"THE TIMES THEY ARE A 'CHANGIN'":
A RESPONSE TO O'MALLEY AND SCHLOESSER

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Inspired by two recent articles in this journal regarding the fact and nature of change at Vatican II, this article analyzes the nature of this change. Drawing on the author's previous writings on ecclesiology and the social sciences, it argues that Vatican II was necessary to restore integrity to the mission of the Roman Catholic Church to the world.

> In a higher world it is otherwise;
> but here below to live is to change,
> and to be perfect is to change often.
> —John Henry Newman[1]

JOHN O'MALLEY'S PROVOCATIVE ARTICLE, "Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?"[2] and the enthralling response by Stephen Schloesser, "Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II,"[3] present us with a profound historical analysis of the context and documents of the Second Vatican Council. Both are exemplary works in their fundamental discipline of church history. In light of continuing disagreement over the "basic interpretation" of the council, of questions of continuity and discontinuity, O'Malley raises the question, "Did anything happen at Vatican II? Any-

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[1] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1909) 40.

[2] John W. O'Malley, "Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?" *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 3–33.

[3] Stephen Schloesser, "Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 275–319.

thing of significance?"[4] He identifies one school of thought that so stresses the continuity of the council with the tradition as to suggest that nothing really significant happened at all.[5] He argues strongly that something significant in fact did happen, focusing our attention in particular on the shift in the literary genre of the conciliar documents and the significance of that shift for the life of the Catholic Church. Schloesser affirms O'Malley's basic insight about "*how* the council, while keeping faith with tradition, also broke with the past. . . . And yet," Schloesser continues, "seeing *how* the council did this has made me wonder only more insistently *why* such a rupture was not only conceivable but necessary."[6] He then goes on to provide examples of the major social and cultural forces operating prior to and during the council that necessitated its changes. Both authors strongly affirm the reality of change arising from the council. Something did happen, and indeed something had to happen, for the good of the Church.

I do not intend to take issue with any of the arguments or conclusions of these two articles. Rather, I want to take them as a starting point for further reflections. In a number of publications I have argued, following the lead of Joseph Komonchak and Robert Doran, for the need to develop a historical ecclesiology grounded in a systematics of history.[7] To further such a project requires active engagement with and reorientation of the social sciences.[8] In this article I want to present how the results of these two articles might appear within the type of project I am envisaging. In doing so I wish to illustrate that, while the two articles make for excellent church history, they do not theologically analyze the material considered.[9] A historical ecclesiology is not just a historical narrative of the Church. It "should be empirical/historical, critical, normative, dialectic and practical."[10]

As I have noted above, both articles focus on the fact of change in the Catholic Church as a result of Vatican II. Change is something that the

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[4] O'Malley, "Vatican II" 8.

[5] Specifically O'Malley, ibid. 3–5, mentions the book by Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, *Il concilio ecumenico Vaticano II: Contrappunto per la sua storia* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005) in which Marchetto attacks the "Bologna school" for its interpretation of the council as a point of rupture.

[6] Schloesser, "Against Forgetting" 277.

[7] Neil J. Ormerod, "System, History, and a Theology of Ministry," *Theological Studies* 61 (2000) 432–46; Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," *Theological Studies* 63 (2002) 3–30.

[8] Neil J. Ormerod, "A Dialectic Engagement with the Social Sciences in an Ecclesiological Context," *Theological Studies* 66 (2005) 815–40.

[9] This is not meant as a criticism of these articles in any way. It is simply to argue for a collaborative division of labor as envisaged in Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1971).

[10] Ormerod, "Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology" 10.

Church has always found difficult to account for and acknowledge. As Ben Meyer noted of the early church, "they did not *acknowledge* development. They overlooked it. They suppressed its novelty, intent on ways of relocating the creative aspects of their own historical experience, safely and objectively, in God's eschatological saving act."[11] And, one might well argue, so it has been ever since. As O'Malley notes, "the Church is by definition a conservative society."[12] This is not merely a sociological observation; it is a theological necessity, given the Church's foundation in the historical events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. While Schloesser identifies an implicit anxiety in the documents of Vatican II about "fragmentation and disunity,"[13] there has also been a constant anxiety about change itself.

This anxiety about change finds theological expression in a type of idealistic ecclesiology that takes the Church out of history and places it in some ideal realm. Whether it be the "perfect society" ecclesiology of Robert Bellarmine, the "mystical body of Christ" ecclesiology of Pius XII, or the *communio* ecclesiologies of more recent times, they are characterized by their lack of interest in historical details and events. They present a timeless, unchanging church, often a very attractive church, but one disconnected from any actual historical community. In contrast to this style of ecclesiology there are a growing number of ecclesiologies that take historical data seriously and hence must come to terms with the reality of historical change.[14] Walter Kasper has characterized the distinction between these two approaches as one between a Platonic and an Aristotelian theology: "The conflict is between theological opinions and underlying philosophical assumptions. One side proceeds by Plato's method; its starting point is the primacy of an ideal that is a universal concept. The other side follows Aristotle's approach and sees the universal as existing in a concrete reality."[15]

While one side is deeply suspicious of change, which can only mean a movement away from an ideal state, the other side takes change for

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[11] Ben Meyer, *The Early Christians: Their World Mission and Self-Discovery* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1986) 23.

[12] O'Malley, "Vatican II" 8.

[13] Schloesser, "Against Forgetting" 279.

[14] Notable works that have adopted this approach are Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry* (New York: Crossroad, 1985); and David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1991). Perhaps the most significant of recent attempts, if somewhat flawed in my opinion, is the work of Roger Haight, *Christian Community in History*, 2 vols. (New York: Continuum, 2004–2005).

[15] Walter Kasper, "A Friendly Reply to Cardinal Ratzinger on the Church," *America* 184 (April 23–30, 2001) 8–14. It is ironic that Kasper himself promotes a *communio* ecclesiology despite its idealistic overtones.

granted. As change is a key issue in this division, this is where I will begin my investigation.

