PRIESTHOOD, MINISTRY, AND RELIGIOUS LIFE: SOME HISTORICAL AND HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.
Weston School of Theology, Cambridge, Mass.

THIS ARTICLE has a simple thesis: the categories with which we customarily think about religious life are inadequate to the historical reality and that inadequacy is to a large extent responsible for some of the confusion in the Church today about religious life, especially about the relationship to priesthood and ministry of the "regular clergy," i.e. priests living in a religious order or congregation under a rule. This confusion, I further maintain, is harmful to religious orders and congregations, even those that do not have ordained members, and is also harmful in the long run to the Church as a whole.

The confusion has roots deep in our past, but it remained latent or at least virtually unnamed until quite recently. Forcing it ever more into our awareness have been the implications and implementation of certain documents of Vatican Council II, especially *Presbyterorum ordinis* on the "ministry and life of priests," *Optatam totius* on the "training of priests," *Christus Dominus* on the "pastoral office of bishops," and *Perfectae caritatis* on "the renewal of religious life." An altogether crucial question has emerged: How do religious priests fit in the ministry of the Church?

If we turn to the Council, we do not find an altogether satisfactory answer, although we are left free to infer that the specific difference between religious and diocesan priests lies in the fact that the former take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, whereas the latter do not. The ideals that these vows entail, however, are so vigorously enjoined upon diocesan priests themselves in *Presbyterorum ordinis* that in the long run the difference seems to be at most one of emphasis or consists simply in the juridical fact of public vows, or perhaps life in community.[1] The difference seems thus reducible to some rather subtle particularities of spirituality which in fact are almost impossible to define. The conclusion that seems to follow is that there is one priesthood,[2] but priests can be animated by different spiritualities.[3] There are no further differences. Although *Presbyterorum ordinis* concedes that its provisions are to be

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[1] Nos. 15–17.
[2] See ibid., no. 7.
[3] See *Christus Dominus* (henceforth *CD*), no. 33.

applied to regular clergy only insofar as they "suit their circumstances," the document seems to assume that they in fact "suit their circumstances" quite well.[4] The topic sentence of the opening paragraph sets the tone for everything that follows: "What is said here applies to all priests."[5]

Some things surely do apply to all. The Council, for instance, locates priestly identity to a large extent in ministry, a location surely pertinent to both diocesan and religious clergy.[6] Yet it is with this very issue of ministry that the problem begins to manifest itself. The basic design in *Presbyterorum ordinis* for priestly ministry, implicit though it is, has three essential components: it is a ministry by and large to the faithful; it is a ministry conceived as taking place in a stable community of faith; it is a ministry done by clergy in "hierarchical union with the order of bishops."[7]

This design corresponds to the ministerial traditions and situation of the diocesan clergy. But does it correspond to the traditions and situation of the religious clergy? Not so clearly. In fact, it practically contradicts them—as I hope to make clear in this article, if it is not clear already. Moreover, we must note that the Council ties ministry to questions of church order when it speaks so repeatedly and insistently of "hierarchical union with the order of bishops." Yet, the major religious orders and congregations have lived in a tradition of exemption from episcopal jurisdiction, to a large extent even for their ministry. If we are to understand the sense of dislocation in some religious at the present time, I therefore contend, we must direct our attention not so much to issues of spirituality, in the conventional sense of the term, but to issues of ministry and church order.

As a background to Vatican II, I will review these two issues in the history of religious life from about the 13th to the late-16th centuries, when traditions that affected the modern Church were set. I deal explicitly with clerical orders and congregations of men, for it is only with them that the question of ordained priesthood arises. Ministry is, however, an issue also for most orders and congregations of women and for nonclerical congregations of men. It is an issue for the laity. For lack of

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[4] *Presbyterorum ordinis* (henceforth *PO*), no. 1. Unless otherwise noted, English translations are from *Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Austin P. Flannery (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975).

[5] Ibid.

[6] On the unresolved conflict in *PO* between the "classic" theology of priesthood and a "poco tradizionale" presentation of ministry, see Christian Duquoc, "La riforma dei chierici," in *Il Vaticano II e la chiesa*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo and Jean-Pierre Jossua (Brescia: Paideia, 1985) 399–414.

[7] *PO*, no. 7. The idea recurs, e.g., ibid., nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12; *CD*, nos. 28, 34; *Optatam totius* (henceforth *OT*), no. 2.

space and competence, I do not address these aspects of the problem, but I assume that where my observations and conclusions might apply to these women and men will be clear. For the same reasons I have had to restrict myself almost exclusively to the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits, but I believe that what I say applies *mutatis mutandis* to others.

SOME HISTORIOGRAPHICAL TRADITIONS

We cannot examine "what happened" until we examine the categories in which we frame what happened. We must therefore examine certain historiographical traditions. I am convinced that the origin of part of our confusion about priesthood and ministry in religious orders and congregations lies in some inadequate but popular and widely appropriated historical grids. That is to say, whether we realize it or not, we think about these issues in historical frameworks that we do not question.

The historiography of any phenomenon falls into patterns that form at certain moments and then tend to persist for decades, generations, or even longer. This is especially true for standard and general histories, for it takes a long time for monographic studies to challenge the received wisdom that such texts tend to repeat without re-examination. Moreover, the historiography of any given phenomenon tends to take on a life of its own, isolated from the historiography of even related phenomena, so that integration of the results of research from different areas or disciplines is a slow and usually imperfect process.

We are in fact dealing in this article with the history of five imperfectly distinct phenomena: (1) ministry and priesthood, (2) church order, (3) religious life, (4) spirituality, (5) church reform. Although in some of their basic premises the historiographical traditions of these phenomena are quite valid, they suffer from certain defects along the lines I indicated above, which in many instances can be reduced to the fallacy of misplaced emphasis. At this point I want simply to describe the patterns, in as brief and clear a manner as possible, and to suggest how they might need to be modified. My critique goes somewhat as follows.

1. Histories of priesthood and ministry, as we now have them, deal almost exclusively with data from the biblical and patristic periods, to the almost complete neglect of the traditions of the Church during the Middle Ages through the modern period up to Vatican II.[8] That neglect

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[8] Typical of this tendency is the otherwise excellent survey by Nathan Mitchell, *Mission and Ministry: History and Theology in the Sacrament of Order* (Wilmington, Del.: Glazier, 1982). See also Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1981); Joseph Lécuyer, *Le sacrement de l'ordination* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1983); Albert Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest according to the New Testament* (Petersham, Mass.: St. Bede's, 1986). In his second book on ministry, Schillebeeckx' treatment of our period is still brief, but especially perceptive and helpful:

of some 1500 years, I propose, gives us a curiously unbalanced and incomplete picture of our traditions of these important institutions.

2. The scant attention that these histories sometimes concede to that long period consists almost exclusively in *ideas* about priesthood or sacred orders that Aquinas or the Council of Trent, for instance, proffered. They thus do not deal with what was actually *happening* in ministry, in church order, in culture at large, and therefore, for this portion of their presentation, woefully brief, they fall into simply a history of ideas. I propose that what Aquinas and Trent *said* about ministry and priesthood did not necessarily correspond to the *experience* of ministry and priest-hood even for their own times. What we desperately lack at present is a comprehensive study of the history of ministerial *practice* from the 12th to the 20th centuries, although we are now beginning to possess the monographic studies in *social* history that would make such a synthesis possible.[9]

3. Whereas histories of ministry do sometimes deal with institutions as well as ideas when they discuss the biblical and patristic periods (though not subsequent periods), general histories of spirituality for all periods have fallen almost exclusively into the pattern of the history of ideas. Their concern is what saints and spiritual authors *thought* about prayer, mortification, spiritual reading, the sacraments, and even reli-gious experience itself. Generally missing, therefore, is any indication of how these devout persons might fill up a day or, more important, how they engaged in ministry, what instruments they might have devised for ministry.[10]

4. The title of David Knowles's little classic on the history of religious life, *From Pachomius to Ignatius*, clearly indicates the pattern with which we habitually frame this complex phenomenon.[11] We see religious life as

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The Church with the Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry (New York: Crossroad, 1985). The only book of which I am aware that attempts a chronologically evenhanded treatment is Bernard Cooke, *Ministry to Word and Sacrament: History and Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976). Commendable though this book is in so many ways, it approaches these centuries with a somewhat different perspective than myself and without utilizing the same information.

[9] The current tidal wave of social history has made practically no impact here. See, e.g., B.-D. Marliangeas, *Clés pour une théologie du ministère* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1978). For some issues connected with social history and for bibliography, see Peter Burke, "Popular Religion," forthcoming in *Catholicism in Early Modern History: A Guide to Research*, ed. John W. O'Malley (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1988).

[10] See, e.g., the survey of literature by Massimo Marcocchi, "Spirituality," in *Catholicism*. See also, however, my "Introduction" to the so-called *spiritualia* of Erasmus, to be published in Vol. 66 of the *Collected Works of Erasmus* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto, 1988).

[11] Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966. See now also Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1985).

a continuous development, out of the cenobitic traditions, of the search for personal perfection. The matrix for the development is thus decidedly monastic. True, there was an "active" element in monasticism almost from the beginning. True, as time moved forward some monasteries and other institutions enriched the tradition by being even more "active" in the world. But, I ask, do not the "active orders" constitute more of a break with the tradition than the from-Pachomius-to-Ignatius pattern superficially suggests? If those orders are viewed not as the institutional embodiment of an ascetical tradition traced back to Pachomius, but as a critically important phenomenon in the history of ministry claiming "apostolic" inspiration, different appreciations and new issues emerge. In other words, at least from the 13th century, the history of religious orders pertains as much to the history of ministry as it does to the history of institutional asceticism.

