next decade. (Table 12.2)

3. *Is the celibate state valued by the Catholic clergy?* Here the answer must be "yes." The overwhelming majority of priests see it as an advantage in their work and a considerable proportion also see it as an advantage for having fuller relationships with other people. The younger clergy, who see more disadvantages in celibacy and are more strongly in favor of a change, are less likely to endorse some of the reasons advanced for celibacy. Nevertheless, they tend to be in agreement with their older colleagues on the fundamental advantage of celibacy in assisting the priest in his work. (Table 12.5)

4. *If most priests would not marry and if most see a definite advantage in celibacy, why is there support for a change?* Apparently, many of those who support a change do so because they are not convinced that celibacy is essential to the priesthood and because

they think that celibacy can be harmful for some priests and is keeping many men out of the priesthood. In other words, a change in the celibacy regulation is perceived as being desirable for the Church, if not necessarily desirable for oneself.

5. *Are substantial numbers of priests actively engaged in courtship in preparation for marriage when the celibacy regulation is changed?* There is no evidence presently that they are.

Analytic Section:

What are the principal explanations for the desire of some priests to marry? Loneliness and youthfulness both separately and in combination provide us with a substantial amount of the explanation for the desire to marry. Values, personality, and lack of work satisfaction are also factors to be considered.

Chapter 13—Future Plans

Descriptive Section:

1. *Is the present resignation rate among priests likely to persist?* There is no evidence in the present data to suggest that at least on a national level resignation rates are likely to decline.

2. *How many more priests are likely to resign?* If only that 3 per cent who responded to our questionnaire by saying that they were probably or definitely going to leave should in fact resign, there will be 2,000 more resignees in the reasonably near future. If substantial numbers of those who are uncertain, or even who say they probably will not leave, should in fact decide to resign, the numbers could be very much higher. (Table 13.2)

3. *Are many priests shaken by the resignations of their friends?* It seems obvious that many are and that a substantial number of American priests have been forced to rethink their position in the priesthood because of the rising resignation rates.

4. *Why do men resign from the priesthood?* The most frequently mentioned reason is the desire to marry. However, various aspects of frustration in the priestly work in *combination* are mentioned even more frequently than the desire to marry. (Table 13.7)

5. *Why do men stay in the priesthood?* The principal reasons for staying are a sense of vocation and happiness in the work. Younger priests also mention a desire to give witness to Christ and to reform the structures of the Church.

Analytic Section:

1. *What is the explanation of future plans with regard to staying in or leaving the priesthood?* There is no single explanation, but the desire to marry is the strongest predictor of plans to leave, in part because it acts as a channel for other causes.

2. *What, then, is the explanation of priests' desiring to marry?* There are a number of causes, but the principal one appears to be the loneliness that some men experience in the priesthood.

3. *Why are young priests more likely than old to think of resigning?* Most of this relationship can be explained by different personalities, different religious values, a higher level of loneliness, and a greater desire to marry.

4. *How could resignation rates be lowered?* It is not our purpose to make recommendations, but in terms of the statistics in our model, a notable reduction in the rate would occur if there were less of a desire to marry and less loneliness.

Chapter 14—Recruiting for the Priesthood

Descriptive and Analytic Sections:

1. *Has there been a decline in enthusiasm for encouraging vocations to the priesthood?* There has been a considerable decline over the last four or five years, though few priests actively discourage young men from seeking the priesthood. Instead, they encourage them less vigorously or let them make up their own minds. (Table 14.5)

2. *Are there some particular groups of priests who are less likely to encourage priestly vocations?* The young and those with "modern" values are less likely to encourage young men to become priests, while those who have had religious experiences, like their work, and evaluate themselves highly in comparison with other professionals are more likely to do so. But the relationships are not strong and one must conclude that a lowering of enthusiasm for recruiting is widespread among all categories of the clergy.

Chapter 15—A Look at the Resignees

1. *Are the resignees "angry" at the Church?* Some certainly are, as a reading of the responses to the open-ended questions would

make clear. But many others are not. Rather they seem to have mixed emotions about the Church, their experiences in it, the treatment they received at resignation, and their present relationship to it.

2. *Why did they leave the priesthood?* They left because they found difficulties with the structure of the Church and the work they were doing as priests and because they wanted to get married. (Table 15.8)

3. *Does resignation indicate a problem of "faith?"* The "faith" issue is one that is clearly expressed by only a small minority—less than one-fifth. For another two-fifths, it does not seem to be a serious problem. The present state of our analysis does not enable us to make a judgment about the "faith" of the ambivalent two-fifths. However, there is nothing in their explicit testimony to indicate that they have "lost the faith."

4. *Are the resignees happy with their decision?* Eighty-six per cent say they are "very satisfied" with their decision to leave and this proportion remains roughly constant, no matter how many years intervene since resignation.

5. *What sort of work are the resignees doing?* Most seem to be engaged in some sort of teaching or social service occupations. About one-third make more than \$12,000 a year.

6. *Do resignees still consider themselves as part of the Church?* About two-fifths think of themselves as part of the official Church and another two-fifths see themselves on the margin but still part of the Church. Around two-fifths attend Mass every week.

7. *Do many of them want to return to the active ministry?* Only about two-fifths seem interested in such a return, and many of these apparently do not want to return to any sort of "full-time" priestly work.

8. *Do they still exercise the ministry?* A minority do preside over liturgical functions, but this decreases as the resignation event recedes into the past.

9. *Are their marriages unhappy?* There seems to be a higher level of tension in their marriages than in most American marriages, and the tension increases with the passage of the years since resignation. But the marriage companionship and sociability scores are also high. There have been few divorces among the respondents. (Table 15.27)

10. *What sort of changes do the resigned priests want to see in the Church?* The most frequently mentioned change was some sort of reform of the ecclesiastical government structure. A change in the law of celibacy was mentioned only one-third as often as governmental change when the respondents were asked to choose only one reform.

III

Tables

Table 5.2

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES BY AGE

(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Spiritual Activity	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Celebrate Mass every day	72	78	89	95
Read the Bible once a week or more	61	55	55	58
Pray or meditate privately every day	38	42	53	69
Feel that celebrating Mass is a very important form of prayer and worship . .	88	90	93	96

TABLE 5.5

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES BY CLERICAL STATUS

(Per Cent Reporting Having Had Each Experience "Frequently" During Past Two or Three Years)

Religious Experience	Diocesan			Religious		
	Bishops	Active Priests	Resigned Priests	Major Superiors	Active Priests	Resigned Priests
An overwhelming feeling of being at one with God or Christ	35	26	17	23	23	23
A sense of being in the presence of God	75	56	37	56	56	42
A deep feeling of being personally loved by Christ here and now . .	63	47	30	46	47	32
A feeling of being afraid of God	3	4	1	1	4	1
A feeling of being tempted by the devil .	10	16	0	13	12	0
A feeling of being abandoned by God	1	2	0	0	1	1

TABLE 6.5
 "TRADITIONAL" RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES BY CLERICAL STATUS
 (Per Cent Agreeing "Strongly" or "Somewhat")

Attitude	Diocesan		Religious	
	Bishops	Active Resigned Priests	Major Superiors	Active Resigned Priests
The mystery of the Trinity is so profound and so central that I should humbly accept it as given and not seek to plumb its depths . . .	56	50	56	44
I think of God primarily as the Supreme Being, immutable, all-powerful, and the Creator of the universe . . .	69	62	55	54
The Catholic Church is the one true Church established by Christ with St. Peter and his successors as its head . . .	97	87	96	88
The important thing to stress when teaching about Jesus is that He is truly God, and, therefore, adoration should be directed toward Him . . .	73	54	58	52
The principal meaning of Christ's resurrection for me is that it proved His Divinity . . .	73	61	61	58
		29		35

TABLE 6.5—Continued

Attitude	Diocesan		Religious	
	Bishops	Active Resigned Priests	Major Superiors	Active Resigned Priests
I think of Jesus Christ as the God who humbled Himself by becoming man and dying for my sins	96	88	91	87
To doubt one article of faith that is <i>de fide</i> is to question the whole of revealed truth	72	47	51	48
I think of heaven as the state in which my soul will rest in blissful possession of the Beatific Vision	80	66	72	64
I feel that the most important thing to recognize about the sacraments is that they are channels for receiving grace	83	66	68	67
A Christian should look first to the salvation of his soul; then he should be concerned about helping others	59	48	45	48
The Church should be a place of refuge and quiet reflection away from the world	30	29	25	27
The primary task of the Church is to encourage its members to live the Christian life rather than to try to reform the world	55	52	50	52
Faith means essentially belief in the doctrines of the Catholic Church	69	45	49	42
One's faith may be jeopardized by studying Protestant theologians	58	26	36	30

^a Not asked of resigned priests.

TABLE 6.17

BIRTH CONTROL ATTITUDES BEFORE AND AFTER *HUMANAE VITAE*
(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Before <i>Humanae Vitae</i>	After <i>Humanae Vitae</i>						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	Other
A. All artificial contraception is morally wrong because it is clearly forbidden by the natural law and by the Church's teaching	27	4	3	1	4	0	1
B. It is not certain that all artificial contraception is morally wrong; still, the faithful are bound to follow the guidance of the teaching of the Church and avoid all methods of artificial contraception	1	6	2	0	2	0	0
C. It is not certain that all artificial contraception is morally wrong; therefore, the faithful are morally justified in using <i>at least some methods</i> of artificial contraception when they have adequate reasons for avoiding more children	0	1	8	1	4	1	0
D. There is no doubt that the responsible use of <i>at least some methods</i> of artificial contraception is morally acceptable, while the use of other methods may be morally wrong ..	0	0	0	3	2	0	0
E. Judgment concerning the morality of artificial contraception should be left to the responsibly formed consciences of the individuals involved	0	0	0	0	19	1	0
F. Given adequate reasons for avoiding children, all methods of artificial contraception are morally acceptable	0	0	0	0	1	5	1
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

Diagonal (no change) = 70

Above ("liberal" change) = 27

Below ("conservative" change) = 3

Total = 100

TABLE 6.31
SOCIAL ATTITUDES BY CLERICAL STATUS
(Per Cent)

Attitude	Diocesan		Religious		Catholic Adults ^a
	Bishops	Active Resigned Priests	Major Superiors	Active Resigned Priests	
<i>Opinion on a guaranteed annual income for poor families:</i>					
It is a good way to make some progress in dealing with the problem of poverty	68	52	65	54	28
It is not a good idea, for it would encourage people who would otherwise work for a living to do less work or none at all, and simply rely on other people's money to support them	30	42	29	38	62
It is simply a surface reform, since poverty stems from the nature of the capitalistic system itself. The only way to wipe out poverty really is to get rid of capitalism and replace it with some other economic system	2	6	6	8	10
Total	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Opinion of riots by urban Negroes:</i>					
They are understandable in the light of very slow progress of the movement to provide Negro Americans with equality	67	55	70	62	35
They constitute a revolutionary response that is right given the current condition of Negroes in American society	4	12	11	10	12
They are wrong. Negroes who riot are going too far. Law and order must be preserved	29	33	19	28	53
Total	100	100	100	100	100

^a Based on data made available to us by Sister Marie Augusta Neal, S.N.D.

