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THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE PARISH

The SOCIOLOGY *of the* PARISH

AN INTRODUCTORY SYMPOSIUM

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THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY
MILWAUKEE

Nihil obstat: THOMAS J. HARTE, C.Ss.R., Censor Deputatus
Imprimatur: PATRICK A. O'BOYLE, Archiepiscopus Washingtoniensis
November 8, 1950

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To

THE AMERICAN PARISH PRIEST

FOREWORD

THIS volume presents a series of studies on many phases of the parish. The editors and authors have integrated these studies in doctrinal and historical truths, to give us a comprehensive notion of the parish, with its constants and its variables.

The parish is the ultimate normal territorial unit in the Church. There is the Papacy, which reaches out over all the world, establishing a bond of unity in the whole Church, teaching, ministering, and governing. There are the Patriarchates and the Provinces, each with its distinct territory and including a number of dioceses. There is the diocese, and the diocese itself is divided territorially into parishes. It is true that in mission territories we have Vicariates Apostolic and Prefectures Apostolic, but these of their very nature are temporary, and the Church has her normal life in those territorial units which are stable. Even in the territorial units in mission territories there are the subdivisions of quasi-parishes or missions. In the history of the Church we see these extraordinary provisions for mission territories gradually in time disappear and the erection of the normal territorial units of the Church. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, we may rightly consider the parish as the ultimate, normal, territorial unit in the Church.

The purpose of the parish is the purpose of the Church, that is, the salvation and sanctification of souls, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. In the parish the pope, the voice of the living Church, teaches, ministers, and governs. In the parish, the bishop of the diocese exercises his ministry and authority. Within clearly defined limits, the pastor, or the

shepherd of the flock committed to his care, teaches, ministers, and governs. It is important to keep these facts in mind in a study of the parish in all its phases. Everything in the parish must concentrate on the one purpose of the parish, namely, the sanctification and the salvation of souls in the Church of Christ. There is, therefore, a certain sameness in all parishes and certain uniformity in all parishes. What is not related to the principal purpose of the parish has no right place in the activities and the life of the parish. We cannot consider the parish merely as a neighborhood social unit. It must be kept in mind that it is a territorial unit in the Church of God and that all its functions are directed to the salvation and the sanctification of souls. To keep this matter clear in our minds, let us say that there are in the parish certain constants which do not change.

Nevertheless, pastoral necessities demand certain variants in the parish. It may be that local conditions in a particular parish require a particular emphasis on the removing of certain occasions of sin from the lives of the people of the parish and setting up certain activities to aid in the practice of virtue. It may be that in certain periods there are present particular circumstances in the parish which require particular pastoral activities and attention which in other periods are not present. It is also true that in the complicated conditions of present-day society there is a variety of activities needed in certain parishes and in parishes of certain places which are not needed in other places. Since the parish is a neighborhood, the economic and social conditions of the people generally will be more or less the same, and activities are needed to meet the necessities of the particular group in a parish. Even parish responsibilities in promoting the larger interests of the Church may vary with time and place. It is easy to understand that many parishes which in other days assumed rightly a very large responsibility for the support of the missions of the Church, today find themselves in conditions in which they cannot discharge such a responsibility. On the other hand, there are many parishes

today which are able to do a larger part in supporting the missions of the Church, and in these parishes in our times the work for the missions will assume larger proportions. There are many varying conditions in parishes, and these varying conditions bring about varying activities. However, all these variants must be understood and studied in the light of the purpose of the parish, namely, the sanctification and the salvation of souls.

The authors of this volume have called it THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE PARISH, because in their surveys and studies they have seen many activities which rightly are classed as sociological in the programs of parishes. In these programs they have seen, besides the distinctly spiritual ministrations, almost everything from promoting the right sort of housing to the care of the poor of all sorts. They have seen study clubs, which look into the labor question, our economic ills, and many other things which are prominent in the studies of sociologists. Quite rightly, therefore, they have called their study THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE PARISH. It seems that this sort of study is more than ordinarily useful in our times. The fault in much of the sociological studies of our times is a failure to grasp the importance of religion in society. When we take merely a humanistic or a naturalistic concept of man or try to work out social programs on this concept, we always end in failure. While the parish exists for the sanctification and salvation of souls, for leading men to their heavenly home, it is also true that nothing contributes more to man's temporal happiness than religion. The human person is one and cannot be divided. Its perfection is identified with the right sort of social progress. When the religious needs of man are satisfied, it is easier to work out a program for his social betterment. When we neglect his religious needs, it is impossible to work out any sort of program for genuine social progress. The purpose and the end of all sociological studies is the betterment of society. Those who contributed to this volume have made a distinct contribution, which must be appreciated not only by pastors of parishes and

the faithful living in parishes, but also by those who are interested in the bringing about of a right social order in harmony with our culture.

Therefore, we recommend this volume not only to those to whom the contributors have addressed it, but we recommend it to all who are really interested in the right sort of social progress in our times. They will find in this study of the parish enlightenment for all their studies and they will discover that it is impossible to do the sort of work which they have in mind without the co-operation which comes from the pastors of the parishes of the neighborhoods. It is our hope that this volume will be widely read. The contributors say that it is an exploratory study, a sort of pioneering in this field of study. It will stimulate thought, and it will promote other studies in this same field, and if the purpose of the contributors is accomplished, it will help greatly to promote the betterment of society in our times.

✠ SAMUEL CARDINAL STRITCH
Archbishop of Chicago

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THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE PARISH

INTRODUCTION

TOWARD A SOCIOLOGY OF THE PARISH

by THE EDITORS

DURING the centuries in which the Church has established herself in the most widely varied human societies, the parish has become the principal social form through which the faithful in their respective localities are incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ. In a very real sense, it is, as one writer has aptly described it, "the Church in action . . . the living unit through which the Church reaches and sanctifies the souls of the faithful."[1] But since it is an historical product, parochial organization is clearly an accidental and not an essential characteristic of the Church. It is subject to the change which characterizes all that is human, even when the human is the bearer of the divine. Hence there is a constant possibility and even necessity for inquiry into the adaptation of the institutional structure of the parish to the realities of given times and places.

This necessity obtains, even if there is general acceptance of the view of a contemporary observer that parishes "seem to be the last stage in the evolution of the local organization of Catholicism" and that "it is likely that no new form will evolve out of the changed conditions of modern times."[2] It is the institutional form, made explicit in canonical definitions, which may well remain relatively unchanged. Cursory observation, however, is sufficient to disclose the numerous variables which appear when the institution is established in specific

communities, or when it is subjected to the succession of social and cultural changes which occur in the life of every community. Old parishes in American cities bear the marks of these changes, and newer parishes must look forward to experiencing them. Such changes are a consequence of the fact that the parish is a living social unit.

THE SCOPE OF THIS VOLUME

The present volume is intended to provide for American readers an introduction to study in the sociology of the parish. Not only students of sociology, but persons practically concerned with parochial administration should find something of use in its approach. The latter category surely includes the parish clergy who are vitally concerned in their daily work with the human and the social as well as with the spiritual aspects of their ministry. It includes seminarians whose future success as parish priests depends in some measure on their understanding of the relationship between the parish as a spiritual apostolate and the parish as a social reality. It also includes religious and lay teachers in our parish schools, Catholic Action leaders, and all intelligent lay Catholics who realize the importance of understanding the system of social relations which is the parish structure. While the sociologist may point his studies toward theoretical development, and the pastor or the Catholic Action leader may look instead for practical applications, both meet in a search for facts and understanding. This, at least, is the assumption of the editors. Neither a systematic treatise nor a busy pastor's guide, this symposium may yet outline the area of common interest which each person concerned may develop in his own way.

This is perhaps a modest aim, but one which takes account of the necessity to make one forward step at a time. The introductory character of this work needs to be emphasized, partly because so few have pursued investigations in this field, and partly because so little can be systematically stated at present. It would not be difficult to apply a formal definition

of sociology in outlining the study of the parish, yet the accumulation of knowledge does not often follow the logic of formal definitions, since so much depends upon the interests of investigators and the problems and occasions which lead them to concentrate in given areas. In scientific research, theoretical construction must rest upon observed and reported fact; therefore, only a limited theoretical definition of certain initial problems has been attempted. In the main, this is a survey of the kinds of material available for the sociological study of the parish and of the empirical problems which seem to be most suitable for investigation.

THE PARISH IN THE CHURCH

There are, of course, several possible approaches to the living reality which is the parish. It is, in one respect, an administrative unit, formally constituted or institutionalized by the Church, with its precise form and functions officially and minutely determined by the Church's laws. It is in its own right a social group, an organized body of people in time and space, a complex system of social relations. It is, most importantly, a vital component part of the organic unity that is the Church, serving its vital needs and sharing its supernatural life. The nature of the parish cannot be appreciated unless these aspects are seen in their proper relationships.

As a spiritual organism the parish partakes of the nature of the Church which, in the sublime language of theology, is "the permanent incarnation of the Son of God."[3] When the Word became flesh, divinity and humanity were bound together in the Person of Christ, and in Christ's Mystical Body, the Church, this unity is destined to be manifested until the end of time. This is Catholic teaching, in which the Church is seen as the instrument chosen by the infinite God to continue the redemptive mission of the Saviour through whom divine life was and is communicated to the world.

Like her Founder and Head, therefore, the Church is at the same time human and divine. Her essential principle of unity is the Spirit of God, not the kind of human juridical or moral bond through which men are joined in other social groups. Supernatural also in her origin and in her end, the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ absolutely transcends all human societies. But the Church has a visible structure, hierarchical in character, through which is exercised the threefold power of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. To teach, to sanctify, and to rule – these functions of pope and bishops and priests are performed in given times and places, among men of diverse races and cultures.

This human side of the Church has grown through the centuries to great complexity. Universal in its geographic and social extension, the Church has manifested also what Cardinal Suhard has appropriately termed its "vertical catholicity":

> She has traversed, and adapted herself to all the successive civilizations of History. She has accommodated herself to the age as well as to the place. Each age has lent her its stature and its visage.[4]

It is this geographical and historical extension which has required a delegation of powers and a virtual microcosmic duplication of the Church itself in all parts of the world. A parish is the Church in microcosm; it is to its own members what the Church is to mankind. Activating in a limited territory the threefold mission of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling, it is indeed

> . . . a realization in miniature of the mystery of the Church, which consists in her union with Christ as His spouse and as His Body. The parish is in its own order a realization of this double union: it is the spouse of Christ and the local replica of His Mystical Body.[5]

This supernatural unity may also be viewed as an integral part of the visible structure of the Church. The constitutions of the Church require the subdivision of each major unit of ecclesiastical administration – usually a diocese – into parishes having mutually exclusive and territorially defined bound-

aries.[6] In exceptional cases, best illustrated in so-called "national parishes," parish membership may be determined by ethnic or linguistic characteristics.[7] Yet even these parishes are territorially limited. The ideal of the Church is the territorial parish which includes all the faithful within specified boundaries without official recognition of class or other social distinctions. An interpretation of the parish system must take into account the implications of this fact.

Territorial parishes are formally established only by the bishop of a diocese, while the approval of the Holy See is necessary for the erection of all other types of parishes.[8] In relation to the larger ecclesiastical organization the parish is subordinate, since it is immediately subject to the jurisdiction of diocesan authorities and, through them, to the supreme jurisdiction of the Holy See. In relation to its members, the parish is not a voluntary association, since it is imposed upon the faithful by competent ecclesiastical authority. Parishioners must accept its jurisdiction and ministrations as necessary means for the attainment of their religious ends. In this way they are formally united with the universal Catholic body through the medium of the hierarchically related juridical bonds, though they are united immediately through the bond of faith and the operation of divine grace.

The official head and spiritual leader of the parish is the pastor, who is appointed to his office by the bishop and who exercises legally specified authority as the representative of the bishop.[9] The duty of the pastor is formally defined as "the cure of souls,"[10] which includes the particular duties prescribed by Canon Law, among which are the supervision of the faith and morals of parishioners, the public celebration of the Mass, the administration of the sacraments and the solemn witnessing of marriages, the instruction of the faithful in Christian doctrine, and the like.[11] Where necessity demands, additional priests may be appointed by the bishop to assist the pastor, to whom, however, they remain subordinate.[12]

The position of the parish as a unit of ecclesiastical organ-

ization is best summarized by reference to the Code of Canon Law itself. The relevant passage reads as follows:

> The territory of every diocese is to be divided into distinct territorial units; and each unit is to have a special church with a designated people, and a special rector is to be given charge over it as its proper pastor for the necessary cure of souls. . . . Such units are parishes.[13]

This statement fixes the purpose of the parish as "the cure of souls"; it designates the proper authority, the pastor; by provisions for the specification of territory and membership, it differentiates the parish from other ecclesiastical units; and by recognition of the most important material property, the parish church, it implies the continuity and permanence of the Church's mission in the community. Since the parish is an institution of the Church, it is this legal definition which determines its nature.

THE PARISH AS A SOCIAL GROUP

Implicit in this canonical definition of the parish, though often insufficiently recognized, is its character as a social group. A parish is not simply a territory differentiated for the discharge of administrative functions, having a status within the Church analogous to the branch office of a business enterprise or a regional division of a government bureau. Nor is it merely an audience which gathers periodically for religious services, or a public which has its attention directed now and then toward religious subjects. It is a group in its own right, though it remains, of course, a constituent part of the Church.

Sociologically, the parish may easily be identified as a formally organized group or association, since it is "a distinctive and organized plan of relations by designated persons participating in the pursuit of some one or several implicit or explicit values."[14] The aim of the parish, the basis for the designation of members, and the general principle of organization have already been mentioned. It is the aim of

the parish – "the cure of souls" – which serves as the uniting value and point of orientation for its plan of relations. Since this aim and this official organization are explicitly defined in ecclesiastical and civil law, the parish is clearly "formally" organized. Similarly, it is "institutionalized" in the sense that, while it functions autonomously within a limited sphere, it is established and continuously regulated by the Church and, to a lesser extent, by the State as well.[15]

The institutional aspect of the parish is most apparent in its legally defined offices. It is, in fact, the conscious filling of offices which is the characteristic note of a social institution.[16] One who fills an office acts with authority, by right, anticipating obedience not to his person but to his office. Like all authority, that which is the pastor's is given by God and defined by law. Though appointed to his office by his bishop, the pastor has rights even against the latter, just as the people over whom he is placed may appeal to their rights against him. Rights and their correlative duties are attached to official status; an office is, in fact, a system of formally defined rights and duties. The official structure of such a group as the parish may be viewed, therefore, as a system of formally defined statuses or offices and their corresponding roles.

Observation of parish life discloses the variety and complexity of relations which result when the formal, institutional patterns of parish organization are established in a community. Those who fill the parochial offices as well as those who are simply members of the parish are human persons with varied origins, backgrounds, interests, tastes, and problems. All have memberships in other social groups besides the parish. Inevitably and naturally, the personal and extraparochial become entwined with the institutional, or, in other words, an informal organization develops which supplements the formal. The basis for status within this informal system is not authority but prestige. This prestige is derived from members' evaluations of one another in terms of personal qualities, friend-

ships, neighborhood relationships, social class affiliations, and the like. A complete view of a functioning parish group must embrace the informal as well as the formal patterns of relationship.

These considerations suggest why it is important to note the relations of the parish with other social groups, both informal and formal. When, for example, parish boundaries coincide with those of a local neighborhood or community, it is likely that parish unity will be strengthened by identification with the locality group. Where cliques and factions divide a community, on the other hand, their maneuvers and quarrels may be brought into the parish as well as into other associations. More subtly, social class distinctions may be introduced into parochial life, either undermining its unity or tending to identify the parish with particular social strata.

Thus, the parish fulfills numerous functions which are not among those officially prescribed. As an agency of ethnic or class or community integration, as a symbol of high or low rank, as a unit of sociability, and in many other ways, the parish serves its members and other groups in daily life. Its essential and distinctive services, however, are those which relate to its institutional status as an organ of jurisdiction, education, and sanctification within the Church.

The analysis of these aspects of the structure and functioning of the parish as a distinct type of social group is within the province of the science of sociology. This science is, in reality, in an early stage of development. Like other social sciences, it is built upon observation and confined to the realm of proximate causes; it discloses, as it were, the *how* rather than the *ought* or the ultimate *why* of human behavior. Specifically, the formal object of sociological research is social interaction. In sociological terms, a social group such as the parish is viewed — as it has been described above — as a system of relations within this broader category of social interaction. Later chapters will develop this concept more fully.

This approach limits the sociology of the parish, of course,

to the visible, historically developed aspect of the Church — its incarnation in the cultural forms of given societies. It must be clear that narrowing the range of observation to this aspect brings into view only a part of the whole reality, a part which is nevertheless essential. The elucidation of the mystery of the Church is the task of the theologian, but other disciplines, so long as they are applied within the limitations set by their own formal objects and their proper methods, may find in the history and organization of the Church a rich source of data for exploration. Eventually, the Church, in turn, may be served by the application of the knowledge so obtained. This is the conviction of the editors of the present volume.

A FUNCTIONAL POINT OF VIEW

Before the particular aims of this symposium are presented in more detail, it seems in place to stress the practical implications of one general characteristic of a scientific approach to social relations in the parish. This may be designated as a functional point of view, since it represents an emphasis upon the interrelations in which a social structure becomes involved in its actual functioning. Awareness of the relations of the parish with other social groups is, as previously mentioned, a necessity for understanding and for practical action. Viewing a problem in isolation can be of only limited value at best; in practice it is likely to be grossly misleading.

The concept of function is most readily explained in terms of physiology, the source from which it has been borrowed. Its use in analyzing social relations and structures is necessarily somewhat complicated by the nature of these phenomena, but it implies the same attempt to bring into view whole systems rather than isolated relations. Thus, each social act is seen as part of the complex of social acts to which it belongs; social systems, each of which is an *organization* of human acts, are seen reciprocally in relation to the individual and group acts which produce and maintain them, and in relation to other systems.[17]

Application to the parish may make this clearer. It has already been pointed out that each member and official acts in roles which are institutionally defined in Canon Law and in diocesan and parochial regulations, and which are informally prescribed in local custom. These roles of pastor, assistants, lay officers, members, and the like, are organized to form a system which functions as a whole. This system or group continues to function through changes in pastors and members as long as there are persons to fill the roles and to serve the common purpose.

The function which a member performs in discharging a duty to the parish – contributing to its support, for example – is apparent enough. What are sometimes overlooked are the functional relations which this same act may have to other social systems. Thus, a contribution follows upon a decision to withdraw funds from the family purse, which, under certain circumstances, affects not only the ability to spend for other purposes but the organization of the family itself. The same act also may function for the individual and the family in the maintenance of prestige in the community, when contributions are made known and are considered essential for status. Or the act may be performed partly with reference to educational functions, since it will set an example to growing children. This rather obvious elaboration might be paralleled in discussing other actions in the parish group.

It is the same with the functional relations of the parish group to other parts of the society in which it exists. Some of these relations are institutionally defined, as in the case of the relation of parish to diocese, municipality, and state. In the United States, for example, parish property is tax exempt. This is an economic advantage to parishioners. For individual property owners, however, it means a proportional increase in tax payments. The existence of this policy of tax exemption is at least an implicit acknowledgment of the contributions of parochial activities to the good of the state.

Other relations are not formally recognized but are still

effective. It has often been the case in the United States that the parish has served as a principal rallying point for an ethnic group, and that through this group or otherwise, it has become, unwittingly perhaps, an organ of the group or of a social class in the community. Sometimes this has brought it into functional relations with a political party. As a result of such relations, the parish, or the Church itself, may become a symbol of certain values in the community with consequent enhancement or loss of its prestige. These functional interrelations often make it necessary to attack parochial problems on other than a parochial level. This is the case, for example, when the inability of the membership to support the parish adequately is the result of its subservient position in the economic and class structure of the community. On another level, the problems of mixed marriage and defection from the faith may be aggravated by opportunities to improve status through marriage outside the Church. Problems such as these must be dealt with on both the parochial and community levels at the same time.