5. The history of the religious orders, especially when incorporated into larger histories, is often seen as pertaining to the history of church reform. This is most obviously verified in the foundations of the Counter Reformation like the Jesuits and the Capuchins, but it is no less true for foundations in other periods. Most histories that deal with church reform tend to treat it in moralistic-disciplinary terms and, to a much lesser extent, in terms of doctrine. The religious orders are seen, therefore, usually in the context of their spiritualities, as "reforming morals and confirming doctrine," which is how the Council of Trent described its own task.[12] This historiographical tradition, which absolutely dominates the way most Catholics think about reform, ignores the important shifts in culture, ministry, church order, religious rhetoric, and propaganda that almost invariably accompany any reform and that in the long run are probably more important than any "moral reform" or "doctrinal confirmation" that might have taken place.

6. This situation is to a large extent the result of the tendency in the West to view church history from the perspective of a universalist ecclesiology. As Giuseppe Alberigo has recently observed, "The efforts made to elaborate a history of the Church 'from the base' or focused on popular religiosity remain largely inadequate and are still far from giving a satisfactory vision of the development, spatial and temporal, of the Christian experience as a communion of local communities."[13] Thus the various ways that ministry was effective or ineffective, especially in the long run, remain unstudied, or at least unincorporated into general

[12] See, e.g., the treatment of the mendicants and of the Jesuits in *Handbook of Church History*, ed. Hubert Jedin and John Dolan, 4 (Montreal: Palm, 1970) 172–83; 5 (New York: Seabury, 1980) 446–55.

[13] "The Local Church in the West (1500–1945)," *Heythrop Journal* 28 (1987) 125–43.

presentations.

7. Although rarely recognized in standard histories, every reform program rests upon ecclesiological constructs like "the true Church," "the apostolic Church," "the evangelical Church," "the well-disciplined Church," the "herald Church," the "sacramental Church."[14] There is an ecclesiology under every reform, and every ecclesiology relates directly to assumptions about ministry and church order. These ecclesiological constructs need to be exposed.

8. General histories that deal with church reform tend to rely too heavily upon official documents, like the decrees of Trent, and upon the *ideals* expressed by reformers, thereby neglecting what was actually happening "in the field."[15] Such histories need to be counterbalanced with *social* histories, which are concerned not with what people wanted to happen but with whether and how anything did happen and with its impact on the institutions of society.

9. Moreover, historians often fail to realize that the official documents of religious orders, including the documents of the founders themselves, express even the ideal only imperfectly. In particular, those documents find it easier to articulate how they are in continuity with the tradition than how they are innovating within it, for by the very nature of the case the latter reality lacks as yet a precise vocabulary. Those same documents are also incapable of rising above the historical realities in which they are immersed.[16] Only with the hindsight of generations or centuries does the *sensus plenior*, the full implication, emerge.

10. Finally, a general tendency in the historiography of all these phenomena must be mentioned: a tendency to read the past as a history of progress. Religious life, church reform, ministry, and similar institutions in this view thus move almost inexorably towards the balanced, comprehensive, and presumably definitive settlements of the contemporary Church, especially as expressed in the documents of Vatican II. One of the consequences of the subtle (and flattering) prejudice towards the present that underlies this tendency is that it admits no regress to a previous situation or condition. Paradoxically, it also does not admit

[14] I have shown this in great detail for one figure in *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform* (Leiden: Brill, 1968). See also, e.g., Gerhart B. Ladner, "Two Gregorian Letters: On the Sources and Nature of Gregory VII's Reform Ideology," *Studi Gregoriani* 5 (1956) 221–42.

[15] See, e.g., a standard text like Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity* 2 (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984) 14–121.

[16] See, e.g., my "The Fourth Vow in Its Ignatian Context: A Historical Study," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 15, no. 1 (St. Louis: Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality, 1983), and "To Travel to Any Part of the World: Jerónimo Nadal and the Jesuit Vocation," ibid. 16, no. 2 (1984).

much possibility of progress beyond the present. According to this style of thinking, the reforms of Vatican II, for instance, become definitive culminations of historical development, now frozen in their perfection, and they do not of themselves invite us to further reflection and action in relationship to a reality that, by definition, can never achieve perfect expression in this world and that therefore requires constant readjustment.

TOWARDS A CRUCIAL TURNING POINT

What I now intend is to provide some historical evidence to support and illustrate the foregoing generalizations and show in more detail their implications. I will deal with just a few crucial moments in the period from the 13th century to the present. I am painfully aware that to accomplish adequately the task I have set myself would require several volumes dense with documentation, but for the moment I have to settle for nothing more than an interpretative essay, with all the perils inherent in such an enterprise.

I must assume that the reader is already familiar with some well-established findings about ministry, church order, and religious life from the period of the New Testament into the Middle Ages. These findings are extremely important for our purposes, but limitations of space indicate that nothing more than the briefest of summaries can be provided here.

The New Testament does not yield an altogether clear or consistent picture about church order, about the relationship between authority and community. Itinerant preaching is the pattern for ministry that emerges most obviously from these same documents, but different origins of missioning and commissioning for that ministry seem operative. Evidence for patterns of church order well into the second century is scarce, but eventually the now familiar pattern of a bishop surrounded by his presbyters emerged. From this point forward most of what we know about ministry during the patristic period derives from this now stable situation, in which the bishop and his clergy assume ever more fully certain traits of the Roman civil servant; the episcopacy becomes an *officium*, and the presbyter a *sacerdos*. Meanwhile, by the fifth century monastic and quasi-monastic communities have developed, and some few of these engage in ministry in collaboration with the bishop.[17]

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[17] On these developments see, e.g., Mitchell, *Mission and Ministry;* Schillebeeckx, *Ministry;* Gerd Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), and his *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale Univ., 1983); Raymond E. Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*

With the breakdown of public order in the early Middle Ages, some members of monastic communities began to take an ever-larger role in ministry. By now often without any relationship to the episcopacy, they became the great agents of evangelization until the tenth century. By the end of that century, however, "ministry," whether done by monks or "local" clergy, consisted to a large extent in various rituals and blessings and in the celebration of the liturgy. Evangelization, catechetics, and other traditional forms had practically disappeared in any organized form, and even preaching was considerably curtailed.[18]

With the 11th century a series of immensely important changes began to take place in society as trade, cities, law, literacy, kingship, and other institutions took on new vitality. A great turning point had been reached, and "the making of Europe" had begun. The Church was so integrally present to these phenomena that it can hardly be distinguished from them. For our purposes, however, two manifestations of change are particularly important.

The first is a phenomenon that took place at the upper level of European society, the so-called Investiture Controversy or Gregorian Reform, whose most dramatic expression was the battle unto death between Pope Gregory VII and Emperor Henry IV. The ramifications of that Reform for the internal life of the Church were incalculably great and are still being felt today. The most obviously direct of these ramifications was the emergence of a strong and centralized papacy and the concomitant emergence of a stronger episcopacy. The latter was a result both of the Gregorian insistence on the ideal of episcopal independence from lay magnates and of the growth of cities, over which bishops presided. The revival of canon law that the Gregorians promoted gave support to an ideal of the bishop that emphasized his status in the hierarchical society of the times and vindicated his authority over certain properties and processes as over against his lay rival, the local nobility. The bishops' relationship to ministry as such was for a number of reasons not much considered in any direct fashion. In any case, the feudal age when abbots ruled the Church from their rural monasteries had begun to fade, as this important shift in church order took place.

The second phenomenon did not occur on the level of bishops and popes, but on a lower level of society. It included some clergy and monks, but also lay elites and rabble, and was in many ways more spontaneous than its Gregorian counterpart. Although it took a number of forms, it was unified by an enthusiasm for the "apostolic life," *vita apostolica* or

(New York: Paulist, 1984); Adolar Zumkeller, *Das Mönchtum des heiligen Augustinus* (Würzburg: Augustinus, 1950).

[18] See, e.g., *Handbook of Church History* 3, 307–12, with bibliography.

vita evangelica.[19] With differing emphases that ideal included itinerant preaching, disdain for material goods, shunning and often denouncing the honors and social position that both Church and society offered. Increased literacy seems to have contributed somewhat to this ideal, for the "apostolic life" was vindicated on the basis of the way the "apostles" were presented in the New Testament. The "apostolic life" sought to recover the "apostolic Church."

This complex phenomenon was surely to some extent a "protest movement," reacting against the ostentatious wealth and status, especially of some of the upper clergy, that the new economic, social, and ecclesiastical conditions had already begun to produce. In some localities the enthusiasm for the "apostolic life" eventually turned sour. By the late-12th century, heretical movements like the Waldensians and the Albigensians—resulting from a strange mixture of learning and ignorance, of high ideals and smoldering resentments—became a widespread and public problem.[20]

THE DOMINICANS AND FRANCISCANS

As we know so well, one "answer" to these heresies was the Dominican and Franciscan orders, both founded in the early-13th century.[21] They "answered" effectively because they were themselves part of the same enthusiasm for the *vita apostolica*, which included certain assumptions about ministry. We must look carefully, therefore, at the ministry of the friars. One of its most notable features was its origin. The ministry of the Dominicans clearly derived from a special and specific *need*, from a circumstance that fell outside the capabilities of the pastoral structures that were normatively in place. Those structures were impotent to deal with the Albigensians. For this period of church history, we can only with reservation describe those structures as "parochial," because parishes were not at this point the sociological reality they would eventually

[19] See, e.g., M.-H. Vicaire, *L'Imitation des apôtres* (Paris: Cerf, 1963).

[20] See, e.g., Tadeusz Manteufel, *Naissance d'une hérésie: Les adeptes de la pauvreté volontaire au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Mouton, 1970), and *Handbook of Church History* 3, 453–65; 4, 98–109, with bibliography.

[21] See, e.g., William A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order* (2 vols. New York: Alba, 1965–73); M.-H. Vicaire, *Dominique et ses prêcheurs* (2nd ed. Paris: Cerf, 1979); idem, *Histoire de saint Dominique* (2 vols. Paris: Cerf, 1982); Cajetan Esser, *Origins of the Franciscan Order* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald, 1970); Stanislao da Campagnola, *Le origini francescane come problema storiografico* (Perugia: Università degli Studi, 1979); Lazaro Iriarte, *Franciscan History: The Three Orders of St. Francis of Assisi* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald, 1983); Lawrence C. Landini, *The Causes of the Clericalization of the Order of Friars Minor, 1209–1260, in the Light of Early Franciscan Sources* (Chicago: n. publ., 1968).

become.[22] But we can say that the structures were those under the local clergy that looked to the "normal" sacramental practice of the faithful. The Albigensians were, however, a radically alienated group, heretics, who scorned that practice and condemned the life-style of its ministers. Out of this situation was born the aptly-named Order of Preachers.