TABLE 7.3

IDEAL DISTRIBUTION OF POWER IN DIOCESE, BY CLERICAL STATUS
 (Per Cent Thinking Each Group *Should* Have "A Very Great Deal" or
 "A Great Deal" of Influence in Determining Policies and
 Actions in the Diocese)

Group	Diocesan		Religious	
	Bishops	Active Priests	Major Superiors	Active Priests
Bishop	96	90	96	88
Auxiliary bishops	49	42	54	45
Chancery officials	63	32	36	37
Deans or vicars	38	26	27	26
Priests' senate	53	61	61	65
Pastors	37	34	32	34
Other priests	23	24	18	23
Laity	32	34	38	38

TABLE 7.13

REFORMS IN THE CHURCH, BY CLERICAL STATUS
 (Per Cent Thinking Each Possible Change Would Help
 "Very Much" or "Somewhat")

Possible Change	Diocesan		Religious	
	Bishops	Active Priests	Major Superiors	Active Priests
Associate pastors choosing to live where they wish	9	41	25	36
All priests living in community when this is possible	83	57	86	74
A parish lay advisory board having some say in the transfer and selection of priests	21	46	58	56
Wider approval of household ministries, "small group parishes within a parish," and floating parishes	32	64	73	71

TABLE 7.13—Continued

Possible Change	Diocesan		Religious	
	Bishops	Active Priests	Major Superiors	Active Priests
Elimination of Catholic school systems	0	20	9	17
Some priests holding secular jobs during the week	16	46	41	48
A court of appeals for all members of the Church distinct from the hierarchy guaranteeing them due process of law	58	78	81	75
Some married priests working in a variety of ministries	39	70	59	69
Election of the Pope by the Synod of Bishops	43	70	72	69
Introduction of the married diaconate whenever and however the local church chooses	80	86	87	86
Election of bishops by the priests of the diocese	24	70	68	74
Election of bishops by the priests, religious, and laity of the diocese	24	65	64	69

TABLE 9.11

JOB REACTIONS BY AGE

(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Reactions	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Would enter priesthood again	74	71	80	89
Feel talents are utilized "a great deal"	26	38	44	47
<i>More or about the same as other professionals:</i>				
Depth of knowledge and skill	71	76	79	79
Autonomy to make decisions	45	52	65	68
Responsibility for an undertaking	64	71	79	83
Commitment to serving needs of people	92	93	92	90

TABLE 9.9
 WORK SATISFACTION BY CURRENT MAIN JOB
 (Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Current Main Job	Mean Scores
Writing and research	39.9
Major seminary work	39.8
University and college teaching	39.2
Publications, press	38.6
Educational administration	38.3
Campus ministry	38.2
Mass media	38.2
Retreat work, mission band	37.8
Religious administration	37.5
Diocesan administration	37.3
Counseling	37.2
Experimental ministry	36.8
Home missions	36.8
Further studies	36.6
Chancery	36.5
Institutional chaplaincies	36.5
Monastic observances	36.3
Social work	36.3
Military chaplaincies	36.2
High school and grade school teaching	35.1
Religious instruction	35.0
Parish work	34.7
Pious groups	34.2
Arts	33.6

TABLE 10.4
 SOURCES OF SATISFACTION, BY AGE
 (Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests Reporting That
 Each Item Is of "Great Importance" As a Source of Satisfaction)

Item	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Joy of administering the sacraments and presiding over the liturgy	75	76	82	88
Respect that comes to the priestly office	8	17	24	42
Satisfaction in organizing and administering work of the Church	18	25	33	47

TABLE 10.4—Continued

Item	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Opportunity to exercise intellectual and creative abilities	61	56	49	44
Spiritual security that results from responding to the divine call	19	34	53	73
Challenge of being the leader of the Christian community	42	36	34	38
Engaging in efforts of social reform	29	22	19	17
Being part of a community of Christians who are working together to share the good news of the gospel	71	64	58	60
Opportunity to work with many people and be a part of their lives	81	73	70	64
The well-being that comes from living the common life with like-minded confreres	42	41	47	62

TABLE 10.6

PROBLEMS IN THE PRIESTHOOD FOR SELF, BY AGE
(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests Reporting Each As "A Great Problem to Me Personally")

Problem	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Lack of clear idea of what a priest is	9	8	4	2
Theological change in the concept of the priesthood	5	7	8	8
Absence of challenge in priestly work	10	10	5	3
The way authority is exercised in the Church ..	44	31	18	10
Relationships with superiors or pastor	22	14	7	5
Celibacy	18	15	8	3
Relevance of the work that priests do	18	12	5	3
Uncertainty about the future of the Church ...	10	9	8	7
Unrealistic demands and expectations of lay people	8	7	6	5
Loneliness of priestly life	23	20	10	6
Too little work	3	4	3	4
Too much work	12	9	8	5
Conflict with parishioners or laity about issues of the day	7	5	4	4
Lack of opportunity for personal fulfillment ...	13	11	6	4
Difficulty of really reaching people today	23	17	15	9

TABLE 11.3

AFFECT SCALE SCORES OF PRIESTS AND COLLEGE-EDUCATED MALES,
BY AGE
(Mean Scores)

Age	Active Priests	College-educated Males ^a (Non-Priests)	
		Married	Unmarried
Positive Affect Scale			
26-35	3.7 (1,094)	3.7 (58)	—
36-45	3.4 (1,526)	3.5 (41)	—
46-55	3.2 (1,155)	3.2 (32)	—
Over 55	2.7 (1,313)	3.2 (10)	—
Total	3.4 (5,088)	3.5 (141)	3.2 ^b (20)
Negative Affect Scale			
26-35	1.9 (1,094)	2.6 (58)	—
36-45	1.5 (1,526)	2.2 (41)	—
46-55	1.1 (1,155)	1.3 (32)	—
Over 557 (1,313)	1.9 (10)	—
Total	1.0 (5,088)	2.2 (141)	2.8 ^b (20)
Affect Balance Scale			
26-35	1.8 (1,094)	1.1 (58)	—
36-45	2.0 (1,526)	1.3 (41)	—
46-55	2.2 (1,155)	1.0 (32)	—
Over 55	2.0 (1,313)	.3 (10)	—
Total	2.4 (5,088)	1.3 (141)	.4 ^b (20)

^a Data from NORC Happiness Study, 1963.

^b Not enough cases for breakdown by age.

TABLE 12.4

FUTURE OF CELIBACY, BY AGE

(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Item	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Expect change in law of celibacy	88	76	58	33
Expect change within 10 years ^a	76	78	75	66
Would certainly or probably marry if celibacy for priests became optional	33	24	13	4
Would certainly or probably transfer to a diocese in order to marry	14	13	7	2
Agree somewhat or strongly that priests who have resigned from the priesthood should be invited to re-apply for permission to function as priests again, whether they are married or single	76	62	42	25

^a Of those who expect change.

TABLE 12.2

ATTITUDE ON OPTIONAL CELIBACY, BY AGE

(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests Giving Each Response to the Statement, "Celibacy Should Be a Matter of Personal Choice for Diocesan Priests")

Response	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Agree strongly	61	43	25	10
Agree somewhat	23	24	20	11
Uncertain	4	8	10	8
Disagree somewhat	6	10	13	11
Disagree strongly	5	15	32	60
Total	99 ^a	100	100	100

^a Not 100 per cent because of rounding.

TABLE 12.5

ATTITUDES TOWARD VALUE OF CELIBACY, BY CLERICAL STATUS

(Per Cent Feeling that Celibacy is "Very Much" or "Somewhat" of an Advantage for Each Aspect)

Aspect	Diocesan		Religious	
	Bishops	Active Priests	Major Superiors	Active Priests
For doing my work better	96	78	90	85
For my personal growth and development ..	82	52	68	62
For the development of my love of God ...	89	56	77	70
For relating more fully to other people	86	56	72	68

TABLE 13.2

FUTURE PLANS IN THE PRIESTHOOD, BY AGE

(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Future Plans in the Priesthood	Age			
	26-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55
Definitely will not leave	25	44	71	92
Probably will not leave	53	40	22	7
Uncertain	17	11	5	1
Probably will leave	3	3	1	0
Definitely decided to leave	2	2	0	0
Total	100	100	99 ^a	100

^a Not 100 per cent because of rounding.

TABLE 13.7

REASONS FOR LEAVING THE PRIESTHOOD, BY CLERICAL STATUS
(Per Cent Giving Each As First or Second Most Important Reason)

Reason	Diocesan		Religious	
	Active Priests ^a	Resigned Priests	Active Priests ^a	Resigned Priests
Desire to marry	51	44	44	44
Personal development and growth ...	18	27	36	25
No longer believe it is one's vocation	10	7	18	15
Can no longer live within the structure of the Church as a priest	34	26	22	28
Emotional problems make a change necessary	9	9	12	13
No longer get the satisfaction there used to be from being a priest	14	3	11	4
No longer agree with some of the ethical and moral teachings of the Church	7	19	5	14
Talents are not being used sufficiently	13	6	6	4
The work of a churchman seems irrelevant	10	8	7	6
The Church is not facing the relevant questions of the day	12	18	20	19
Other	22	33	19	28
Total ^b	200	200	200	200

^a Of those uncertain, probable, or definite about leaving the priesthood.

^b Totals equal 200 per cent because of combined categories.

TABLE 14.5

VOCATIONAL RECRUITING ATTITUDES FOUR OR FIVE YEARS AGO
AND TODAY

(Per Cent of Active Diocesan and Religious Priests)

Four or Five Years Ago	Today				
	A	B	C	D	Other
A. I actively encourage boys to enter the seminary or novitiate, since I see the priesthood as a very rewarding vocation	29	1	1	0	0
B. I encourage boys but advise them about the uncertainties surrounding the role of the priest today	18	9	22	0	0
C. I neither discourage nor encourage boys, but allow them to make up their own minds	12	5	19	0	0
D. Abstracting from their personal qualities, I tend to discourage boys from entering now and advise them to wait until the future is more certain	1	1	1	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	2

Diagonal (no change) = 59

Above (more encouragement) = 4

Below (less encouragement) = 38

Total = 101^a^a Not 100 per cent because of rounding.