These examples seem elementary. They illustrate, however, the necessity for seeing the parish from the outside, as it were, in order to grasp its relations to its constituent elements and to the whole society in which it functions. This view must be objective, uncolored by personal bias or desire, whether well intentioned or otherwise. Without accurate knowledge of the facts and their interpretation within an adequate frame of reference, effective action is impossible.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS VOLUME

The basic concepts which have been used in planning this symposium are not new. Others have done the "spadework" in opening this field of study. Two foreign works by contributors to this symposium must be singled out for mention. One is a theoretical study by the Polish sociologist, Father Franciszek Mirek, *Elementy społeczne parafii rzymsko-katolickiej* (*The Social Elements of the Roman Catholic Parish*). As its title

indicates, this book describes the institutional aspects of the parish which define it as an object of study for the sociologist. The other publication is a comprehensive and suggestive program for inquiry into the state of religion in France, Professor Gabriel Le Bras's *Introduction à l'histoire de la pratique religieuse en France.* Since most data on the practice of the faith must be obtained at the parochial level, the national scope of the investigations proposed by Professor Le Bras does not diminish the usefulness of this work as a source of hypotheses for research on the parish. In the United States, *The Lay Apostolate,* by Father John J. Harbrecht, represents the only comparable attempt to treat the parish as a social structure, though it is devoted mainly to the organization of parish charities. Other contributions of either theoretical or practical import will be mentioned in the chapters to follow.

In this country, at least, sociologically oriented studies of the parish have been the products of individual interest rather than of concerted effort. The sociology of the parish has something of an academic history, however, since as early as the second semester of the academic year, 1929–1930, the present Bishop of Kansas City, Missouri, the Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara, offered a course in "Parish Problems" in the Department of Sociology at the Catholic University of America. His Excellency offered a similar course at the University of Notre Dame the following summer. A group of social scientists in the New York area, individually interested in the study of the parish, met together for discussion several times during the early forties. Since 1947, Fordham University has offered a seminar in the sociology of the parish, under the direction of John D. Donovan, another contributor to this volume. Most recently, the American Catholic Sociological Society has devoted convention meetings to the presentation of papers in this field and has sponsored a research committee to stimulate further investigation in it.

The immediate need is for more empirical studies of American parishes. Until sufficient factual material is presented

in the form of statistical analyses or of descriptions of parish structure and functioning, knowledge of what is happening within parochial boundaries will remain rudimentary. Research reported in the past has been based upon census procedures or social surveys. While these approaches have yielded results of interest and use, newer studies should be designed to test hypotheses bearing upon sociological theory. The report of a year-long parish study by the Reverend Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., now being published, should be of particular interest in this regard. One purpose of the present symposium is to call attention to the need for sociologically oriented investigations.

The chapters which follow may be grouped conveniently into four divisions. Part I, devoted to "The History of the Parish," includes an account of the development of the parish institution and its establishment in the United States. Rural, urban, national, and racial parish types are treated in Part II, "Parish Organization in American Communities," which also contains a discussion of parish societies. Part III, "Social Research in the Parish," presents a sociological frame of reference for parish study, an outline of empirical problems upon which research may be focused, and applications of census and survey techniques to the parish. Finally, in Part IV, "The Parish Apostolate," attention is given to the adaptation of the parish to the needs of the apostolate in twentieth-century America.

The several chapters represent the work of contributors with special interests and training in their respective fields. Some of the subjects treated involve issues which are controversial, and in several instances differences in points of view may be noted. In a work of this kind, it would be unreasonable to expect uniformity in theoretical approaches or unanimity in the interpretation of the facts of parish life. It should be obvious that the views expressed in each chapter are those of its author alone, not necessarily those of the editors or of other contributors.

Two appendixes are included. The first, which has been prepared with the assistance of well-known Catholic sociologists from Canada and Europe, presents three summaries of "Parish

Research in Foreign Countries." These should be exceedingly helpful in acquainting American students with foreign developments in this specialized area. Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain summaries of the important work being done in France and the Netherlands in time for inclusion in this volume. The second appendix identifies the writers of this volume.

FOOTNOTES – INTRODUCTION

1. P. Glorieux, *L'Église à l'oeuvre* (Montreal: Fides Publishers, 1942), p. 179.
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3. Johan A. Moehler, *Symbolism or Exposition of the Doctrinal Differences Between Catholics and Protestants as Evidenced by Their Symbolic Writings,* trans. James B. Robertson (5th ed.; London: Gibbings & Co., 1906), p. 259.
4. Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard, *Growth or Decline? The Church Today,* trans. James A. Corbett (South Bend, Ind.: Fides Publishers, 1948), p. 22.
5. R. P. Conger, O.P., "Mission de la Paroisse," in *Structures Sociales et Pastorale Paroissiale* (Paris: Union des Oeuvres Catholiques de France, 1948), p. 48.
6. Canon 216, no. 1.
7. *Ibid.,* no. 4.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Canons 451, no. 1, and Canon 453.
10. Canon 464, no. 1.
11. Canons 339, 462, 466, 467, 469.
12. Canon 476.
13. Canon 216, nos. 1 and 3.
14. E. T. Hiller, *Social Relations and Structures* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1947), p. 286.
15. Cf. Florian Znaniecki, "Social Organization and Institutions," in Georges Gurvitch and Wilbert E. Moore (eds.), *Twentieth Century Sociology* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1945), pp. 212–215.
16. Everett C. Hughes, "Institutional Office and the Person," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLIII (1937–1938), 404.
17. For a general treatment of this concept and its significance in the formulation of policy, see Alexander H. Leighton, *Human Relations in a Changing World* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1949), Chap. IX.

PART I

THE HISTORY OF THE PARISH

CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FORM OF THE MODERN PARISH

by PHILIP M. HANNAN

THE ORIGINS OF THE PARISH

FROM his chilly quarters in the papal palace, whose furnishings had been reduced to monastic simplicity, Pope St. Gregory I in January of the year 591 dictated a letter to Balbinus, Bishop of Grossetto in Tuscany, appointing him as apostolic visitor to a nearby region. One of his duties in the office was to appoint a priest, assigned or incardinated in a different church, to be in charge of the vacant parish church in Populonia; he was to appoint two deacons as his assistants. Since it was imperative that the vacant parish in that harassed region have a competent pastor and sufficient clerical assistance, the Pope would not wait for an election of the pastor by the local members of the lower clergy, the nobility, and the people. It was not the normal procedure but the times were troubled and called for swift, decisive action. The slight, bald Pope, a descendant of the famous Anici, who had discarded the jeweled trabea of the Roman prefect for the rough-woven garb of a monk of St. Benedict and had been called from the monastery of St. Andrew to become the Vicar of Christ, realized that a determined course was needed to save the Church. The welfare of the basic unit of the Church, the parish, was paramount.

There was no need to instruct Bishop Balbinus about the type of pastor needed for the vacant parish. The Pope had

expressed himself fully in that respect in a complete work on the office and qualifications of the pastor, *Liber Regulae Pastoralis,* written to John, the Bishop of the great city of Ravenna, the gateway from the East to northern Italy. Although the work had been directed to a bishop, it applied also to a pastor of a parish as the delegate of the bishop for the territory of the parish. In fact, the connection and relation between parish and diocese was so close that the word *parochia* or *paroecia* was used primarily in the early councils to denote a diocese. By a curious twist, in some localities of Gaul the terminology was reversed, so that a diocese was called a parish, *parochia,* while the parish was called a diocese, *diocesis.*[1]

The establishment of parishes as subdivisions of dioceses under the direction of resident priests who enjoyed certain rights had occurred over a century before the reign of Pope St. Gregory I. Parishes had been established in the city of Rome even in the fourth century, and long before they were known in the city they had been established in the country districts around the great cities, not only in the populous East, but also as far west as Spain.[2]

This division of the territory under the jurisdiction of the bishop into somewhat independent units was necessitated by the conversion to Christianity of many rural people who could not assist at the Mass celebrated by the bishop in the nearby city. This development had occurred particularly early around the cultivated, bustling city of Alexandria in Egypt. The bishop of the city — *episcopus in omni et sola civitate* — was therefore obliged to deputize priests to say Mass and to administer the sacraments, insofar as they were permitted, to the rural Christians in chapels or oratories built in the country. Thus the Council of Laodicea in the fourth century, faced with the problem of either creating more than one bishop for each city and the surrounding territory or of delegating episcopal powers to clerics to act in behalf of the bishop, urged the bishops to appoint "traveling priests" to carry out certain functions of the ministry in the rural regions — *Quod non oportet in vicis et*

pagis Episcopos constitui sed periodeutas, hoc est, circumcursatores (Canon 57).[3]

In some sections, the bishop appointed a "country bishop," *chorepiscopus,* who had the authority to administer the sacraments to rural Christians but who was solemnly forbidden, by the Council of Ancyra in 314, to ordain priests and deacons. The *chorepiscopus* was also forbidden to encroach on the ministry of the bishop residing in the city.

It was soon learned that a stable division of the territory of a bishop into separate parishes administered by resident priests appointed by and subject to the bishop was far preferable to the mobile, rather independent, and unstable ministry of the "country bishop" and the "traveling priests."

Contemporaneously with this development of parishes in rural regions, shrines and oratories were built in various sections of cities to provide convenient places for prayer and for the celebration of Mass outside the cathedral church of the bishop. Parishes became necessary in the city for the same reason as in the country. Instead of deputizing priests and other clerics to carry the Holy Eucharist from the Mass celebrated by a bishop in his cathedral to the Christians gathered in some distant section of the city, bishops delegated priests to celebrate Mass and to perform other functions in the oratories and shrines. These priests could perform only those functions permitted by their bishop. They did not necessarily reside near a particular church or have any jurisdiction over the affairs of a specific church or oratory.

By the reign of Pope Gregory I at the end of the sixth century, the parish, in many provinces of the Church, had been well established as a unit of the diocese. Each parish had well-defined territorial limits and was administered by a resident pastor, generally a priest, who was assisted by a group of clerics. Bishops had gradually entrusted to pastors certain well-defined rights and duties regarding the spiritual care of the faithful and the temporal administration of the parishes—duties which they were no longer able to discharge adequately.

The clergy assigned to a parish – both pastor and assistant clerics – were almost never transferred except for weighty reasons. From the moment when a Christian was accepted into the ranks of the clergy by the conferring of tonsure, he was destined, or incardinated, for the service of a certain parish or church. His whole clerical life was devoted to the work of that parish; and if he were transferred, as in the case of the priest appointed pastor by Gregory I, a grave reason was needed to effect such a transfer canonically. This perpetuity of assignment to one's church or *title* was invested with a sacred character by likening it to the union of the Church with Christ and of the soul with its Saviour. At the Seventh Ecumenical Council held at Nicaea, in 787, it was forbidden to transfer clerics from the churches to which they were assigned.

PASTORAL RIGHTS IN ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

The most decisive grant of power to the parish priest by the bishop was the right to baptize solemnly, the right to receive a person into the Church of Christ. The enjoyment of this right distinguished the parish priest, *presbyter parochianus,* from priests in charge of oratories and shrines who had no parochial rights. The churches whose pastors enjoyed this privilege (and source of income) were often called, in view of their dignity, "baptismal churches." Even though the parish priest had the right to baptize solemnly, the Sacrament of Baptism was to be conferred, except in danger of death, only at the regular time of Easter or Pentecost.

So zealously, and possibly jealously at times, was this right guarded that even when a parish was divided the pastor of the original parish often succeeded in preventing a baptismal font from being installed in the newly erected parish. It is interesting to note that not until the past century was the general law established, embodied in the present Code of Canon Law, that every parish church has, *ipso facto,* the right to a baptismal font.

Although the pastor of the parish church or baptismal church alone had the right to baptize solemnly, the priests of other and lower churches and oratories in the countryside had the right to celebrate Mass for the benefit of the faithful who lived nearby. To safeguard the existence of the baptismal churches by securing their financial support, it was decreed that the faithful were obliged, under penalty of failing to discharge their obligation of assisting at Mass, to attend Mass on important feast days either in the parish church or in the cathedral. As early as the year 506, the Council of Agde enacted this legislation for the Church in Gaul.

This regulation was the opening wedge for introducing the obligation requiring the faithful to attend Mass either in the cathedral or in the parish church on *all* feast days, including Sundays. The climax of this development was reached when the pastor was empowered and enjoined to inquire before beginning Mass whether the faithful belonging to other parishes had secured permission from their proper pastors to be present. If any of those present failed to meet this test, they were to be ushered to the door, with all due propriety and charity, and thus forced to return to their proper parishes.

There was not, in the beginning, the correlative exclusive right of the pastor to administer Holy Communion to his parishioners. They were permitted to receive Holy Communion wherever they could legitimately attend Mass. The legislation indicates, in fact, a certain laxity on the part of some parish priests who were rebuked for permitting the administration of Holy Communion to the sick by lay people, even by women. The administration of Holy Communion became reserved to the pastor only when the parishioners were required to attend the parish church for Mass.

As the precept of receiving Holy Communion at the Easter time became better defined and enforced, the right of the pastor to administer Holy Communion became exclusive, since the pastor was obliged to see that the faithful discharged their obligation; the obligation of supervision and pastoral care

necessitated the correlative right of the pastor to administer Holy Communion. In consequence, he was also empowered to refuse Holy Communion to the faithful of other parishes.

While bishops were very precise in delegating to pastors the rights to baptize solemnly and to administer Holy Communion to parishioners, there is no evidence of similar exclusive delegation of the right to administer the Sacrament of Penance and to reconcile penitents with the Church. It appears from the canons of the councils that bishops had deputed to many of their priests, not only to the pastors, the right to administer the Sacrament of Penance and to reconcile public penitents. The influence of the Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionaries, in whose countries public penance with its consequent reconciliation by the bishop was practically unknown, was an important factor in preventing the reservation of the administration of the Sacrament of Penance to the pastor.

Likewise, there is no positive proof that in the early centuries the right to administer Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction was reserved to the pastor, but there is much evidence for such an inference. The pastors were reminded, especially in the Council of Aachen in 836, to safeguard the spiritual interests of those entrusted to their care, and above all to see that they were fortified in their last moments by the Sacrament of Extreme Unction and by Holy Viaticum. Later the rights of pastors in the administration of these sacraments became well defined as a result of a lively controversy concerning the rival rights of the monks to administer them.

Although it is certain that, even from the earliest years of the Church, the blessing of the priest was considered an essential element of the ceremony of marriage, it is not certain that this blessing and witnessing of marriage was reserved to parish priests. It is known that such a right was later reserved by statute to pastors. Since custom is also a source of law, it is possible and natural to presume that pastors were accorded this right by custom even before they had it by statute. In view of the Church's prohibition of clandestine marriages and

its insistence on the investigation of the status of the prospective spouses before permitting a marriage, it is natural to assume that the Church made some cleric responsible for declaring the parties free to marry. This cleric would presumably be the parish priest who was in the most advantageous position to know the status of the spouses.

THE SUPPORT OF PASTORS

From the first centuries of the Church, when the Christians vied in securing from the brotherhood of gravediggers (*fossores*) burial places in the catacombs next to those of revered saints, the question of Christian burial was carefully considered. Apparently the pastor was early accorded the right and duty to conduct the burial of the deceased parishioners.

Insistence on this right insured a not inconsiderable income to the pastor since the offering made on the occasion of a burial was generous. In fact if a person were not buried by the pastor, a third of the offering made to the priest conducting the burial was to be remitted to the proper pastor of the deceased. The bishop, for obvious reasons, still reserved to himself the right to permit the burial of deceased in the cathedral or in any church of the diocese.

The gradual delegation of episcopal rights and functions to the pastor of the parish was accompanied by a corresponding increase in financial independence. Whereas individual clerics had formerly been supported by a stipend granted by the bishop if they lived apart from the episcopal residence, from the fifth century onward they were ordained only if they had been assigned to a church or oratory (their *title*) which was obliged to support them.

The clerics thus afforded an independent financial support were held accountable for the disposition of their incomes. The prescribed division was adapted from that in force for the income of the bishops – showing again the close relation between the functions of the bishop, the pastor of the whole diocese, and the priest, the pastor of the unit of the diocese

called the parish. Pope Gelasius (492–496) ratified the established custom of dividing the parish income into four parts: one for the construction and the maintenance of the church; one for the poor and dependents of the parish; one for the bishop; and one for the support of the clergy of the parish. In Spain the division of income was arranged so that the bishop was obliged to use his share for the repair of the church; if the church was not in need of repair, the bishop did not receive any of his share.

The financial independence of the pastor naturally brought with it responsibility for assuming the obligations formerly discharged by the bishop. The pastor was now charged with the care of the poor and dependents of his parish who had been supported by the episcopal treasury. Charity was the accepted emblem of his faith and fitness for office. Just as a candidate for Orders was not considered worthy of acceptance if he had failed to donate all his goods to the Church, a pastor who failed to share his goods with the poor and orphans was in danger of deposition.

The principal sources of income for the parish were tithes offered by the faithful, and produce from the lands bequeathed to the Church. Apparently it was only in Visigothic Spain that the Church in the sixth century was supported to a considerable extent by the money offerings of the faithful at Mass. The Church, as was natural in view of the agrarian character of medieval civilization, gradually came to rely on the comparatively certain produce from land as the source of support for a church. In the time of Charlemagne, the ecclesiastical authorities forbade the erection of a church unless it was endowed with a plot of land large enough to support the clergy of the parish.

PARISH SCHOOLS

The pastors also realized their obligation of providing schooling for the children of the parish. A certain Protogenes, in the fourth century, provided a school for the children of

his parish; and a parochial school system, within the means of the resources available, flourished in Italy in the same century. The Council of Vaison, in the year 529, commanded the pastors of Gaul to institute schools for the children of the parish with the object of training candidates for the priesthood. The Council ordered the pastors to bring the unmarried youth into the rectory for instruction, as was the custom in Italy, but cautioned them to allow them to leave and to get married if they so desired: *"Cum vero ad aetatem perfectam pervenerint, si aliquis eorum pro carnis fragilitate uxorem habere maluerit, potestas ei ducendi conjugem non negatur."*[4] This system of parish schools spread to Spain, where the same prudent caution was given not to force the scholars to become clerics.

These parochial schools were distinct from and independent of both monastic and cathedral schools. The erection of the parochial schools represented another assumption by the pastor of the duty of the bishop to provide an education for the youth, especially those who were candidates for the priesthood; the parochial school followed, within its means, the curriculum of the cathedral school and provided for those in the territory of the parish the advantages of education they had formerly expected from the diocese.

Thus by the end of the sixth century the parish had been developed as a unit of the diocese whose pastor, within the competence assigned him by the bishop, discharged some of the spiritual, charitable, and educational functions formerly reserved to the bishop.

THE MENACE OF SECULAR CONTROL

This development of the independence of the parish was not uniform throughout Christendom. In Constantinople, for instance, under the generally benign dictatorship of Justinian, the clergy, supported by the State, led a communal life, and were all attached to the cathedral from which center they ministered spiritually to the whole city. The cathedral had

the following complement of clergy: 60 priests, 100 deacons, 40 deaconesses, 90 subdeacons, 110 lectors, 25 cantors, 100 doorkeepers (*ostiarii*). These clerics attended to the oratories and churches in Constantinople as well as to all the charitable and religious institutions. The number of clergy permitted was fixed by the Emperor and no one could be ordained unless a vacancy had occurred either because of death or permanent disability.