If we take the life of St. Francis as somewhat paradigmatic for the origins of Franciscan ministry, we have a somewhat different picture. It is true that the Franciscan movement cannot be understood apart from the history of the Waldensians and similarly heretical groups, but the direct inspiration for Francis' preaching seems almost certainly to have been the impelling force he felt within himself to speak of the Lord and of His love for all creatures. While the origin of Dominican ministry was a quite specific situation "out there," a need, the origin of Franciscan ministry was more internal to Francis' spirit. The origins of these two ministries were similar, however, in one extremely important regard. Neither of them derived from office.

The origins of the concept of *officium* are ancient, but the most influential description of it came from St. Isidore of Seville in the seventh century. For Isidore it signified the functions connected with major and minor orders, which he understood to be largely ritual and liturgical functions. Gratian and especially later canonists, bearing the burden now of the social and economic legacy of the feudal periods, inextricably linked benefices to *officium*, because benefices were the way those in major and minor orders received their living.[23]

Thus in the clerical state office and benefice were two aspects of the same reality. Even more important from my point of view, however, is that, while office implied the care of souls in some form or other, it did not always in fact so issue. Where it did, furthermore, it looked to stable, established, and well-defined positions, whose functions did not vary from generation to generation.

The Gregorian Reform and its aftermath accelerated and accentuated developments like these in the ministerial apparatus of the Church. In its quest for order in the Church, it aided and abetted closer definition of *officium*, just as it aided and abetted a hierarchical mode of thinking about the clerical state that already had grounding in the patristic period with the graduated *cursus honorum* of minor through major orders.

[22] See, e.g., Luigi Nanni, "L'Evoluzione storica della parrochia," *Scuola cattolica* 81 (1953) 475–544.

[23] See, e.g., Donald Edward Heintschel, *The Medieval Concept of an Ecclesiastical Office* (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1956); see also Thomas Peter Rausch, *Priesthood and Ministry: From Küng to the Ecumenical Debate* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1976) esp. 98–144.

The Gregorian Reform marks the strong articulation, therefore, of what we have come to call the "institutional Church," or, to use Ernst Troeltsch's term, "the church-type." We can still take a hint from Troeltsch's brilliant, though faulty, analysis of the aftermath of the Reform and postulate that the Dominicans and Franciscans represent the "sect-type," an almost inevitable reaction to the church-type.[24] The church-type, whose essence is "its objective institutional character,"[25] would be constituted even in its ministry by order, status, office, and stable functions. In the wake of the feudal and monastic cultures of the early Middle Ages, those constitutive elements of ministry would be further specified as ritual and sacramental.

The sect-type, by definition "a voluntary community,"[26] even in its ministry would be almost the antithesis, evidencing by its flexibility and adaptibility the inward inspiration that was its source. Whereas the church-type would find its scriptural warrant in the Pastoral Epistles, the sect-type like the Dominicans and Franciscans would clearly find its warrant in the ministry of Jesus and his first disciples in the Synoptics and in the egalitarian principles in the early chapters of Acts. Francis underscored that egalitarianism when he consistently referred to his group as a *fraternitas*.[27]

For the friars this distinction between the two types cannot be pressed too far, for in many important respects it does not correspond to the facts, nor does it correspond in the main to the friars' self-understanding. "Types" are, after all, artificial constructs designed to make an admittedly too sharp distinction. Neither the Dominicans nor the first followers of Francis defined themselves as against the Church or apart from it, and they found justification for their ministry precisely in the licensing of a bishop, the bishop of Rome. Nonetheless, we must pay attention to the realities that the distinction makes more manifest to us.

It is at this point that the "spirituality" of the early mendicants must enter into consideration. Dominic chose poverty and rejected nominations to the episcopacy so that he might preach in freedom.[28] Asceticism and ministry are thus closely conjoined for the Dominicans. Francis' romance with Lady Poverty may in some ways seems to antedate and be more independent of his own early ministry, if we may thus speak of it, but here too the fusion of spirituality and ministry is early. Both founders

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[24] *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* 1 (New York: Harper and Row, 1960) 328–82.

[25] Ibid. 338.

[26] Ibid. 339.

[27] See Esser, *Origins* 17–52.

[28] See Vicaire, *Dominique et ses prêcheurs* 222–35.

were engaged in a ministry of discipleship.[29]

The New Testament, but especially Acts 4:32-37, taught the late-12th and early-13th century a great deal about the "apostolic life," for which it showed such great enthusiasm. That apostolic life did not mean only a life of "apostolate" in our sense of the word, but included a life-style modeled on the way the early disciples or "apostles" were supposed to have lived, which to many did not seem to correspond to what they found in the Church of their day. The vows pronounced by the friars, especially the vow of poverty, thus had an important relationship to ministry, even though superficially they might seem to relate only to the ascetical tradition. The apostles, like Jesus, preached, moved around from place to place, shared their goods, and based their relationship to one another on direct personal fellowship. A certain egalitarianism was implied because of the implied recognition of the validity of a variety of charisms in a setting where charism was the foundational value. All these factors, plus others, had impact on the internal structures of the early mendicants, articulated into a system of capitular government—in some contrast to the "monarchy" that was emerging ever more decidedly in the papacy as well as in the episcopacy—and of superiors elected for definite and indefinite terms, quite unlike abbots united to their monasteries and bishops united to their dioceses until death, and even unlike other clerics united to their benefices in almost the same way.[30]

Another telling difference between the diocesan clergy and the friars developed almost immediately: the concern of the latter for systematic programs of education for their recruits. The friars came into being just as the universities attained their mature organization at the beginning of the 13th century. Although diocesan priests and even monks sometimes attended the universities, the friars had a relationship to them that was systemic. This is not to say that every member of these orders who engaged in ministry attended a university, but rather that explicit programs of education were formulated within them that were based on the same principles that undergirded the university programs.

These programs were created by the internal government of the orders and never suffered any episcopal, or even papal, restraints upon their formulation and implementation. They were the first systematic attempts to formulate and implement programs of education for the clergy that were generally incumbent upon them. The *raison d'être* for such programs was without question the kind of ministry in which the friars principally engaged in the various forms it might take—preaching. Preaching under-

[29] See Brian E. Daley, "The Ministry of Disciples," *TS* 48 (1987) 605-29, and Avery Dulles, "Imaging the Church for the 1980's," *Thought* 56 (1981) 121-38.

[30] See, e.g., Hinnebusch, *Dominican Order* 1, 217-50; Esser, *Origins* 53-135.

went its powerful revival in the 13th century because it figured so clearly in the "apostolic life." It also happened to correspond to the *needs* of a population that was increasingly urban, more curious and critical, even more literate.[31]

If we should at this point construct a profile of the friar, therefore, we would note that his ministry originated in charism and need, that the minister transcended local lines and moved about "like the apostles," that his ministry consisted to a large degree in preaching and thus required an education, that it related to personal life-style and to the style of governance within the order, which in effect removed him from the governance operative in the church-type. If this profile is inserted into the history of religious life as we now have it, strong continuities emerge because of the ascetical tradition involved. If this profile is inserted into the history of ministry and of church order, however, we perceive a sharp break not only with the preceding monastic and feudal era but to some extent even with the presumably more normative paradigms of, say, the fourth and fifth centuries.

Finally, we must at this point recall that from the beginning both orders enjoyed certain privileges and exemptions from the Holy See, which grew more numerous with passing years. On the surface this fact does not seem terribly remarkable, for it seems to fit into a tradition that goes back to the monastery of Bobbio in the seventh century, but more immediately to the monastery of Cluny in the tenth, when Cluny was taken under the patronage of St. Peter, i.e. the papacy, so that it might be free in its internal affairs from the interference of local patrons—lay and episcopal. This juridical reality gained in clarity and application in the 11th and 12th centuries. What is important for us, however, is not the similarity between the exempt status of Cluny and the later mendicants, but the immense difference.[32]

Cluny was a monastery, and in medieval theory and practice the right of monks to engage in ministry was hotly contested, even forbidden by

[31] See, e.g., Hinnebusch, *Dominican Order* 1, esp. 3–98; Hilarin Felder, *Geschichte der wissenschaftlichen Studien im Franziskanerorden bis um die Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg i/Br.: Herder, 1904).

[32] See, e.g., E. Fogliesso, "Exemption des religieux," in *Dictionnaire de droit canonique* 5 (Paris: Letouzey, 1953) 646–65; J. Dubois, "Esenzione monastica," in *Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione* 3 (Rome: Paoline, 1973) 1295–1306; and J. Fernández, "Facultà e privilegi negli istituti di perfezione," ibid. 1378–85. See also Burkhard Mathis, *Die Privilegien des Franziskanerordens bis zum Konzil von Vienne (1311)* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1928), esp. 91–115. Even after the publication of the first Code the Jesuits, e.g., issued an *Elenchus praecipuarum facultatum nostris ad auxilium animarum concessarum* (2nd ed. Rome: Curia Praepositi Generalis, 1936).

canon 16 of Lateran Council I, 1123.[33] The "exemption" granted to Cluny was, therefore, in favor of the interior development of the monastery, to try to ensure the election of abbots who would promote its special regimen, especially the long and powerful intercessory liturgies of the monks, which in Cluny were considered their foremost duty.

The similar juridical status granted the Dominicans and Franciscans looks, of course, to their internal governance, but the most striking difference from Cluny, Citeaux, and like establishments was that it also looked to ministry. The *ministry* of the friars was exempt from the supervision of the episcopacy, for the friars engaged in ministry in a particular way and, like "the apostles," they transcended local boundaries. This development is a tribute to the stronger papacy that the Gregorian Reform set on its course, as well as to those bishops who supported such exemption for the friars because, whatever its juridical complications, it helped get needed ministry done.