TABLE 15.8
REASONS FOR LEAVING THE MINISTRY

Reason	Per Cent "Very Important for Me"
Bad relations with superiors	14
Desire to marry	47
Church was not facing the relevant problems of the day	39
Emotional problems made change necessary	17
Conflict with parishioners, or laity	1
No longer believed it was my vocation	26
Attracted to other work	8
Could no longer live within the structure of the institutional Church as a priest	53
Could no longer agree with some of the ethical and moral teaching of the Church	35
No longer got the satisfaction there used to be from being a priest	14
The work of a priest seemed irrelevant	21
Personal growth and development	46
Could no longer agree with some of the theological teaching of the Church	29
Talents were not being used sufficiently	23

TABLE 15.27
MARITAL ADJUSTMENT BALANCE SCALE SCORES OF RESIGNED
PRIESTS AND COLLEGE-EDUCATED MALES

	Mean Scores
<i>Resigned priests (by year of resignation):</i>	
1970	6.9
1969	6.6
1968	6.2
1967	5.8
1966	4.9
1964-65	5.0
Total	6.1
<i>College-educated males (by age):^a</i>	
26-35	5.5
36-45	5.4
46-55	6.4

^a Data from NORC Happiness Study, 1963.

Summary and Conclusion

We now turn to an evaluation of the "assets" and "liabilities" of the Catholic priesthood in the United States insofar as these can be determined by our research.¹ It must be emphasized that this assessment is made from a sociological and not a religious perspective.

1. There is no evidence in our research that Catholic priests are deficient in emotional maturity when compared with other groups in American society.

2. Priests maintain a high degree of personal morale, higher in fact than college-educated males in the same age categories.

3. No evidence could be found that either early entry into the seminary or dating experience affected either emotional maturation or personal morale among the clergy.

4. Most priests engage in some form of regular prayer, and a substantial proportion have had frequent religious experiences of union with the object of that prayer.

5. There is a fundamental acceptance by priests of the basic religious values to which the Church is officially committed, though there are some differences in the formulations according to which these values are expressed.

6. On certain social and racial matters, priests are more "liberal" than a sample of laity; and bishops are more "liberal" than priests. It therefore seems that one cannot assert that priests are lacking in social conscience.

7. There is support for ecumenism among the Catholic clergy and considerable involvement in ecumenical activity.

8. There is an acceptance among practically all priests of the bishops as the principal leader and decision-maker in the diocese.

9. Most priests feel that they have close friends, that the place where they live is "home," and that their relationships with their colleagues are adequate, although not always excellent.

¹The reader may now wish to reread the summary questions and responses.

10. Priests work moderately long hours, evaluate themselves quite favorably in comparison with other professionals, enjoy an adequate (though not spectacular) level of job satisfaction, are inclined to pursue a good deal of professional reading, and are committed to the need for more professional training.

11. A large majority of the clergy say that if they had the choice to make again, they would enter the priesthood.

12. While there is a moderate correlation between inner-directedness and inclination to leave, there is no evidence of a massive exodus of the best educated and most mature of the clergy. On the contrary, our data would indicate that such an exodus is not occurring.

On the other hand, there are serious problems facing the priesthood.

1. Large numbers of priests are dissatisfied with the way the ecclesiastical structure is shaped and the way decision-making power is distributed; but the leadership of the Church does not share this dissatisfaction. Furthermore, it would appear that differences between younger and older priests on the distribution of power and authority are rooted in ideological differences about the nature of the Church and religion.

2. There are systematic and substantial differences between bishops and priests on almost every matter we studied. In most cases, the bishops hold different points of view and positions than even the priests in their own age group. Given the disagreements over power and over appropriate reforms in the Church, these systematic differences of conviction indicate a serious and potentially dangerous "gap" between the priests and the hierarchy.

3. There are drastic differences between the priests and the bishops on the subject of sexual morality. The official position of the Church on birth control and divorce does not command majority support among the priests, and there has been a deterioration of support for the birth control position since the issuance of the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*.

4. The majority of the priests do not accept the present position on obligatory celibacy and expect that a change in the law is likely. Even though celibacy is still valued, and most priests (four-fifths of all, two-thirds of those under thirty-five) say that they would not be likely to marry if celibacy became optional, there is still strong sup-

port for a modification of this regulation, particularly among those under forty-five. The hierarchy, however, is strongly opposed to such a change.

5. About 5 per cent of the diocesan priests resigned in the four years from 1966 through 1969. Even though such a rate may not be high in comparison with other professions, it is certainly high compared to impressions about what the rate was in the past. While only 3 per cent of our sample of active priests said that they either certainly or probably would leave the priesthood, many more were uncertain—particularly among the younger priests. The immediate reason for thinking about resignation is apparently the desire to marry, a desire which in its turn is partly based on the loneliness and discouragement of the priestly life.

6. There has been a considerable decline in enthusiasm for vocational recruiting, a phenomenon that may be far more serious than the resignation rate.

7. The condition of the associate pastor is poor. Job satisfaction in this group, for example, is generally lower than that of unskilled workers. Associate pastors also do not feel that they have very good relationships with their colleagues.

8. Finally, if one postulates for the clergy a high degree of self-actualization and psychological well-being, then they clearly fail to meet these standards. On the other hand, if NORC had been able to administer questionnaires to the twelve apostles and the seventy-two disciples, there is some reason to think on the basis of the evidence in Scripture that they would not have scored extremely high on these measures either.

A number of summary comments may also be made about the resignees.

1. The two reasons for resignation mentioned most frequently as "very important" are inability to live within the structure of the Church and the desire to marry. When forced to choose one recommendation for change in the Church, only 15 per cent of the resignees mentioned celibacy.

2. There is no evidence that the resignees regret their decision or are unhappy in their present state. On the contrary, there is considerable evidence that they are in a state of emotional euphoria, characterized by what Karen Horney has described as a "binge of

health"—a binge that is understandable and probably inevitable in their circumstances.

3. Resignees are apparently moderately successful in their occupations, with one-third making over \$12,000 a year.

4. At the present time the resignees have attitudes and values that are sharply different from those of active priests, even those active priests under thirty-five. They also recollect much less satisfaction from priestly activities than do their opposite numbers among the active clergy. On the other hand, they find more satisfaction in their present career efforts than they did in their work as priests.

5. About two-fifths of the resignees still consider themselves to be Catholics and part of the official Church, another two-fifths are on the margins of the Church, and the remaining one-fifth are no longer affiliated with the Church. Apparently these proportions exist at the time of resignation and do not change much over time. Thus, one can tentatively conclude that the "faith" problem is overriding only in about one-fifth of the resignations—though there may be "faith confusion" among many of those on the margins of the official Church.

6. Only a minority of resigned priests (36 per cent) definitely wish to return to the priesthood. And only a minority of that minority (10 per cent) seem interested in the exercise of full-time parochial or teaching ministries.

7. In the years immediately after marriage, the marital adjustment balance scores of married resignees are higher than those of the typical American marriage of college-educated males, but the scores become lower than those of the typical American marriage as the years pass. However, there were almost no divorces or separations recorded in our sample.

One observation should also be made of more general social science interest. Two variables—family tension when one was growing up and the experience of contact with the Deity—make relatively small but consistent contributions to the explanation of priestly attitudes and behavior. In the explanation of the propensity to stay in the priesthood, they are almost as important as work satisfaction and values, though obviously less important than such powerful predictors as age and desire to marry. The family-tension variable was introduced into our research on the basis of theoretical considera-

tions drawn from the increasing literature on religious apostasy. While the confirmation of the theory is not spectacular, confirmation is still to be found. One would not, after all, expect family tension to explain vast amounts of variance in values, morale, work satisfaction, and future plans. That it explains anything at all is, from a theoretical viewpoint, interesting and important.

That religious experience does contribute positively to work satisfaction, morale, and the desire to remain a priest may not be surprising to priests, but it is still a moderately important discovery for the rather undeveloped tradition of empirical research on mystical experiences.

As far as practical solutions are concerned, the two principal problems of priests that have emerged in this study—authority and resignation—are relatively independent. Thus even though loneliness is a strong predictor of the desire to marry, and the wish to marry is powerfully correlated with plans to leave, only 20 per cent of the priests in our sample think that they would be likely to marry even if they could. Loneliness is not such a problem for 80 per cent of the priests as to make them want to get married and to think of resigning as a result of that desire. On the other hand, problems with authority and work satisfaction are not nearly as strong predictors of the desire to marry as is loneliness.² Thus, if steps are taken to solve the work and authority problems in the priesthood but the problem of loneliness remains unresolved, the desire to marry and the resultant resignation rate will fall only somewhat. If, on the other hand, the loneliness problem can be solved the desire to marry and the resignation rate will decline rather considerably, but the internal conflict problems will remain substantially unresolved. Policy-makers will apparently have to face the fact that conflict over authority and feelings of loneliness may have to be approached as rather distinct problems. Reducing conflict within the authority structure may not reduce resignation rates very much; and reducing loneliness is not likely to have too much impact on internal conflict. We cannot make any absolute assertion about the relationship between authority as a problem and loneliness as a problem since the logic of our model does not permit us to postulate a causal relationship. However, we can say that an improvement in work satisfaction would not appreciably affect the loneliness problem. Where there

² The net regression weights with desire to marry when the prior variables in our model are included are $-.08$ for work satisfaction, $.12$ for authority as a problem, and $.33$ for loneliness as a problem.

are obviously some priests for whom both authority and loneliness are problems, there are others who have one problem or the other but not both. One can conclude that no single solution will enable the priesthood to cope effectively with both problems.

One way to conceptualize this situation is to say that in a hypothetical model when all those who certainly or probably would marry if they could have left the priesthood (which would mean about one-fifth of all the priests and one-third of those under thirty-five), the amount of loneliness in the priesthood would be substantially diminished and resignation rates would become quite low once again, but there would be little change in the conflict over authority.