While Constantinople had but one cathedral parish in the great metropolis and Rome had a number of parishes within its ancient city limits, the parochial system was almost unknown in the British Isles, where society was governed by the clan system. The development of the Church in those Isles was due principally to the influence of the great monasteries, with the result that insufficient stress was laid on the organization of dioceses and parishes. The popular loyalty seems to have been toward the monastic superior who, if he was not a bishop, had one of his religious subjects consecrated bishop so that he could administer the Sacraments of Holy Orders and Confirmation at the direction of the superior of the monastery. Even on the Continent, where the parish system flourished, monasteries sometimes had the rights of parishes so that the religious superior named a vicar who served as pastor for the monastery. This arrangement became rather general in some localities although in the beginning it was intended to be used only where there was an absence of a parish church, and of secular clergy to administer it, or where a monastery, because of its venerable tradition, had been accorded this privilege.

The gradual ascendancy of the Germanic nations, with their legal concept that whoever had dominion over the land ruled everything on it, brought a challenge to the Church's administration of parishes. As the king considered himself the equal of the pope and tried to claim the right to dispose of bishoprics to his favorites, the lesser nobility claimed the right to appoint pastors and to enjoy the income of the parishes. The Moham-

medan threat to Christian Gaul from Spain gave Charles Martel an excellent opportunity to despoil the Church of its property in order to fight its enemies. This emergency power was prolonged until it was claimed as an imperial right. Thus Pepin installed a favorite in the Church of Langres, who gave the Church of Bèze, with its income, to his courtesan.

This concept of the "proprietary church," by which the lay ruler disposed of the income of the church, displaced the bishop in favor of the count and thus tended to increase the independence of the parish from the rule of the bishop – and also tended to pervert and pauperize it. The lay lord soon learned to divide the property of the parish into its various components and parceled these to his favorites or to the highest bidders. In some cases he had his serfs ordained and appointed pastors to make them more defenseless in the face of his rapacity. Finally the holdings of the parish were whittled away until the pastor was left only the "altar plot," a wraithlike remnant of the parish property barely sufficient for the support of the cleric and completely inadequate for the support of those who formerly were maintained by the parish, such as the poor, the widows, and the orphans.

THE CAROLINGIAN REFORM

The reform of the Church by the assertion of its rights, inspired by St. Boniface and Bishop Chrodegang of Metz, was greatly forwarded by Charlemagne. As the strong arm of Charlemagne forced his nobles to restore, at least in part, the possessions of the Church and to recognize its rights, it became necessary to define more clearly the rights of the pastor and his duties of administration.

The spiritual rights of the pastor were more sharply specified and abuses were checked, especially in regard to the administration of the sacraments. The right of the pastor to baptize was reaffirmed, but he was warned not to accept any fee for its conferral, even by the subterfuge of having the people place a coin in the shell used for pouring the water. The pastor's

exclusive right to perform the marriages of his parishioners was enunciated and the form of interrogation of the betrothed was described; the examination was calculated to discourage any deception, for the pastor was obliged to question the parties in the presence of the congregation concerning whether they were related, had married before, had committed adultery, and other matters. Likewise the right of the pastor to perform the burial rites of his parishioners was reaffirmed with the exception that the bishop alone could permit the burial of a person in a church edifice.

The most notable change wrought in parish life during the Carolingian era concerned the support and the extrasacramental functions of the parish. As a basis for the security of the parish work, it was decreed that an estate of a certain size — generally estimated to be about twenty acres for the smallest parish — exempt from all obligations and taxes, was to be assured to each parish. This estate was the famous *mansus integer* (from which we derive the word "manse") which was the chief but not the sole means of support for the parish. Later a cemetery plot and suitable buildings for the work of the parish were included in the necessary complement for a parish unit.

With this minimum of economic independence secured, each parish could support the educational and charitable institutions ordered by both the spiritual and temporal authorities. The clergy assisting the pastor were therefore divided into two groups according to their function: those who helped in the religious services and those who assisted in the administration of the institutions and property of the parish.

The insistence of Charlemagne on schools extended even to the parish level. By the *admonitio generalis* of 789, each villa or great estate was required to have a school; and if the villages on an estate were too widely separated, additional schools were to be built. These schools were under the direction of the pastor and were considered necessary adjuncts to the work of

the parish. The admonition of the bishop seconded that of the king, as may be seen from the following capitulary of Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans:

> Let the priests keep schools in the villages and town, and if anyone of the faithful shall wish to give his little ones to learning, they ought to accept them willingly and teach them gratuitously. . . . And let them exact no price from the children for their teaching, nor receive anything from them save what the parents may offer voluntarily and from affection.[5]

The curriculum of the school was simple, suited to the needs and capacities of the students, and included lessons in reading, singing, and mathematics. Although a capitulary of 802 stated that "everyone should send his son to study letters and that the child should remain at school with all diligence until he had become well instructed in learning," there was no compulsory attendance.[6] School instruction was considered the right only of those who could profit from it; however, parents were strongly urged to send their children to school.

The charitable work of the parish was centered in the *matricularium* whose function was so aptly expressed in its name. The cleric deputed by the pastor to supervise this institution performed a responsible and arduous duty; outstanding service in this office insured a recommendation for promotion. His performance of duty was certain to serve him for ill or good, because the pastor and the archdeacon were obliged to inspect his administration.

The budget of the *matricularium* consumed a considerable portion of the income of the church. One fourth of the tithes and offerings presented at the church were allotted to this work. Bequests could be made to the *matricularium* in the same fashion as they are made today to charitable institutions, and by a law of 818 half of the donations of land to the parish were required to be given to the *matricularium*.

The operation of this institution was well ordered. No one could receive aid unless registered as a qualified recipient of

aid, that is, as a member of the parish, poor, and unable to work. To insure impartial and just administration of this institution, the clergy in charge were forbidden to receive gifts because of their duties or to admit members of their families unless these latter were notoriously poor or incapable of work. Although the *matricularii* were not obliged to perform any work, they were allowed to perform certain light tasks such as caring for the lights, which rather favored their pride than provided a service to the church.

Although the pastor, by delegation of power from the bishop and by his financial security, tended to become independent of the bishop, the latter managed in normal times to keep a strict surveillance on him through the archdeacon and dean. The archdeacon served as a general supervisor for the bishop. He was obliged to make an annual visitation of the rural section of the diocese, noting all the churches, chapels, and oratories to determine if any had been erected without episcopal permission, and to investigate not only the priests assigned to such churches and chapels but also each candidate for ordination. He also inspected the pastor's administration of church property and institutions, as well as his conduct of divine services and care of books; these books included the antiphonaries, sacramentaries, and penitentials. The archdeacon had no direct disciplinary power — at first — over the priests, but he could administer disciplinary action on the lower clergy.

The dean had much less power than the archdeacon, but the pastor was possibly more conscious of his authority because he lived under his immediate supervision. He was a resident intermediary between the bishop and the pastor, transmitting orders and communications from the bishop and reporting their fulfillment or neglect. Once a year he held a clerical conference which was dedicated to prayer and study, especially of the Holy Scriptures. He was also empowered to demand a full report each year from every priest in his deanery and was supposed to keep a current list of all the clergy assigned to churches in his deanery.

The immovability of the pastor, strengthened by legislation during this period, protected the pastor from arbitrary action by the bishop, who could move him from his parish only after a judicial trial and only for definite causes, such as refusal to appear before a tribunal, appeal to a secular court, flagrant crimes, and theft of ecclesiastical property.

Relative to this immovability of the pastor was his obligation of residence in the parish. Even when a pastor was entrusted with the care of more than one parish, a practice permitted very rarely, his time was so allocated as to insure his presence in each parish for a maximum amount of time. In the Spanish March, for example, the two parishes of Baltarga and Say had a common rector who was obliged to direct the clergy of each parish and to divide his time equally between the parishes according to this schedule: the pastor was to live in the village of Say from the vigil of the feast of St. John the Baptist until the eve of Christmas, and was to visit each day of this time the church at Baltarga; from Christmas Eve until the vigil of the feast of St. John the Baptist he was to live in Baltarga and was to visit each day of this period the church at Say. Such a schedule certainly lent force to the Church's prohibition forbidding pastors to have jurisdiction over more than one parish.

The pastor continued to be selected, under ordinary circumstances, by an election or by presentation of the lay patron of the church; in either case the bishop could ratify or reject the candidate selected. There was little formality in the election; a meeting was held attended by the people of all ranks, by the clergy attached to the parish, and by the dean who presided. Apparently agreement was easily reached, in a noisy and demonstrative manner. The name of the candidate was then reported by the dean or archdeacon to the bishop for his approval, which was always withheld if the candidate was not literate or a serf, lest he be subject to undue influence.

If a priest had been elected and was approved by the bishop, the archdeacon generally installed him. If a minor cleric was elected — a frequent occurrence — he was conducted to the

bishop for ordination; during the ceremony of ordination the delegates of the people were expected to shout their approbation — "He is worthy!" — when the candidate was presented by the bishop.

The increased independence and administrative power of the pastor in the Carolingian Era resulted in a development of his jurisdiction. Besides his spiritual powers, the pastor could exercise considerable jurisdiction over those who attempted to infringe on the parish domain. He could restrain and resist usurpation of the domain and force illegal occupants to cede back to the Church the parcel they had appropriated — unless the usurper had royal protection. He could also decide questions ordinarily reserved to the State if the rights of the Church were involved. To enforce his decisions he had the powerful sanction of excommunication, a dreaded penalty that often inflicted civil as well as religious disabilities. In a society in which spiritual and temporal loyalties were firmly intertwined, a man could not afford to mock the power of the shepherd unless he were certain of the protection of the highest civil power.

Besides being the delegate of the bishop in the parish, the pastor became the representative of the king for the settlement of certain cases. The policy of the pious Carolingian kings was to transfer when possible certain rights from the restless and irresponsible lesser nobles to the more trusted clergy. The pastor could apprehend and reprove those who committed certain offenses, principally those punished by public penances, such as theft, rape, adultery, incest, and murder. If the offenders refused to amend their conduct, they were sent to the bishop's court for judgment, not to the civil court, for the bishop's court was the court of appeal from the pastor's court.

Thus, under the influence of the Carolingian reform, the parish became not only the center of the religious and charitable life of the territory but also the center of its social and civil life, especially in the rural districts. The noisy and exuberant elections were held in the church, not only because it was the largest edifice, but also because it best insured order.

The church was also the location of the court for the count, the local civil authority, and for the pastor, as it was also the place of asylum for accused criminals fleeing the heavy hand of justice or vengeance. Near the altar were held the solemn acts of emancipation by which a man was declared free of the restrictions of serfdom, while under the busy portico were often carried out, despite the frowns of the Church, all the exchanges and sales of the market. In times of war, the venerable house of God became a fort to which the frightened peasant fled, bearing his movable household effects as well as food stocks and praying that the patron saint would deliver him from physical peril as he had rescued him from moral perils.

In order to strengthen the moral life of the clergy, especially in the cities, community life was encouraged so that in some places, notably at Metz under the great Bishop Chrodegang, most of the clergy of the city lived in one center from which they served their parishes. They led a common devotional life, which included daily reading of certain pious works as well as the chanting of the office. From this custom of reading a chapter of the rule or other pious book arose the practice of naming the group of clergy assigned to a parish as the "chapter." The pastors who led this community life enjoyed the same rights within their parishes as those who lived in parish rectories.

THE CODIFICATION OF ECCLESIASTICAL LAW

The policy of royal protection for the Church by the pious Carolingian kings created the impression among their not so pious successors that the Church was their ward, to be despoiled at will. Chaos followed, but, by the disposition of Divine Providence, it was ended by a century of intensive study and promulgation of ecclesiastical law.

The finding, in Pisa, in 1070, of the long lost *Digest,* one of the legal codes of Justinian, happily sharpened and encouraged the study of the well-ordered Roman Law which influenced the jurisprudence of the Church law. The Roman Law concepts of a corporation and of an office provided the

legal instruments and concepts for shaping the Church's definition of a parish as a corporation whose pastor held an office to which were attached definite rights and duties. The delineation of the concept and rights of a pastor were greatly aided in the following century by the compilation and attempted reconciliation of the existing law of the Church by the little-known but vastly important monk, Gratian, whose work was amply described by its title, *Concordia Discordantium Canonum.*

Although the work of Gratian, popularly and sensibly called the *Decretum,* was not officially approved by the Holy See, it provided a ready and common reference for questions on the law of the Church, and proved a great impetus to the promulgation of an official collection of ecclesiastical law. The first authentic collection of Canon Law, providing a complete legal code for the Church, was promulgated in 1210 by Pope Innocent III (1198–1216). The promulgation of other volumes by succeeding popes provided the Church with much-needed additions and clarifications for the general law of the Church. A number of jurists and commentators eagerly and exhaustively developed the concepts of the parish and of the rights of the pastor as contained in the legal code of the Church.

THE CONFLICT OF PASTORS AND RELIGIOUS

In addition to the promulgation and study of the law of the Church, a new force arose to sharpen by conflict the definition of the parish structure. This force was the rise of the mendicant orders, whose intense zeal disregarded the boundaries of parishes and dioceses. The popular appeal of the poor, coarsely clad mendicants, traveling from place to place, tended to transfer the loyalty of the people from the resident pastor to the itinerant friar. The people asked for the administration of the sacraments from the hands of these zealous religious.

This was not a new problem – it was a recurrence in a stronger form of the old problem that had faced Pope

Gregory I in the sixth century. After his time, in the eighth century, a trend had set in among some religious orders, such as the Augustinian Canons and the Premonstratensians, to include the care of souls through parish work as one of their purposes. This trend was generally considered at variance with the fundamental purpose of the monastic and religious orders, that is, the development of the interior and contemplative life.

The Church wished to utilize the great zeal of the mendicants without disregarding or injuring the territorial and stable structure of the parish. The Pope, who in a dream had seen little St. Francis holding up the tottering Church, was quite willing to accept the help of the Poverello and his followers, but he was also anxious to regulate their assistance so that it would not alter materially the structure of the Church. This clash of the personal jurisdiction of the religious (who were directly under the jurisdiction of the pope) with the territorial jurisdiction of the pastor was reflected in almost every phase of parish life.

The religious were strictly forbidden to confer the Sacrament of Baptism unless their monastery had been given the right to administer the parish in which it was performed. Likewise, at a later date, Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484) found it necessary to forbid the mendicants to tell parishioners that they were not obliged to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation in their parish church. This legislation was included, aptly enough, in the section of the law which dealt with keeping the truce and the peace.[7]

The conflict was sharpest over the right to hear confessions, because the religious received their faculties to administer the Sacrament of Penance from the pope, not from the bishop, and were therefore independent of the restrictions placed upon pastors by the episcopal power. The Fourth General Council of the Lateran, in 1215, confirmed earlier local legislation that the faithful were obliged to confess their sins to the pastor at least once a year in fulfillment of the law of annual confession. A delicate balancing of these opposite claims for

the common good of souls is seen in the solution made by Pope Boniface in 1300. The religious superior was to present for the approbation of the bishop the friars he had approved for the hearing of confessions. If the bishop refused his approbation, the religious superior was to present other approved friars. If the bishop likewise refused his approbation to this second group, the rejection was *ipso facto* overruled, and the friars could hear confessions in the diocese in virtue of the jurisdiction granted directly by the Holy Father. This arrangement did not settle all the disputes but it preserved the territorial jurisdiction of the parish while utilizing and protecting the exemption of the religious from the jurisdiction of the bishop.

The right of the pastor to administer Holy Communion at Easter time, or to permit the parishioner to defer it, was also decreed at the Fourth General Council of the Lateran. The mendicants were permitted to distribute Holy Communion to the faithful at other times. The commentary of the famous canonist, Joannes Andreae, on this legislation reveals how firm was the concept of the power of the pastor in his own parish, for he hesitantly affirmed that the bishop could grant the right to administer the sacraments to priests other than the pastor in his capacity as pastor of the diocese.

The pastor's right to witness marriages and to perform the burial rites, unless the faithful had expressed a desire to be buried in another cemetery, were also defined by councils in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The controversy with the mendicant orders extended to the question of parish finances and obligations of charity. The medieval system of support from the *mansus integer* was in decay; the support now came from offerings and tithes which involved the question of exacting payment from the holdings of the religious orders located within the parish. It was decided that tithes could be demanded of property held by religious unless they were specifically exempt from such payment, as were the strict Cistercians.

Although the Church, mindful of the obligation of charity, still urged the fulfillment of that magnificent axiom, *"Quidquid clerici habeant est pauperum,"* by the maintenance of charitable institutions, a distinction was made between what was essential for the foundation of a parish and what was secondary. It was agreed, grudgingly and hesitantly, that a parish could be established without providing a hospice or charitable institution because the principal and essential work of the parish is the care of souls.

Charitable institutions were maintained wherever it was possible, and the specialization achieved in this work rivaled that of our modern institutions. A commentator enumerated the following types of charitable institutions: *xenodochia,* or hospices for the pilgrims; *ptochotrophia,* a home for the poor; *gerontocomia,* a retreat for the indigent aged; *orphanotrophia,* an asylum for the orphans; *brephotrophia,* a place where the infants of the poor received food.[8] The simple rule enforced in handling the poor was that everyone in need of food was to receive it.

This period was distinguished by the widespread establishment of parochial schools which furnished students for the great universities which had arisen. Councils and diocesan synods decreed the necessity of parochial schools; the success achieved by this legislation is attested by the complaint of the Bishop of Evreux after the Reformation had ruined the parochial school system:

> We admire in our diocese the solicitude of our Fathers; for there was scarcely a parish of any importance where there was not a schoolhouse and a foundation for the endowment of the school. But at the same time we must condemn the negligence or rather the sacrilegious conduct of our age . . . so that now we seldom find a school or a master we will not say in the country-places but even in the towns, nay even in the largest cities.[9]

Although the pastor was immediately responsible for the parish school, the general supervision of the parish schools throughout the diocese was one of the duties of the arch-

deacon who was not permitted, however, to visit or inspect the monastic schools unless authorized by local custom. In the latter part of the eleventh century a learned canon, called the *scholasticus,* was deputed to inspect the schools of the diocese and to approve the teaching personnel. The prestige of the *scholasticus* can be judged from the benefice accorded him, that of a canon, while the importance attached to the impartial performance of his duties is evident from the severe penalty imposed by Pope Alexander III in 1170 on those who exacted a fee for the issuance of teaching licenses. A *scholasticus* guilty of this practice could be deposed and deprived of his benefice.

In one respect, however, the pastor during this period lost some of the powers which he had once enjoyed — the civil powers granted under the Carolingians which had long since been revoked or disregarded.

THE DECREES OF TRENT

The status of the parish as determined by the great councils of the thirteenth century, as well as the codification of the Canon Law in that period, did not long remain unchanged. The development of the religious orders, whose efforts were frequently rewarded by grants of privileges which were often contrary to the exclusive rights of pastors, gradually altered the established status of the parish. Thus by the time of the Council of Trent in the middle of the sixteenth century, it was necessary to reassert the rights of pastors and the form of the parish.

The pontifical concession of privileges shared by all the religious through the device of "communication of privileges" had grown into that vast body called *Mare Magnum.* It should also be remembered that the religious orders were always actively represented in Rome and had access to the Holy See, especially when one of their members was on the Throne of the Fisherman. The pastors, on the other hand, had no such representatives in Rome to protect their exclusive rights.

The Council of Trent decreed a renewal of the concept and function of the parish: the bishops were to assign clearly defined boundaries to the parishes whose pastors were to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over the parishioners. Furthermore, only the pastor — whether a secular priest or a religious — could licitly administer the sacraments.