From the viewpoint of church order, of course, this development is astounding. It created in effect a church order (or several church orders) within the great church order, and it did this for the reality to which church order primarily looks—ministry. It is no wonder, therefore, that all through the rest of the Middle Ages well into the 17th century the conflicts between the episcopacy and the religious orders were so many and so characteristically bitter. It *is* a wonder, however, that these various church orders worked together in fact as well as they did and provided such an abundance of ministerial diversity in the Church.

We consistently fail to take account of this *de facto* variety in church order, which goes beyond the familiar patterns of local order and universal order. In the Celtic Church, responsible for so much of the evangelization of barbarian Europe, the abbots governed.[34] In the great monastic centuries, and even beyond, abbots were often the equals of bishops in sacramental powers and in many cases at least their equal in practice, if not in theory, in church order. We forget that, while some 400 bishops celebrated Lateran Council IV, 1215, the greatest and most effective of the medieval councils, their number was dwarfed by the 800 or so abbots who attended—besides some lay magnates and their vicars.[35] The local clergy often had little relationship to the bishop in matters like appoint-

[33] G. Alberigo et al., eds., *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta* (2nd ed.) 193; henceforth *COD*.

[34] See, e.g., James Bullock, *The Life of the Celtic Church* (Edinburgh: St. Andrew, 1963); Kathleen Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (London: Methuen, 1966); and John Ryan, *Irish Monasticism: Origins and Early Development* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ., 1972).

[35] See Raymonde Foreville, *Latran I, II, III et Latran IV* (Paris: L'Orante, 1965) 251–52; see also Georgine Tangl, *Die Teilnehmer an den allgemeinen Konzilien des Mittelalters* (Weimar: H. Böhlaus, 1922) 219–32.

ments, and only in the late Middle Ages did urban parishes as such begin to achieve in fact more central status in church life.[36]

The role of monarchs and lay magnates in church order is, of course, of a different character. We must nonetheless recall that, although massively challenged during the Gregorian Reform, it persisted strong and in various forms, with a legitimacy unquestioned by bishops and popes, at least until the French Revolution. Even Pius IX and his collaborators agonized over whether to invite the Catholic monarchs to Vatican Council I, 1870.[37] We must also recall that, despite what we generally read, the monarchs and lay magnates were often, though surely not always, more solicitous for the Church than their clerical counterparts.

The essential point for us, however, is to realize that the story of the mendicants is a story of ministry, and the story of mendicant ministry is inseparable from questions of church order. By the middle of the 13th century, and for some centuries thereafter, the most dynamic, visible, and articulate corps of ministers in the Church did not fall under the jurisdiction, for the most part, of the supervisors of ministry, the local bishops. The mendicants had their warrant from the bishop of Rome. Within that warrant they had a distinctive "order" of their own.

What was innovative here was not the *fact* that the bishops did not have supervision of religious, for that had never been consistently operative in the Middle Ages, or even antiquity. Nor did the innovation consist in exemption as a *juridical* reality, for that had ancient roots. It consisted rather in its being to a great extent an exemption for *ministry*. Local church order for ministry had to reckon with a more universal church order, which itself allowed for further diversities.

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The later Middle Ages were dominated by the ministry of the mendicants—Dominicans and Franciscans, of course, but also Carmelites, Augustinians, and Servites. Although that ministry came under heavy criticism from influential persons like Erasmus and others, its achievements were considerable. It would continue to be, in renewed and somewhat different forms, an extremely powerful influence into the 16th and 17th centuries and well beyond.[38] Nonetheless, in the 16th century a number of important factors converged to effect further changes within Roman Catholicism. Two are especially important for our purposes: the Society of Jesus and the Council of Trent.

[36] See, e.g., *Handbook of Church History* 3, 566–70.
[37] See Roger Aubert, *Vatican I* (Paris: L'Orante, 1964) 50–51.
[38] See, e.g., John Patrick Donnelly, "Religious Orders of Men," in *Catholicism*.

If the Jesuits are to be placed in the history of ministry, they must be seen as fundamentally a continuation of the traditions that began with the mendicants and a powerful expansion of them. Nothing is more characteristic of Catholicism in the 16th century than the veritable explosion of ministerial initiatives. In this enterprise the Jesuits were only one force among many, but since they helped create and promote most of these initiatives, they can for our purposes be taken as emblematic.

Although surely not without its debit side, ministry in the Catholic Church in the 16th and 17th centuries was perhaps the most innovative and exciting in history. This well-kept secret began to be revealed only about 20 years ago and still cries for historians to do it justice. "Catholic Reform" of the 16th century was not, therefore, simply a "reform of morals," but a reform of pastoral practice and an immense expansion of its scope.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of 16th-century ministry was the energetic and hardheaded pragmatism that, in conformity with the medieval tradition, animated it. Whatever seemed to "produce fruit" in souls, whatever met a need, was pursued with creativity and method. Verifications for that generalization can be found in many sources, but perhaps nowhere more consistently than in the 12 volumes of correspondence of St. Ignatius himself.[39] This is all quite a contrast with the more "normative" approach to ministry that prevails today—and with the correlative lassitude of contemporary Catholicism and most mainline churches in many areas of the world.[40]

The dramatic baroque statue of St. Ignatius that stands in the basilica at Loyola, designed by Francisco Vergara in the middle of the 17th century, depicts him in a chasuble, holding a book on which are inscribed the words *Ad majorem Dei gloriam.* The book probably represents the Jesuit *Constitutions*, in which those very words occur so often, and the statue thereby fits Ignatius into the history of religious life. "From Pachomius to Ignatius"!

The chasuble, on the other hand, fits him into the tradition of priesthood. But depicting Ignatius as a priest does not automatically fit him into the history of ministry, which is where he just as deservedly belongs. While Ignatius surely found in the Mass a source of great personal devotion and relied heavily upon its power of impetration, he never

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[39] *Monumenta Ignatiana: Epistolae et instructiones*, Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu (12 vols. Madrid: G. Lopez del Horno, 1903–11). See also, e.g., André Ravier, *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1987) 359.

[40] See my "Tradition and Traditions: Historical Perspectives," *The Way* 27 (1987) 163–73.

considered it as such an instrument of ministry peculiar to his order. Not to exaggerate: there is an implicit co-ordination between priesthood and ministry, between word and sacrament, in early Jesuit sources. Nonetheless, one searches almost in vain in those sources for any mention of priesthood or ordination, whereas the word "ministry" occurs on practically every page. In fact, Vergara would have been even more faithful to the historical sources on Ignatius had he shown him in a pulpit holding a book inscribed *ministerium verbi Dei*. By the time Vergara labored, however, such a depiction would have seemed altogether too Protestant.

The fact is, nonetheless, that ministry of the word of God dominates the early Jesuit sources. It is the rubric under which we can gather Ignatius' many activities to be "of help to souls" for the 15 or so years between his conversion and his ordination.[41] It stands in first place in the so-called *Formula of the Institute*, the foundational document that constitutes the essential statement of what the order is all about.[42] Indeed, that phrase can be considered the genus under which almost all the other ministries listed in the *Formula* and in the Jesuit *Constitutions* can be gathered as species. In early Jesuit sources the "herald" model of the Church predominates over the model of the Church as sacrament, to use the well-known constructs of Avery Dulles.[43] (Dulles himself has correctly called attention to the discipleship model that is also operative, perhaps more radically, in those same sources.[44])

By ministry of the word of God the Jesuits of course meant preaching in the usual and conventional sense of the word. But, in continuation with the mendicant tradition, that preaching took place not only during Mass but also in church in the afternoons and other occasions—every day during Advent and Lent. It was also done in the street, hospitals, and other places. By the 17th century a number of new occasions had been created in which sermons played a major role—novenas, Forty Hours, Tre Ore. The presses were jammed with books by Jesuits and others with various "aids" to preachers, and the example and precepts of Cicero and the Fathers of the Church were carefully and sensitively scrutinized for whatever help they might give. For sheer quantity and effort, Catholicism in the late-16th and 17th centuries did not hold

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[41] Ignatius' autobiography has several times been translated into English, most recently by Joseph N. Tylenda, *A Pilgrim's Journey* (Wilmington, Del.: Glazier, 1985).

[42] See *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, tr. George E. Ganss (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970) 66 [3]. On the more general issue of priesthood and ministry in the Society of Jesus, see the commendable contribution by William J. Harmless, "Jesuits as Priests, Crisis and Charism," in "Priesthood Today and the Jesuit Vocation," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 19, no. 3 (St. Louis: Seminar in Jesuit Spirituality, 1987) 1–47.

[43] *Models of the Church* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1978).

[44] "Imaging the Church" (n. 29 above).

second place to any Protestant tradition in preaching.[45]

For the Jesuits, however, ministry of the word of God extended beyond preaching. It included "sacred lectures" on the Bible and theological subjects, that is, series of instructions in church in the afternoons that were a clear forerunner of "adult education." It included catechetical instruction, a ministry that had practically disappeared in the Middle Ages but experienced a great upsurge in the 16th century. It included exhortations to religious communities and teaching local clergy about "cases of conscience." It even included "spiritual conversation" on the word of God among individuals and in small groups, on either a planned or spontaneous basis.

All these forms of the ministry of the word of God were integrated into one of the most important ministerial instruments that 16th-century Catholicism created: the "mission" to small villages and hamlets. The Middle Ages knew nothing like them, nor did the patristic era. These missions to the rural poor were excellently organized pastoral strategies, in which were combined preaching, catechesis, adult education, folk piety, and conversion to godly ways in the sacraments of Eucharist and especially of penance. The missionaries arrived at a locality in groups of two to eight, generally stayed for four to six weeks, and had clearly-formulated goals. By the 17th century the missions, these Catholic "revivals," had proved so successful that they also began to be directed to towns and cities. The new orders—especially the Jesuits, Capuchins, and Vincentians—took the lead.[46]

Few words are more familiar to us today than "mission," for even businesses sometimes profess to have one. Until the 16th century, however, it was practically restricted even in religious circles to describing realities of the Blessed Trinity. The Jesuits helped recover and popularize the word to describe how their ministries were to be made operative, in imitation of the "sending" of the apostles, and in early Jesuit literature "mission" is sometimes synonymous with "journey" and "pilgrimage."[47] Not by stable office but by mission, or by perception of need, did one undertake one's ministry. By the 17th century the word had been taken up by other religious groups and entered our common vocabulary.