To attempt one final summary of our findings, we have discovered no evidence that the Catholic priesthood is in a state of collapse or even near collapse. There are many strong and positive forces at work in the priesthood, and it would be an unwise man who would conclude on the basis of our data that it will disappear. On the other hand, the priesthood has certain very serious problems, most of them centering around the highly volatile subjects of power and sex, which indicate trouble and conflict in the years ahead. Given the uneven nature of the social scientific study of professions, no certain answer can be given to the question of whether the Catholic priesthood has more problems or less problems than other professions; and given the nature of it as a profession *sui generis*, such a comparison would be of only marginal utility. And yet, by way of drawing all strands together, one might come away from a consideration of the NORC data with the conclusion that the priesthood has both more assets and more problems than most other professions.

Report



Subcommittee on Psychology

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Summary: The Loyola Psychological
Study of the Ministry and
Life of the American
Priest

April, 1971

This document is a summary of a larger report. It contains a brief resumé of the study, a summary of the methodology, and two chapters of the report which present an overview of the findings and recommendations.

Brief Resumé of the Results

The psychological research conducted through Loyola University of Chicago for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops attempted to answer the following question: *What are American priests like as persons?* The intensive depth interviews which were conducted with a cross-sectional sample of American priests reveal them as neither sick nor mysterious. They are instead ordinary men who reflect, through their own personal experiences, situational challenges, and professional problems, the common difficulties of the American male population from which they largely come. In other words, American priests emerge psychologically like the rest of men, with no extraordinary assets or liabilities of personality. In terms of their unique ministerial calling they reflect the reactive patterns of integration and adjustment that one would expect in any group of similar men exposed to the same conditions of life and training.

The psychological profile of American priests is not, therefore, a perfect one; neither is it a sick one. The challenges and problems of American priests, like those of most other men, can be described better in the vocabulary of growth rather than that of psychopathology. They reflect in their psychological growth the normal distribution of maturity. American priests, in other words, can, much like other American men, be described according to a conceptual model which enables us to see them at various stages of personal development. For this study, American priests were placed into four main groupings which represent levels of overall personal growth. These categories and a brief description of each follow:

1) *The Maldeveloped:*

These are men, very few in number, who have had life-long major psychological difficulties, typically related to their early familial relationships and living conditions, which have interfered in a serious way with their adjustment and occupational effectiveness. An example is a person who, from earliest years, has had recurrent emotional problems which have required

extended professional assistance and/or special treatment and assignments.

2) *The Underdeveloped:*

These men, representing a large segment of American priests, have not achieved the level of psychological growth appropriate to their chronological age. They are, in one degree or another, emotionally immature and they reflect this in many ways in their personal and professional lives. The incomplete growth evidenced in this group seems related to family experiences, cultural pressures, and the fact that they have not had essential human experiences in full or free enough fashion. These men have fundamental growth problems which no role characteristics or societal expectations make up for. The chief evidence of growth problems is in their interpersonal relationships, which are frequently distant, stylized, and unrewarding. They have major problems with psychological closeness; as a result, much of their work with people is a source of conflict and uneasiness for them. Their growth problems with personal identity are reflected in their draining and preoccupying efforts to integrate successfully the sexual component of their personalities. These men manifest unresolved adolescent developmental problems which are also reflected in their difficulty in identifying and expressing an inclusive philosophy or theology of life and in their ambivalent and unsettled attitudes toward authority. In other words, while these men look adult and have adult responsibilities, they are less than completely adult on the inside. Their growth has been stalled and they operate at a later chronological age with the psychological equipment of an earlier stage of growth.

3) *The Developing:*

These are men, again a sizable group, who, having been stalled at a certain level of psychological growth for a number of years, have, because of changes in their environment or their personal relationships, begun to grow as persons again. These men are found across all the age categories but they are dealing with similar issues of incomplete growth. In other words, even though the man is in middle age, he has become aware of certain lacks in his personal development and is making an effort to make up for them. These men are growing, sometimes awkwardly, sometimes painfully, but growing nonetheless.

They experience a new sense of themselves and their former incompleteness on all levels of their concern, including that of their religious development. They bring high motivation to the task of becoming more alive and manifest this drive to health in many ways, from going back to school to beginning to relate more closely with women. There is great vitality in this group even though they are dealing with serious and sensitive problems. Some of the developing men choose to leave the priesthood, but this is by no means exclusively the choice of the developing, nor inevitably the outcome of their efforts to develop themselves. They do, however, shift away from more traditional, institutional values and toward more personalistic ideals and convictions in their lives which they lead with almost aggressive vigor.

4) *The Developed:*

These men, small in number in any population, are those whose overall personal growth matches their calendar age. They are the persons who provide us with the relative measuring sticks we have for what we call maturity and normality. These men are neither perfect nor conflict free. They have many problems and difficulties but they respond to them with a constructive maturity. They make mistakes, have personality shortcomings, challenges still to work out; that is the face of health: imperfect but unhidden and undefensive. These men are independent and self-sufficient, not nearly so much in need of institutional support as less well developed persons. They are responsible and reasonably aggressive in their work and express confidence and warmth in close relationships with others, including women. They continue to explore and develop their religious convictions as they live life according to their consciences. There is a settled and stable quality about these men.

As has been noted, American priests can be classified into these developmental categories according to the analysis of the depth interviews as well as the collateral psychological testing that was given. It is not the purpose of this report to project percentages on the whole population of priests; it is rather to get a feeling for the living experience of American priests. Statistically speaking, however, one would expect similar results if samples were drawn in a similar way from the population until all American priests had been interviewed. Simply stated, the results tell us that American priests

share with other American men the same developmental problems, although they manifest them according to the styles and issues of their particular lives.

Some of the main findings about significant psychological issues connected with the lives of priests are these:

Religious faith: Many priests experience difficulty in defining and discussing the nature of their religious commitment and the underlying philosophy or theology by which they lead their lives. This incompletely developed faith seems related to incomplete personal development and a formation in and life by a religion that stresses the extrinsic aspects of belief. This is not to say that priests do not believe; it is rather to observe that for many, as for many other American men, the interiorization of religious belief is a slow and incomplete process. It may, in fact, be difficult for a person to deepen his faith into a set of internal guiding principles if his opportunities to develop his overall personality are limited. The developing priests who are trying to complete their growth are actively dealing with their level of religious conviction and commitment; the developed have already achieved a level of internalized faith. Unresolved religious attitudes and a tendency to accept faith as more extrinsic than intrinsic: this is more characteristic of the underdeveloped priests in this research.

Authority: Surprisingly, authority, despite the widespread publicity about it as a problem within the priesthood, did not emerge as a problem quite in the way that the popular impression would have suggested. In depth interviews few priests complained about authority as their most serious problem; they did not, in fact, describe themselves as men who worked constantly under the pressure of authoritarian supervision. Indeed, authority, in the person of a demanding authority figure, impinges on the life of the ordinary priest in a limited way. Authority is more of a problem, it would seem, because of the unresolved and ambivalent attitudes toward it among priests. This may be partly a function of the manner in which authority is exercised but it is also related to the fact that many of these men have not worked through their own attitudes toward authority. Perhaps this is a particular problem for men who are trained to regard themselves as exempt from many of the ordinary cultural pressures of authority. In any case, for many priests who may externalize their problems as those of authority, there is a more basic problem of integrating the meaning of authority into their outlook on life. Frequently, priests do not take the dictates or attitudes of authority

very seriously; many of them devise means to get around rather than come into direct confrontation with authority.

Celibacy: There is no doubt that celibacy is a well-realized value in the lives of some priests. It does, however, demand a level of personal integration and dedication that is relatively rare. For most priests, and certainly for the underdeveloped, celibacy remains an ideal which is neither vital nor dynamic. There is little breach of the regulations of celibacy; American priests are neither impulsive nor uncontrolled. Celibacy as a personally developing and freeing condition of life just does not exist in the ideal manner in which it is described. American priests, as a group, are not eagerly waiting to get married, nor do they believe that optional celibacy will solve their problems. Instead, they seem to favor the option of marriage because of the freedom which is involved in the issue. Many would not, in fact, immediately marry if the ecclesiastical regulation were modified. It might be added that some of the conditions that have arisen in the training and living conditions of priests have enabled them to remain unmarried but at the price of limiting or frustrating their personal growth. The isolation and distance from human relationships which has been the source of growth difficulties for many American priests has been due, in part, to the mode of implementing the condition of celibacy in the lives of seminarians and priests. The isolation and protection from normal socially developmental experiences seems a contributing factor in interrupting or suspending their personal growth. Clearly a majority of American priests favor optional celibacy even though many of them would not, in fact, marry were this change introduced.

Summary of Recommendations: The heart of the psychological recommendations centers on the question of whether those with responsibility for the priesthood wish to assist American priests to achieve greater maturity and, therefore, greater effectiveness in their work. This is so because the chief problem described by this study is one of incomplete growth in the lives of many priests. They are not sick; they are not fully grown. No response that is disciplinary or administrative in nature is appropriate to a challenge of personal growth. Bright and able, American priests need a deeper and broader experience of life itself if they are to deal with their developmental problems successfully.

It is suggested that an increase of practical freedom as well as an increase of personal accountability for their work of ministry are essential elements in dealing with this problem. American priests

need a more genuine experience of freedom in all those areas of life which are recognized as significant to the process of personal development. These include freedom concerning celibacy, self-support, place of residence, life-style, and mode of Gospel service. What seems most important is not one or the other of these issues but the reality of the practical freedom which the priests would experience with enlarged choices in these areas. It is also suggested that much greater accountability for the professional work of the priest is needed as a test and expression of their mature exercise of freedom.

Specific recommendations were made for each of the developmental groupings as well as for continued research on other problems connected with the ministry and life of priests, such as resignations and retirement.

Methodology

The methodology of the present study has the following three major facets: data collection devices, sampling procedures, and analytic techniques.

Data Collection Devices: The primary information-gathering technique for the study was the depth interview conducted by a professional psychologist. The tape-recorded interviews were approximately two hours in length and biographical in character. Topics of major focus were the following: Family Life and Relationships, Psychosexual Development, Development of Vocation, Self-Concept, Interpersonal Relations, Priesthood, Faith, Celibacy, and the Future. Twelve clinical psychologists at the Ph.D. level who were especially trained for the study served as interviewers.

Following each interview the psychologist wrote an evaluation of the information obtained. The purposes of the evaluation were summary, synthesis, interpretation, and prediction. Each evaluation was approximately 11 pages in length. The form of the evaluation was primarily discursive; limited use was made of rating scales. These evaluations served as the primary data upon which the report is based.