In particular, a religious could not validly hear confessions of lay people unless approved by the Ordinary or unless he held a parochial benefice, nor could the churches of religious claim the funeral "quarter share" which they had formerly received by privilege. Most important of all, the pastor alone was given the right of witnessing the marriages of his parishioners and imparting the nuptial blessing, so that the ceremony was invalid if not performed by the pastor or someone delegated by him. Any priest who contravened this law was automatically suspended until dispensed and absolved by the Ordinary of the pastor whose right had been disregarded.

The other rights of the pastor were reiterated except the regulation commanding the faithful to hear Mass in their parish churches on Sundays and holydays of obligation under the penalty of failing to fulfill their obligation. The relaxation of this obligation was thus officially countenanced, but the faithful were piously counseled to attend their parish churches. The pastor's duty and right to instruct the faithful, to prepare the children for Holy Communion, to supervise education in schools, and to erect charitable institutions were again enunciated.

The Council of Trent further protected the independence of the parish by guaranteeing the pastor's income, whether from a benefice, pension, or his own patrimony. The bishop, who had long since lost his right to a fourth of the income of the parish, could only demand the *cathedraticum,* a nominal sum of two *solidi* offered as a token of obedience, besides a relatively light exaction for the support of the seminary and an offering for the expenses of the bishop on the occasion of the episcopal visitation of the parish — and the bishop was

positively forbidden to descend with a horde of retainers on the poor parish during the visitation. The pastor had a right to receive the whole income of the benefice, as it was his duty to use this income for the proper maintenance of the parish church and buildings, as well as for the support of the clerics assigned to the parish.

The Council likewise definitely put an end to the claims and discussions concerning the pastor's jurisdiction in the external forum, such as the power to impose excommunication. The pastor was conceded no power of jurisdiction (except by delegation) in the external forum in regard to the imposition of penalties.

An equitable and salutary method of selecting a pastor was also decreed at the Council. Candidates for the office of pastor were to be examined by the bishop and a board of three examiners who were to investigate his intellectual and moral fitness.

Although the Council had very precisely defined the pastor's rights, difficulties arose concerning the functions that lay in the twilight zone of parochial rights such as processions and blessings – things which because of their popular appeal and public nature were of considerable importance in a locality as symbols of authority and prestige. To settle the contentious problems arising from dispute about such functions, Pope Clement XI (1700–1721), on January 12, 1704, approved a series of responses from the Sacred Congregation of Rites which assured the right of the pastor to regulate such functions. A solution was also found to settle the difficulties arising from the relations between the pastors and the religious confraternities and "Third Orders."

POST-TRIDENTINE LEGISLATION

Although the Council of Trent had established very clearly the rights of pastors and had fixed the general canonical form of parishes, some slight modifications were made, principally by the amazingly learned and judicious Pope Bene-

dict XIV (1740–1758). A change was made in the manner of selecting pastors by requiring that those who wished to become irremovable pastors undergo a written examination whose results would largely determine the choice of the pastor. The relaxation of certain laws, such as that requiring the reception of Holy Communion at the paschal time in one's parish church, received further approbation. An accommodation to the altered economic status of the Church was made by permitting clerics to be ordained without the support of a stable income, but on the prospect of support from the offerings of the faithful. In this respect, the Church's policy had come full circle, and thus returned, by force of circumstances, to the practice of the primitive Church.

Finally, after centuries of experience and consideration, the rights of pastors and the canonical form of the parish were unequivocally enunciated in the present Code of Canon Law, promulgated in 1917 and effective in 1918. A very sketchy account of the principal rights of a pastor will illustrate the extensive power and responsibility granted by the Code which confirms, in general, the earlier legislation.

The pastor enjoys an office in which inhere certain rights and duties. The pastor is obliged to reside in his parish, and cannot, without special privilege, be the pastor of more than one parish. He is appointed or approved by the bishop, and can be required to undergo an examination to determine his qualifications, especially if he is to be made an "irremoveable pastor." He must administer the sacraments to the faithful, offer up the Sacrifice of the Mass for the intention of his congregation on Sundays and certain feast days, instruct the faithful not only by preaching but also by providing a general education in religion to the children. The pastor also has the duty of performing works of charity, personally or through others, toward those in need; the duty of charity is primarily incumbent upon the pastor in virtue of his office, even though because of circumstances the more important works of charity are organized under a separate agency in

the diocese. The pastor is likewise bound to administer the resources and income of the parish under the general supervision of the bishop.

The present Code is particularly precise in determining the rights of the pastor in the administration of the sacraments and the other functions of divine worship. The old controversy about the distinction between rights and functions of the pastor is neatly and decently interred in complete silence. The Code, in a deceptively brief, prosaic manner, catalogues the following principal rights of the pastor in matters of divine worship: he can confer solemnly the Sacrament of Baptism; he alone may carry publicly the Blessed Sacrament to the sick in his parish (this solemnity is never used in non-Catholic localities and the informal method of taking the Blessed Sacrament to the sick is not reserved to the pastor); he alone may administer the Sacrament of Extreme Unction and bring Holy Viaticum either solemnly or privately; he has the exclusive right of conducting the prenuptial investigation of his parishioners, including the announcement of the banns, of imparting the nuptial blessing, and witnessing the marriage; he has the right of announcing the reception of Orders by his parishioners; the pastor also performs the funeral rights of his parishioners and has the right to bless homes within his parish on Holy Saturday, as well as the right to bless the baptismal font on the same day; the pastor may lead processions through his parish.

The present Code confirms the relaxation of the law concerning the exclusive right of the pastor to hear the confessions of his parishioners at least once a year, to administer Holy Communion during the paschal time, and to compel his parishioners to attend the celebration of Mass in their parish church on Sundays and holydays of obligation. The faithful, however, are counseled to attend Mass in their own parish and the priest who administers Holy Communion in fulfillment of the paschal obligation is urged to notify the proper pastor of the fulfillment of this obligation.

The sole remnant of jurisdiction accorded to the pastor is the right to grant a dispensation from the law of fast and abstinence to his parishioners or to those within his parish as well as the right to dispense the same persons from the observance of feast days.

CONCLUSION

Although there has been a great deal of evolution and development of the concept of the parish and the rights of the pastor, the form of the parish today is the result of the territorial subdivision of the diocese made when it was no longer possible for the bishop to provide adequate spiritual ministry to the whole diocese. The pastor of the parish is, in a sense, the delegate of the bishop, the pastor of the whole diocese. The gradual delineation of the inherent rights and duties of the pastor under the influence of various ideas and forces through the centuries shows the constant will of the Church to maintain the territorial structure of the parish and the generally exclusive right of the pastor within his parish.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER I

1. Pierre Imbart de la Tour, *Les Paroisses Rurales du IV au IX Siècle* (Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1900), p. 5.

2. Canon 77, Council of Elvira (circa 305) – Burns, *Canones Apostolorum et Conciliorum Saeculorum*, IV–VII (2 vols.; Berlin, 1839), II, 12. Cf. Bernard Kelley, *The Functions Reserved to Pastors* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947), p. 4.

3. "That bishops should not be appointed for villages and hamlets but 'traveling priests.'"

4. "If any of them, when he has reached a mature age shall prefer, because of the weakness of the flesh, to marry, he shall not be denied the right to marry." – Canon 1, Council of Vaison (529); J. Hardouin, *Acta Conciliorum et Epistolae Decretales ac Constitutiones Summorum Pontificum*, 12 vols. (Paris, 1715), II, 1105.

5. Capitulary of Theodulf – Migne, *Patrologia Cursus Completus Series Latina*, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–1864), CV, 196.

6. *Capitula Examinationis Generalis*, n. 12 – *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Legum Sectio II, Capitularia Regum Francorum*, 1 ed. (Hannoverae: A. Boretius, 1883), p. 235.

7. *Extravagantes Decretales*, Lib. I, Titulus 9, *De Tregua et Pace*, Canon 2.

8. Comments of the Glossator on the word "xenones" in Canon 23, Question 8, Causa XXIII, of Gratian's *Concordia Discordantium Canonum.*

9. De Beaurepaire, *Recherches sur l'Instruction publique dans le diocèse de Rouen avant 1789,* 3 vols. (Evreux, 1872), II, 5.

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CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARISHES IN THE UNITED STATES

by FERGUS MACDONALD, C.P.

INTRODUCTION

IT SHOULD be understood at the outset that there was no organized Catholic Church in the United States until after the Revolutionary War. Previously there were merely scattered missions in the colonies of England, France, and Spain, under the direct ecclesiastical control of bishops in either the mother country or more distant colonies. In the British coastal colonies, which were to assume the status of nationhood, the missions of the Church were virtually confined to the settlement of Maryland, founded as a refuge for Catholics from England. It was on the foundation of these English Catholic missions in Maryland that the organized American Church was built. Until 1784 this mission territory was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic of the London District in England. But political separation from the mother country made an ecclesiastical separation highly desirable, while the growth of urgent local problems required adequate local authority to deal with them. These conditions were met by establishing in 1789 an independent American episcopal authority, in the erection of the diocese of Baltimore, the mother see of the American Church.

The first Bishop, the illustrious John Carroll, found himself

immediately responsible for the Church in the entire territory of the new republic. In the absence of episcopal authority, serious abuses had developed within the Catholic body, making it necessary for the first Bishop to take steps against them. In particular, quarrels and divisions in a number of parishes had reached the stage of major scandals. In fact, it was the urgency of this problem which had made it evident to the clergy that a bishop was necessary.

In this country the early parish organization had evolved in much the same manner as in every mission land. During the colonial period missionary priests had carried the faith from place to place, establishing missions where their scattered converts could be assembled for worship and instruction. The missionary had a general responsibility for the people in one area. But as the missions grew, limits were gradually assigned to the missionaries' territory, and the mission stations frequently came to have resident priests with the status of "quasi-parishes." No parish in this country could progress beyond this stage of canonical development so long as this land remained in the category of a mission territory, *i.e.*, subject to the administration of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, in Rome. It was not until 1908 that the Catholic Church in the United States reached its maturity, so to speak, when it was freed from this status of dependency upon Propaganda and placed under the general disciplinary law of the Church. This was effected by the apostolic constitution of Pius X, *Sapienti consilio,* of June 29, 1908.

But long before that date the infant Church in this nation had been plagued by a series of problems originating in the sphere of parish organization. Bishop Carroll was confronted with grave threats to church discipline, which were occasioned by the legal form of incorporation of church property in some of the "quasi-parishes" existing at that time. In other words, the early Church in the United States ran squarely up against the problem of trusteeism.

TRUSTEEISM

It can be truly said that no problem in the young Church harassed its leaders more than that of trusteeism. Congregations were torn with dissension, and sometimes with actual schism, over the workings of the system in New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, Norfolk, Savannah, St. Augustine, New Orleans, and St. Louis – all in the years before 1820.[1] The system, with its attendant evils, was to continue for many years to come. In fact, it has been asserted that until the latter part of the nineteenth century "there was probably not a single year during which the disease of trusteemania was not epidemic, or better endemic, in some diocese in the country."[2] Closely associated with this situation was the problem caused by the clash of rival nationalities – a problem aggravated as the years went on by the rising tide of immigration. If a further source of trouble were needed, it was furnished by the presence of free-lance clerics, sometimes invited by their own bishops in Europe to betake themselves elsewhere, and accepted by American bishops who were desperately short of clergy for the growing Catholic population.

But the root cause of this recurrent evil which beset so many parishes lay in the very nature of the trustee system. Briefly, it was the system of legal incorporation of church property which required that the property be registered in the names of a board of lay trustees representing the congregation. The civil laws on the subject had been drawn up by men familiar with the Protestant method of incorporating church property in the name of the vestrymen or deacons or elders. The system had certain advantages, at least in theory. It freed the pastor from temporal responsibilities in the parish; it gave legal security to the property; and it gave the people an active and responsible voice in the administration of the parish, thus appearing to be in agreement with the democratic principles upon which the nation had been founded.

Unfortunately, the system also gave free scope and legal protection to unworthy men who had themselves elected to boards of trustees. A graphic account of the probable extent of the ensuing evil is provided by the following estimate of the system, written by Archbishop John Hughes of New York in 1855:

> It was well calculated to gain the confidence of a mind so generous and so liberal as that of the first Archbishop of Baltimore. But in practice it became the bitter chalice of his old age. It led to violent strifes in Charleston and in Norfolk. It led to riots and bloodshed in Baltimore and Philadelphia. Archbishop Carroll, when there were but two churches in Baltimore, was doomed to witness the congregation of one of them assembling at the house of divine worship on Sunday with loaded muskets in their hands. He was doomed even during his own administration to see an excommunicated priest inaugurated by lay trustees in another church in Philadelphia; and to undergo a legal prosecution at the hands of lay trustees, in the civil court, for a simple act of episcopal jurisdiction. . . . After his death, similar results of lay trusteeship followed in the church of St. Mary in Philadelphia. Whoever will turn to the press of that city in the years 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, and 1825, will see melancholy evidence of its workings in social strifes, religious enmities, schism, lawsuits, fearful riots, and bloodshed. The evils which manifested themselves in these churches on a grand scale, were witnessed in a minor degree in almost every congregation throughout the country, under the government of lay trustees.[3]

The precise point around which trouble usually developed was the limit of the trustees' power. Lay control of the property of the parish involved no essential conflict with the hierarchical nature of the Church. But any intrusion by the trustees beyond this point, into the spiritual prerogatives of the pastor or the bishop, involved an attack on the constitution of the Church. Such intrusions were made by some congregations, enthusiastic for democratic ideas but ignorant of the divine constitution of the Church, who thought they had the right to engage any pastor they wished, to keep him as long as they pleased, and to get rid of him when it

appeared advisable for them to do so. Since the trustees held the purse strings, they clearly had power in this regard. If they chose to back some recalcitrant cleric, the bishop was hard put to remove such a person under this system. The results were bound to be serious.

One of the most vivid illustrations of the evils of trusteeism was furnished by the German parish of the Holy Trinity in Philadelphia. This parish had been established in 1789, and a German Capuchin friar, Father Charles Heilbron, had been elected as pastor by the trustees and confirmed in office by Bishop Carroll. This priest had returned to Europe in 1791, leaving his brother, Father Peter, in charge. Father Charles disappeared in the storm of the French Revolution and was heard from no more. Affairs in the parish in Philadelphia went along without notable incident until another German priest appeared on the scene in 1796 and began scheming to have Father Peter deposed and himself elected as pastor. In this effort he was successful, so that we find the trustees writing, on October 15, 1796, to Father Heilbron:

> Rev. Sir: We hereby inform you that in consequence of your refusal to sign the twenty-six resolutions you are hereby dismissed and deposed from your office in this church. Furthermore your salary is withdrawn. . . . In case you refuse to give up the property of the church we will prosecute you with the law.[4]

This, of course, was a preposterous usurpation of power which would strike any Catholic today as ludicrous. Yet the bland assurance with which the statements were made is the measure of the ignorance of the trustees. They were as good as their word: they promptly installed the newcomer, Father John N. Goetz, as pastor. Whereupon Bishop Carroll warned the usurping cleric and the trustees that they were in danger of excommunication.

At this point it is well to identify a European custom appealed to in this instance, as in others, by trustees in support of their alleged right to appoint the pastor. This was

the *jus patronatus, i.e.,* the recognized right of the patron of a church or other benefice, under certain conditions, to *nominate* the beneficiary of the support provided by the patron or his family. But this right gave the power merely to *present,* not to appoint. The latter right belonged exclusively to the Ordinary. The *jus patronatus* was of immemorial usage in Europe and had a recognized juridic status. But in this instance it was made clear to the trustees that they had no grounds whatever for claiming that right as justification for presuming to discharge their pastor. This was pointed out to them in a letter from the coadjutor Bishop-elect of Baltimore, Leonard Neale, who was acting as vicar-general for Bishop Carroll. He told them that they had no *jus patronatus* and could have none "because your Church has no FIXED, PERMANENT and UNALIENABLE fund for the support of a Pastor. Such is the doctrine of the Council of Trent." Neale also told them that even if they had the *jus patronatus,* "it would entitle you merely to present, and not to appoint or discharge your Pastor."[5] The specific reason why they invoked the right of patronage seemed to be that they had built this church out of their own resources, and had guaranteed to support a pastor. But this did not constitute "fixed, permanent, and inalienable" support of the pastor, as events surely showed. A guarantee of support from the trustees was something dependent entirely on their good pleasure. It clearly could not meet the canonical requisite for the *jus patronatus.*

Bishop-elect Neale added a warning in this pastoral letter, reminding the trustees of the consequences of persistence in their disobedience. His effort failed, as did also a similar intervention by Bishop Carroll himself. The latter finally excommunicated the usurping pastor for holding that "the power of ecclesiastical ministry and government is derived to pastors from the community or congregation of the people."[6] But even this stern action failed to produce submission. In 1798 Bishop Carroll went to Philadelphia to try to end the schism, only to be arrested at the behest of the trustees. But in taking

such action against Bishop Carroll the trustees overreached themselves, it would seem, for the arrest of the Bishop shocked the parish and lost the trustees much support. It was not long before the trustees made overtures for peace. By 1802, the tragic schism was ended — "the first schism in the Church of the United States."[7]

This trustee disturbance was by no means the only one of the time. In fact, while the affair in Philadelphia was coming to a climax, Bishop Carroll was beset by similar situations in the parishes of Norfolk and Charleston. Shortly afterward, another trustee scandal occurred in Philadelphia, to be followed by the so-called Hogan Schism there, lasting from 1820 to 1836, and characterized by violent riots and near warfare. Bishop Dubois, who came to New York in 1826, found lay control widespread, and Bishop Fenwick met it in his cathedral in Boston.[8]

The frequency and the scandals of trustee disturbances in the young American Church finally resulted in papal action in 1822, when Pius VII issued an apostolic brief, *Non sine magno,* entirely rejecting the claim of trustees to the *jus patronatus,* and reprobating their intrusions into the sphere of episcopal jurisdiction.[9] This was followed in 1829 by the decision of the American bishops, gathered in the First Provincial Council of Baltimore, to recognize no new church whose deed was not in the possession of the bishop.[10]

Despite these actions, trustee troubles continued to occur, *e.g.,* in Portland, Maine, in 1830; in Hartford, in 1831; and in Providence, in 1843.[11] In the diocese of New York the trouble was widespread until the arrival of the vigorous John Hughes as bishop. He proceeded to get control of church properties himself, thereby progressively removing this source of trouble in his parishes. But in 1847 his diocese was divided, the western part becoming the new see of Buffalo, whose first bishop was John Timon. This worthy prelate had much trouble with trustees, notably in the German church of St. Louis in Buffalo. In an odd development during the early

1850's, trusteeism in his diocese became associated with the Know-Nothing movement. Bigots of the latter group co-operated with rebellious trustees by helping to get the Putnam Bill through the state legislature on April 6, 1855. This law ordered Catholic parishes to incorporate under the trustee system. Similar laws were passed through Know-Nothing efforts in Connecticut and Vermont.[12]

While all these disturbances were occurring in the East, the area to the West was by no means free of similar troubles. In 1822 the Bishop of the new diocese of Cincinnati, Edward Fenwick, clashed with trustees of Christ Church in Cincinnati over a piece of property. In 1844 a major crisis developed in that city over the same system, but it was surmounted by an enlightened Catholic attitude among the laity. Detroit had had trustee troubles since 1823. Milwaukee had to cope with rebellious trustees in 1845. Yet, in general, trustee troubles in the Old Northwest were never so serious as those which plagued the Church in the East.[13]

Even in the East, the disease was well under control by 1860.[14] Bishop John England, the sturdy bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, had solved the trustee problem in his diocese by a unique method — the adoption of a constitution which gave representatives of the laity some advisory voice in assisting the bishop and clergy to administer the temporal affairs of the diocese and the parishes, under very careful safeguards against usurpation. It permitted the existence of something akin to the trustee system, as far as form went, but removed from it the dangerous substance of unwarranted power.[15] The system bore a resemblance to the type of church government in use in the Church of England.