[45] See my contribution "Preaching," to appear in the encyclopedia of Jesuit history now being compiled at the Jesuit Historical Institute, Rome. See also Peter Bayley, "Preaching," in *Catholicism*.

[46] See, e.g., my "Preaching," and Jean Delumeau, *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: A New View of the Counter-Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977) 189–94.

[47] See my "To Travel"; Mario Scaduto, "La strada e i primi Gesuiti," *Archivum historicum Societatis Jesu* 40 (1971) 323–90; and esp. F. Bourdeau, "Le vocabulaire de la mission," *Parole et mission* 3 (1960) 9–27.

The best publicized, though not necessarily the best studied, ministry of the Jesuits was the network of schools they established, which by the early-17th century numbered over 400 spread around the globe. Despite the role the Church played in medieval institutions of learning, i.e. the universities, neither antiquity nor the Middle Ages knew anything like the "church-related" schools created by the Jesuits and others in the 16th and 17th centuries. Even these astounding facts are not so impressive, for our purposes, as the change in mentality they indicate. For the first time in history, conducting schools and teaching in them had now become a form of ministry, formally considered such in the Jesuit documents and in those of other orders and congregations that shared with them in the general enthusiasm.[48] A 16th-century source captured that enthusiasm in a few words: *Institutio puerorum, renovatio mundi.*[49]

By formalizing and putting method into certain religious practices as old as Christianity itself, or older, the orders and congregations of the 16th century in effect created new ministries and instruments of ministry in the area we sometimes today dub "ministries of interiority." Outstanding among these was the retreat, which we can with a certain qualification say was created by the Spiritual Exercises and the practice that followed upon them. The practice of spiritual direction became so widespread among the devout and reflection upon it entered such a new phase that it is almost a different reality from what the Middle Ages knew. The printing press offered, of course, occasion to continue all the genres known in the Middle Ages, but the upsurge in quantity of books of "spiritual reading," as well as apologetics against the Protestants in certain areas of Europe, indicates a new ministry in the making. The principal agents of all these changes were the religious orders and congregations.[50]

The Jesuits, like others, were also active in "social" ministries, founding and promoting programs or houses to assist catechumens, reformed prostitutes, the poor and the ill, orphans and others. Of special note here is the concern to engage laymen and laywomen in these projects. These laypersons were often asked to finance them, but, in keeping with late-medieval traditions, they also were expected to engage personally in providing certain services on a daily basis. They not only collaborated in their management but were generally expected to bear primary respon-

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[48] See, e.g., Paul Grendler, "Schools, Seminaries, and Catechetical Instruction," in *Catholicism.*

[49] Said by Juan Bonifacio, S.J., as quoted in John W. Donahue, *Jesuit Education: An Essay on the Foundation of Its Idea* (New York: Fordham Univ., 1963) 186.

[50] See my "Early Jesuit Spirituality: Spain and Italy," forthcoming in *Christian Spirituality* 3, ed. Louis Dupré (New York: Crossroad).

sibility for their ongoing operation.[51]

The list of new or almost new ministries that the 16th century brought into being could be extended further and refined, but it is even more important to point out a general feature of much of it that finds clear articulation in the Jesuit documents. This feature concerns the persons among whom religious priests exercised their ministry. The list given in the Jesuit *Formula* is authoritative: ". . . among the Turks or any other infidels, even those who live in the region called the Indies, or among any heretics whatever, or schismatics, or any of the faithful."[52] The "missions" to infidels outside Europe date back to the mendicants in the 13th century, with St. Francis himself preaching before El-Kamil, the Sultan of Egypt. These missions powerfully expanded in the "Age of Discovery" in the 16th century, when the mendicants were now joined by the Jesuits and others. Moreover, the Reformation created a situation that gave special urgency to ministry among "heretics and schismatics."

Jerónimo Nadal, the contemporary and best interpreter of St. Ignatius, reduced the Jesuit list in effect to *anybody* in *need*, especially those who are neglected and have nobody to minister to them.[53] Thus Nadal interprets the Jesuits' famous Fourth Vow. That vow to go anywhere in the world, if sent, in order to do ministry dramatizes the basic assumption that Jesuit ministry is perhaps as far removed from the pattern of stable and local *officium* as it was possible to get. It seems clear, in fact, that in the Jesuit documents the itinerant Paul is the implicit model for ministry.[54] "From *Paul* to Ignatius" would be the title of the appropriate book on the subject.

Peter also figures in the vow, in fact more explicitly. This vow about doing ministry anywhere in the world specifies the bishop of Rome as the one who would send the Jesuit on this mission. In Jesuit sources the formality under which the pope is viewed in this context is precisely his more universal responsibility and, presumably, vision. That is, he will see beyond the local Church—or even beyond the Church altogether, for he should be more aware of infidels, heretics, pagans, and schismatics. The superior general of the Society of Jesus for the same reasons has the same kind of authority to "send" any of his subjects anywhere.

The Fourth Vow serves another function important for our purposes. It provides a clear indication that religious profession was not a link

[51] See, e.g., Ravier, *Loyola* 359.

[52] *Constitutions* 68 [4].

[53] See my "To Travel."

[54] Nadal in fact states: "Petrus firmitatem et directionem, Paulus nobis ministerium in Societate nostra significat, et adiuvat uterque ut Ecclesiae Princeps" (*Orationis observationes*, ed. Miguel Nicolau [Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Jesu, 1964] 151 [41]).

simply with "Pachomius" but also with ministry—even though that latter link was often not explicitly expressed in the formula of the vows or, as with the Jesuits, not generally understood in that way. Ignatius once called that vow "the principle and principal foundation" of the Society.[55] He did not exaggerate. Other religious institutes, in the Middle Ages and of course in modern times, have in fact also had "special" vows that related in similarly direct fashion to ministry.[56]

If the Jesuits embody and symbolize one aspect of Catholic Reform in the 16th century, the Council of Trent does the same for another. In 1975 Hubert Jedin completed his massive, masterful history of the Council, the culmination of a lifetime of research and of training students in the history of every aspect of the "Tridentine era."[57] We are now better informed about the Council than we have ever been. Given the immense obstacles we now see the Council had to overcome during the 18 years over which it stretched, its achievements seem even more brilliant.

This research has also, however, made us more aware of the limitations of the Council and has not yet answered every question about its immediate impact upon the Church. In other words, now that we have so much solid information about Trent, we are faced even more squarely with questions about how to assess it.[58] In this task, especially as it pertains to our purposes, it is important to recall again the two stated aims of the Council, which in fact continued to guide it through its tumultuous course: (1) "to confirm doctrine" and (2) "to reform morals."[59] In actual fact, both of these aims admitted further specification. "To confirm doctrine" meant to deal not with all doctrines but only those attacked by the Protestants and, as things almost inevitably worked out, practically in the terms of the attack. "To reform morals" was taken as synonymous with the older phrase "reform of the Church," which had by 1545 become too dangerous and ambiguous. Trent undertook "to reform morals" through certain juridical changes. Masked therefore under "reform of morals" were issues of church order, little aware though we have been of their importance until recently.

All this means that in a period in which Roman Catholicism was

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[55] See my "The Fourth Vow" and Burkhart Schneider, "Nuestro Principio y principal Fundamento: Zum historischen Verständnis des Papstgehorsamsgelübdes," *Archivum historicum Societatis Jesu* 25 (1956) 488–513.

[56] See, e.g., Johannes Günter Gerhartz, *"Insuper Promitto . . .": Die feierlichen Sondergelübde katholischen Orden* (Rome: Gregoriana, 1966).

[57] *Geschichte des Konzils von Trient* (4 vols. in 5. Freiburg i/Br.: Herder, 1950–75). Only the first two volumes have been translated into English: *A History of the Council of Trent* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1957–61).

[58] See, e.g., Giuseppe Alberigo, "The Council of Trent," in *Catholicism.*

[59] Sessio IV (April 8, 1546), COD 664.

experiencing an explosion of ministerial initiatives that in their intensity and creativity were for any given period almost unprecedented, Trent took little or no notice. Part of the explanation lies in the fact that many of these initiatives were happening contemporaneously with the Council and came fully into their own only after the Council ended. But the more fundamental reason is the agenda of the Council itself. Trent mandated a catechism, but has not a word to say about retreats, spiritual reading, spiritual direction, social ministries, "missions"—even about evangelization of the various "Indies" that had been under way for a half century and would eventually change the face of Catholicism. One catches in Trent only the slightest mention of schools and "adult education."[60] Trent took notice of the printing press in its concern about the Index of Forbidden Books (also a creation of the 16th century), but never proposed that the press might become an instrument of ministry.[61]

Jedin judges that the vision underlying Trent's many decrees on reform was to transform bishops "from feudatories into pastors."[62] That is, from exploiters of benefices into ministers. One would expect to find, therefore, a great deal in Trent about *ministries*, but, as I indicated above, one finds very little. Some of this blindness surely stems from certain assumptions about the unchanging character of the Church—and therefore of its ministries—that blinds one to changes actually taking place. It is not at all clear, indeed, that even the creators of the new ministries were fully aware of how innovative they actually were.

Preaching is one ministry that receives attention in Trent, although the amount of space actually devoted to it is small in comparison with the totality of the Council's decrees and canons. Trent's designation of preaching as the *praecipuum munus* of the bishop had great impact upon Carlo Borromeo and a few other reforming bishops, and hence contributed significantly to the general revival of this form of ministry of the word of God.[63] If we lacked this subsequent history about Borromeo and his likes, however, the lines from Trent on preaching could almost escape our notice. Moreover, Trent seemed to mean "preaching" in a most conventional sense and gives no hints as to how even this ministry might

[60] See Sessio V (June 17, 1546), ibid. 667–70. On this rather ineffective decree, see Jedin, *Trent* 2, 99–124.