In addition to the interview, several psychological tests were used. Among these were the Loyola Sentence Completion Blank for Clergymen, Self-Anchoring Rating Scale of Maturity of Faith, Scale of Identity, and Personal Orientation Inventory.

Sampling Procedures: Potential subjects were selected via a two-stage stratified random sampling procedure. First stage sampling units consisted of all the dioceses and religious institutions separately grouped or "stratified" according to the number of priests affiliated with them.

These sampling units were arranged in a geographical order and then sampled within each stratum. The second sampling stage was the random selection of individual priests within the first stage units. The sampling plan of this study did not have as its aim the

estimation of population parameters. The major concern was the selection of potential subjects in an objective manner.

A total of 719 priests was selected for participation in the field interviews according to the sampling methodology described above. Prior to the field interviews, 60 priests (not included in the above total) served as interviewees in a three-month pilot study.

Potential subjects were contacted by mail and/or phone. Three follow-ups were undertaken. In the end, 240 refused to participate; 111 did not respond; 97 were precluded from participation (primarily due to foreign residence, death, or report of having left the active ministry); 271 completed the psychological interview. With minor exceptions, these 271 priests quite accurately reflect the composition of the American priesthood in terms of diocesan-religious affiliation, age, and geographical dispersion.

Analytic Techniques: Examination of the cases obtained in the pilot study and those obtained in the field suggested the possibility of describing four categories of priests in terms of their personal development. These categories were Developed, Developing, Underdeveloped, and Maldeveloped. A rating system for the categories was devised, tested, revised, and applied to the sample of priests. The result of the rating procedure was the following distribution: Developed, 19; Developing, 50; Underdeveloped, 179; Maldeveloped, 23. It should be emphasized that these are not estimates of population parameters.

The authors again reviewed the cases placed within each category and expanded the composite personality sketches to include theoretical notions appropriate to each. Illustrative case histories were added. The expanded composite personality sketches, the theoretical material, and the case histories comprise the major portion of the report. The psychological test data were analyzed separately in terms of this taxonomy of development.

An Overview of the Findings

An overview of the results of the present psychological investigation of American priests can be summarized in a sentence which sounds simple but which expresses complex truths: *The priests of the United States are ordinary men*. Many of their conflicts and challenges arise precisely because they are ordinary men who may have to live as though they were not ordinary at all. Perhaps no group of men has such high expectations placed on it by the Church, society, themselves and even their closest personal associates. Psychoanalyst Margaretta K. Bowers has written that "all through the ages the clergy have suffered from the insurmountable contrast between their very real humanity and the transcendent requirements of their symbolic representation as *the priest*, the Incarnate Christ." (*Conflicts of the Clergy* by Margaretta K. Bowers, M.D., Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York, 1963, p. 9.) The expectations made on the personal life of the priest have shaped his education, his style of living, and his mode of relationship to others. But priests are ordinary men and they can only react to this demanding environment with their ordinary human powers. The results of the psychological investigation are in no sense alarming. Priests do not emerge as seriously disturbed, rebellious, or atypical individuals. They are rather human beings with certain limitations, many of which have not been sufficiently appreciated because of the "great expectations" they are charged with fulfilling. Priests are men, and while this may seem a simple-minded observation, a deepened sensitivity to the limits as well as the possibilities of the human condition is indispensable for a true understanding of the ministry and life of American priests.

Speaking in summary terms again, American priests are bright and good men who do not as a group suffer from major psychological problems. Obviously, a cross-sectional look at priests who are actively functioning does not allow an investigation of those subjects who may be psychiatrically hospitalized at the time of the inquiry. A few of the subjects had, at one time or another, been hospitalized for psychiatric reasons; others had sought psychotherapy for themselves on an individual or group basis. The men who have had these

experiences, however, constitute a small percentage of the priests of the United States. This is an index of their general health and a sign of their similarity to other men in the population. There is no way, in other words, that the priest population can be described as psychologically sick. The developmental problems of priests, which we will discuss later, are significant but they cannot be appropriately described in psychopathological categories.

American priests are equal to most of the demands that are made on them by the Church and by their people. This is not to characterize these demands as overwhelming; it is to note that priests can and do perform without undue stress the services which are required of them. There is no breakdown, then, in the function which they perform in society in general. This is not to comment on the varying quality of the work which these men may perform. As in any profession or occupation this is as different as the individual priests are from each other. It is, however, to note that priests meet their general professional responsibilities in acceptable fashion. We may reflect on this in another way. American priests, as a class, do not stand out on either end of the continuum of job performance. They carry out the duties which are part of their lives, in other words, pretty much the way most other professional people do, without unusual comment or notoriety.

In many ways priests reflect the problems of the general population. While we will discuss the particular difficulties which many priests have because of lack of full personal growth, these do not seem far different from the problems which many of their contemporary fellow Americans experience. Priests probably stand up psychologically, according to any overall judgment, as well as any other professional. It is important to remember, however, that we have little data about other professional persons because so few have permitted, encouraged, or cooperated with such in-depth research. Indeed, as the investigation of the American priesthood proceeded at Loyola, it was learned that a large professional association, while interested in a study of its members, was unwilling to subject them to the same kind of intense scrutiny which constituted the essential part of this study. What we do know of some other professions, however, does suggest that the priests of the United States would not suffer terribly in comparison. This is, it would seem, a function of the common humanity of persons across all the professions rather than of the special nature of any particular profession. While interests, motivations, and the nature of work may differ, there is a com-

mon core of personality which overlaps most of the professions, reflecting the truth of psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan's famous phrase, "We are much more simply human than anything else."

The priesthood is not reduced in any psychological or philosophical sense by observing the ordinary character of American priests and thereby modifying the expectations made on individual persons who are priests. They are not supermen. But this is not because they have chosen the priesthood rather than some other walk of life; it is because they are men. The profession of the priesthood, if it can so be described for the purpose of this discussion, has long been surrounded with assertions and traditions which have set the priest apart and made him, in effect, an extraordinary personage in the eyes of the Church and its human communities. This is reflected in the way the priesthood has been written about, the social reinforcement of the priesthood by the Catholic population, and also by its share in the general esteem accorded to all clergymen. In the eyes of Catholics, priests have had very special qualities. This has notably affected the conditions of recruitment, training, and the living and working experiences of priests themselves. They have been encouraged to look on themselves as separate, called to a very high vocation of service, and asked to transform their own personalities into that of Jesus Christ Himself. Catholics are so familiar with this kind of language that one must step back for a moment and reflect on the powerful effects of these expectations and attitudes on the way priests have looked at themselves and their roles within the Church. Perhaps this is illustrated somewhat dramatically but nonetheless accurately in the example chosen by Dr. Bowers to underscore the same point. She cites the following reflections from Catherine de Hueck (*Dear Seminarian*, Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1950, pp. 85-87):

For a priest is a miracle of God's love to us; a man who, through his sacrament of ordination, becomes *another* Christ with powers that beggar human imagination . . . nothing can be greater in this world of ours than a priest. Nothing but God Himself.

A priest is a holy man because he walks before the Face of the All Holy.

A priest understands all things.

A priest forgives all things.

A priest is a man who lives to serve.

A priest is a man who has crucified himself, so that he too may be lifted up and draw all things to Christ.

A priest is a symbol of the Word Made Flesh.

A priest is the naked sword of God's justice.

A priest is the hand of God's mercy.

A priest is the reflection of God's love. He teaches God to us . . . He brings God to us . . . He represents God to us.

As Bowers notes: "This statement on the nature of the priesthood, though put in exalted terms, reflects in a very real sense the clergyman's ideal self-image, and at the same time intimates the staggering demands on his heart and conscience if he is to fulfill it." It may well be observed that this is precisely the attitude which one should have toward the priesthood, that this traditional style captures the essential separateness and dignity of this occupational choice. That may well be the truth, but the psychologist as such cannot pass judgment on theological realities. He can only look at the psychological truth as it emerges in the individual persons into whose lives he is privileged to look. Presumably, however, theological realities manifest themselves in the psychological realities of priests' lives. The psychologist must conclude that the priests of the United States, marked largely by sincerity and good will in trying to meet the expectations of their role as priests, cannot shatter or transcend the bonds of their own humanity in the process. In other words, priests remain limited human beings under strong pressures to be more than this on a full-time basis. One need not destroy an ideal to recognize that this is extremely difficult for even exceptional men; it is understandably impossible for ordinary persons to exceed the limitations of their own personalities.

It is important to put the reality of their psychological "ordinariness" into focus if we are to understand the ministry and life of American priests. They do not demonstrate any exemptions from what we understand as the ordinary laws of psychological growth. Nothing makes up for human experiences which they may have missed or which, for one reason or another in their personal histories, may have been distorted for them. There is, in other words, and despite the other theological claims and powerful wishes of the Catholic community itself, no special psychology for priests.

Unless we can accept the fact that priests are psychologically similar to the general population of men, it may be difficult to under-

stand one of the major findings of this research. A large proportion of the priests in this cross-sectional sample, as in any cross-sectional sample of American men, has not developed to full maturity. Although we do not wish to make statements about proportions as though we could project these estimates onto the entire population of priests, the careful method of sampling employed in this study indicates that successive samples drawn with the same care would yield the same results as those which have come from the interviews with this group of men. In other words, if one were to draw successive samples until the entire population of American priests had been interviewed, the results would not appreciably change. A large proportion of priests would emerge as "underdeveloped" persons. This means that these priests have reached a level of overall personal growth that is not equal to that which is expected of them at their age and in view of their careful selection and lengthy training. This is a major significant finding of this research. These psychologically underdeveloped priests probably reflect the fact that a great many American males are also underdeveloped. You do not have to be a priest in order to have this growth difficulty. In other words, in this regard the priesthood tells us something about normal persons and their developmental problems just as surely as it tells us about the men who are specifically priests.

The difficulty, of course, is that the population of priests is carefully selected and supervised during a long training period. One would presume that, with this care, psychological underdevelopment would have been noticed and would have been remedied. Educational analysts within the Church have suggested that the selection and training process tended to mask rather than reveal the lack of development in many of the candidates for the priesthood. It did, after all, reward conformity, a certain passivity to regulations and authority, as well as willingness to stay away from many normal developmental experiences such as dating and a normal social life. Recruitment and training for the priesthood have not, in any case, eliminated the difficulty of finding so many psychologically underdeveloped persons functioning within the profession. Were we to inspect the general population, even without sophisticated psychological data, we could see many signs of widespread underdevelopment in the American male population. Divorce statistics, stress in marriages, the almost epic interest in psychological group experiences to expand personal sensitivity: all these tell us that men in general have real difficulties with psychological growth. Immaturity in personal development is manifest in subtle statistics,

such as the fact that over six million buy and read *Playboy* magazine, a publication designed, according to social commentators, for the immature and undeveloped personality. So too the widespread middle-class, white-collar interest in pornography also points to a lack of full personal development in a great many Americans. To say that priests have psychological difficulties because they are not fully developed is to speak about them as typical members of the American male community.