THE QUESTION OF CHANGE

Change is a complex notion, particularly when one is dealing with historical communities such as the Church. At present, for example, there is considerable debate about the issue of globalization. Is it a reality? What is driving it? Is it primarily economic, political, or cultural? Where is it taking us? When we look at the Church, it is obvious that some things have changed. The priest now faces the people; the liturgy is in the vernacular; the pope travels by jet airplane, and the Vatican has a web site. Such changes are obvious and undeniable. Clearly, those who want to minimize claims to change are not suggesting that these changes have not occurred. Perhaps they want to suggest that nothing essential has changed, but then that suggestion simply opens up questions about what is essential and what is accidental, with all the attendant difficulties of essentialist thinking.

In fact, understanding change is a key issue in any study of human communities. In his often noted but as yet unpublished "File 713—History," Bernard Lonergan sought to develop elements for a *summa sociologica* that would "throw Hegel and Marx, despite the enormity of their influence on this very account, into the shade."[16] Perusing this file some ten years ago, a cryptic throwaway line caught my eye: "constants disappear when you differentiate." Here Lonergan was drawing an analogy between the task of a social theory and Newton's first law of motion. Newton's key insight was that constant motion needed no explanation—bodies at constant velocity continued in that motion unless acted upon by an external force.[17] Lonergan was suggesting something similar in the field of the social sciences. Human communities are complex realities that aim to some extent at "self-reproduction." Constancy in human communities does not as such require explanation. What requires explanation and analysis is change. Central to Lonergan's account of history was an analogy drawn from Newton's account of planetary motion. It consists of a series of three approximations. In the first, the ideal line of history, people "always do what is intelligent and reasonable," resulting in pure progress. In the second, one grasps the presence of the unintelligible, unintelligent surd in

[16] Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan*, Outstanding Christian Thinkers (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1992) 22–23.

[17] In Lonergan's terms this was an inverse insight, recognizing that there was no need to find an explanation for constant velocity. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1992) 43–50.

human affairs, whereby people are unintelligent and unreasonable in their decisions, and these result in decline. In the third, there is renaissance or redemption that by God's grace moves humanity closer to the ideal line of history, of pure progress. In its own way this basic heuristic structure re-appears throughout Lonergan's career, certainly in *Insight* and in *Method in Theology*, but also in various occasional pieces as well. The most sig-nificant of these is the essay, "Healing and Creating in History."[18] This essay is a sophisticated transposition of the classical grace-nature distinc-tion into social and historical categories.

Robert Doran has built on Lonergan's proposals, developing his notion of a hierarchical scale of values—vital, social, cultural, personal, and reli-gious—by identifying dialectic structures of transcendence and limitation at the social, cultural, and personal levels. These, together with Lonergan's notion of healing and creating in history, provide a heuristic structure for ordering history: "Taken together these three processes constitute . . . the immanent intelligibility of the process of human history. . . . History is to be conceived as a complex network of dialectics of subjects, communities and cultures. Insofar as these dialectics are integral, history is intelligible. In-sofar as these dialectics are distorted, history is a compound of the intel-ligible and the surd."[19] In a more recent work, Doran adds to these ele-ments four created communications of the divine nature corresponding to the four Trinitarian relations, to develop what he calls a "unified field theory" for a systematic theology of history.[20]

Four points should be noted about Doran's proposal, built on Loner-gan's foundations. First, the structure is thoroughly dynamic. Lonergan's three overarching categories of progress, decline, and redemption are all categories of change. The dialectic structures Doran develops at the per-sonal, cultural, and social levels are elements that produce personal, cul-tural, and social change. There are creative movements up the scale of values and healing movements down the scale. The structure incorporates integrative forces that seek to maintain stability but also operative forces that move in the direction of self-transcendence. Change is built in from the start.

Second, the structure is normative. The normative force of Lonergan's transcendental precepts operates at all levels of the structure. The social order arises as a normative response of practical intelligence seeking re-

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[18] Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Col-lection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist, 1985) 100–109.

[19] Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990) 144.

[20] Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of To-ronto, 2006) 62–66. Doran derives the terminology of a "unified field theory" from unpublished papers of Daniel Mansour.

current solutions to the need for the production and just and equitable distribution of vital values. The cultural order arises as a normative response to the human need to find meaning and purpose in daily living. The personal order is our own normative orientation to meaning, truth, and goodness, which enables us to move beyond our social and cultural context and beyond mere personal satisfaction, to ask about the truly good that is yet to be achieved. The dialectics at the personal, cultural, and social levels identify a normative order of self-transcendence, an operator that relentlessly transforms all our current settled situations.

Third, the structure is dialectical. It recognizes not merely the normative order of self-transcendence, but also the real and indeed realized possibility of historical decline. Lonergan speaks of the shorter and longer cycles of decline, while Doran analyzes the potential breakdowns in the personal, cultural, and social dialectics. These patterns of breakdown and decline provide a rich set of conceptual tools for analyzing particular historical situations and the problems they embody.