[61] Sessio XVIII (Feb. 26, 1562), COD 723–24, and Sessio XXV (Dec. 3, 1563), ibid. 797.

[62] With Giuseppe Alberigo, *La figura ideale del vescovo secondo la Riforma cattolica* (2nd ed. Brescia: Paideia, 1985).

[63] Sessio XXIV (Nov. 11, 1563), canon 4, COD 763. On preaching see also Sessio V (June 17, 1546), ibid. 667–70. On Borromeo see my "Saint Charles Borromeo and the *Praecipuum episcoporum munus*: His Place in the History of Preaching," forthcoming in *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. John Headley (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America).

be revived by new methods and techniques, subjects that in fact had already been greatly discussed "in the field" for decades.[64]

Since Trent felt obliged by the Protestant attack to deal with all the sacraments, it had occasion to deal with ministry when it considered the sacrament of orders.[65] In that decree, however, ministry is in effect not mentioned. For Trent the sacrament of orders relates to office and hierarchy, and it confers the power to administer the sacraments, most especially to confect the Eucharist.

Two features of the decree deserve comment. First, the correlation that we saw in Isidore among *officium*, ritual, and both major and minor orders had persisted up through Trent. In answering the Protestant challenge to the sacrament of orders, Trent in the process accepted, as it almost inevitably had to, older formulations and assumptions about the nature of priesthood. Secondly, the decree falls among the *doctrinal* decrees of Trent. Thus, what Trent is dealing with is the *idea* of what orders or priesthood is, without any attempt to correlate that idea with the living reality. This dichotomy between doctrine and practice manifests itself even in Trent, for in its *reform* decrees preaching and pastoral governance were taken into account.[66]

Although the correlation office-orders-ritual has even older roots, the specific identification of priesthood with the power to confect the Eucharist received a classic formulation with Saint Peter Damian, one of the Gregorian reformers of the 11th century.[67] Damian's identification is not surprising, since he lived in the monastic age that for all practical purposes knew no ministry, only liturgy. The model of the Church as sacrament never found fuller expression in social reality, for instance, than in the elaborate liturgies of Cluny.

[64] See, e.g., my "Content and Rhetorical Form in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching," in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1983) 238–52, and now especially Debora Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1988).

[65] Sessio XXIII (July 15, 1563), COD 742–44.

[66] See Schillebeeckx, *Human Face* 197–201, and the perceptive article, with ample bibliography, by Severino Dianich, "La teologia del presbiterato al Concilio di Trento," *Scuola cattolica* 99 (1971) 331–58. See also Alexandre Ganoczy, "'Splendours and Miseries' of the Tridentine Doctrine of Ministries," in *Concilium* 80 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 75–86.

[67] See his *Liber gratissimus*, c. 15 (PL 145, 118). See also Yves Congar, *L'Eglise: De s. Augustin à l'époque moderne* (Paris: Cerf, 1970) 170–71, and his "Modèle monastique et modèle sacerdotal en occident de Grégoire VII (1073–1085) à Innocent III (1198)," in his *Etudes d'ecclésiologie médiévale* (London: Variorum, 1983) IX. Congar's observation is apposite (158): "Il me semble que les XIIIᵉ–XVᵉ siècles aient été une époque essentiellement 'cléricale,' non au sens des problèmes politiques qui sont liés au cléricalisme, mais en ce sense qu'alors le Catholicisme est essentiellement religion du sacrement."

More surprising is that Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* two centuries later in effect repeats the identification—so strong is the force of tradition—when it speaks of the sacrament of orders. No correlation is made with Thomas' own priesthood as a member of a religious order whose priests by definition were "preachers."[68] It is significant that only when Thomas discusses religious life does he deal with ministries—in particular the ministries of preaching and hearing confessions, which he notes that both religious and "presbyteri curati" do.[69] When he treats of bishops, he recognizes in them an office grounded on the care of souls, but in effect he identifies this care more with *regimen* than with any direct ministry.[70] What is especially pertinent for us, however, is that Aquinas correlates ministry with certain forms of religious life rather than with the sacrament of orders per se.

The documents of the Council of Trent advert to the fact that religious were doing ministry, and tried to assure that this ministry be properly supervised. Nonetheless, the specific decree "Concerning Regulars and Nuns" deals practically exclusively with discipline internal to the orders and their houses, i.e. with matters pertaining ultimately to the personal holiness of the members, which betrays a mentality that will still view religious as essentially in the Pachomian tradition.[71]

At Lateran IV in the early 13th century the abbots far outnumbered the bishops. At Trent there were practically no abbots present, and for all practical purposes the only voting members were bishops. These simple facts already suggest that Trent would be a bishops' council, and, as I indicated earlier, a large number of reform decrees looked directly to the episcopacy—in an effort to "reform their morals" but also to enhance their authority. Trent knew no other way to accomplish these two goals than by creating and/or implementing certain juridical structures.

Were these goals for the episcopacy ever accomplished? In the long, long run there were surely some successes, and at least "on the books" episcopal authority in many areas was more fully postulated than ever before. As is well known, however, the authority that the Council in fact most strongly promoted, although only indirectly and beyond its intention, was that of the papacy.[72] Once again here we see how misleading official documents can be, for the authority of the papacy was never

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[68] Suppl., qq. 34–40. Although the Supplement was not written by Thomas, it generally represents his thinking on a given issue, and even more surely that of his age; see, e.g., *Sum. theol.* 3, 82, 1.

[69] *Sum. theol.* 3, 188, 4; see also 2-2, 184, 6 and 8.

[70] Ibid. 2-2, 185. He does, however, implicitly recognize preaching, ibid., a. 6, ad 2.

[71] Sessio XXV (Dec. 3–4, 1563), COD 776–84.

[72] See, e.g., Alberigo, "Trent," and his "L'Episcopato nel cattolicismo post-tridentino," *Cristianesimo nella storia* 6 (1985) 71–91.

directly treated at Trent and, indeed, debate over the precise nature and extent of that authority came within a hair's breadth of utterly destroying the Council in 1563.[73]

As Trent treated of bishops and tried to strengthen their authority in their dioceses, it attempted to do the same for pastors and their parishes. These latter institutions were, after all, the articulation of the diocese. This aspect of the Council has generally received little notice, for to our contemporary way of thinking it seems to say little that is noteworthy, so generally has it been accepted. John Bossy has in recent years, however, repeatedly called attention to this phenomenon and has heavily criticized it for imposing on the Church a pattern of "parochial conformity." Such an effectively prescriptive pattern was unknown in the Middle Ages, when the pastoral machinery was more complex, variegated, and, according to Bossy, more integrated into the "natural" fabric of life.[74] Bossy sees the change as ultimately detrimental to religious practice.

Just when and why a pattern of "parochial conformity" took hold are questions that are not easy to answer; yet the answers must range beyond the legislation of Trent in order to be adequate. However, there can be no doubt, in my opinion, that by its decrees the Council set the Church on a long journey that by the 20th century meant that when people thought of "church" they thought of "parish," when they thought of "priest" they thought of "pastor." In the Middle Ages being enrolled in one's confraternity was sufficient to ensure Christian burial, just as that enrollment provided spiritual nourishment in the company of one's peers and professional "kin" during life. That is to say, from the sixth century even until long after the Council of Trent the parish church was only one element in a vast and lumbering array of other institutions like monasteries, priories, shrines, manor chapels, oratories, guilds, confraternities, third orders, sodalities, schools, and collegiate churches (to which list "retreat houses" would at a certain point be added) where in one way or another Christians satisfied their devotion. These institutions were, like the sect-type itself, "voluntary." Perhaps for that reason they were able to evoke engagement and thus help impart to medieval Christianity such vitality. The shift in church order that Trent legislated and promoted in this regard would obviously have immense impact, in time, on how and where persons would normatively—even obligatorily—be ministered unto and on what religious opportunities would generally be

[73] See Hubert Jedin, *Crisis and Closure of the Council of Trent* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1967).

[74] See esp. his "The Counter Reformation and the People of Catholic Europe," *Past and Present*, no. 47 (May 1970) 51–70. See also now the important article by Alberigo, "The Local Church."

open to them. The Code of Canon Law of 1917, and again of 1983, developed along the same lines.

VATICAN COUNCIL II

After Trent it was not until four centuries later that a council would once again deal with episcopacy, priesthood, and religious life. Vatican II believed itself to be in continuity with Trent on these issues, and to a considerable extent it surely was. In some ways, however, the differences are more striking than the similarities. The fathers of Vatican II spoke out of their experience of the Church of the 20th century, which, partly because of the long-range impact of Trent, was much different from the Church of the sixteenth. Moreover, the fathers of Vatican II, practically all of whom were bishops or their equivalent, had through their theologians perspectives, especially some historical perspectives, that Trent lacked. From these two frameworks of past and present they constructed models of episcopacy, priesthood, and religious life. These models or ideals they presented as such in clear, though often quite general, terms.

Precisely in the terms, or rhetoric, lies one of the great differences between Trent and Vatican II.[75] In its reform decrees Trent's language is invariably juridical. To discover the "ideal bishop" of the fathers at Trent, one must extract and reconstruct it from hundreds of juridical details. Vatican II, on the other hand, presented goals and idealized models. These goals and ideals were generally painted in the broadest possible terms, so as to include all. Two problems arise, however, from this approach. First, the ideal, general though it may be, does not always seem adequate to every situation. Secondly, these ideals sometimes imply or allow certain assumptions about church order or changes within it, but do not clearly state them. These two problems have sometimes been rendered more obvious by official documents issued after the Council than they were in the decrees of the Council itself, so these must also be given some consideration if we are to understand the present situation. For the sake of clarity and conciseness, however, I will gather what I have to say under the rubric of the documents of the Council that treat most directly of the issues that concern us.