This is not to say that most priests, or American men for that matter, are sick. This medical notion of sickness is not entirely appropriate in speaking of the psychological difficulties which indicate immature personal development. *Sickness* is not the correct concept to describe problems which are related to inadequate social and/or educational experiences. People who are immature may not need medical or psychological treatment as much as they do need a broader and richer experience of life itself. We shall discuss some of the characteristics of the priests of the United States and the way that this lack of personal development is manifested in their lives.

First of all, the problems of underdeveloped priests are not cognitive in nature. Priests do not lack knowledge nor are they defective in their capacity to understand or reason. The problems of underdeveloped priests are emotional in character. They reflect a lack of proper integration of their emotional and intellectual growth. Underdeveloped men have not passed through all the stages of growth which lead to what is recognized as adult and mature behavior. They look like adults but, on the inside, they still struggle with the challenges of previous levels of psychological development.

The priests of the United States use high order defenses to handle the problems of psychological underdevelopment. They utilize, for example, intellectualization with obsessive features in order to adjust to their lack of growth. As defenses go, intellectualization is a good one. It is much better, in other words, than some regressive or erratic pattern of behavior because it reflects a certain measure of intelligence and psychological resourcefulness. It also indicates that instead of moving forward and dealing with the problems of growth, priests who are underdeveloped tend, if we can extend the analogy, to move sideways through multiple adjustments to their lack of growth. They do not confront their lack of growth or deal with it directly but they are adept at smoothing it over through their skilled use of this intellectual defense. This enables them to think about life while it excuses them from having to feel the conflict which they

might experience if they were not so skilled at employing this defense. This intellectual defense enables underdeveloped priests to impose a consistency on their view of themselves even when their understanding of themselves really does not match what they are like in reality. They are good, in other words, at not looking closely at the gaps between what they are really like and what they perceive themselves to be like. The use of such defenses, of course, exacts a price from them. It makes it more difficult for the underdeveloped person to grow further and it also imposes limits on his capacity to enter into and to enjoy life in an adult way.

How does this incomplete personal development manifest itself? The chief area in which the underdeveloped priests manifest their incomplete psychological growth is in their relationships with other persons. These relationships are ordinarily distant, highly stylized, and frequently unrewarding for the priest and for the other person. Underdeveloped priests report their interpersonal relationships as difficult, even though they like people and, at a deep level of their personality, would like to be closer to them. There is a certain pain involved for them in this conflict between wanting the psychological experience of being close to people and yet finding it awkward and difficult to get themselves into close relationships with others. Some may have the impression that the priest has a host of intimate friends. This is true of some priests. We speak here of that segment of underdeveloped priests, however, who reveal in depth interviews that they have few close friends. There is quite a difference between revealing one's isolation and fears about relationships in a lengthy interview and making the surface claim of many friends. Beneath the surface one finds extensive interpersonal uneasiness. This is reflected in the underdeveloped priests' description of their problems in getting through to people in the context of their priestly functioning. Underdeveloped priests are genuinely uneasy about intimacy. Intimacy is here used as it is employed in the developmental schema of Erikson. It refers to responsible closeness with other persons, one of the most important challenges of adult life, and one that can only be handled by a person who has worked through the adolescent challenge of securing his own identity. Most of the underdeveloped priests have not worked through these problems, and they do experience difficulty with their own personal identity; they are, therefore, uneasy in handling psychological intimacy. They may report many acquaintances. Acquaintances are not the same as friends. It is indeed a moving experience to sense the lack of depth in the human relationships of many priests. What these men say about themselves

over and over is that there are few people to whom they are close, few people who know them well, indeed, few people who have enabled them to express themselves as fully as they did during the interview conducted for the study. Psychologists have long been aware of the fact of social desirability which affects the way people respond to questions. This tendency to say the things that make a person sound normal or like most others explains why priests may report many acquaintances in one moment and then admit few friends in the next.

Underdeveloped priests experience difficulty at a focal point of their priesthood because their relationships with others constitute such a substantial part of their day and, therefore, of their basic life and occupational experience. They know difficulty and discomfort in the very area which should be a deep source of personal and work satisfaction. For a more rewarding sense of pastoral achievement they should feel confident and at ease in their dealings with other people. The opposite seems to be more characteristic. Some priests feel that on principle they should remain at a distance from other people. This is a good example of the use of an intellectual defense. This asserted principle provides a socially acceptable and inwardly rewarding good reason, in other words, for not solving the problems of intimacy. But the person, whether he is a priest or not, who has not solved the problem of intimacy has not reached maturity either. The individual who is not sure of his identity and who experiences uneasiness in his personal relationships and work experiences cannot enter very deeply into life.

In underdeveloped priests there are evidences of passivity, exaggerated docility, and a tendency to identify themselves through the role of the priesthood rather than through their own personalities. This may be the outgrowth of their seminary training. It has been pointed out that a certain theological and scriptural interpretation of traditional Catholic teachings tended to diminish the value and importance of personal identity especially in the work of clergymen. They were to minimize the possibility of their own contribution to any work they might do, feeling that this work was validated by their cooperation with God's will and through the manifestation of His power rather than through the exercise of God's help. They mistrust themselves, feel unworthy, and frequently hold back from using their full capacities. This lack of development is reinforced by aspects of their training and by some of the principles by which they choose to live. They perform adequately, as was noted previously, but this is

not the same as performing with a sense of or an aspiration toward excellence.

There are many other ways in which this incomplete personal development is manifested in underdeveloped priests. Perhaps chief among these is the fact that so many of the underdeveloped have not achieved an integrated psychosexual identity. For whatever reasons, these priests have not resolved the problems which are ordinarily worked through during the time of adolescence. Sexual feelings are a source of conflict and difficulty and much energy goes into suppressing them or the effort to distract from them. They find it difficult to place sexuality into an easy and manageable perspective in their lives. Sexuality is, in other words, non-integrated in the lives of underdeveloped priests and many of them function at a level of psychosexual growth below that appropriate to their chronological age. This uncertainty about their sexuality affects their sense of personal identity and makes it difficult for them to accept and deal with the challenge of intimacy. This uneasiness concerning sexuality is reinforced by the guilt which has been culturally associated with sexuality. This is especially so because of the underdeveloped priests' lack of instruction or emotional understanding of the meaning of sexuality in their own lives. Most report education about sexual development in a negative or non-existent way; many report no normal developmental social experience. Most of them use strong psychological controls so that their public behavior will in no way stray out of bounds. These controls, however, drain away an inordinate amount of energy and time in these priests' lives. To put it simply, sex takes more time and effort to handle and control, and is productive of more anguish than it should be in any adult life. This excessive concern and uneasiness does not produce growth.

What is presumed to be central in their lives is found to be peripheral and frequently superficial. Underdeveloped priests have not questioned or worked through for themselves an integrated and sustaining theology or philosophy of life in depth. They would not, in most cases, bring up the subject of religious faith if it were not suggested by the interviewer himself. It is clear that the priesthood, howsoever it may be surrounded by religious ideals and presumed theological motivations, frequently meets the needs of underdeveloped priests in a very detailed way. In other words, the vocation to the priesthood frequently does more for the underdeveloped individual than the individual does for it. It enables the underdeveloped priest to maintain a position of prestige and security and to enjoy

protection from testing his own powers against the competition of the world. The priesthood for many of these underdeveloped men is a vocational choice which allows them to continue in life without really needing to develop in all areas of their personality.

This combination of factors affects markedly their capacity to implement religious ideals in their lives. We speak here of the underdeveloped priests, although, for proper perspective, it is important to remember that developed priests do, in fact, live their religious ideals authentically. The number of well-developed men is not great. However, the priests who are described as developing are dealing more realistically with their religious principles and practices. The maldeveloped priests, again a small number, have major and relatively unresponsive psychological problems in dealing with their religious convictions. The underdeveloped have difficulties, for which they frequently blame themselves, which are, in a real sense, perfectly predictable and understandable given the fact that they are ordinary men. In other words, their failure to realize fully the proposed meaning of celibacy in their lives is not an indictment of them or their good will; it reflects the difficulties any group of average men would have if they had to live in the same circumstances. It is important to understand this clearly because the danger of distortion here is great. The underdeveloped practice celibacy exactly the way any ordinary group of well-educated but incompletely mature men would. Their difficulties are precisely those you would expect if you took a group of young men, sent them to special schools and virtually eliminated their contact with women, and then put them to work in circumstances that continued to reinforce all male living in a socially restricted public religious role. Any group of men would find it difficult to make celibacy a vital and integrating force in their lives if they had this educational experience. So it is with the underdeveloped priests, few of whom violate their vow of celibacy but who adjust to it rather than live it with much vitality. Celibacy for underdeveloped priests means that they are not married; in the lives of underdeveloped priests it does not reflect a higher development of religiously motivated dedication.

On the contrary, celibacy, which most of them maintain, as has been noted, through adjustment, creates a situation which makes it genuinely difficult for them to continue their development. So much energy goes into adjusting to celibacy, so much effort into dealing with basically non-integrated sexuality, that these men could hardly be described as more free to do their priestly work because of celi-

bacy. As a condition of life, celibacy tends to reinforce the very aspects of these men which need development if they are to be more mature as individuals. It is also suggested that it is the lack of overall personal maturity which prevents these men from deepening their own religious faith.

The problematic situation of celibacy probably explains the general attitudes toward celibacy found in the depth interviews as well as in the sociological questionnaire. The majority of priests favor making celibacy a true option for the clergy. At the same time the majority of priests would not marry if the celibacy law were changed in their lifetime. One senses their willingness to continue in the present situation with the simultaneous realization that there should be greater practical freedom in regard to the election of celibacy as a condition of clerical life. Many of these men seem to realize that marriage is not the automatic answer to their own problems; indeed, it is clear that many of the underdeveloped priests are aware that in their incomplete development they would not effect a satisfactory marriage. Some feel that they are too old or too set in their ways to marry. In any case they share a conviction that, no matter what they would personally do, celibacy should be made optional. This conviction also obtains among the most developed priests who have integrated celibacy in a meaningful and religiously motivated manner in their lives. Some who strongly resist a change in the celibacy law do so because the projected change threatens their own adjustment. For example, it would challenge them to establish closer relationships with women. Their rejection of the possibility of optional celibacy expresses their own desire to preserve it because it is such a functional facet of their own hesitant adjustment to life. It is quite remarkable that most of the priests who do make celibacy a well-rounded value in their lives are not only unthreatened by a possible modification of the law but are, in fact, strongly in favor of a change to optional celibacy.