Bishop England believed that the trustee troubles in the American Church could be ended only by a council of all the bishops of the United States. For that reason, and for others, he repeatedly urged upon Archbishop Ambrose Maréchal of Baltimore the calling of a council, but not until the advent of Archbishop Whitfield was a council convened. The First

Provincial Council of Baltimore, meeting in 1829, decreed that in the future no church was to be erected in the United States "without being legally assigned to the bishop, wherever possible."[16] This, of course, was a blow at the very roots of the trustee system. Again, in 1837, at the Third Provincial Council, the subject was treated.[17] In 1852 the First Plenary Council of Baltimore forbade the laity to have any responsibility for church money without the permission of the bishop. Another decree warned the clergy to remove trustee interference in church affairs.[18] All this legislation, along with a steady effort by bishops and priests to teach the people the evil nature of lay interference with the essential constitution of the Church, helped gradually to end the problem.

But the elimination of trustee usurpation actually solved only half of the problem. There still remained the question of an alternative means of incorporating church property in a way conformable with both ecclesiastical and civil law. The requirements of the latter varied in different states of the Union. In 1840 the Fourth Provincial Council of Baltimore had urged the *bishops* "to have recourse to the civil law for incorporation wherever these laws allowed it."[19] Yet there were real obstacles to the adoption of this system of holding parish property in the name of the bishop. It was forbidden by law in some places. Again, the people were not accustomed to the idea, and as the years went on their confidence in the financial competence of the bishops came to be badly shaken. This was in part a result of a most serious financial failure involving the archdiocese of Cincinnati, where diocesan money affairs had been since 1838 in the control of Father Edward Purcell, brother of Archbishop John Purcell. This priest was a good and self-sacrificing man who lived frugally, but who did not possess the ability to administer large finances. Yet he became the depositary of large sums of savings which the poor Catholics of Cincinnati entrusted to the Archbishop after the successive bank failures of 1837, 1842, 1854, 1857, and 1873. The deposits increased with each failure of banks so

that by 1875 Father Purcell held over a million dollars. But in 1878 additional closings of local banks started a run on Father Purcell, and it was found that he was heavily involved in those banks. In December, 1878, crowds clamored for their money at the cathedral residence and had to be told that there was no money left to pay them.

This was indeed a serious crisis. It was discovered that Father Purcell had kept no record of deposits, and claims were now totaling nearly four million dollars. Archbishop Purcell offered to resign his see, but the unanimous protest of his clergy persuaded Rome against accepting. The other bishops in this country tried to help him out of the financial pit into which bad management had brought him. Next to the poverty and shock which came upon many of his depositors, the most serious effect was the imminent threat to the properties of the Church in the archdiocese. As all this property was held in the Archbishop's name, the creditors demanded that churches and other properties be sold to pay the Archbishop's debts. Much litigation ensued, with determined efforts made to achieve such an adjustment. Fortunately, the threat was averted and the diocesan property saved. Many people fell away from the faith, however, in their shock over what had happened.[20] Surely it is not surprising that lay confidence in the business ability of the bishop was badly shaken.

Nor is it surprising that the Third Plenary Council, in 1884, decreed that the system of holding church property in the name of the bishop (in "fee simple") was to be allowed only as a last resort, when no other method was legally possible.[21] As long before as 1852 Archbishop Hughes of New York had said of this form of tenure that "the bishops feel it as an oppression to be the owners, in *fee simple* of such an amount of property."[22] Earlier still, in 1834, the Archbishop of Baltimore had adopted another system of property tenure which was to have considerable vogue. By an act of the Maryland legislature, March 23, 1833, the Archbishop became a *corporation sole, i.e.,* Church property was to be held in the

name of the archbishop, not as an individual, but as a moral person who would exist perpetually through his successors.[23] This system came to be rather widely accepted, though it was fought with much vigor in places, *e.g.,* Boston.[24] In Maine, in the early years of the twentieth century, racial feelings created unfavorable attitudes toward this system when French-Canadian Catholics, vainly seeking a French bishop in Portland, tried to end the corporation sole tenure of property in favor of parish corporations. For undertaking court action in the matter, six prominent French laymen were excommunicated in 1911 by Bishop Walsh, who was upheld in his action by the Holy See.[25]

Soon after this trouble in Maine, the Holy See issued in 1911 a decree on the methods of property tenure to be used in the United States. A gradation of preference characterizes the decree, and in this it follows the expressed attitude of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884. The *parish corporation* (or "corporation aggregate") was declared most preferable by Rome. The Council of 1884 had expressed the same favor for this form of tenure, in which the bishop, vicar-general, and pastor are *ex officio* members of the parish corporation, which also includes several members of the laity. The Roman decree of 1911 directs that the bishops are to introduce this system at once if the civil law allows. The next most desirable form of tenure is the *corporation sole,* which is to be *permitted* when the civil law does not allow the parish corporation, but only on the strict proviso that the bishop hear the diocesan consultors and those directly concerned in his administration of diocesan property, his conscience being obligated to this. This safeguard was meant to protect bishops from suspicion of arbitrary use of church goods.[26] Finally, the decree ordered the abolition of all tenure in *fee simple.*[27] This last form of tenure exposed church property "to the danger of descending to heirs at law of the bishops."[28] Likewise, danger of mismanagement was increased by it, as the tragic experience at Cincinnati had shown.

The parish corporation, given priority of preference by the Roman decree, was a form of property holding first instituted by the legislature of New York in 1863 and called "corporation aggregate" or "membership corporation." It recognized that the parishioners as a whole are the incorporators, for whom the trustees are merely managers. The New York law stipulated that the bishop, vicar-general, and pastor of the parish are *ex officio* members of the corporation *and it is they who appoint the two lay members.* This form of tenure has been adopted in several states, with separate provisions made to protect hierarchical authority. This is true in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin. Similar forms of incorporation, without explicit reference to the Catholic Church, exist in the codes of Montana, Minnesota, Oregon, and Nebraska. The code of Connecticut declares that this corporation "shall at all times be subject to the general laws and discipline of the Catholic Church."[29] This New York model for incorporating church property, however, is not in universal use in the United States. Yet it has the explicit approval of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, given in 1911, as indicated above — an approval which was not withdrawn by the Code of Canon Law in 1918.[30] To date, this form of tenure seems to be the final answer to the trustee troubles which upset so many parishes in the youth of the American Church. It provides legal protection for parish property while safeguarding the inherent rights of ecclesiastical authority. The long effort to attain these two goals has deeply affected the development of the American parish, agitating it violently, but finally bringing it peace and legal security.

IMMIGRANT PARISHES

Meanwhile, during the nineteenth century, while parish property was still a major problem, another phenomenon was shaping the development of the American parish. This was the tremendous influx of immigrants into this country. The parish was profoundly affected by the arrival of huge numbers pour-

ing in from Europe all during the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth century. It is no exaggeration to say that immigration became the greatest problem facing the American Church during most of the past century. The Church strove vigorously to preserve the faith of the masses of poor Catholic immigrants by providing parish facilities wherever these people settled, if at all possible. It was not merely a question of overwhelming numbers. There was also the delicate situation caused by the presence of nationalities whose whole cultural background was so foreign to the American way of life that it was a major task to try to assimilate these immigrants, and they frequently resisted with tenacity any attempts to do so. To provide for the spiritual needs of these increasingly diverse peoples within the framework of an ecclesiastical organization which could not sacrifice its internal unity in favor of national diversities — this proved, indeed, a formidable task for the leaders of the American Church, a task that was not completed painlessly.

From 1820 to 1930 a total of 37,762,012 persons entered this country.[31] Of this huge number, a large proportion was Catholic. Evidence for this is furnished by the fact that in three decades, from 1881–1910 — long after the heavy Irish and German Catholic immigration of the mid-nineteenth century — nearly five million Catholics entered the United States.[32]

Long before then, in fact from the very beginning of the organized Church in this country, it had been a major task to try to provide priests who could speak the language of the immigrants. In this connection, the Irish were fortunate in that they spoke the language of the country. But the Catholics from the Continent, knowing no English, needed priests who could speak their own tongues. Generally they organized their own foreign-language parishes. Thus, as early as 1764 the German Catholics in Philadelphia set up a separate congregation for themselves under a German-speaking priest.[33] Twenty-five years later another German parish was opened in

the same city. This parish of the Holy Trinity is said to be the first "national parish" in this country.[34] In New York a German parish was erected in 1836; in Boston, one in 1841; in Pittsburgh, one in 1839. Meanwhile, Cincinnati, Chicago, and St. Louis had German parishes. Likewise, separate provision had been made for French Catholics in New York and in Boston.

The organization of German parishes followed rapidly on the arrival of German immigrants. The process of setting up these German parishes was materially assisted by two mission-aid societies in the Old World — the Bavarian Ludwigmissionsverein, founded in 1838, and the Leopold Society of Austria, founded in 1829, both of which gave liberally to German parishes in America during the nineteenth century. The influx of Germans was so heavy, and the building of their parishes so rapid, that as early as 1853 they began to protest against Irish priests being placed over them.[35] Earlier, in 1836, some German groups had asked for a German bishop.[36] Unlike the Irish, many of whom arrived in America penniless and had to remain where they landed — in Boston, New York, or Philadelphia — the Germans arrived in somewhat better financial condition and were able to move on to the newer sections of the country above the Ohio or west of the Mississippi, where rich farm land was available.[37] They took root in the Middle West, particularly, and as they did they developed a highly organized social life, with rather decidedly nationalistic overtones. In the religious sphere this was to form the basis for the very unfortunate episode in American Catholic history known as Cahenslyism — a crisis which arose on the parish level.

Beginning in 1884, the Holy See was asked by German priests in this country to grant greater recognition to their parishes.[38] In November, 1886, Father P. M. Abbelen, vicar-general of Milwaukee, presented to Propaganda a memorial concerning "the relations of the non-English to the English parishes and especially the relations of the German to the

Irish parishes in the United States of America." The memorial asked that all immigrants be assigned to a church of their own language, and that children be sent to Catholic schools using the language of their parents. In Rome, Father Abbelen presented the charge of the German bishops in America that their people were not treated fairly and that their spiritual needs were ignored. After investigation, Propaganda rejected the memorial and rebuked Abbelen.[39] But this was not the end of the trouble.

In 1891, Peter Paul Cahensly, secretary of the Archangel Raphael Society, an international German immigrant aid society, presented a memorial to the Holy See asking appointment of bishops in America on the basis of national representation because, he alleged, already more than sixteen million Catholic immigrants there had lost the faith for lack of clergy of their own nationality. This allegation was branded as a lie by Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul in an interview given in Rome to the Boston *Pilot*.[40] The Holy See saw through this attempt and rejected the proposals.

Behind the specific charges of Abbelen and Cahensly lay a serious division of opinion in the American hierarchy on several burning questions, notably the famous School Controversy, which again was related to the wider issue of "Americanization." Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland, Bishop Spalding, and Bishop John Keane of the Catholic University were the leaders of those who sought to assimilate the incoming foreign Catholics in order to preserve the unity of the American Church against the disruptive strain of nationalism, and to lay the prejudice that the Catholic Church was a foreign institution, not amenable to American life. The more conservative bishops, notably Archbishop Michael Corrigan of New York, Bishop Bernard McQuaid of Rochester, and the German bishops, were suspicious of what they considered undue accommodation to American ideas.[41] The opposition of the "liberal" bishops to the German-language schools was resented very strongly. The judgment of one student of

the affair seems warranted, however: "The far-sighted wisdom of Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Ireland in fighting the movement has been abundantly justified, not only for the internal good of the American Church, but also for the unity of the United States when wars with Germany came in 1917 and 1941."[42] Since the rejection of the Abbelen and Cahensly proposals by the Holy See, separate German parishes have continued to exist, but meanwhile the people to whom they minister have become assimilated and have surely enriched American life and history by their own distinct contributions.

As the nineteenth century progressed toward its close, there was a shift in the current of immigration, with a new and heavy tide coming from southern and eastern Europe. Peoples of Slavic and Latin stock predominated in this "new immigration." As very many of these newcomers were Catholics, their coming gave an ever more diversified character to the American Church. It has been said that four fifths of these later arrivals in this country settled in the industrial urban centers of the North and East.[43] They were available as cheap labor for the expanding industrial system, and there was no longer the opportunity for free agricultural lands which earlier had attracted northern Europeans to the rural areas of the Middle West.

The Catholic Church made efforts to furnish these new peoples with facilities for the practice of their faith in this country. As early as 1854 a Bohemian parish was organized in St. Louis. Czechs began later to settle in considerable numbers in Chicago, and by 1915 there were in Cleveland eight Czech parishes. One evaluation of these foreign-language parishes is implied in the comment of a student of immigration: "Many Czechs, on moving away from their communities, have simply ceased attending any church."[44] Their European neighbors and relatives, the Slovaks, also came in force and today are represented in nearly seven hundred settlements in thirty-seven states. Pittsburgh is the center of their greatest

concentration, while Youngstown, Ohio, and Bridgeport, Connecticut, also have large Slovak groups.[45]

Another Slavic people who came in very great numbers in the "new immigration" were the Poles. Their heavy influx began after 1870 and increased until World War I. By 1920, Chicago had a Polish colony of 350,000; New York, one of 250,000; and Buffalo, one of 80,000, though the latter city has since claimed to have the second largest Polish population in America. The census of 1930 listed 1,268,583 foreign-born Poles in the United States and fixed the total Polish stock, with one or both parents Poles, at 3,342,198. Today nearly one half the Poles are in the industrial states of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; but the largest center is the city of Chicago, with a total Polish population of over half a million.[46] Another interesting feature of their settlement in America is that about three quarter million Poles went into farming areas, partly in New England in localities abandoned by the old New England stock, and partly through the Middle West and beyond. In all these areas Polish parishes are well established, one authority asserting that "the advance of Polish settlement can usually be traced to the establishment of Roman Catholic parishes."[47]

While other nationalities from eastern and from central Europe came in the "new immigration" and made their impact upon Catholic life in America, there is not space here to trace the development of their language parishes. Rather, it is necessary briefly to survey the effect on American parish development of the huge influx from southern Europe, particularly from Italy. From this Mediterranean land there came nearly five million people between 1820 and 1930.[48] By the time of World War I there were large Italian colonies in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, and Omaha, in the textile cities of New England, and in scattered rural areas from coast to coast. Parishes were provided for these Italians as rapidly as possible, so that by the end of World War II there were at least a dozen Italian parishes in the city of Chicago;

about sixteen in the Manhattan borough of New York City, with more than ten in the borough of Kings (Brooklyn); and approximately twelve in the city of Philadelphia.[49] These figures are only samples of the number of Italian parishes in this country which can be found in all large cities, and in many smaller ones as well.

Other nationalities have their own language parishes, too. The Portuguese are represented in New England, especially in Fall River and New Bedford; the French-Canadians throughout all of New England in considerable numbers, with the exception of Connecticut; the Mexicans in the southwestern states; the Puerto Ricans in New York and several other areas; and, of course, the Hungarians, Lithuanians, and others in scattered localities.

All of these language parishes established for people of a specific nationality form a generic type of parish known in the law of the Church as a "national parish." Through this type of parish the bishops worked to provide for the immigrants in their own language. In 1862 Archbishop Alemany of San Francisco directed that French, Spanish, and German people in his archdiocese be under the rule of pastors of their own language.[50] In 1866 the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore urged that priests knowing the language of immigrant groups be placed in seaport towns to help the newcomers. It also decreed that seminarians should learn one modern foreign language, according to the needs of the diocese and the wish of the bishop.[51] The detailed study of the whole phenomenon of national, racial, and non-Roman rite parishes in America will be treated in a subsequent chapter.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN PARISHES

More than passing reference to the Negro group is called for, however, in a study of the American parish. The Negro has been conspicuous mainly by his absence in the Church in the United States, in spite of his relative prominence in the history of the country. The emancipation of millions of Negro

slaves, upon whose backs the economic system of the South had been built, was a tremendous challenge to the American Church. The bishops gathered in the Second Plenary Council in 1866 pleaded with priests to devote themselves to the service of the colored race. "We have a golden opportunity to reap a harvest of souls, which neglected may not return," wrote Archbishop Martin J. Spalding of Baltimore.[52] But in the years after the Civil War, the increasing influx of immigrants so taxed the resources of the more populous northern section of the Catholic Church that little was done for the colored. By contrast, some of the Protestant denominations saw the opportunity and seized it, thereby winning the adherence of the bulk of the Negro population, so that by 1906 there were 2,311,172 Negro Baptists in this country and 869,710 Negro Methodists. By 1926 there were in the South alone over 20,000 Negro Baptist churches with a membership of 2,700,575. In the same year, according to the federal census of religion, there were 147 Negro Catholic churches with 124,324 parishioners. When these figures are put against the total of 47,000 Negro churches for all religions and 5,000,000 members, the extent of the Catholic failure can be seen.[53]

The first organized Catholic effort to convert the Negro was made by priests from the Mill Hill Society in England who came to America in 1871. In that year Father Herbert Vaughan, who had founded Mill Hill five years earlier, came to America to work among the colored, in response to the appeal of the Second Plenary Council of 1866. Vaughan made a careful tour of the South and recorded his impressions. He noted with shock in Memphis: "Negroes regarded even by priests as so many dogs. . . . I visited the hospital where there were a number of Negroes. . . . All said either they would like to be Catholics or something to show that they were not opposed to it. Neither the priest with me nor the Sisters in the hospital do anything to instruct them. They just smile at them as if they had no souls."[54] Surely one cannot deny the existence of racial prejudice among Catholics even now, long since those words were written.

In all fairness, however, it must be observed that behind the failure to provide spiritual facilities for the colored lay a fact which hindered the expansion of the Church generally. That fact was something which haunted the bishops during the nineteenth century, and still hampers some of them today, the chronic shortage of priests. Churches were useless without priests. Great numbers are believed to have left the Church in America for lack of priests to minister to them. This tragic eventuality was foreseen by Bishop Carroll even before he was consecrated. He believed Ireland was his best source of clergy, but he learned from experience that "a new land like America was a serious temptation to priests who were in difficulties at home."[55] So it was not surprising that he wrote to Archbishop John Troy of Dublin: "Unfortunately almost all who offer their services have great expectations of livings, high salaries . . . and I find few, or, to speak more properly, I find none willing to commit themselves entirely to the care of Providence, and seek to gather congregations, and livings, of consequence, by fixing themselves in places where no missioners preceded them."[56] Back of these words lay much unhappy experience with undesirable clergy.

The first American bishop came to realize the need for a local seminary to train native vocations, and Rome reminded him of the same necessity in its Bull erecting the see of Baltimore in 1789. When in England for his consecration, in 1790, Bishop Carroll was approached by the Sulpician Fathers, whose special function it is to train students for the diocesan priesthood and who at that time were seeking refuge from the storm of the French Revolution. They offered to start a seminary for Carroll in his new diocese. He recognized the hand of God in the offer and accepted it gratefully. This was the start of a venture to which the American Church owes a great deal. Thousands of priests have been sent out of the famous St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore and other Sulpician seminaries. But in the beginning of their work in this land, the rate of increase in vocations was slow indeed. The various councils

spoke of the decree of the Council of Trent making diocesan seminaries mandatory.[57] Taking the American Church as a whole, it cannot be said that the shortage has been ended. Witness the current scarcity in such eastern dioceses as Scranton, Harrisburg, and Wheeling, to say nothing of the South or the West. Yet there is no lack of evidence to show that the bishops have done their utmost to provide priests and parishes for their flocks.