Fourth, the structure is both thoroughly "social scientific" and theological. It recognizes the autonomy of the social, cultural, and personal levels, but only as a relative autonomy. The social is open to the cultural, the cultural to the personal, and the personal is ultimately open to the possibility of grace. The healing vector of grace initiates religious conversion, then moral conversion (personal level), and in some cases intellectual conversion (cultural level). Moral conversion raises questions of social justice and equity (social level) and so transforms societies "from above." As such, the structure rejects the conceptualist assumptions of methods of correlation that tend to disconnect the sociocultural from the religious as separate realms or spheres, only then to have difficulty in reconnecting them in any meaningful way.[21]

TRAJECTORIES OF CHANGE

If the issue is one of change, what then does the structure developed by Lonergan and Doran tell us about change? What are the major trajectories of change that will provide us with a heuristic structure for analyzing what happened not only at Vatican II, but at any other major historical event? In seeking to respond to this question, I shall focus on the social and cultural levels of the scale of values as most relevant to the problem of historical change. I take Lonergan's notion of healing and creative vectors and generalize it to movements from "below up" and "above down." Some

[21] See Neil J. Ormerod, "Quarrels with the Method of Correlation," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996) 707–19, for a more detailed analysis of this issue.

of what I have already written on this matter in an earlier article I will repeat here.[22]

Trajectory 1—From Practical Insight to Cultural Change

The trajectory begins with a new practical insight that alters the social situation. This insight may be a new technological development—for example, the invention of computers; or a new economic insight, such as the free market; or a new political insight such as representative democracy. If the practical insight works, that is, if it increases the flow of basic goods, improves the efficiency of the distribution of those goods, or increases the sense of belonging in society on a recurrent basis, then it will lead to the development of lasting institutions that embody this practicality. This practical insight will in turn lead to new meanings and values that incorporate it as part of the social story, the new social identity, and the way things should be done. Thus, the cultural superstructure may respond to developments in the social infrastructure by incorporating new meanings and values consonant with the social change. A conflictualist sociology invariably understands such a process as ideological, but it need not be thought as such.[23] Meaning-making is essential for fully human living—human beings do not live by bread alone—and while meaning may occasionally be distorted, without it our lives would be subhuman. This meaning-making may, however, be ideological, if the practical insight neglects other communal values, and if the meanings and values that arise justify that neglect by denying the validity of those communal values. Thus, with liberation theology and critical theory, we must ask, "Who are the victims of this social change? Who is marginalized? Whose voice has not been heard?" We must ask whether the practical insight suffers from bias, either individual, group, or general. All these are possibilities. But in the ideal shift, new practical insights give rise to cultural shifts that, recognizing their own contingency, can avoid ideological pretensions and distortions. Culture is then a creative, contingent, indeed artistic expression of the human spirit helping us make sense of our social world. We arrive at a new, relatively stable social and cultural state that incorporates the shift brought about by practical intelligence.

Trajectory 2—From Cultural Change to Practical Insight

The second trajectory begins with the emergence of new meanings and values. How can this happen? It can occur when one culture comes into

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[22] Ormerod, "Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology" 19–20.
[23] For a fuller treatment of the different styles of sociology and their theological significance, see Ormerod, "A Dialectic Engagement" 815–40.

contact with another, as when European culture "discovered" the East and developed new art; or when Islamic scholars brought Aristotle to the Christian Middle Ages. It can happen when a creative person develops a new philosophy or even a new religion. Most significantly, it can occur when God communicates new meanings and values into human history through revelation. This revelation is most evident in the incarnate meaning of the person of Jesus Christ, his life, death, and resurrection. It is then further carried in the hearts and minds of his followers, particularly the saints. It finds written expression in the Scriptures and definitive judgment in the dogmas of the church and the writings of theologians. Whatever their source, new meanings and values may be incompatible with the present social ordering. New insights into the meaning of human dignity may be incompatible with slavery, the denial of women's voting rights, and child labor. These insights grow among people through debate, discussion, and art. Cultural institutions are formed to promote a certain vision of life around these new meanings and values. People begin to envisage a new social ordering through a multiplicity of practical insights more expressive of the emerging meanings and values that give purpose to their lives. These new emerging meanings may of course represent the biased interests of a particular group. They may reflect a distorted meaning such as racism. But they may also represent a greater attunement to the intentional goals of truth, goodness, and beauty. Such an attunement will lead to a healing of distortions in the social order.

I would now like to supplement this basic proposal by bringing it into dialogue with Christopher Dawson's identification of five "main types of social change."[24] The merit of Dawson's proposal is that it has emerged not from theoretical *a priori* consideration as above, but *a posteriori*, on the basis of his historical investigations. I will, however, change the order of his presentation to suit the current context.

Case 1: "The simple case of a people that develops its way of life in its original environment without the intrusion of human factors from outside."[25] This is a case of relative stability in which the two trajectories outlined above move a society incrementally forward.

Case 2. "The case of a people which comes into a new geographical environment and readapts its culture as a consequence."[26] A new geographical environment demands new practical insights to meet the needs of survival. Inevitably these insights have an impact on the culture of the

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[24] Christopher Dawson, *The Age of the Gods* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1933) xvi. Dawson lists his cases as A, B, C, etc., whereas I have enumerated them.
[25] Ibid. xvi.   [26] Ibid. xvii.

group. New stories must be told, new cosmologies developed, even new theologies. This case is an example of Trajectory 1.

Case 3: "The case of a people that adopts some element of material culture which has been developed by another people elsewhere."[27] Dawson notes how rapidly elements of material culture can move from one society to another, instancing the spread of the use of metals, of agriculture, and irrigation in the ancient world. However, he adds, "it is remarkable how often such external change leads not to social progress, but to social decay."[28] This again is an example of Trajectory 1, where a practical insight has been borrowed from others. Dawson's observation about the possible negative impact perhaps reflects instances where the disparity between the two levels of technology is such as to cause a fundamental collapse of the world of meaning of the recipient society.

Case 4: "The case of a people which modifies its way of life owing to the adoption of new knowledge or belief, or to some change in its view of life and its conception of reality."[29] The way Dawson puts this makes it clear that this "new knowledge" is not just a new technique or product of practical intelligence—what he previously referred to as "some element of material culture." Dawson is indicating a major cultural shift, a new "conception of reality." The source of this new conception is "Reason" or the "mind of man."[30] This case is clearly an example of Trajectory 2.