It seems clear that, were the law of celibacy modified to allow greater practical freedom of choice, most priests would approve and some would immediately marry. The majority would, however, remain as they are. This suggests that the real psychological issue, even when it is not identified consciously as such, is greater freedom rather than the question of celibacy itself. The priests of the United States are not, as they are sometimes popularly pictured, restlessly waiting to marry. They do want the freedom to choose or not choose celibacy, however, and this might vitalize rather than destroy

this traditional condition of service. Freedom, of course, concerns much broader issues than just celibacy and has many implications for the fuller development of American priests.

From the depth interviews it seems clear that most of these men did not feel psychologically free about the question of celibacy when the time came for them to make the decision during their seminary training. This is also understandable from a psychological point of view. The point of choice for these men came near the end of a long and secluded seminary training during which, it now seems clear, the conditions of removal from the world, strict discipline, and the reduction of social contacts, arrested the development, to one degree or another, of the seminarians. This result, as has been noted, is exactly what would be expected with ordinary men. Nothing in the atmosphere of the training successfully supplanted the growth that simply did not take place because of these restrictive psychological conditions. These men did not, in fact, know themselves as well as a man making this major kind of commitment might well be expected to. Indeed, men who have integrated celibacy in their lives in a successful way frequently report that this was the outcome of self-search and growth only after they had been ordained to the priesthood. The fact that so many men, across all the classifications, feel that they were not completely free at the time of choice in the seminary may explain why they want celibacy to be made more truly optional at this time.

There is little indication that American priests would exercise freedom in any impulsive or destructive way. Most of them want to do their best and they would not flout the laws of God or the Church if they were given a wider range of options. Indeed, they might, as a group, develop a more mature concept of authority than they now have. They are not men about whom one would have to be afraid if greater freedom were allowed to them. The developed men would hardly change their present mode of living and working, because they live very responsibly already. The maldeveloped have lost so much inner freedom that an increase of it in their life or work situations would mean little. The developing priests would use greater freedom to pursue their own understanding of themselves; they might seek wider forms of life experience but not in any oversensationalized way; they would merely broaden their social and occupational horizons, such as any growing persons do.

The underdeveloped priests are not a group that would abuse greater freedom either. In fact, the problem might be to get them to

use it responsibly, to accept, in other words, the consequences of their own decisions and programs. The underdeveloped American priests have not resolved their feelings toward authority, largely because this is a developmental task which they have not really worked through yet. Many tend to have ambivalent attitudes toward authority, wanting its protection and direction on the one hand while they resent it and use it as a handy device with which to externalize their own problems on the other. This is not a remarkable finding; again, it is predictable behavior in men who have been educated to docility in a profession which has always emphasized the role and dignity of authority. The remarkable discovery of this study is that authority seems to impinge so little on the day to day activities of these priests. They perceive their lives as circumscribed by authority but authority, in the person of a living and controlling authority figure, does not enter their lives often in a practical way. It is true that in some parish settings the pastor operates in an authoritarian manner and that he will ordinarily go beyond some fraction of the priests' activities, and there are many parish situations where the pastor operates in a very different manner. The point is that most of the underdeveloped priests are not sure what they really feel about authority. In this they may reflect a broader American problem, but, in any case, they are not totally consistent in their attitudes. This may spring from the psychological sources of their own personalities: their ambivalence about earlier authorities in their lives, their need for approval, and their consequent tendency to some passivity toward authority. Whatever the case, they do not evince a completely integrated attitude toward authority in their adult lives.

They find it easy to describe their problems in terms of authority but this is a common strategy for all men who would prefer to do this than recognize their own limitations. There is little evidence, however, to suggest that, were all the authorities in their lives suddenly to transform themselves according to their wishes, they would find their problems solved. The underdeveloped priests do not, in general, display a well thought out or consistent pattern of responses to authority. They may speak about changing it but they would feel very uneasy if they did not have its approval. They may perceive it as personally oppressive and yet, for all practical purposes, ignore it in their own lives. In fact, in the day to day transactions of their lives, it seems clear that these priests do pretty much what they want to do within the general limits of the profession. They have a practical flexibility of scheduling which is not available to many profes-

sional people. When regulations get in their way they frequently display real ingenuity in circumventing them.

Authority is not the practical problem in everyday living that one might have anticipated. This may be a function of the way authority is exercised, but it is also a function of incomplete development in many of these men. They are freer than they would like to admit to perform their professional service; authority seldom personally intervenes in their lives; their own ambivalent attitudes toward authority make them inconsistent in their feelings about it as they waver from dependence to independence in relationship to it. Authority, if it is a major problem, may be such because it does not seem to be a fully realized value on the part of those who exercise it or those who are subject to it. There is some evidence to suggest that priests are becoming increasingly indifferent to it.

In summary, the ordinary men who are American priests are bright, able, and dedicated. A large number of them are underdeveloped as persons with a consequent lack of fully realized religious and human values in their lives. They are not sick; they are not fully grown. They seem to need a broader, deeper, and genuinely freer experience of life to overcome this lack of development. There seem to be minimal risks in increasing the active options in their lives and, therefore, increasing the areas in which they must become more fully responsible for themselves and their work. The priests of the United States are clearly adequate in their function; they could be far more effective personally and professionally if they were helped to achieve greater human and religious maturity. The basic therapy for this kind of problem is the opportunity and encouragement for a deeper and freer participation in life itself.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this chapter are related to basic psychological questions which must be proposed to those who are responsible for the continued development of the priesthood: what are your goals or expectations for American priests? This question leads immediately to two others which seem to express the psychological implications of the findings of the present research:

1. Do you put first priority on assisting American priests to achieve greater personal maturity and therefore greater effectiveness as priests?
2. Do you rather put priority on American priests' adjusting themselves to the expectations of the institutional priesthood even at the price of not developing themselves?

There is a conflict implied by these two points of view, although it is obviously one that is not impossible to resolve. Those responsible for the exercise of the priesthood should, however, understand the terms of the conflict with which they must deal before they can move to meet it. There is a problem, even though it may be a problem shared by many other persons and institutions in our culture. The problem arises precisely because a sizable group of American priests are not as developed psychologically as they could be. There is also evidence that a number of them are aware of this and are anxious to grow more as persons and as priests. This basic dynamism is healthy and explains many of the efforts for greater responsibility and self-determination within the Church. On the other hand, those responsible for the priesthood have long-term expectations of how the men who are priests should be recruited, educated, and how they should live. These might be described as the institutional expectations of the priesthood, the conditions which, if observed readily, will minimize the stress in administering the activity of priests so that it fits into the pattern of organizational needs. This dilemma is common to all institutions: how to manage personnel so that what contributes most effectively to personal growth also contributes to the work of the organization. The definition and resolution of these mutual

expectations regarding the priesthood and the work of preaching the Gospels is at the very heart of understanding the issues uncovered by this investigation.

One need not take sides to outline this difficulty, but one would fail as a psychological consultant if one does not try to make the dimensions of the difficulties as clear as possible. If the men who are priests become increasingly aware of the challenges which they experience because of their lack of personal development, then they will gradually begin to seek what they consider to be the appropriate remedy. This movement will be toward those values and conditions of life which provide greater freedom personally and occupationally. They will reject solutions which emphasize conformity to organizational expectations without adequate consideration of what they value in their own personal growth. On the other hand, those responsible for the overall functioning of an organization may not conceptualize the problem in quite the same way; they are preoccupied with institutional concerns and, in the light of this focus, may emphasize conformity to the expectations of the organization as a fundamental consideration for the adjustment of the personnel. This, indeed, seems the case with the American priesthood, where the conflict between the desire for personal growth on the part of priests and the seeming institutional restrictions and expectations for their acceptance of traditional patterns meet headlong. This is not an irremediable problem but it is one that can grow more sharp-edged and complicated the longer its resolution is delayed.

This can be put in another way. The main problem of American priests is not sickness which needs some specific psychological treatment. It is, along with that of most other Americans, a problem of incomplete growth, for which there is only the remedy of an expanded and realistic experience of life itself. Whenever individuals have a personal problem of growth they do not solve it by making themselves conform to expectations outside themselves. Authentic growth is necessarily expressive of the individual himself; it frees him from conforming as a mode of adjustment and commitment to being more responsible for himself. This process of releasing greater growth in persons does not necessarily set them against other people or the organization in which they work. In fact, it usually allows them to contribute with greater cooperation and creativity as well as a greater sense of self-satisfaction. Research on management has confirmed many times over the wisdom of encouraging growth as the key to an effective organization. Those who are responsible for

the organization of the Church must review their expectations on their priest-personnel and ask whether they want greater maturity in them or whether the demands of the institution make it necessary to insist on re-emphasizing conformity to the traditional role of the priesthood.

Is it important to keep this general question in mind, even though one might ask: Is it not possible to have both of these values preserved, that is, greater personal development in priests and yet a continuity in the role expectations of the priesthood at the same time? Perhaps this question can only be answered effectively after all the research evidence on the priesthood is completely absorbed by those who read it. It is obvious that no solution can totally ignore the needs of either the individuals or the institution; but no solution will say that changes are unnecessary in either the lives of individuals or on the part of the institution. Psychologically speaking, changes have occurred and will continue to occur. One needs thorough understanding to make decisions that insure the positive course of the continuing process of change. A clear picture of the conflict at the root of possible responses to the problems of the priesthood is necessary before final decisions can be made. No recommendation that ignores the need to reconcile individual growth with institutional aims can be psychologically successful. One might sum up these observations thusly: you cannot strengthen the personalities of an institution's personnel without modifying the expectations for conforming behavior on their part; you cannot emphasize institutional goals and demand conformity to them on the part of personnel without limiting their personal development.