The great difficulty they experienced in the past century helped to produce another phenomenon which has shaped the development of the American Church, viz., urbanization. The parish in America undoubtedly has been affected by the fact that the great majority of our Catholic people are concentrated in cities. Shortage of priests was partly responsible for this phenomenon. The Irish, in particular, remained in the cities where they landed, only gradually moving on to other urban centers. Always there was the fear of losing touch with the Church, for which they had undergone so much. They did go into canal and railroad building during the years before the Civil War and into the coal fields of eastern Pennsylvania, but they eventually returned to the cities unless the Church was able to follow them. Follow them it did into areas like the textile towns of New England. But the Church in the East did not venture far from urban centers, largely because of lack of priests. Most priests and prelates agreed that if the Irish took advantage of the opportunities for land farther west, they would soon be lost to the Church.

Some have maintained that the gregariousness of the Irish made the prospect of rural life unattractive to them. Some pastors are known to have opposed Western colonization schemes in order to hold their parishes together and maintain the parish plants erected at great sacrifice by their people.[58] Yet some bishops tried to induce the Irish to escape from the cities and settle on the land where they could take root and bring up their families with some promise of health and security. Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul, Minnesota, and Bishop

John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria, Illinois, were especially eager for this, as were Bishops Joseph Cretin, an earlier incumbent of St. Paul, and Matthias Loras of Dubuque.[59] But Archbishop Hughes of New York led the opposition in the East, vigorously opposing colonization efforts in the fear that the Irish Catholics would lose their faith by losing touch with the Church. Still, the Irish Catholic Colonization Association had considerable success, establishing colonies in Minnesota, Nebraska, and Arkansas. Irish agricultural settlements in Minnesota finally spread over 300,000 acres.[60] But such successes were insignificant when compared with the overwhelming concentration of the Irish in the cities.

The German Catholic immigrants never presented such a problem. Several Midwestern cities are heavily peopled today by persons of German extraction, *e.g.,* Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. Yet, a large proportion of the Germans settled on the land in the Middle West, developing in time a network of rural parishes. But even these German rural parishes account for only a small proportion of the total American Catholic population.

Many European visitors to America in this century have been greatly impressed by the sheer physical size, and often by the beauty, of the parish buildings in our cities. Often they have expressed amazement on discovering that these structures have been built and maintained entirely by the free-will offerings of the Catholic laity, without a cent of state support. It is legendary that St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City was built by Irish servant girls. The increase in numbers in the cities has resulted in a veritable network of parishes. It is by no means unusual to have more than 10,000 Catholics within one parish. Such size necessarily has made many city parishes decidedly impersonal in character — an unfortunate circumstance, but virtually unavoidable under our historical conditions.

Another feature of the average American city parish which never fails to impress European visitors is the extent and efficiency of the parish school system. So common is the school

in the average city parish that it truly can be called an integral part of the parish in this country today. That this is the case is the result of historical factors which have placed upon the parish the responsibility of educating its children. Originally this necessity was due to the Protestant character of the public school system in this country and the almost universal refusal of state and city authorities to make any provision for Catholic children which would safeguard their faith. The first free parish school for boys and girls, taught by religious, was opened by the famous Mother Elizabeth Seton, foundress of the American Sisters of Charity, in St. Joseph's parish, Emmitsburg, Maryland, in 1810.[61] From then on parish schools were opened as rapidly as possible. Efforts were still made to secure government support for the parish schools, notably by Archbishop Hughes of New York, who realized so vividly the function of the school in preserving the faith that he adopted the slogan, "the school before the church."[62] But his efforts to secure a share of public funds for his schools in New York failed and only aroused bigotry. Meanwhile, there began a campaign to eliminate religious teaching and practice from the public school system. This was unwittingly aided by Catholic efforts to have Protestant Bible reading, prayers, and instructions stopped in public schools attended by Catholic children. By 1844, the Protestant Bible had been abandoned in thirty-one public schools in New York City because of Catholic efforts.[63] There can be no doubt, however, that it was far beyond the intention of Hughes to further the lamentable secularization of the public school system.

Catholics have had to accept failure in the effort to secure relief from the system of double taxation to which they have obligated themselves in order to provide for the religious and moral training of their children. Great emphasis was put upon the necessity of Catholic parish schools by the three plenary councils of Baltimore – in 1852, 1866, and 1884. These councils stressed with increasing seriousness the obligation of parents to send their children to the parish school. In fact, it was

decreed by the Third Plenary Council (1884) that a school must be erected near each church within two years of the council, unless already in existence, or unless the bishop allow a deferment.[64] In that year of the council, of 6613 parishes in the United States, 2532 or about 40 per cent had schools. By 1913, of 9500 parishes, 5250 had schools, or 55 per cent. In 1933, of 12,537 parishes, 7462 had schools, or 60 per cent.[65] It has been estimated, however, that about half of the Catholic children in this country are still in public schools.[66] Thus, while much has been accomplished, at tremendous sacrifice on the part of laity, religious, clergy, and hierarchy, much still remains to be done.

CONCLUSION

Now that the foundations of the American parish system have long since been laid and a splendid structure has been erected, the functions of the parish have been gradually widened. The essential function of providing for the spiritual life of its members was of course the very reason why the whole system was built. The additional work of providing an education integrated with religious and moral values was forced upon the parish by existing circumstances in this country. Now it is gradually coming to be recognized that still broader purposes pertain to the parish, at least by extension. Such, for instance, is the operation of social centers, labor schools, credit unions, maternity guilds, parish libraries, and programs of adult education. In other words, the tendency is clearly growing to regard the parish as a center concerned not only with the spiritual welfare of its members, but also with the temporal concerns which so powerfully affect spiritual welfare. This tendency will reverse the trend which has been so catastrophic in Europe – that of regarding the material and economic problems of the parishioners as of no concern to the Church. Parishes minister to human composites of body and soul – not to disembodied souls. The greater the recognition of the implications of this fact, the greater the hope for the faith in America and for the parish which keeps it alive.

The American parish has come of age. Born in a time of turmoil, with an adolescence agitated by internal stress and complicated by incredibly rapid physical development, it has survived the crises of growth and has reached a stable maturity. Now it is feeling the powers of its adulthood and is beginning to broaden the purposes for which it lives – all of them related to its central function in the Mystical Body of Christ.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER II

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59. *Ibid.,* p. 151.
60. *Ibid.,* pp. 152–153.

61. James A. Burns and Bernard J. Kohlbrenner, *A History of Education in the United States* (New York: Benziger Bros., 1937), p. 77.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
63. Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1938), p. 155.
64. Burns, *op. cit.*, pp. 138–144.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

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PART II

PARISH ORGANIZATION IN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE PARISH

by JOHN D. DONOVAN

INTRODUCTION

IN THE preceding chapters of this symposium, the Catholic parish has been placed in historical perspective. It has been identified in character as a partial social system whose members are united by common religious bonds and whose relationship to the Church is defined both by Canon Law and tradition. These considerations have provided the necessary background for the present investigation of the social structure of the parish, that is, the inner organization of the group and the relatively stable patterns of relationship present to the interaction of its members.[1]

At the outset it is significant to note that this concept of the parish as a social structure has had little currency in the United States. In non-Catholic circles the traditional Protestant emphasis on the *individual* character of religious life and experience has sapped the vitality of its religious organization to the point where little more than the scaffolding remains. Among Catholics, on the other hand, the parish structure has persisted as the nuclear unit of religious life in the Church. To a degree markedly greater than among the Protestant congregations, the parish has survived the splintering of its community life brought about by increasing urbanization. At the same time its losses have not been negligible. The work, recreation, education, etc., of parish members is now so gen-

erally located outside parish boundaries that only a small part of their lives is spent within the parochial environment. As a consequence, the importance of even their fragmentary social relationships within the parish has been obscured, and the focus of attention has largely been restricted to the spiritual life of the parish and the religious functions which it fulfills. In this latter emphasis the functioning of the parish is evaluated in such terms as attendance at Mass, the numbers who receive the Sacraments, conversions, vocations, membership in religious associations, and similar matters. Ordinarily a parish is thought to be "successful" or "good" in terms of its record when measured against these criteria. Only infrequently are social relationships in the parish recognized explicitly as important in their own right; or, if they are recognized, they are seldom related to parochial religious functions. Thus, the human coefficient in parish life is relegated to the background within a religious rationale which is in some respects analogous to that employed by the economist who implicitly rejects the social nature of man.

In the experience and thought ways of most Catholics, however, the parish is more than an agency for the satisfaction of religious obligations. The latter, of course, is its first and foremost *raison d'être,* but the supernatural and spiritual life of the parish has to find expression in the daily lives of its members. From early childhood the parish is for its members "a kind of great family. . . ."[2] This is not the same everywhere nor does everyone participate in the same degree. In some parishes the very size of the membership may make it difficult for individuals to know more than a few. And always there are those who are more active than others, and there is the constant turnover as some members are lost to the parish and new members received. These facts notwithstanding, all the parishioners are conscious in varying degrees of their group membership and of the social interaction, the processes of change, and the consequent problems. There is the priest they like and the priest they don't like – but still a priest. There

is the pastor, the nuns, the sexton, the housekeeper, the altar boys and the organist, the ushers and the choir, the officers of the parish societies, and the hundreds of parishioners – young and old, militant and indifferent, Irish and Italian, "born Catholic" and convert, and people like themselves. Some, or even all, of these parishioners they know; but the important thing is that with reference to them, individually or in groups, they have attitudes and sentiments and patterns of expected behavior. The larger organization of the Church with the pope and bishops, the college of cardinals and the curia, the codes of Canon Law, and the like – this is not unknown to them; but in a concrete operational sense the whole effective life of the Church is telescoped into the organization of the parish. As Archbishop Richard J. Cushing has expressed it, "The Catholic parish, with its pastor and priests, its altar and confessionals, its pulpits and schools, its good works, its sinners, its saints – the Catholic parish so constituted is a microcosm, it is the whole Church in miniature and through the parish, Christ does for a limited group what He founded the Universal Church to do for the whole world."[3]

Regarded in this light the Catholic parish is evaluated as "good" or "weak" not only in terms of the degree to which external manifestations of participation in the Mystical Body of Christ are achieved, but also in terms of the quality and kinds of social relationships which the parishioners as well as the priests experience. Accordingly, the parish has constantly before it the two problems of fulfilling its religious function and of maintaining at the same time the kind of social organization through which its members can co-operate and satisfy their worthy desires. The problem of social organization has often either been overlooked or has been assumed to have little relation to the religious functions of the parish.

In addition to the concrete evidence in the daily lives of most Catholics, the results of recent sociological studies in other fields indicate the significance of these interrelationships. Studies in the area of industrial organization are probably most

familiar.[4] In the logic of management, it had been taken for granted that the worker was motivated rather exclusively in his behavior by rational economic considerations. The fact that entire lives were being lived in the factory, lives full of hopes and fears, values and sentiments, was largely overlooked. Recent studies have "rediscovered" these expressions of the social nature of man, the forms they assume, and their importance to the productive goals of management. In a manner which at once establishes the significance of these interrelationships in the field of industrial organization and legitimizes their study in the parish, Roethlisberger and Dickson have written, "The kind of social organization which obtains within a concern is intimately related to the effectiveness of the total organization. Likewise, the success with which the concern maintains external balance is directly related to its internal organization."[5]

Accordingly, in what follows there is presented an investigation of the structural aspects of parish life, in order to establish patterns of interrelations, their variations, and their meaning for the primary religious functions for which the parish has been established. The need for such an analysis is reflected in the very fact that the materials for it must to a considerable degree be drawn from the kind of general experience and participant-observation which are scientifically suggestive but of low estate in the order of finality. They may serve nonetheless to sketch the broad outlines of the parish structure against which experiences can be evaluated and systematic study continued.

In looking at the Catholic parish as a social system, it is advisable first to check its status in the universal language of Canon Law. Ironically this legal status, despite the tradition for fifteen centuries of the parish as an ecclesiastical institution, was not absolutely defined until the Code of Canon Law of 1918.[6] Here it is positively stated that "The territory of every diocese is to be divided into distinct territorial units; and each unit is to have a special church with a designated people, and a special rector is to be given charge over it for the necessary

care of souls."[7] In this legal definition of the parish four separate elements may be singled out: (1) a distinct district; (2) a designated people; (3) a parish church; (4) a proper pastor for the care of souls. The explicit presence of all four elements, as well as lesser conditions imposed by declarations of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, define canonical parishes.[8]

Regarded in the structural terms of the present analysis, these canonical provisions direct attention to two major areas of the parish organization: (1) its technical organization as required by the physical plants of the church and distinct territorial boundaries; and (2) the human organization explicit in the requirements of a proper pastor and a designated people.

THE TECHNICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PARISH

It is very likely that if an opinion poll were conducted among Catholics to ascertain their definitions of the parish, large numbers would describe it solely in terms of the church building or the parish boundaries or a combination of both. On reflection they might add that these, of course, were only the technical aspects of the parish organization but that they were necessary to the satisfaction of its religious functions.

This view of the parish is not unlike the naïve stereotype of the factory as a place full of tools, machinery, operating schedules, and so on. It correctly recognizes the church building as the center of the life of the parish, but in its omissions it attributes to the technical organization the position of exclusive importance. For, however essential the building and territorial boundaries may be, the vital point is always the interrelationship and interdependence which exists between the technical and the human organizations. This is most clearly seen in the fact that neither priests nor people are indifferent to the church and its accouterments nor to the physical boundaries by which the parish is limited. In the attitudes of some the parish may be wonderful because of the beauty of the altar, the church grounds, or the school, or the conveniences of a parish hall or rubbered kneelers or a schedule of late Sunday Masses. Con-

versely, other parishioners may feel dissatisfaction because the parish boundaries fail to recognize their closer proximity to another church or because the building is drab and small or because there is no organ and candelabra. All these seem to be petty things, whether positive or negative. More than that, they are nonlogical and despiritualized. But in the experience of most Catholics, both clergy and laity, the relationship of these attitudes to the technical organization of the parish is real and important. The Italian immigrant Catholic, for example, may miss the hundreds of vigil lights before the altar, the colorful statuary, and the soul-stirring music of organ and choir. Somehow his American parish church may seem cold and efficient — and on these grounds, partially, he may miss Mass. Priests, on the other hand, may regret that the church building is so old or so ill equipped and may constantly seek to change and improve it. Perhaps they try to do this by repeated financial drives and, notwithstanding their good intentions, they may invoke the criticism of some of their parishioners. In both instances the technical organization of the parish constitutes the focus of attention, but its importance appears mainly in relation to the human organization of the members. In the interests of achieving more completely the common religious goals or to create more satisfaction and co-operation among the parish members, the human organization is constantly seeking to add to or to rearrange the technical organization. At the same time, any change in the physical environment may require important adjustments among the members of the parish. Whatever the case, the technical or nonhuman environment of the parish is seen as providing foci of crystallization for the human organization of its members.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE PARISH

Within this technical environment of the parish, varying numbers of individuals are bound together by common religious values, and seek through the agency of the parish the collective goals of the Church. Each of these individuals,

whether he be priest or lay member, brings to his parish life a unique personal and social background. In large part this is derived from his participation in other social structures and from the cultural milieu in which he has been socialized. The age, sex, family, class, and occupational structures to which he has or does belong have each conditioned him in their own way. They have left their imprint on his individual personality in the form of values, attitudes, and patterns of behavior, and these factors are not without effect upon his definition of the parish. Moreover, the sentiments and behavior proper to one such structure may or may not be proper to another. Adjustments and changes continue from birth to death and in every instance the complexus of these experiences and their meanings contribute to the individual's definition of his role in the parish structure. The parishioner, for example, who is young, male, "old American," a lawyer, and a convert brings to his participation in the parish social structure sets of values and sentiments widely different from those of the old Italian woman, "born Catholic," recently migrated to this country, and dependent upon her children for financial support. Both are Catholic, both are members of the human organization of the parish; but its meaning in their lives, and their definitions of their roles in it, are bound to reflect the individual differences in their personal and social background. And so for every member of the parish organization.

Looking at the parish, however, one sees more than simply a plurality of individuals who are uniquely motivated in terms of their individual backgrounds. It is a social organization and in the interaction of all the parish members — pastor, curates, nuns, lay members — there is a certain regularity, a uniformity in the ways in which they act toward one another. In the terminology of sociologists, these relatively stable patterns of relations are called "institutions," the most essential aspect of the social structure, since they define the proper or expected behavior of persons or groups who are playing roles relative to one another.[9] In the parish these institutions prescribe the

behavior and sentiments viewed as legitimate and "normal" for a wide range of situations, and they are supported not only by the individual parishioner's own positive motives for conformity but by the sanctions of others.

If one looks at a parish situation, individuals and groups are seen acting in certain accepted ways with one another. Not every individual is behaving in an identical manner, but in terms of the role he plays in the group his behavior reflects different social relationships. The curate, for example, interacts in one way with his pastor, in another way with his fellow curates, and in still another way with the parishioners. With each of them his role involves him in a different social relationship for which there are institutionalized patterns of behavior and attitude. It is expected that he will show an appropriate deference to the higher status position of his pastor; that he will interact as an equal with his fellow curates; and that the dignity of his priestly office will be respected in his relationships with parishioners. On the other hand, he can expect certain kinds of behavior from others. The parishioners, and even non-Catholics, will be expected to show him every courtesy; he will be called "Father"; his authority, particularly in matters of religion, will be recognized; and so on. Sometimes these relationships of the priest with his parishioners may be complicated by other bases of interaction founded on family relationships or on earlier membership with some of the laity in college, or in work groups, etc. But even here the range of tolerance is prescribed and the social relations institutionalized.

A kind of protocol surrounds all parish relationships, but particularly those that involve the clergy and religious with lay members. A large part of the early socialization of the "born Catholic" has been concerned with absorbing the knowledge of the "socially right" and "socially wrong" behavior and the ranges in between. "He knows how to act" would be one paraphrase of the institutionalized behavior. But more than that he knows the outer edges and the nuances present to his role as a layman in relation to the priest. There are the minimum

obligations which he must meet in order to retain respectability and avoid the censure of the group; there are the practices and symbols normally expected (such as tipping one's hat to the priest), but where the pressure to conform is relatively slight; and there is, at the other extreme, the "socially wrong" behavior associated with the oversolicitous, overattentive reactions of some lay members in their interaction with both clergy and religious. For almost every situation involving their social interaction both the priest and the parishioner are mutually obligated in greater or less degree to manifest the sentiments and behavior institutionally expected of their roles. Both the formal definitions of Canon Law as well as tradition have so completely conditioned them to this relationship that it is taken for granted as commonplace. But if Catholics have thus suffered from chronic nearsightedness and have failed to see adequately what went on before them, perhaps this unique social structure of their parish life can be better seen through the eyes of a "newcomer" to the Church and parish.