Case 5: "The case of two different peoples, each with its own way of life and social organization, which mix with one another usually as the result of conquest, occasionally as a result of peaceful contact." Dawson describes cultural mixing as "the most typical and important of all causes of cultural change." [31] It is clearly also the most complex, as it involves elements of all the above types, movements "across" as well as "up and down." There are exchanges at the level of practical intelligence and at the realm of meanings and values. New forms of intersubjective identification must develop, as well as new stories, myths, philosophies, and theologies to accommodate the new context. Dawson speaks of this case as initiating a "period of intense cultural activity, when new forms of life created by the vital union of two different peoples and cultures burst into flower." [32] He warns that it can also result in "violent conflicts and revolts of spasmodic action, and brilliant promise that has no fulfillment."[33]

While Case 5 is complex, there is a certain sense in which the previous four cases constitute components within it. Moreover, each case is greatly clarified by bringing it into dialogue with the perspective of the two tra-

[27] Ibid. xviii.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid. xix.
[31] Ibid. xvii.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid. xviii.

jectories draw from Lonergan and Doran. Taken together the two trajectories and five cases provide a good set of heuristic tools for an analysis of major social and cultural change.

In the light of our present discussion, we may ask not just *how* change happened (O'Malley) or *why* it happened (Schloesser), but "what *type* of change happened at Vatican II?"

VATICAN II: WHAT HAPPENED?

To assess what type of change happened at Vatican II, one must first have an account of the situation prior to the event. Such an account must not simply identify the historical conditions antecedent to the council, but must also provide an analytic framework for understanding this cluster of conditions. Both O'Malley and Schloesser use Lonergan's notion of a transition from classicism to historical consciousness to provide some understanding of the nature of the Church's prior situation.[34] The Church had locked itself into a classicist understanding of culture as a normative ideal that it possessed and others must attain. This stance is certainly evident in the Church's missionary endeavors that were as much about planting European culture as they were about preaching the Gospel.[35] As Schloesser notes, this stance had a particularly negative impact on the Church's missionary endeavors in Asia. I would now like to make this account of the Church prior to Vatican II more explanatory by drawing on Doran's notions of the dialectics at the cultural and social levels of value.

As noted above, these notions are conceived as dialectics of transcendence and limitation. The normativity of the structure dictates that these two poles be held in dialectic tension while recognizing the priority of the transforming power of the transcendent pole of the dialectic. A breakdown of the dialectic occurs when a community moves in one direction of the dialectic or the other, to the neglect or even rejection of the opposing pole. Given the two dialectics at the two levels, there are four distinctive antitypes or patterns of breakdown in the sociocultural context of any com-

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[34] O'Malley, "Vatican II" 16 n. 27; Schloesser, "Against Forgetting" 308 n. 109. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical Mindedness," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. Ryan and Bernard Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 1–9.

[35] This classicism is evident in the Apostolic Constitution of Benedict XV to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, where he states that the Church "promoted also most effectively the development of civilization. For not only did she abolish the laws of barbarous nations and remodel on more humane lines their savage customs, but likewise, with God's assistance, she reformed and brought to Christian perfection the very law of the Romans, that wonderful achievement of ancient wisdom" (Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* [San Francisco: Ignatius, 2001] 21).

munity. I have analyzed this typology elsewhere and here will draw attention to what I call the classic conservative antitype.[36]

Classic Conservative Antitype

The classic conservative antitype represents a distortion of both the cultural and social dialectic in the direction of limitation.

At the cultural level there is a strong emphasis on tradition. The past is normative, not as a prototype for future development, but as an archetype to be endlessly repeated. The tradition sets the standard for theology, philosophy, art, literature, and so on. Any innovations at the cultural level, such as new theologies or new philosophies, are seen as a threat to the purity of the tradition. This distortion of the cultural dialectic in the direction of limitation can go hand in hand with a strong sense of transcendence, but there is a compensatory distortion in the way such transcendence is conceived. Because the culture is not in touch with the reality of actual cultural self-transcendence, it may conceive of transcendence in some purely "spiritual" sense, as in an extrinsicist account of grace, or some other "other-worldly" understanding of religion.

At the social level a rigidity of social organization is present. The distortion toward limitation does not mean a lack of social organization. Rather this distortion implies the inability of that organization to adapt to changing social circumstances with new solutions arising from practical intelligence. Instead, problems are met with a reliance on old "tried and true" methods. Such groups have a strong sense of community and social identity. There can be genuine experiences of warmth and fellowship. However, the distortion of the dialectic in the direction of limitation can mean that the intersubjective warmth can be perverted into shared anxieties or psychotic fantasies, particularly those of a strong leader. Again there is a compensatory distortion of how social transcendence is conceived. Rather than being seen in terms of practical intelligence resolving new problems through new social structures, it may be seen more in terms of "growth," that is, becoming a bigger group. Mission then means "others joining our group."

The coherence between the two distortions, both being in the direction of limitation, means that such communities are highly resistant to change and strongly successful in self-reproduction. There is a tendency to see the world in hostile terms; hence, one must separate oneself from the world.

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[36] Neil J. Ormerod, "Church, Anti-Types, and Ordained Ministry," *Pacifica* 10 (1997) 331–49. In this article I had simply numbered the four antitypes that I now refer to as classic conservative, neo-conservative, semi-progressive, and totally progressive.

This antitype corresponds, perhaps, to the sociological understanding of a sect.[37] As a breakdown in the integrity of the social and cultural dialectics, this typology is not just an analytic category; it represents a failure of a church community to effectively realize its mission.