Perfectae caritatis has provoked much discussion and even controversy over how to implement its injunction to religious to make changes in

[75] On the rhetoric of Vatican II, see my "Developments, Reforms, and Two Great Reformations: Towards a Historical Assessment of Vatican II," *TS* 44 (1983) 373–406.

their institutes while remaining faithful to their original charism.[76] The sources for the disagreements over how to interpret the decree in this regard are many and complex, but surely one of the most fundamental is the very framework in which the Council presents religious life. It is the framework of the three vows. It is the framework of the personal search for spiritual perfection (presumably enhanced in some cases with the additional adornment of ministry). It is the framework of from-Pa-chomius-to-Ignatius. Yet today we must ask: Does the traditional way of *interpreting* religious life fully correspond to the *tradition* of religious life?

Of the 25 sections of *Perfectae caritatis*, only two (nos. 8 and 20) are devoted to ministry.[77] Yet the Dominicans and the Jesuits—to name only some of the best-known and clearest examples—were founded precisely to do ministry. Indeed, to do ministry in quite special ways. But the framework in which *Perfectae caritatis* was conceived makes it impossible for it to take adequate account of this absolutely basic consideration. The postconciliar *Essentials of Religious Life* makes the problem even more manifest.[78] That document has been criticized for reducing religious life to a monastic model. The more general weakness, however, is that it implies that religious life, as we have generally known it since the 13th century, can be reduced to "the three vows." Absolutely constitutive though these vows are, they do not directly express the full reality.

Presbyterorum ordinis has not received much attention since the Council, but it is an important document.[79] Unlike Trent, it makes a clear correlation between priesthood and ministry. It also attempts, not altogether successfully, to break the identification of priesthood with confection of the Eucharist and states that "it is the first task of priests"

[76] For the history of the decree and commentaries, see *L'Adaptation et la rénovation de la vie religieuse: Décret "Perfectae Caritatis,"* ed. J. M. R. Tillard and Y. Congar (Paris: Cerf, 1967), and Friedrich Wulf, "Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (5 vols. New York: Herder and Herder, 1967–69) 2, 301–70. Two especially important treatments of the general problem are John M. Lozano, *Discipleship: Towards an Understanding of Religious Life* (Chicago: Claret Center, 1980), and Sandra M. Schneiders, *New Wineskins: Re-imaging Religious Life Today* (New York: Paulist, 1986).

[77] See the comments on these two sections by Wulf, *Commentary* 2, 352–53.

[78] The English text is in *Origins*, 13 (1983) 133–42, document dated May 31, 1983.

[79] For the history of the document and commentary, see *Les prêtres: Décrets "Presbyterorum ordinis" et "Optatam totius,"* ed. J. Frisque et Y. Congar (Paris: Cerf, 1968), and Friedrich Wulf et al., "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests," *Commentary* 4, 183–297. See also *Los presbíteros: A los diez años de "Presbyterorum ordinis,"* Teología del sacerdocio, no. 7 (Burgos: Ediciones Aldecoa, 1975), and Brian Charles Foley, "*De cura animarum*: A Voice for the Priesthood," in *Vatican II Revisited by Those Who Were There*, ed. Alberic Stacpoole (Minneapolis: Winston, 1986) 255–69.

to preach the gospel.[80] Moreover, while utilizing the triad priest-prophet-king to describe the function of "presbyters," it redefines those terms to integrate them into a more collaborative perspective than they directly indicate.[81]

Nonetheless, despite its many fine features and the good intentions that prompted it, religious must not be unmindful of the challenges it delivers to them. The document presents an ideal and a model of priesthood—a construct. This construct is based, first, on the analogue of the contemporary diocesan clergy. Secondly, the normative model that is operative, I suggest, is the patristic Church, as is somewhat indicated by the number of references to patristic documents.[82] The Church that Ambrose and Augustine knew was a close-knit community of clergy around their bishop, ministering by word and sacrament to a stable community of the faithful in the rather-well-defined world of the Christian emperors. That Church and world are, however, far different from anything we have known since at least the sixth century even, in my opinion, up to today. From what biblical scholars tell us, it also seems to be different in many respects from the Church, or churches, that we find in parts of the New Testament.

As I mentioned earlier, *Presbyterorum ordinis* makes three basic assumptions about the priest-minister.[83] The first concerns the place and structure of ministry. Although it is not always explicitly stated, the document presupposes as normative that the priest-minister will deal with a *stable* community, in which, moreover, a regular rhythm of liturgies of word and sacrament will be celebrated. The word "parish" is seldom mentioned, but the idea is omnipresent. At least by implication, the parish is normative for ministry.

The second assumption is almost a corollary. The stable community is composed of the *faithful*. Some notice is taken of what the Council elsewhere says about evangelization, ecumenism, and the manifold issues raised about "the Church in the modern world," but it is almost perfunctory.[84] The priest-minister of *Presbyterorum ordinis* will deal with the faithful, and his training as proposed in *Optatam totius* will be designed to prepare him precisely for that flock.

The third assumption relates to church order. The priest-minister is

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[80] *PO*, no. 4. For a detailed comparison of *PO* with Trent, see *Les prêtres* 193–232.

[81] See *PO*, nos. 4–6. On the origins of the triad, see now Peter J. Drilling, "The Priest, Prophet and King Trilogy," to appear in *Eglise et théologie* (1988).

[82] See *Les prêtres* 376–77.

[83] These three assumptions also clearly undergird *Lumen gentium*, no. 28, which was foundational for *PO*. See *Les prêtres* 138.

[84] *PO*, no. 4, best indicates awareness of the necessity of evangelization.

in hierarchical communion with his bishop. The remote model from which this assumption derives seems, again, to be the patristic Church, and it suggests an appealing collaboration and co-ordination between the bishop and his clergy. But we must not miss how repeatedly this document, as well as others, returns to the relationship between bishop and priest, almost to the point of defining the priest-minister through that relationship. *Optatam totius* goes so far as to speak of the priest as participating in "the hierarchical priesthood of Christ," an intriguing notion.[85]

At this point it is hardly necessary to point out how difficult it is to reconcile these assumptions with the traditions of ministry in most of the religious orders. That ministry was not structured with an eye to a local and stable community, as symbolized by the parish, but transcended diocese and even nation—"to go anywhere in the world," as the Jesuit *Constitutions* say. Although all the orders ministered to the faithful, they had a special interest in heretics, schismatics, infidels. It was not without good grounding in tradition, for instance, that Pope John Paul II in his allocution opening the 33rd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, September 2, 1983, especially commended to the Jesuits ministries like "ecumenism, the deeper study of relations with non-Christian religions, and the dialogue of the Church with cultures," and "the evangelizing action of the Church to promote justice, connected with world peace."[86]

Even among the faithful, religious orders and congregations have tended to have a special interest in those whom the ordinary ministry of the Church for one reason or another failed to reach: orphans, young vagrants, prostitutes, the "alienated"—or, on the other hand, those laity seeking to devote themselves to God and their neighbor in more challenging and unconventional ways. Moreover, their "instruments of ministry" showed an ingenuity that carried them beyond the rhythm of word and sacrament in the usual senses of those terms. Finally, the priests of the great orders had no hierarchical relationship with the ordinary of the place, but had a fraternal, or capitular, or "sect-type" relationship with their own ordinary.

This brings us to *Christus Dominus*, the decree on the pastoral office of bishops in the Church.[87] As adjusted to the bishops, the same three assumptions are operative as in *Presbyterorum ordinis*. The bishop

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[85] *OT*, no. 2, "ad Christi Sacerdotium hierarchicum."

[86] This English version is found in *Documents of the 33rd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1984) 77–84, esp. 81–82.

[87] For the history of the document and commentary, see W. Onclin et al., *La charge pastorale des évêques: Décret "Christus Dominus"* (Paris: Cerf, 1969), and Klaus Mörsdorf, "Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church," *Commentary* 2, 165–300.

presides over a local community, of the faithful, in hierarchical communion with the bishop of Rome. The convergence of these three elements manifests in a striking degree certain elements of the "church-type," for it projects a ministry based on office, on well-defined and normative functions, on authority that is clearly articulated and regulatory, and on the maintenance of faith and order. Although these elements have been traditionally associated with the office of bishop, they had never before been pulled together in precisely the same way and, of course, never before presented to the Church with the authority of a council. In comparison with these broad strokes in Vatican II, the "ideal bishop" of Trent seems lost in a myriad of juridical detail.

Nonetheless, underneath what often seem to be bland generalizations, *Christus Dominus* deals with church order in just as significant a way as the legislation of Trent. It projects a vision of church order that has raised a number of complex questions, as our newspapers seem to testify almost daily, but that in a number of instances seem fraught with special consequences for religious. The document states, for instance: "All priests, whether diocesan or religious, share and exercise with the bishop the one priesthood of Christ. They are thus constituted providential cooperators of this episcopal order."[88] The paragraph goes on to assert: "The diocesan clergy have, however, a [the] primary role in the care of souls because, being incardinated in or appointed to a particular church, they are wholly dedicated in its service to the care of a particular section of the Lord's flock, and accordingly form one priestly body and one family of which the bishop is father."[89] Pastors of parishes hold first place among the collaborators with the bishops in the care of souls.[90]

If "care of souls" (*cura animarum*) is taken in the technical and canonical sense, nothing new is being said here, for in that sense *cura animarum* refers to the office that has traditionally belonged to the diocesan clergy, especially pastors. Nonetheless, the groundwork seems to have been laid for a generalization made later about religious priests that relates priesthood as such to the episcopacy: "Religious priests, who have been raised to the priesthood to be prudent co-operators with the episcopal order, . . . may be said in a certain sense to belong to the clergy of the diocese inasmuch as they share in the care of souls and in the

[88] *CD*, no. 28. The second sentence is taken from the Preface of the ordination of priests. See the important qualifications by Mörsdorf, *Commentary* 2, 256.

[89] *CD*, no. 28. The Latin seems clearly to indicate the definite article for English, whereas the edition by Flannery (580) employs the indefinite: "In animarum autem cura procuranda primas partes habent sacerdotes diocesani . . . ."