In every parish the convert is a person full of hopes and not a little trepidation. For him the decision to enter the Catholic Church was in all likelihood an experience full of trials and tribulations the like of which "born Catholics" have been spared. It meant that an old life had to be cast off and a new life taken on. This was more than simply accepting the truth of the faith and a new spiritual life with its procession of sacraments and individual religious obligations. Indeed, this part was a joy even if Baptism did not make of him a Doctor of Theology. If there were still questions he could not answer, he could be comforted by the company of many "born Catholics" who, more than he, might be expected to know. Still he is "different" somehow and, aside from his common membership in the Mystical Body of Christ, he wanders "lonely as a cloud amid the alien corn."[10] The trouble seems to be that while he is a Catholic, he does not know how to *act* like one. As one convert has summed up this dilemma, "To accept, with joy, the basic verities is one thing. To think, act, smell,

talk, and feel like a Roman Catholic is quite another."[11] For everyone else the "way of life" in the parish seems so natural and right, but for him the ordering of attitudes and sentiments and patterns of relationships is both complex and frightening. His accommodations to the new life have to cover so much. They seem to extend all the way from "adjusting Protestant knee joints to a Catholic prie-dieu"[12] through the maze of distinctions among the relations of the lay members of the parish to an understanding of "the relation of the priest to his people . . . unique in its alliance of almost incompatible elements; for it blends reverence and familiarity, qualities which in most relations tend to exclude each other."[13] For some converts the process of assimilation is quite rapid; for others it may be that participation in the religious life of the parish remains their sole index of membership. Notwithstanding the best of intentions and long years in the parish, some may never "feel Catholic" in the sense of internalizing and living the institutionalized patterns of behavior present to their role in the laity. In an effective manner, however, the convert's experiences testify to the reality of the parish social structure and its importance.

As in any other social organization, parish life constantly involves the process of social evaluation among its members. In terms of the values and sentiments of each individual, other parishioners are located, separately or in groups, on a rough scale of prestige based on what they do, or who they are, or with whom they are associated. Such evaluations tend to cluster and the distinctions are voiced in the comparative language of "fine," "fine but —," "inferior," "superior." One priest may be esteemed by some in his capacity as a preacher or as a confessor or simply because he says his Mass with dispatch. For others a somewhat different evaluation may be made because of youth or age, sternness or humor, spirituality or appearance of worldliness. Ordinarily these evaluations are only peripheral and secondary factors in the high prestige which the *office* of the priesthood enjoys as divinely established, but they condition

both the frequency and the kind of social interaction the priest may have with his parishioners.

The bases of evaluation relating to the lay members of the parish are much more varied and more general. In terms of the values associated with religious practices, they may be distinguished as "practical," "lax," and "lapsed" Catholics. Some enjoy prestige and respect because of their frequent reception of the sacraments, while others are recognized critically as "backsliders" or only "Sunday Catholics." Even the relatively minor fact of spatial position at religious services sometimes serves as a basis for evaluation. Depending on individual attitudes, a positive or negative connotation is included in reference to the "side aislers," "the rear-pew sitters," the "down fronters," and so on. Generally the sentiments attached to these latter evaluations are lacking in strong pressure, but at times the subtle value identification process serves to direct the careful selection of pews.

On quite another level, differences in age, sex, class, and nationality are used as bases of classification. The parochial school children are compared to those in the public school; the devotion of women is contrasted with that of men; the foreign element to the native born — and in these evaluations, some local to the parish and some derived from the wider community, implications for interaction within the parish are involved. The young men in a Holy Name Society, for example, may find that their participation is limited by the control and prestige enjoyed by older parishioners. A select few of the parishioners may appear as the only members of charity organizations or study clubs and may be recognized as a separate group because of what others describe as "preferential treatment." Perhaps only parochial school children are chosen to serve as altar boys, while public school children are even excluded from the children's choir. Whatever the form these values and sentiments may take in the concrete situations of parish life, their presence serves the purpose of stratifying the lay membership into positions of greater or lesser prestige.

The justice or righteousness of these status assignments may never be completely accepted by the members, either individually or as groups. They may resent the differentiation or fail to understand why they exist — "Aren't we all Catholics?" — but in their behavior patterns the real existence of these value distinctions and the symbols connected with them is clearly seen. At the same time those of the laity who enjoy the parochial privileges and honors tend to acquire vested interests in their retention, and any attempt to change the order of functions or personnel and disrupt the *status quo* arouses strong sentiments of resistance. The organist and the ushers, the sexton and the altar boys — they among others may view a proposed change in procedure or personnel as a challenge to their status which is both unfair and unjust. And the pastor or priest who initiates the change may well be perplexed and wonder what is wrong — what all the excitement is about.

From this point of view it can be seen that both the technical and human organizations of the parish are supercharged with systems of values and sentiments of united importance. What is seen to be significant is not only the thing in itself — the person, the place, the hour, the change — but the social value which it carries to the members of the parish. Thus, behavior within the parish cannot be regarded as simply motivated by religious considerations or by a logic derived from the common religious goals of the members. No matter how routine the pattern of interaction, the behavior of all the parishioners expresses the importance of the strong sentiments derived from the multiple identification which each person holds with other social structures. That there are, however, in this complex motivation of behavior clearly discernible structures of relationship directs attention now to the formal and informal institutions of parish society.

THE FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PARISH

Like almost every other social organization, the parish is in part formally organized. For the parish this refers to the

patterns of relationship established by the Church and imposed for the purpose of attaining more efficiently and in standard form its religious goals. This formal organization is composed of strata or levels which differentiate the pastor from the curates, the curates from the religious, the priests from the laity, and so on. Each of these levels is carefully defined both by Canon Law and separate ecclesiastical regulations as to its distinct functions and authority. The relations which are supposed to obtain in the social interaction which cuts across these strata and surrounds them with detailed systems of rules, policies, and regulations are presented. For centuries this formal organization of the Catholic Church has been an object of marvel among students of social organization, and its comprehensiveness on all levels has made it the prototype of formal structures. Even on the parish level, however, this formal structuring is conspicuous, and serves as the base point for understanding many of the social interrelations of Catholics.

The formal structure of the parish is what appears on the organizational chart of the Church for that particular unit. Essentially it is a system of positions occupied by persons with the lines of authority and communication drawn between them. For the Catholic parish in the United States this formal structuring is suggested in Figure 1.

In this blueprint of the parish structure, the two major status levels of priests and lay members are seen as hierarchically ordered in such fashion that the pastor is placed above his curates, the priest above any religious, and each of these ranks above that of the laity. This ranking is associated primarily with the differential functions, authority, rights, obligations, and prestige associated with each status level. It indicates that orders are expected to proceed from the top rank down to the lower ranks along certain lines of communication and that individuals on each level should defer to those above them and expect deference from those below them. Whether the parish has the number of priests indicated in the diagram, or whether there is an administrator and/or members of

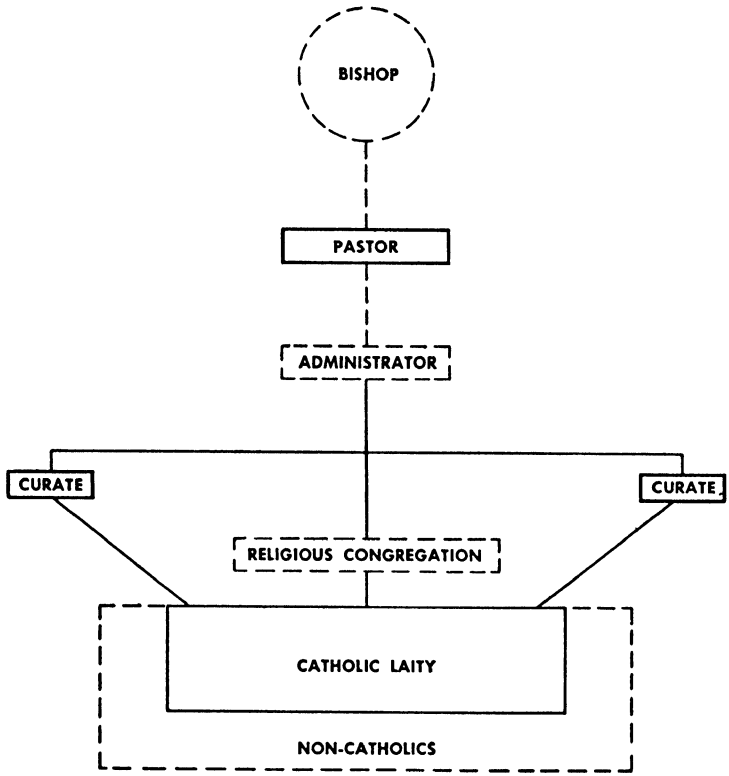


Figure 1. The Formal Structure of the Parish

religious congregations is incidental. The heart of the formal structure of the parish resides in the relationships of the priesthood and the laity, and it is to the description of these strata that we now turn.

THE PRIESTHOOD

The status of the priesthood probably has its highest formal expression in the expectation that the priest be an *alter Christus.*[14] Pope Pius XI's expression of this is in many respects typical:

> The priest is a minister of Christ, an instrument, that is to say, in the hands of the Divine Redeemer. He continues the work of the Redemption in all its world-embracing universality and divine

efficacy, that work that wrought so marvelous a transformation in the world. Thus the priest is 'another Christ,' for in some way he is himself a continuation of Christ.[15]

Accordingly, as the official representative of Christ and His Church in the parish structure, the status of the priest is superordinate to that of all members of the laity. This status he has acquired by the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. At ordination he is invested with religious authority and powers permanent in duration which sanctify his own life and place him as the intermediary between God and man. Thus he has the privilege and power to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass, to transform bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, to grant forgiveness for the sins of penitents, to baptize and marry the laity, and so on. The distinctive feature of these endowments is that their authority and powers do not inhere in any personal quality of the priest, but are derived from ordination. Whatever may be the character of his personal life and behavior, the validity of his faculties can never be called into question. His person is identified with his official role, and this is so structured as to insulate the priest's functions from involvements with those with whom he has to deal. In a special way this office of the priesthood is further protected by the vow of celibacy and the oath of service to the diocese which each diocesan priest takes.

The priest's formal function in this office is the care and salvation of souls under his supervision. This responsibility holds implications for his behavior not only in requiring that he be a keeper of the sacred tradition, a skilled performer of the rites, and an interpreter of the sacred dogmas, but that he manifest a dignity appropriate to his high status. Symbolically, this position of the priest is reinforced by the title of "Father," and by a distinctive garb which increases his social visibility and identifies him as the legitimate leader of the religious life of the parish.

To these rights, duties, and responsibilities of the status of the priesthood, however, new notes are added when the one

internal differentiation relevant to the parish structure is made. This refers to the formal positions of the pastor and his priest-curates in the parish, and the manner in which the Church has institutionalized their roles and interrelations.

According to the new Code of Canon Law the presence of a proper rector is an essential element of a canonical parish. The status of this pastor as "shepherd of his flock" assigns to him both the spiritual and administrative leadership of the parish. He is superior in prestige to both his priests and the laity, and this superiority is supported by special authority, powers, and privileges which are accorded to his office. Jurisdiction in certain matrimonial cases is reserved to the pastor; he is the immediate source of important decisions regarding all aspects of parochial life; and he enjoys privileges which aside from their religious aspects guarantee him the advantages of greater material rights. The pastor's responsibilities and obligations are, of course, commensurate with his higher priestly position, and require that he protect the spiritual life of the parish and maintain and improve its physical organization. Thus, unless otherwise provided by law, his obligations include the offering of the *missae pro populo,* or Masses for his people, the instructing of children in the Catholic religion, the maintenance of parish books and archives, and obedience to the authority of the Ordinary of the diocese. This latter obligation may vary among dioceses, but it places the pastor under the Ordinary's jurisdiction largely in administrative affairs. By Canon Law the tenure of his status and the scope of his pastoral authority are protected except for the gravest of offenses.

Relating to the parish curates, the status of the pastor is analogous to that of a higher staff officer over his subordinate military leaders. He has the authority to direct their activities and to delegate authority to them, but he can in no way withdraw the powers of the priestly office they hold. The laity are enjoined not only by the definition of their relations to the clergy generally, but by specific Church command to contribute to the support of their pastor. He is the formal authority

representing the organization of the larger Church to the parish and the community, and he stands as the connecting link between the parish and the higher administrative divisions of the Church.

The status of the priest-curate is subordinate to that of the pastor. He is expected to give obedience to all legitimate orders and instructions of the pastor and to carry out his priestly functions on the pastor's assignment. His own status is so closely identified with that of the pastor that administrative rights, powers, and obligations are the main distinguishing factors. Still, in terms of these prerogatives of the pastor's position as well as the seniority and long experience he ordinarily possesses, the curate is expected to grant deference and respect to his pastor in all their relations.

The place of the religious in the formal structure of the parish is intermediate between that of clergy and laity. They are subordinated to the clergy mainly on the lesser importance of their parish functions and the absence of the powers and privileges received by the priest at ordination. The formal expectations of their personal sanctity and the functional importance of their teaching or other roles to the parish and the Church reward them with a prestige rank superior to that of the laity. Their voluntary abnegation of worldly life and their withdrawal to the spiritual environment of the religious community entitles them to the respect and admiration of clergy and laity alike. Symbolically again, their identification with the source of a higher life is expressed by a distinctive garb and by the titles of Mother, Sister, and Brother. For female religious this identification is further symbolized in their mystic unions as "brides of Christ." In the direct line of authority they are subordinate to the pastor of the parish on whose invitation they have undertaken specific functions. At any time they may be withdrawn from the parish groups with the consent of the Ordinary, but in their membership they are viewed as entitled to the prestige and respect of the laity on grounds both functional and spiritual.

THE CATHOLIC LAITY

In the formal blueprint of the parish structure, the laity are generally depicted as an undifferentiated group of Catholics occupying the large square at the bottom of the organizational chart. They are specified as to parish membership simply in terms of their physical inclusion within territorial boundaries and are expected to fulfill their religious obligations within its framework. Regardless of sex, age, or any other considerations they are collectively subordinate to the clergy in functional importance, authority, power, and prestige and to the members of any religious congregation in functional importance and prestige. In the ideal construct they are expected to acknowledge the religious authority of their pastors and priests in matters of religion specifically, to follow their spiritual leadership, and to live in conformity with the dictates of God and His Church.

While it is seldom delineated on the parish blueprint, respective substatus positions are assigned to the parish laity by the laws, policies, and regulations of the Church. These condition the rights, mainly, which they have to participation in the life of the parish and to the kinds of interrelations they may experience with others in the parish. Thus, differentiation is made in terms of religious practices expressed in classifications of "practicing," "lax," and "lapsed" Catholics. The excommunicated Catholic, for example, is denied the rights and graces of the sacraments and the patterns of social interaction they involve so long as the interdict on full membership persists. This ban, of course, may be removed, and it is the obligation of the Catholic to secure this removal as soon as possible. Other differentiations are made primarily on age considerations and regulate functional participation in the parish as well as rights and obligations. The "born Catholic," for example, achieves simple membership in the Church and parish through the Sacrament of Baptism. Until the age of seven or thereabouts, when the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist are first received, the obligations of the child

and responsibility for behavior are at a minimal level. From this point on through the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation where a militant adult status is assigned, there is an increase in the fullness of the rights, obligations, and prestige open to lay members. As is seen in the diagram, however, there is no set of distinctions among the laity formally based on functions, rank, order in authority, or prestige. The lines of authority and communication relate them in a subordinate position to the pastor, priests, and religious and through their positions to the formal organization of the Church.

THE INFORMAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PARISH

The experience of most Catholics testifies to the fact that this formal blueprint of the parish structure necessarily oversimplifies the realities of parish life. That this is in no sense unusual is indicated by the recent studies in the area of industrial organization. These studies prove that, rather generally, the blueprints of formal organization are seldom fully implemented, nor is conformity to them achieved without strain, nor is the pattern the same for all individuals in the same system. What happens is that many of the actually existing patterns of human interaction have no representation at all and others are inadequately represented in the formal structure.[16] The formal structure is essentially a depersonalized construct of what the organization should be in an ideal sense in order to achieve its purposes. It can and does express the relations between the status levels oriented to the group interest, but the occupation of these positions by individuals possessed of social values and attitudes is not taken into account. In terms of the significant presence of these values and attitudes, it is now necessary to look at the informal structures variously found in the parish organization.

In the parish, as in all organizations, the personal relationships of members lead to the formation of informal groups and to uncharted status positions within each. These informal groupings are not only found on the separate status levels of

the clergy and the laity, but in some instances cut across their distinctions. The simple necessity, for example, of maintaining a parish rectory in order to provide for the physical comfort and needs of the parish clergy at once provides a situation conducive to the formation of an informal group. For the clergy, life in the rectory is a substitute for the family life denied them by their office. The pastor is normally the person who sets the tone for this family life. On the one hand, he may be a benevolent patriarch whose sympathy and understanding permits the younger priests a wide range for the expression of their individual values and sentiments. Again, he may be the personification of the dignity and superiority of his official status and sedulously maintain the social distance which separates him from his curates. In a very real sense, the personality of the pastor not only stamps the social life of the rectory family but leaves its imprint on the structure of the whole parish. Situations are not unknown, however, when the pastor has abdicated his right to establish the patterns of social interaction within the parish, or when they have been abrogated or taken over by a "stronger personality." Not infrequently, a priest-curate may "take over" and reconstruct the patterns of relationship in the parish to such a degree that his *real* authority among the laity in parish affairs seems to exceed or in fact does exceed the limits of his formal status.[17] At times it may be that even a member of the laity has this informal position of authority. Few priests or lay members will deny, for example, the "heavy stick" which the housekeeper or sexton may occasionally wield in the life of the rectory and the parish. The physical position in the headquarters of the rectory where decisions are made, orders transmitted, etc., places them in a key spot for conditioning, particularly, the interrelations of priests and laity. What they say, what they decide, what their impressions may be – these can reverse to a degree the expected order of relations in the parish structure. More importantly, it is an illustration of the prominent roles which may be found in the informal structure of parochial

life, uncharted in the formal blueprint, but significant to any real understanding of parish relationships, processes, and problems.

On another level, the importance of individual and group values and sentiments is seen in the patterns of relationships between priests and the laity. In the formal structure of these relations the social distance between their status levels is assumed to be uniformly the same. When observed, however, it is noted that some priests are socially closer and more successful in their ministry with some lay groups than with others. Young Father A. may have quite different patterns of social interaction with the school boys and girls than Father B. The latter, on the other hand, may be accepted more enthusiastically and have more effective contact with the Holy Name Society or the Study Club. This fact simply indicates that the pattern of relations between the clergy and lay groups transcends the formal definitions of their interaction and in an important way involves the sentiments connected with age, class, and educational interests.

Among the lay members of the parish the absence of any formal differentiations represents an obvious oversimplification. As was indicated above, informal cliques of parish members are found which rest on a number of different bases. These cliques are functionally important not only to their members but in their relationship to the total parish structure. Like all other aspects of the informal organization they may serve a "good" or a "bad" function. However, it should not be assumed that they have a "bad" influence simply because they are not provided for in the formal structure. Much collaboration exists on the informal level and sometimes this is directed or can be directed to assist the functioning of the formal organization. What must be realized is that such informal groupings and their informal differentiations are made in every parish. To the real parish life of the priests and the parishioners they are vitally important.

THE ASSOCIATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PARISH

While in the strict sociological sense, the parish as a social group is itself classified as an association,[18] the language of Catholics generally uses this term to describe the separate societies which are found within its organization, viz., the Holy Name Society, the C.Y.O., the Rosary Society, and the like. These are, as it were, substructures established as formal organizations in order to attain some specific or unique goal, either on the parish level alone or in conjunction with diocesan, national, or international organizations. Their presence in every parish and the importance of their roles in parochial life requires that brief mention be made of them here.