It is not difficult to mount a case that prior to Vatican II the Catholic Church approximated such an antitype. In the wake of the Reformation the Catholic Church adopted a defensive attitude toward its ecclesial opponents. This defensiveness spread to emerging sciences, political changes, philosophical approaches, and eventually to the whole of modern society. It found its peak expression in Pius IX's Syllabus of Errors.[38] The Church defined itself by its rejection of the modern world. Theologically, the era was marked by an increasing extrinsicism that separated grace from nature and viewed the spiritual life as one cut off from the world.[39] The mission of the Church was conceived as "saving souls," focusing on the beatific vision, but not so much on the resurrection of the body.[40] Socially the Church presented itself as strongly cohesive, but it expressed its chronic anxiety about the "other" through its scapegoating treatment of the Jewish people.[41] Its social forms of organization displayed remarkable persistence through the centuries from Trent to the 20th century.[42] Overall the Church displayed remarkable stability to the point of being static, resistant to the forces that were effectively reshaping the world. Indeed, it even made a virtue of this stability, stressing its unchanging nature.

As I noted earlier, this type of community is highly resistant to change. It does not allow for human creativity to operate either at the social level of organization and practicality, or at the cultural level of philosophy, theology, and critical reflection. The community of the Church represented a relatively self-enclosed subcommunity of the larger society. It is likely

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[37] According to Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London: Faber, 1969) 166, "the sect, in its classical sociology-of-religion conception, serves as a model for organising a cognitive minority *against* a hostile or at least non-believing milieu." The limitation of this conception lies in its failure to distinguish hostility at the cultural and social levels.

[38] Schloesser, "Against Forgetting" 297–301, on the Church's rejection of modernity and its struggle to shift at Vatican II in the area of religious tolerance and pluralism.

[39] The *nouvelle théologie* movement and the theologies of Rahner, Lonergan, and Doran are all attempts at overcoming the extrinsicism of neo-Scholasticism.

[40] Dennis M. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2000) 41–42, on the ecclesiology of the manual tradition, which defines the final cause of the Church to be the beatific vision.

[41] Schloesser, "Against Forgetting," 289–94, on the "Jewish question" as a context for Vatican II.

[42] Perhaps the most notable example of this persistence is that of the tridentine seminary.

that in such a community change can occur only where it is sanctioned and even initiated "from above." Even so, such a community will face change with considerable resistance because of its long-term commitments to suppress novelty. On the other hand, an increasing disconnectedness between the Church and the world creates great tension between its members who must live both "in" the Church and "in" the world.

In this situation it seems appropriate to compare the change initiated in the Church at Vatican II to that of the fifth case considered above. The change was not a simple shift at the level of practicality or of culture. Rather, it was a complex interaction at the social and cultural levels, the conditions for the possibility of which had been established by centuries of separation from, and resistance to, the changes taking place in the world. In such circumstances it is not unusual that the council initiated a "period of intense cultural activity, when new forms of life created by the vital union of two different peoples and cultures burst into flower" but also the possibility of "violent conflicts and revolts of spasmodic action, and brilliant promise that has no fulfillment."[43] Indeed Dawson's words here have a prophetic character in relation to the aftermath of Vatican II. It has been a period of intense cultural activity, but also a period of increasing conflict over the basic interpretation of the council, leading some to fear that the initial brilliant promise of the council has not been fulfilled.

A MISSIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE TO CHANGE

As I already suggested, a church that approximates the classic conservative antitype represents a community that effectively fails to realize its mission. This assertion is full of theological judgments that need unpacking. As I have suggested in a previous article, the Church is defined teleologically, that is, by its mission.[44] In contemporary writings that mission is expressed heuristically by the symbol of the kingdom of God. The mission of the Church involves the building of God's kingdom. Nonetheless this mission is not exclusive to the Church. As John Paul II put it: "The kingdom is the concern of everyone: individuals, society, and the world. Working for the kingdom means acknowledging and promoting God's activity, which is present in human history and transforms it. *Building the kingdom means working for liberation from evil in all its forms.* In a word, the kingdom of God is the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness."[45]

Now if the antitypes represent a breakdown in the integral dialectics of

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[43] Dawson, *Age of the Gods* xvii–xviii.
[44] Ormerod, "Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology" 8–9.
[45] *Redemptoris missio* no. 15, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/

the scale of values, if such breakdown represents a movement away from the ideal path of progress and into the path of decline, then they are a manifestation of social and cultural evil, which Lonergan refers to as the social surd. The Church does not and cannot contribute to working for the kingdom by manifesting evil in its own life and operations. The Church therefore has a missiological imperative to change.

This missiological understanding of the Church is evident in the opening paragraph of *Lumen gentium*: "Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission." It is reaffirmed in the opening paragraph of *Gaudium et spes*: "United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds." The Church has a universal mission, a mission of salvation, as a sign and instrument of the unity of the whole human race and its history. The Church's mission has an essentially historical dimension. Because the world changes, because each new age brings new problems and challenges, the Church must find new ways to deal with these new problems and challenges. In short, it must change to fulfill its mission in a changing world.

Schloesser has identified one aspect of the missiological failure of the pre-Vatican II Church. He notes Archbishop Giovanni Benelli's statement of 1973: "There is no doubt that in the Middle Ages and subsequently up to twenty years ago, there was in the Church a centralization of powers" that had "contributed to delaying for centuries the conversion of Asia."[46] And no doubt the evangelizing mission of the Church in Asia has met with significant resistance. However, a far greater failure of the Church's mission can be identified much closer to home. Western Europe is increasingly post-Christian. With the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution, Catholicism increasingly lost the intellectual class. With the industrial revolution, it increasingly lost the workers. With the rise of democracy and the emergence of the modern secular state, it lost any privileged political position and has become increasingly irrelevant to the middle classes. The seeds of this failure were laid in the increasingly sectlike characteristics of the Catholic Church itself. Its hostility to the changes taking place in the modern world presented the Western world with too stark an option, of either Catholic Christianity or modernity. A failure to recognize the more

encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio_en.html (accessed August 7, 2006, emphasis added).
[46] Quoted in Schloesser, "Against Forgetting" 289.

positive aspects of modernity and to embrace these has left the Church increasingly out in the cold.