[90] *CD*, no. 30: "Praecipua autem ratione Episcopi cooperatores sunt parochi, quibus, tamquam pastoribus propriis, animarum cura committitur in determinata dioecesis parte sub illius auctoritate."

practice of apostolic works under the authority of the bishop."[91] Just a few lines later a crucial and logical consequence is drawn for religious, and probably more directly for their superiors: "Furthermore, religious should comply promptly and faithfully with the requests or desires of bishops when they are asked to undertake a greater share in the ministry of salvation (*salutis humanae ministerium*)."[92] "Ministry of salvation" seems to have become here a synonym for "care of souls."

The following propositions, though crudely put, summarize this aspect of *Christus Dominus*. There is one priesthood, which cannot be defined apart from the "episcopal order." That priesthood is concerned with the "care of souls," which has meant and still seems to mean primarily the ministry of pastors of parishes under the bishop. Although religious orders of priests have in former times on occasion been forbidden such "care of souls," or, like the Jesuits, have themselves explicitly renounced it in favor of other ministries,[93] they now seem by virtue of their ordination almost to be destined for it. There seems to be, moreover, at least a suggestion that all "ministry of salvation" is reducible to "care of souls."

I would maintain, therefore, that for all their merit *Christus Dominus*, *Presyterorum ordinis*, and *Optatam totius* do not take into sufficient account the tradition of ministry and priesthood in the religious orders. The Council could not take this tradition properly into account because the history of it had not yet been done, or at least not done in a helpful way, for reflection on the nature of religious life was always encased in the from-Pachomius-to-Ignatius framework. This means that in effect the Council had little choice but to reduce religious life to the practice of certain forms of spirituality, some more "active" than others. When religious do ministry, they may enhance it with a special "spirit," but for all practical purposes they function as diocesan priests.

Confirmation of this interpretation can be seen in what the Council says about the exempt status of some religious. It asserts that the privilege of exemption from the jurisdiction of bishops "relates primarily to the internal organization of the institutes ... [so that] the perfection of religious life [is] promoted."[94] That was surely the sole purpose of the first exemptions of Cluny in the tenth century, but beginning with the 13th the most impressive privileges of the orders related directly to ministry. The great orders of mendicants, for instance, each had their

[91] *CD*, no. 34. The convoluted explanation that Mörsdorf gives of no. 34 indicates the complexity of the issues (*Commentary* 2, 266–68).

[92] *CD*, no. 35.

[93] *Constitutions*, nos. 324, 325, 588.

[94] *CD*, no. 35.

so-called *mare magnum*, their comprehensive grants of pastoral prerogatives. Moreover, even the "internal organization" of these and subsequent orders was directed to a large extent to ministry. The programs of study and formation themselves were not directed to "the love of learning and the desire for God" as in the monastic tradition, but towards more effective ministry.[95]

<div style="text-align:center">CONCLUSION</div>

By this point I hope to have established at least that there are other possible ways of looking at the history of ministry and priesthood, of church order and reform, of spirituality and religious life itself. I would, moreover, contend that our more systematic reflection on these issues will be significantly hampered, even blocked, until we devise for them more adequate historical frameworks. Two items on this agenda are most urgent. First, we must try to achieve a better integration among themselves of all these aspects of church life which until now have to a large extent been treated separately and, in some cases, almost as if they had no relationship to one another. Such an integration would take special note of the millennium and a half between the end of the patristic period and the opening of Vatican II.

The second item would be to study all these aspects most diligently as they manifest themselves in the *life* of the Church. In other words, we must not look so exclusively to what the Church *said* about these issues as to how it has in fact *acted*. Besides its other merits, such a shift would bring scholarship into better conformity with what the Council itself implicitly enjoined with its profound statement in *Dei verbum*: "What was handed on by the apostles comprises everything that serves to make the People of God live their lives in holiness and increase their faith. In this way the Church in her doctrine, *life*, and worship perpetuates and transmits to every generation *all that she herself is*, all that she believes."[96]

We must, in any case, reckon that even religious geniuses like Dominic, Francis, and Ignatius may not have been fully capable of expressing what they were doing or hoped to do, so that that expression must confront their actions in the long context of the traditions in which they moved. For all their merits, to give another instance, the decrees of the Council of Trent do not tell us everything we need to know about ministry and priesthood in the 16th century. In fact, on these points the decrees are unwittingly but decidedly misleading.

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[95] See my "The Houses of Study of Religious Orders and Congregations: An Historical Sketch," in Katarina Schuth's study of the future of Roman Catholic theologates, forthcoming (Wilmington, Del.: Glazier, 1988).

[96] No. 8, emphasis mine.

Studies along the lines I am proposing are not just an academic exercise. I believe that they have important repercussions not only on how "regular priests" think about themselves, and therefore are trained and pursue their ministries, but on other groups and on the Church at large. For all the confusion and complexity that encumber the issues treated in this article, confusion and complexity so profound that I have hardly been able to touch the surface, some rather specific conclusions have emerged.[97] In closing, the following considerations seem to me especially pertinent.

1. In the vast majority of orders and congregations founded since the 13th century, ministry has been at the center of their self-understanding. Definitions and descriptions of religious life that fail to take full account of this indisputable fact are, no matter what their other merits, misleading and harmful.

2. There have been at least since that time two quite distinct traditions of ministry that have given shape to the reality of priesthood in the Church. Both can claim legitimacy in the New Testament and in the long history of the Church. Both have served people's spiritual (and sometimes material) needs. Although different spiritualities have certainly animated them, these two traditions cannot be reduced simply to differences in spirituality. Moreover, while tensions have always existed between them and have sometimes erupted into ugly and disedifying battles, the genius of Catholicism up to the present has been its ability to contain them both within itself and not settle for neat resolutions or a single church order for ministry.

3. Although there has been considerable and healthy overlap, a sort of "division of labor" has in fact prevailed between diocesan and regular clergy over the course of the centuries. The "local" or diocesan clergy has ministered primarily to the faithful according to time-honored rhythms of word and especially sacrament. Religious, when they ministered to the faithful, did so in these ways but also particularly in others that were more appropriate to special groups and circumstances: through schools or soup kitchens, through retreats or running houses for reformed prostitutes, through books and journals, or through street preaching and "revivals." This division of labor has taken the religious even further afield, away from the "faithful," in order to minister in some fashion or other to heretics, schismatics, infidels, pagans, and public sinners.

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[97] What I have proposed in this article both clarifies and obscures, e.g., conclusions reached in documents like *The Ministry in the Church*, Roman Catholic/Lutheran Joint Commission (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1982), and "Ministry and Ordination" (1973), in *The Final Report*, Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1982) 29–39.

4. The division of labor is not an accident of history. It reflects the two traditions that over the course of the centuries have manifested themselves with uneven beat but with considerable consistency in ways that can only be suggested here. The vocabulary, for instance, is different. On the one hand, words like "office" and "parish" recur, while on the other we find "need" and "mission." "Hierarchy" predominates in one, whereas "fraternity" or its equivalent is found in the other. For the one, "apostolic" indicates a conduit of authority; for the other, it suggests a style of life and ministry. For the first, ministry seems modeled on the Pastoral Epistles, the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, and the examples of Ambrose and Augustine. For the second, it seems modeled on Jesus and his disciples in the Synoptics, the itinerant Paul of his letters and Acts, and the example of the charismatic layman (later deacon) Francis. In the one instance, the model of the Church as sacrament seems especially operative; in the other, the Church as herald. The former relates more easily to "priest"—celebrant for the community and its public servant; the latter more easily to "prophet"—spokesperson and agent for special points of view. The first generally corresponds to the "church-type," the second to the "sect-type."

5. With the bishops and the diocesan clergy the force of that first tradition is today as strong as ever, perhaps stronger. Even more than ever is it being taken as normative and in some cases, indeed, as the tradition that admits no alternative. Its central concern is still, and by the very nature of the case seems destined to remain, ministry to a *stable* community of the *faithful*. The *parish* is thus the locus of ministry par excellence.

6. It can reasonably be argued that, if such a tradition and viewpoint should utterly prevail, it would lead not to an enrichment but to an improverishment of the Church and its larger mission. "Special" minis-tries, which religious can by reason of tradition and interest rightly claim as peculiarly their own, seem more needed today than ever. They will, of course, take different forms than in the past in many cases, and they require more imagination and daring than seem commonly to be expended upon them. But even among the faithful, many persons seem to be falling through the cracks of "normative" ministry, at least in Western Europe and North America. Here lies the challenge for religious today.

7. Again: if such a tradition and viewpoint should utterly prevail, it would in time deprive the vast majority of religious of the center and meaning of their lives. Ministry is not something one adds to one's vocation as a Franciscan or Jesuit upon ordination to the priesthood, but something that was central and intrinsic from one's very first moment in the order, no matter how imperfectly this might be expressed by the

ceremony of the vows.

8. Does not the teaching of Vatican II on the sensitive subjects with which this article has dealt need to be reviewed and enlarged? A subtle and implicit historiographical grid that seems to be widely operative in the Church today suggests that the Council has, after centuries of confusion, finally said the last word on all subjects, including these. But is this not a prideful bias towards the present that ignores the richness of the past and the potential of the future? Is it not far even from the intent of the Council itself?

9. Do we not need, therefore, especially to recover the pragmatic approach to ministry that current historiography is showing happily characterized our past, but that today seems to be ever more effectively smothered by the "normative" or by some idealized model? The abstract ideal can deliver death as well as life. In the mainline Churches— Protestant and Catholic—ennui, respectability, and dull liturgies and ministries hold sway in all too many places. It is not our "fidelity" that today needs testing, but our creativity.

10. The future of ministry in the Church is hidden in the mind of God—perhaps hidden more effectively than it has ever been. How do the laity figure into this future, how do women religious? Does religious life itself have a future? These are questions none of us can answer with any certainty. But we can try to think more adequately, and then act more appropriately, in relationship to priesthood, ministry, church order, and religious life as we actually have these institutions today.