The basic problem with American priests would seem to be the need to provide them with the opportunities and the encouragement to continue their personal growth in a successful manner. One must remember the fact that American priests are, psychologically speaking, ordinary men; greater realism about this will allow sensible positive recommendations for the kinds of experiences they require to move forward in their personal growth. To recommend the creation of more opportunities for self-development is not in any sense to pander to some kind of weakness. It is rather to capitalize on their strength, their residual capacity to achieve greater maturity. One must work with what is there, not with what one wishes were there or presumes is there as far as psychological make-up is concerned. Indeed, some of the policies that have been implemented to prepare men for the priesthood have been based on a

misunderstanding of psychological reality; these policies, such as removal of seminarians from ordinary developmental educational and social experiences, have contributed to arresting rather than freeing the growth of men who are priests. If one is committed to the continued personal development of priests, one must have a real sense of the nature of the basic difficulty. It is not sickness that needs a specific medical or psychological treatment; it is personal development, and that can only be treated by a more adequate experience of mature living.

It would be relatively simple to write recommendations for American priests if we could conclude that they suffered some psychological illness. A very small proportion of them would be described by this notion of sickness; psychological treatment on a vast scale is obviously not the response of choice for this population. It is true that there are priests who are classified, as a certain number of persons in any profession would be, as maldeveloped. The following seem to be appropriate suggestions regarding these priests:

1) The maldeveloped will always function within the limitations imposed by their severe psychological problems. They should not be expected to overcome them as though these problems were simply bad habits or evidences of weak wills. Greater sensitivity and awareness of symptoms is needed, because frequently symptoms are the only language in which these maldeveloped men convey their message of inner discomfort. A more prompt response to them as individuals would enable a proper diagnosis and course of treatment to be planned at a time when it would be far more beneficial to them. Those who have suffered serious psychological problems need continued support and understanding, and, perhaps in certain circumstances, a greater positive toleration of their eccentricity if they are to continue some measure of psychological functioning in the priesthood.

2) The benefits of an adequate psychological screening program are underscored by the evidence of this research. In every case there was early clear information about their psychological difficulties which would have enabled authorities to make much better decisions both for these priests and the Church itself. The signs have been there a long time and skilled psychiatrists and psychologists would have been aware of them at an early period in their lives.

3) With regard to the rehabilitation of the maldeveloped some fresh thinking should be done about the ideal mode of readjustment.

Frequently in the past, the notion of being recovered has been synonymous with the idea of returning to the work of the priesthood. This may be a dangerously narrow and restrictive ideal to propose for these men. It seems clear that it may be healthier for many of them to be able to move out of the priesthood with minimal difficulty rather than to strive only to readjust to it. A more acceptant attitude to their future possibilities would create a better atmosphere for the success of their efforts to re-integrate themselves.

4) The last point in dealing with the severely emotionally troubled priests is to recall that what is appropriate for them may not be at all appropriate for other priests. In other words, while psychological screening will help to identify those with serious emotional liabilities and enable one to decide on an appropriate treatment for them, it will not do quite the same thing for the men whose problem is growth rather than sickness.

It is neither realistic nor practical to recommend some form of psychological therapy for the underdeveloped priests of America. While they might profit from it to a certain degree, it would not touch the basic problems nor do much to relieve the situational difficulties which promote and sustain this lack of development. As has been mentioned several times before, these men need a more active incorporation into life itself. They need, first of all, to be stirred to deal with their growth problems and then assisted in every way to do this constructively. Many of them do not really recognize that they are not fully grown; they are so firmly defended by their adjustive styles that they may be insensitive to their basic lack of maturity. The underdeveloped priests are men of good will; this is no indictment of that. Not all of them, however, recognize that they could be more fully grown, that their work could be more fruitful and satisfying, and that they could, in a real sense, experience life in a richer and happier way. So many of them are fearful of others, cut off from personal relationships, and only tentatively dealing with the adolescent issues of their own identity, that they draw back from the challenges of a deeper form of living. The only long-range way to improve the priesthood as a function of service is, of course, to make it possible for priests to improve themselves. The problems with which they have to deal are not intellectual as much as they are emotional. They must learn a little better how to live in the full dimensions of their personalities. This is an affective rather than a totally rational problem. They are ordinary men who have tried their best to cooperate with a system of training and a discipline of life

which have not introduced them fully to the real problems of their personal development. Indeed, one might observe that seminary training reinforced aspects of their personalities which really did not need further strengthening (self-control, a sense of duty, docility) while it ignored the areas in which they needed genuine development (personal identity, ability to relate closely and responsibly with others, self-confidence).

The therapy for underdeveloped persons is not a greater insistence on conformity. Psychologically speaking, these men need a greater practical freedom within which to assume their true adult responsibilities in life. Underdeveloped priests need more active options, beginning at an earlier age and extending throughout their careers. They need, in order to overcome passivity and a tendency to go along with life, more challenges to exercise freedom in regard to their own lives and the work which they do. The emphasis, as it was in earlier comments on celibacy, is on the quality of freedom itself rather than on any specific object of it. Unless responsible freedom becomes more clearly the environment within which men may serve as priests, one cannot expect the problems of underdevelopment to be dealt with constructively. What, however, are some of the specific areas in which greater practical freedom could be introduced into the lives of priests? Freedom and a sense of trust and concern for its mature use should be introduced in those aspects of life which are the most important for personal development. It does little good to increase the freedom of individuals in areas of their lives which are not of great significance. In fact, those responsible for the development of the priesthood might ask, "How much freedom can we afford to give and still insure a cohesive and responsible priestly ministry?" In other words, what are the immutables, the essential things which cannot change? When these are clear, then it is easier to see the dimensions of priestly life where freedom could be sensibly increased.

It may, for example, be essential to maintain a very clear and healthy relationship between a bishop and his priests if the work of the Church is to go forward. This may be one of the immutables, without which the identity of the priesthood would fragment badly. Is this achieved by control or by increased cooperation or a healthy compromise of these elements? There must be some essential agreement on the nature of Gospel teaching and Gospel service to the world, but these ends may be achieved by augmented educational and other programs rather than by anything else. In any case, as the

qualities which must be preserved are more clearly defined, it will be easy to specify more clearly the areas in which greater freedom could be granted without damage either to the nature of the priesthood or the integrity of the institution.

What, then, are some of the areas of life in which responsible freedom is important for the growth of persons? One might begin with the educations of priests, in which programs emphasizing greater freedom have already been introduced to some extent. Priests need to be trained in a more individual manner than was the case when seminary training was characterized by conformity. Seminarians must be helped to understand themselves and to develop fully the special talents which they may have been given for the benefit of the larger community which they will serve as priests. An individualized approach to the training of priests allows greater freedom but it also insists on greater personal accountability. This is the mixture that makes for maturity.

It is the same in the exercise of the priesthood itself. Greater freedom can be allowed in many areas of the personal lives of priests—in celibacy, living quarters, self-support, and opportunities for further education—but only if at the same time there is an increased demand on their professional performance as priests. Up until now the emphasis has been on the rather close supervision of the priest's personal life without much mature supervision of his professional life. Greater accountability for the manner in which a priest discharges his obligations of service can only increase maturity; greater freedom in his personal life can only enlarge his opportunities to use it in a self-developing and responsible manner.

It should be noted, of course, that while there are some risks in enlarging the genuine freedom in the lives of these men, there is not much danger that they will abuse it. In fact, for some of the more lethargic, the problem will continue to be that of getting them to take active and creative advantage of it. These men are not, however, impulsive persons; they are, if anything, just the opposite, more overcontrolled than undercontrolled. There is not much danger that they would use enlarged freedom for purposes that would subvert the institution which they serve. While there will be necessary adjustments to be made to make this freedom truly available to them, a greater consequent maturity will enable these men to serve more cooperatively and more effectively in the priesthood. A much greater fear arises if one asks what will happen if the freedom of American priests is not expanded in a practical manner?

Part of the answer to that comes from an inspection of the priests who are designated as developing. These men are, as a matter of fact, attempting to enlarge their range of personal choices in order to achieve greater personal growth. For many this is an extremely difficult process, although the experience of increased growth makes up for the pain of having to stretch oneself to attain it. Clearly, some of the developing priests are discovering new strengths within themselves which enable them to function more effectively in their work of ministry. They frequently find that they no longer need to depend on the institution for as much support as they once did. Their strength comes now from within, where a deepened faith and set of convictions provides a more stable bedrock for their work. Others discover that the course of development leads them out of the priesthood, where they feel they never really belonged or which they now feel in conflict with because of new attitudes toward themselves and the Church. It is clear that, if greater responsible freedom is not encouraged for priests, more and more of them will find themselves, one way or another, on the path of personal development anyway. This may lead some to greater dedication; it may lead others to new decisions about their lives. In other words, those men who are closest to a realization that they still have personal growth to achieve will continue to move into this challenge because of its profound personal importance to them. This pattern will continue even if it is unrecognized, unsupervised, and, on the part of Church authorities, unresponded to.

The developed members of the priest population are people who can also be trusted with more freedom. The fact that they have developed as well as they have reflects the favorable life experiences which they have had. Their maturity enables them, in whatever work they do, to accept new freedoms with confidence and a sense of responsibility. Indeed, the revitalization of the priesthood may depend on reinforcing the men who are most capable of integrating the goals of personal growth and institutional integrity in their lives. One of the great strengths of developed priests is their lack of psychological defensiveness. The developed should be identified for their leadership potential for the future of the Church. More needs to be learned about the developed priests of the country with a view to helping them to continue to grow and also to understand the kind of man who can minister responsibility to others.

This brings us back to the question with which this chapter began. Do those responsible for the priesthood want to encourage individ-

ual development, or does this seem too alien to the objective of maintaining institutional integrity? This is a complex question which needs careful reflection. Is the priesthood a profession that can contain and express the personalities of psychologically growing persons? Or is it, in view of institutional needs, a profession in which the man who can shape himself to its demands is the person who is desirable? Only an answer to this question can determine how much growth through responsible freedom one wishes to introduce into the lives of American priests.

The final recommendation of this report is to extend and continue research on the priesthood and other aspects of Church life. It is clear that a more profound understanding of the underlying psychological truths of the present condition of the Church can only be beneficial to it. In the course of the present research, the investigators identified many areas which need more in-depth analysis. To mention a few:

1. A study in depth of retired priests whose problems are only now beginning to appear. The difficulties of retirement are many. There seem to be special ones regarding personal identity. Here increased knowledge would be especially helpful.
2. In-depth interviews with a number of resigned priests would enable the Church to have a much better understanding of this serious problem.
3. An in-depth study of seminarians would be instructive, especially in the light of the responsibility they will bear for the Church in the future.
4. A continued program of research on pastoral questions coupled with continued dialogue between researchers and Church officials.