The Church has recognized some of its failure in Western Europe with the calls of both John Paul II and Benedict XVI for a reevangelization of Europe, and for Europe to reaffirm its Christian roots. These are certainly important goals. But on the present analysis, if these goals mean simply that Europe must come back to the Church and a form of Christianity that existed in the past, without any significant shift in the Church itself, re-evangelization will fail. As John Allen notes in his review of George Weigel's, *Witness to Hope: A Biography of John Paul II*: "Delegates at the Dialogue for Austria [Salzburg, 1998] repeatedly stressed that for John Paul's new evangelization to work, the church first must get its internal house in order. As long as Europeans—or anyone else—perceive the church as an oppressor of women, gays and dissidents, it is unlikely to generate much sympathetic attention."[47]

A MISSION TO THE WORLD

This recognition of the need for change, of course, is not to give a blanket endorsement of the modern world, as if the Church should simply conform itself to the world without critique. Far from it. One may argue that just as the Church has suffered distortion because of its rejection of major currents in modernity, so too the world, or at least the Western world, has suffered distortion because of its separation from the Church. Just as both the social and cultural dialectics identified by Doran can be distorted in the direction of limitation, leading to a context that actively resists both social and cultural change, so too can they be distorted in the direction of transcendence.

Totally Progressive Antitype

The totally progressive antitype represents a distortion of the cultural dialectic and the social dialectic in the direction of transcendence.

At a cultural level such communities embrace new ideas, new theologies, new philosophies, and new world views very quickly, since they are not held back by the past. Rather than see the past as authoritative, they tend to view the past with suspicion, sharing the Enlightenment's "prejudice against prejudice." In a form of intellectual evolutionary optimism, the new idea is seen as inevitably better. However, because such groups are no longer grounded in an intellectual tradition, they lack the ability to discriminate between cultural progress and cultural decline. They fail to rec-

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[47] John Allen, "Weigel Puts Favorable Spin on John Paul's Pontificate," *National Catholic Reporter* 36.3 (November 5, 1999) 37.

ognize the traditional character of all cultures, including the one to which they belong, a point Alasdair MacIntyre emphasizes.[48] As a consequence there is a tendency to be intellectually faddish and superficial.

At the social level there is a willingness to adapt to new situations, to make use of new technologies in communication, and to move away from methods that worked in the past but have lost their appeal. While such communities may generate excitement and a sense of immediate togetherness, the distortion in the direction of practical intelligence may lead to undervaluing intersubjectivity beyond a superficial level, for they fail to recognize that the affective bonds of genuine community are cross-generational and may reach back for decades, even centuries. Such communities may lack a stable social identity, and there may be a high level of mobility within them. The neglect of intersubjectivity means that their members do not produce enduring communities, as a result of significant geographical mobility. Moreover, the distortion in the direction of practical intelligence may lead to a faddish adoption of new social techniques, programs, and technologies, with little critical appreciation of longer-term affects on the community as a whole.

Again, these two distortions are mutually reinforcing, though the outcomes will be very different from those of the classic conservative antitype. These groups take on new ideas and new social processes on a regular basis. At an extreme, the only form of social organization is what is required to meet an immediate practical need. The basic form of gathering is the workshop, the seminar, or the conference called to impart the latest new idea or teaching. The intellectual and social identity of such groups is short-lived as people and ideas come and go in a constant turnover. They provide a brief and intense experience of sharing, but it is generally superficial with no enduring sense of community. They exhibit an intellectual syncretism and a fragmented social organization. Significantly, they may have a compensatory bias toward cosmological symbolism, which represents the limitation pole of the cultural dialectic.[49] There may also be a tendency to idealize more traditional communal forms, while providing little hope of ever truly attaining such forms.

Again, as with the description of the Church prior to Vatican II in terms of the classic conservative antitype, it is not difficult to mount a case that

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[48] See the works of Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1988); Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition: Being Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh in 1988* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1990).

[49] See, Neil J. Ormerod, "New Age: Threat or Opportunity," *Australasian Catholic Record* 71 (1994) 74–81, where I argue that the New Age movement represents such a compensatory stance toward cosmological symbolism.

our modern world suffers from the distortion evident in this totally pro-
gressive antitype. Certainly the practical intelligence of neo-liberal eco-
nomic theory is dominating the West, effectively silencing voices that speak
of social capital or community values. Technology is all-pervasive, and the
pace of technological change shows no sign of slowing. Our ethical reflec-
tions are playing catch-up, particularly in areas of biotechnology. Our po-
litical and legal institutions too are playing catch-up in a world trapped in
the ever-increasing demands of a globalizing economy. Culturally we are
caught up in a postmodern relativism that undercuts all claims to tradi-
tional authority and truth. In the face of rapid social and cultural change,
a protest movement of "tribalization" occurs that reasserts the values of
local communities and their cultures.[50]

Of course, one does not want to oversimplify our present context. Cul-
tures and social structures are pluriform; in particular, a culture will em-
pirically consist of dominant and subversive voices, loud and soft voices,
affirmative and protesting voices. The totally progressive antitype is just a
type, not realized in any human community in its "pure" form. Nonethe-
less, it is suggestive of the situation of decline, or of distortion, evident in
the social and cultural dialectics in our present context.

To the extent that this analysis is accurate, it suggests that the failure of
the Church's mission has been a failure to mediate the healing vector of
salvation to our present historical context. While the world has moved in
one direction of distortion, the Church has moved reactively in the other.
Both have suffered as a result. However, these mutually opposed move-
ments of Church and world away from the integrity of the social and
cultural dialectics created the conditions for the possibility of the type of
interaction proposed by Dawson between two distinct communities. In the
short term this interaction has had more impact on the Church because it
has moved from a more static to a more dynamic state. Moreover, these

[50] Bjørnar Olsen, "The End of History? Archaeology and the Politics of Identity
in a Globalized World," in *The Destruction and Conservation of Cultural Property*,
ed. Robert Layton et al. (New York: Routledge, 2001) 47 notes: "On the other hand
we can identify a completely opposed reaction [to globalization] in many parts of
the world: cultural and religious fundamentalism, neo-nationalism, and the increas-
ing ethnification of the political discourse, in short what Friedman has referred to
as the 'Balkanisation and tribalisation experienced at the bottom of the system'
(Friedman 1997:85). In the wake of this we see the proliferation of myths of origins
and authenticity, and how the past increasingly is being used as a foundation for
'histories of revenge'. The latter reaction, and the way the past is being used in
'defence' of existing or invented identities, may remind us that what we are facing
is as much the 'return' of history as the end of it. The resurgence of ethnic nation-
alism in Europe and elsewhere has given hundreds of historians full-time occupa-
tion in writing glorious histories for their peoples. As noted by Eriksen, . . . 'It is
never too late to have a happy childhood.'"

changes occurred simultaneously at the level of both social organization and culture. These changes impacted the organizational processes of parishes and dioceses, with, for example, the adoption of pastoral councils, finance committees, and new liturgical forms, as well as new theologies and philosophies at the cultural level. In the shorter and longer term, the Church's success in bringing the distortions of our present culture back toward some form of dialectic balance remains an open question. Certainly, much of the Church's social teaching is a resource for those who want to argue for a realignment of our present social and cultural dialectics.[51]

EMPIRICAL, CRITICAL, NORMATIVE, DIALECTICAL, AND *PRACTICAL*

The claim of the current proposal in relation to ecclesiology is that it should be based on an empirical and critical analysis of the historical data, the adoption of a normative framework, and a dialectic account of the breakdown from that normativity, together with a practical therapeutic based on that account. Now is the time to identify some elements of that therapeutic. Since this is an article in ecclesiology, I will focus on the situation of the Church and leave the situation of the world to the larger concern of missiology.[52]

While Vatican II was surely not the sole agent of change in the Church's life,[53] it was the major source of sanction for the process of change that has occurred. Given the Church's approximation to the classic conservative antitype, for any movement of change to be successful, it needed sanctioning from the top. The council provided that sanction, with the oft-noted notion of the "spirit of Vatican II" being used repeatedly to justify elements of change in the life of the Church. Nonetheless it needs to be acknowledged that, overall, the process of change was not well managed. No one was prepared for the pace of change that occurred after the council, certainly not the people in the pews. Largely practical changes in the liturgy and other sacramental practices were in place within just a few years of the council. Previously hidden topics such as the ordination of married men,

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[51] One thinks of the great social encyclicals of John Paul II, such as *Laborens exercens* (1981), *Solicitudo rei socialis* (1987), and *Centesimus annus* (1991).

[52] For an analysis of globalization using these same tools, see Neil J. Ormerod, "Theology, History, and Globalization," to appear in *Gregorianum*.

[53] The process of change had been going on behind the scenes since the condemnation of "Modernism" in 1907. One thinks of major contributions in the first half of the 20th century made by theologians who eventually served as periti at the council such as Karl Rahner, Henri de Lubac, Edward Schillebeeckx, Yves Congar, Hans Küng, and John Courtney Murray, and liturgiologists like Odo Casel and Josef Jungmann.

and even of women, were openly discussed. Were these just matters of practicality, or were there genuine theological reasons involved? Theology itself departed from its neo-Scholastic bindings and experimented with other philosophical approaches, while the impact of critical historical studies in the Bible began to be felt. Once the genie of change was released from its bottle, it would be difficult to put it back in. What then were the limits and the possibilities involved in the process?

The decades after the council have reflected this struggle to identify limits and explore possibilities. Under the direction of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith made a number of strategic interventions in areas of moral theology, Christology, liberation theology, ecclesiology, and the theology of religious pluralism.[54] In the curious mix of the cultural and the practical that we call liturgy, the Vatican also acted to eliminate "liturgical experimentation" and reassert control of different aspects of the liturgy, the current struggle over English translation being but one example. At the practical level we have seen major reviews of canon law, of seminary and religious life, and so on. While the soundness of some of these might be questioned, they must be located against the background of the dynamic process that Vatican II sanctioned. Having sanctioned change, the Church then sought to define the parameters of that change, particularly at the cultural level, but also at the level of social organization.

The greatest dangers in this process is to be found among those who seek an undifferentiated return to the past, the dangers of integralism or restorationism. These forces need to be resisted, because they would represent a loss of nerve in the transforming mission of the Church to the world and a repetition of the mistakes of the past. As I noted above, the classic conservative antitype is highly resistant to change, and it is not difficult to identify persons and groups who represent such resistance within the Church. The most extreme version is that of the traditionalist followers of Archbishop Marcel Lefèbvre (1905–1991), who seem to reject completely the validity of Vatican II. However extreme they may be, over the long pontificate of John Paul II, representatives of such resistance to change seem to have gained notable support.

On the other hand, a danger remains, particularly at the cultural level,

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[54] One thinks of names such as Charles Curran, Edward Schillebeeckx, Roger Haight, Leonardo Boff, Anthony de Mello, Jacques Dupuis, together with documents such as Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation (1986), *Dominus Iesus* (2000), and the overarching document, Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian (1990). One should also refer to a number of encyclicals of John Paul II on moral questions, such as *Veritatis splendor* (1993), *Evangelium vitae* (1995), and the Apostolic Letter on the nonordination of women, *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (1994).

that theologians and other cultural agents will conform themselves to the "spirit of the age." Some seem to view postmodern relativism not as a problem to be confronted, but as a solution to be adopted with some relish. The totally progressive orientation of the globalizing world will inevitably lead to social fragmentation and intellectual faddism. The healing of the distortions of the social and cultural dialectic is a concern for the Church and for theologians whose task it is to mediate "between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of religion in that matrix."[55] A central issue for theologians in dealing with this question is, I believe, struggling with the issue of the permanent validity of the dogmatic decrees of the Church.[56] These are an enduring stumbling block to all postmodern relativistic claims.

Nonetheless the Church has a long history of dealing with such problems. This is why the problem of restorationism is a far greater danger. The forces of resistance to change are playing to past strengths and enjoy greater institutional power than those who seek to promote change. In this context the current rise of *communio* ecclesiologies should be noted. In earlier articles I have criticized this style of ecclesiology, and I repeat my concerns here. Symbolically the notion of *communio* has an integrative function. It stresses values of harmony and integration. Such a function resists change, because change introduces stresses into the community that threaten to disrupt communal harmony.[57] Thus, the recognition of communion ecclesiology by the 1985 Synod of Bishops as the central and fundamental idea of the documents of Vatican II was not just a theological stance; it can be read as an expression of anxiety over potentially disruptive forces of change within the Church.[58] This is why communion ecclesiology has been so rapidly adopted by more conservative bishops seeking to put a halt to forces of change. The theme was further taken up in the 1992 statement of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Some Aspects of the Church as Communion.

I have argued that, at the very least, *communio* ecclesiology requires some balancing by an emphasis on the mission of the Church as defining its identity. It is significant, then, that, while the congregation's 1992 statement emphasizes *communio,* mentioning the mission of the Church only a few times, the *Instrumentum laboris* of the 2001 Synod of Bishops, The Bishop:

[55] Lonergan, *Method in Theology* xi.

[56] Ibid. 320–24. See also Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 133–36, on the distinction between understanding data and understanding facts. In relation to issues in trinitarian theology see Neil J. Ormerod, *Trinity: Retrieving the Western Tradition* (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 2005) 143–52.

[57] Ormerod, "Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology" 27–29.

[58] Schloesser makes the same observation about repeated calls for unity in the documents of Vatican II themselves ("Against Forgetting" 279–80).

Servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Hope of the World, presents a different picture. Along with repeated statements about the "Church as communion," ("communion" appears about 180 times), it also mentions the missionary nature of the Church (about 85 times). On 20 occasions the two notions are joined, noting, for example, that "Communion and mission enrich each other. The force of communion makes the Church grow in extension and depth. At the same time, mission makes communion grow, extending it outwards in concentric circles, until it reaches everyone. Indeed, the Church spreads into various cultures and introduces them to the Kingdom, so that what comes from God can return to him. For this reason, it has been said: 'Communion leads to mission, and mission itself to communion.'"[59] While *communio* emphasizes the integrative function of the life of the Church and adds "depth," mission is the transformative, operative function that moves the Church beyond its present realm of comfort into dialogue, debate, and mediation to the world. I would argue that a proper recovery of the Church's essentially missionary character[60] is needed to prevent the Church from slipping back into the classic conservative antitype from which it attempted to escape through Vatican II. It is simply overloading the language of *communio* to expect it to carry forward this missionary aspect. In this regard, those who promote *communio* ecclesiology could well take note of the 2001 Synod document that is far more balanced in placing these two aspects into conjunction without seeking to reduce one to the other.

CONCLUSION

The 1960s was a period of great change and of consciousness of change. To some extent the "spirit of the age" was captured by Bob Dylan's song, "The Times They Are a'Changin'." This was a song of protest against those who wanted to tie the world to the past. The youth wanted emancipation from the forces of tradition, of social and cultural conservatism. Perhaps naïvely we did not realize that forces of change were already reshaping the world and had been doing so for centuries. Now, 40 years later, our concern is not one of promoting change in the world, but of questioning its direction and pace. Where are we going, and are we simply moving too fast?

[59] *Instrumentum laboris* of the 2001 Synod of Bishops, The Bishop: Servant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Hope of the World no. 62, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20010601_instrumentum-laboris_en.html (accessed August 7, 2006). Significantly, on six occasions where the document links "communion" and "mission," it does so with an explicitly trinitarian dimension.

[60] As *Redemptoris missio* notes, "Church is missionary by her very nature" (no. 5).

These same forces of change, which the Catholic Church had resisted for centuries, Vatican II released into the life of the Church. While the Modernist Crisis represented a last-ditch effort by the hierarchy to resist change, Vatican II sanctioned efforts to change, and these have since had an irrevocable effect on its life. Theologically, the Church's resistance to change represented a failure in its missionary stance to the world. Its hostility to change was indiscriminate. The Church set its face against the world and thus no longer effectively mediated the healing vector needed to help keep the world "in balance." The Church is now faced with the need to bring about change in itself (*aggiornamento* and *ressourcement*)[61] while seeking to put the breaks on the pace of change in the world. This is a delicate balancing act. It would be easy for the Church to be captured by a romantic idealism that would identify the Church as a place of solidity and permanence in an ever-changing world. However, it would be a sectarian Church, one caught up in the classic conservative antitype. To favor a world-rejecting hostility would be an abrogation of the Church's mission to the world. This must not be allowed to happen.

Finally, this article attempted to illustrate a style of ecclesiology promoted by Joseph Komonchak and developed further by myself. Drawing on categories from Doran's theology of history, it seeks to consider the Church in its concrete historical manifestations. Here the historical material has largely been provided in the two articles by O'Malley and Schloesser, but these have been further processed by categories that are at once sociological and theological. The two antitypes are basically sociological categories—what Lonergan refers to as general categories. However, they take on a theological significance when they are placed in relation to the Church's theological mission to work "for liberation from evil in all its forms."[62] My hope is that I have illustrated how fruitful this style of ecclesiology can be.[63]

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[61] As O'Malley observes, these key notions of the council "are both geared to change" ("Vatican II" 13).

[62] *Redemptoris missio* no. 15.

[63] An earlier draft of this article was presented at the 33rd Annual Lonergan Workshop at Boston College, June 2006.