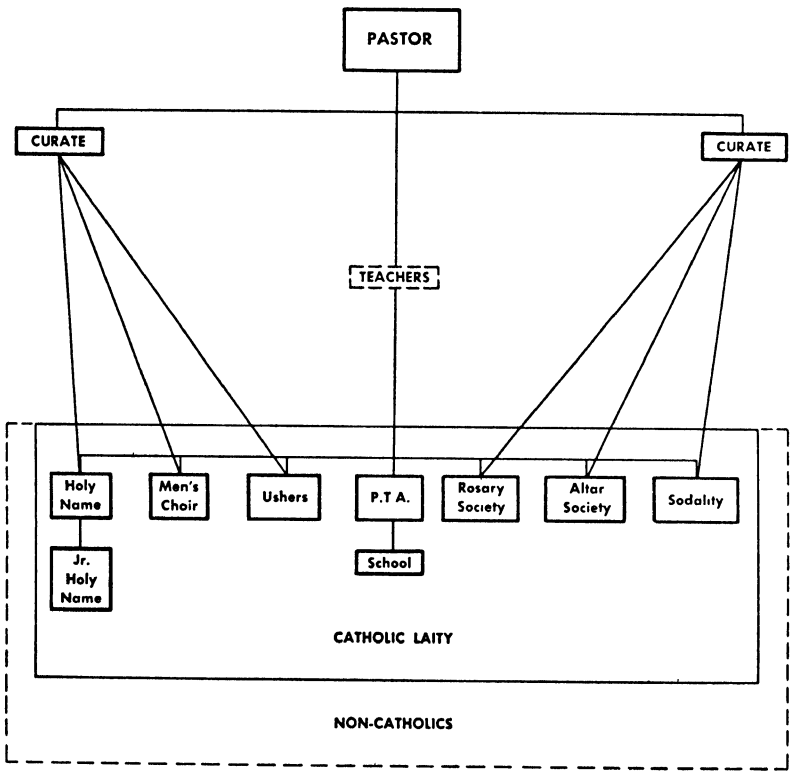


Figure 2. The Formal Associational Structure of the Parish

In Figure 2 the general outlines of this formal structure of parish associations are suggested. It will be noted that the status distinctions between priests and laity are again depicted in hierarchical form. Whatever the society may be, a priest is moderator or director, and exercises spiritual as well as administrative authority in varying degrees. Further, the associations tend to be specific in their delimitation of lay membership in terms of sex, age, or other criteria of interests. To a degree the inner organization of these societies is determined by either formal or informal sets of rules which distribute and define the administrative offices open to the laity, formalize their objectives, describe their procedures, and relate the society's goals to the general religious life of the parish. In miniature it reflects the social structure of the parish itself and as such it is often used as a measuring rod to determine both its social as well as spiritual status.

It will be sufficient to point out here that any evaluation of the associational structure of the parish at once involves the recognition of its informal patterns of organization and their relevance to parish life. The same people who belong to the larger unit of the parish may hold membership in one or more of the parochial societies. In each of these, both the formal expectations of behavior and the individual and group values and sentiments of the members are involved. On a number of different bases cliques are formed and the interaction of their members informally controlled. For example, the lay leadership may be perpetuated in the hands of a few to the dismay of others who feel that they or their friends are entitled to the honors. Or perhaps the priest-moderator's personality traits make his leadership less successful in one society than in another. Or again it may be the well-known case of school cliques which so operate as to minimize the opportunity for "outsiders" to gain honors. However many the examples may be and their varieties in form, the significant point is that here in a substructure, the parish once again has the problem of maintaining a kind of social organization which is

delicately balanced to the values and sentiments of so many. The important relation of this problem to the religious functions of the association and to the spiritual life of the parish needs no repetition. It simply focuses once again on the need for recognizing the complex patterns of interaction present to parochial life.

CONCLUSION

These evidences of the social structure of the parish and its associations are capable of multiplication in terms of numerous other factors not mentioned above. The relations of the parish to the community as a religious group and through the interaction of its separate members and societies, the differences present to the parish structure in terms of its rural or urban location, the special features present to racial and national parishes – these are all variations on a single theme. The parish must be seen as a partial social system. Its technical and human organization, wherever found, are closely identified with the whole Church; but within these technical and human organizations, the *real* patterns of relationships observed among parish members are seen as important considerations not only as indexes of their social organization, but as importantly related to the active participation in the Mystical Body of Christ.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER III

1. The canonical definition of parish membership includes all persons, Catholics and non-Catholics, within the territorial boundaries. The consideration of membership is here restricted to Catholics alone for heuristic reasons.

2. William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America,* 2 vols. (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1918), I, 275.

3. Quoted from a talk by Archbishop Richard J. Cushing, in the Boston *Morning Globe,* Dec. 27, 1947.

4. F. J. Roethlisberger and William J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939), *passim.*

5. *Ibid.,* p. 552.

6. John J. Harbrecht, *The Lay Apostolate* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1929), p. 21.

7. Canon 215, 1–3.

8. Harbrecht, *op. cit.,* p. 23.

9. Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1949), pp. 34–35.

10. Lucile Hasley, "The Alien Corn," *The Sign,* XXVIII (July, 1949), p. 13.

11. *Ibid.,* p. 14.

12. *Ibid.*

13. F. J. Sheed in *The Trumpet* (Feb., 1950), p. 1.

14. Cf. Charles Augustine, O.S.B., *A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law,* II (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1936), *passim.*

15. Encyclical of His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, *Ad Catholici sacerdotii* in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXVIII (1936), p. 10.

16. Roethlisberger and Dickson, *op. cit., passim.*

17. The characterization of the young priest and his pastor in the film "Going My Way" is an effective, though possibly overdrawn, illustration of this point.

18. N. S. Timasheff and Paul Facey, S.J., *Sociology: An Introduction to Sociological Analysis* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1949), Chap. VI.

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CHAPTER IV

THE PARISH IN THE RURAL COMMUNITY

by EMERSON HYNES

INTRODUCTION

THE critical reader will properly view the title of this chapter with certain reservations. (1) The distinction between rural and urban in reference to parish organization has no justification in Canon Law or in the Liturgy of the Church. At best it must refer to secondary aspects. (2) Even if the distinction was at one time justified sociologically, the differences between rural and urban in the United States are today in some respects almost meaningless as a result of modern methods of transportation and communication. Finally, (3) although there has been a wealth of romantic literature contrasting agrarianism and industrialism, studies of the rural Catholic parish are so few as to preclude scientific generalization.

The first mentioned objection is completely valid. A parish is a parish. The Mass is the Mass. From the standpoint of the primary purpose of the parish there is no valid distinction between rural and urban. The sacraments are no more efficacious when administered in the midst of waving golden grain than in the shadow of the skyscraper. Only indirectly, *and not necessarily,* will the location of the parish have an effect on its primary purpose.

The consideration of the second objection is the principal aim of this chapter. It will be an attempt to show that the differences between rural and urban communities are still considerable and that these differences have an important

influence on parish life. Again it is necessary to emphasize that rural and urban environments are actually quite variable and that generalizations must be made with caution.

The third objection is readily granted. Rural sociology has developed remarkably in the past quarter century, but not much more than general statistical data are available on rural churches. Almost nothing has been written on the Catholic rural parish. Consequently, the observations and conclusions which follow must be taken as tentative. In many cases the writer has relied upon information gained over the past twelve years from rather steady contact with rural pastors in the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. While these experiences have provided valuable insights, it would be pretentious to imply that the following synthesis represents a complete and scientifically established appraisal.

THE PLACE OF THE RURAL PARISH IN THE UNITED STATES

American Catholics are overwhelmingly urban.[1] However, since the religion of citizens is not part of the general census, precise figures are not available. The special religious census of 1936 suffers from the same defects as the three preceding it, namely, the collection of data from individual pastors on a voluntary basis, and the lack of a single criterion for defining church membership. Still, the rural-urban breakdown may be taken as reliable enough to show the general trend. The Catholic Church listed 16,041,764 urban members and 3,873,173 rural members, the latter constituting about 19.4 per cent of the total. Of the eleven religious denominations reporting memberships of one million or more, only the Protestant Episcopal and Jewish congregations had smaller proportions of rural members. Three of the eleven largest denominations had rural memberships of more than 50 per cent, and three others were about 40 per cent rural.[2]

It is certain that some rural Catholics are members of urban parishes, while it is unlikely that any urban Catholics are

members of rural parishes. Consideration of these facts would alter the proportion of rural Catholics only slightly. No attempt was made in the census to divide the rural population into farm and nonfarm categories, so it is impossible to say what percentage of American Catholics were actually members of farm families. If this percentage followed the national division between rural-farm and rural-nonfarm, it would be about 10 per cent.[3]

It would seem that the great majority of American Catholics are urban largely because their immigrant ancestors happened to settle, for economic reasons, in heavily urbanized parts of the country. The Catholic dioceses "in the industrial Northeast, the area east of Milwaukee and St. Louis and north of a line drawn between Cincinnati and Baltimore" had in 1945 "a combined Catholic population of 16,105,646 or 66.8 per cent of the total number in the United States."[4] In 1940 this region had nine of the ten states that were over 60 per cent urban, including New York (83 per cent), Illinois (74 per cent), and Ohio and Pennsylvania (each about 67 per cent).

The fact that American Catholics are so urban raises two important questions about the future place and importance of the rural parish. One question pertains to the natural growth of the Catholic population, and the other to vocations to the religious and priestly life. Both of these questions hinge upon the low net-reproduction rate of urban families. With 1.00 taken as an index to indicate a sufficient number of children to maintain a stable population, the following table indicates the contrast in rural and urban families.[5]

Size of Community	*Native White*	*Negro*
United States	1.12	1.13
Rural-farm	1.69	1.80
Rural-nonfarm	1.37	1.23
Cities, 2,500–10,000	1.04	.84
Cities, 100,000 or more	.76	.68
Rural average	1.54	1.61
Urban average	.86	.72

It is evident that extensive urbanization of any group means eventual decline in its strength unless losses are made up in other ways. The effect upon the Catholic population has been predicted by Dr. O. E. Baker, who at the time of writing this excerpt was the population expert of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

> In the large cities today 10 adults are raising only about 7 children. Should the reproduction rates now remain stationary . . . these 7 would raise 5 children, these 5 about 3½. Births would fall to only about one-third the present number in a century. . . . In the farm population 10 adults are now raising about 14 children. Again, assuming a stationary reproduction rate these 14 would have about 20 children, these 20 about 28. Births would almost treble in a century. . . . The Catholic Church, deprived in large measure of this flow of youth from rural areas, is facing a problem which can be solved, in my opinion, only by a great missionary movement among the rural people, who are members of no church, especially the poor but proud people of the South.[6]

There is the possibility that even if cities fail to reproduce themselves, Catholics within the cities will have large enough families to continue the natural growth of urban parishes.[7] Yet a National Catholic Rural Life Conference study has shown that even such heavily Catholic cities as Boston (74.3 per cent Catholic), New Orleans (66 per cent Catholic), and Providence (56.7 per cent Catholic) still fall short, taking each city as a whole, of the birth rate necessary to maintain the population.[8] On the other hand, nothing indicates that the rural Catholic family is any smaller than the national rural average. It can scarcely be doubted that rural parishes add proportionately more to natural Church growth than do urban parishes.

The same claim may be made with respect to vocations. It is commonly asserted that the quality of the religious life in the rural home and parish provides greater encouragement to religious vocations; also, that these vocations come principally from large families, which are found more often in the country.[9] A study of teaching and nursing Sisters in ten religious communities (2800 questionnaires were sent out with a 60

per cent response) revealed that " . . . 11 percent of the vocations come from families having 3 or fewer children; 40 percent from families having 4 to 7 children; 49 percent from families having 7 or more children."[10] Furthermore, " . . . 46 percent of the vocation subjects were born in the large city, 19 percent in small cities, 17 percent in small towns, and 19 percent on the farm."[11] While this indicates a much higher percentage from rural areas (37 per cent) than the national Catholic rural population (19.4 per cent), it may be misleading, since the proportion of Catholics to the total urban or rural populations of the areas is not known. If only 20 per cent of the Catholics in the areas from which the vocations came were rural and they furnished 37 per cent of the vocations, then a relationship between vocations and rural populations would be indicated. This is an hypothesis needing further study.

It is understood that size of family and rural living are not the only significant factors in vocations. Education in a Catholic school is most influential, and a Catholic education is much more likely in an urban than in a rural parish. But where a rural parish in a solidly Catholic community maintains a parochial school, conditions would seem to be best for the highest rate of vocations. The parish of St. Michael, Minnesota, founded in 1856, meets these qualifications. The parish has been stable in membership, averaging about one thousand persons. In its history it has produced sixty-five Sisters, two Brothers, and twenty-two priests. In the past twenty-five years the parish has had seventeen Sisters, two Brothers, and ten priests. The national ratio of professed religious to the total Catholic population is about 1 to 136. The ratio of the living religious of just the past twenty-five years to the average parish membership at St. Michael is about 1 to 35.[12] St. Michael has a reputation for an exceptionally high vocation rate and its record is not presented as typical of rural parishes.

Any practical plan to increase the proportion of rural Catholics must start with the rural parish. Planning is needed to prevent the exodus to the city by helping young farmers

to procure land, and by educating rural Catholics in their responsibility to maintain Catholic families in the parish area.[13] Planning is needed also to develop methods of bettering the standard of living of rural people, and to develop sources of nonfarm income, perhaps through decentralized industry. It would seem to be practical to work for the establishment and strengthening of rural parishes located on the fringes of cities, where there would be opportunity for rural family living even though wage earners had urban employment.[14] One of the "four working aims" of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference is "the settling of more Catholics on the land," and the Conference has as a long-time objective that "not less than one-half of our urban Catholic families should be living where they can have space, light, air and the ownership of some productive property. This group would be occupied in industry, commerce, and trades, but the habitat of the family would be in a milieu conducive to Christian family living and to the perpetuation of the race."[15]

No consideration of the rural Catholic parish would be complete without mention of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.[16] Started in 1923 through the efforts of Father Edwin V. O'Hara (now Bishop of Kansas City, Missouri), and a dozen rural pastors, it is now a well-organized independent association under the patronage of the hierarchy. Its executive secretary, Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti, has become one of the outstanding Catholic leaders of the nation. Official rural life directors are appointed in eighty-three of the nation's dioceses. Six bishops have served as presidents of the organization, and many others have given their active support.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL PARISH

In spite of the small percentage of rural Catholics, rural Catholic churches were more numerous than urban churches in the 1936 religious census, the number being 10,135 rural and 8274 urban.[17] A diocesan check by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference in 1947 revealed only 9641 rural

churches; the 1948 *Catholic Directory* listed a total of 19,847 parishes and missions in the nation, which would give 10,206 urban churches or more at the present time.[18] As would be expected there is a vast difference in the size of the two types. In the 1936 census the urban averaged 1939 members and the rural 382. This urban average was far greater than for any other religious body reporting (the next highest being the Jewish congregations with 1282), and the Catholic rural average was also highest, with the exception of two small denominations of fewer than fifty churches.[19]

From the point of view of the pastor as "father to his flock," the size of the rural parish is more favorable than the size of the average urban parish. It is easier to know 400 people and their problems in a homogeneous community than 2000 in a heterogeneous city, and parish life is likely to be less personal and intimate as the parish increases in size. This advantage in size of the rural parish is offset by the fact that nearly half the rural churches have no resident pastors. Those with resident pastors total 5326, and those without, 4315.[20] A pastor cannot humanly serve two or more parishes equally well. The parishioners of the place of his residence have the advantage of his daily presence, of daily offering of the Mass, and of other religious services. Rightly or not, the parishioners of the mission tend to feel neglected; and, other factors being equal, they are more likely to become lax in the practice of religion.

Increasing the membership of mission parishes is not always possible, but in some cases modern roads and cars would make the abandoning of missions feasible, since a majority of rural parishes were established in horse and buggy days. The difference already noted between the rural churches in 1936 (10,135) and 1947 (9641) indicates some combination of parishes into larger units. But transportation is not the only factor in a rural parish. Traditions must be considered. The sense of belonging to an old parish, with its cemetery of deceased relatives and neighbors, is very strong, and nearby parishes may be regarded as "foreign."

The small size of the rural parish is one of the obstacles to the building of parochial schools and other parish facilities. The basement of the church is often the parish hall. This is an undesirable arrangement and one which limits the parish's social and recreational programs. Rural areas that are heavily Catholic, even small villages of under 500 population, sometimes have good parochial schools and parish halls, but they are in the minority. In 1947 only 1726 rural parishes (17.8 per cent of the total) had elementary parochial schools, and only 309 (3.1 per cent) had high schools.[21] The effects on the religious training of Catholic rural youth are obvious. There is no substitute for religious instruction as a regular part of a school curriculum. Religious instruction on Saturday or Sunday morning or, in some states, on released time for an hour or two a week, are standard procedures in rural areas. The summer religious "vacation school" was experimented with in the early part of this century. After 1926 its promotion became a special feature of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, working with the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; since 1935 the latter has become the official sponsoring agency for summer religious instruction.[22] "Vacation schools" illustrate the adaptability of rural parishes. They have grown "from three in 1921 with an enrollment of 47 . . . to 8,000 in 1945 with an enrollment of over 700,000."[23] Not all of these are in rural parishes, but the great majority are.

Other methods of providing religious instruction have also been used in rural parishes. Correspondence courses are available through the Confraternity. The Reverend John Shields has worked out a plan at Aledo, Illinois, which has unusual features. Unable to build a parochial school, he has engaged four Sisters to become "roving teachers" during the regular school year. The Sisters drive from place to place, holding classes in schools (where released time is allowed) or in homes or parish halls. Each child receives three hours of religious instruction a week. Seven parishes have been brought into the plan and the Sisters serve children over an area of several

hundred square miles. No one of these parishes could have a parochial school, but the co-operation of parishes has brought weekly instruction on a graded basis by trained teachers. The Sisters also visit homes and aid in adult religious education.[24]

Figures on the financing of parishes have changed since the 1936 census, but probably the comparative position of rural and urban parishes is much the same. Of the 6866 urban Catholic churches reporting in 1936, the average value of the church edifice was $92,845. Of the 8795 rural churches reporting, the average value was $17,001. The average annual expenditure for the urban church was $15,897, for the rural, $3,006.[25] Since the average urban church had five times the membership of the rural, the figures on values and expenditures are remarkably similar on a per capita basis.

Notwithstanding, rural parishes in many instances owe a debt of gratitude to urban parishes and people for financial assistance. Examples of rural parishes contributing financially to urban parishes would be rare, but through diocesan channels urban parishes indirectly make heavy contributions to rural parishes. The average rural Catholic does not appreciate the advantage to the rural parish which flows from the diocesan structure of the Church, the unity and authority of the hierarchy, and the provisions of Canon Law for the training of priests. On the whole, Catholic rural parishes escape most of the problems which beset the majority of Protestant rural churches, such as the excessive number of churches for small congregations, the lack of well-trained ministers, and inadequate financial support.[26]

In Europe farmers traditionally live in small villages, with the church in the center, and go out to the fields to work; also, of course, the farms are much smaller than those in the United States. The American type of agriculture, with its open country living and large farms, makes parish participation more difficult, physically speaking, for farm families than for village and city people. Only 1657 of the Catholic rural churches are located in the open country; 3734 are in villages up to 500 population;

and 4250 are in villages of from 500 to 2500 population.[27] Regardless of the location of the church, rural parishes include larger geographic areas than urban ones — up to several hundred square miles in some western states. The time and number of parish services, religious and otherwise, are influenced by the needs of farm families. If the parish is a mission, or if the resident pastor must also serve a mission, only one Mass is offered on Sunday; rarely are there more than two in a rural parish. This, in addition to distance from church, means that the whole family, babies and all, attend the same Mass. The weather and the condition of roads are also factors to be reckoned with by farm families and the rural pastor. Probably, on the whole, rural people make more physical sacrifices to practice their religion than do urban people; and in the case of parishes with small memberships, they will likely make larger financial contributions. While distance is still a factor, it is a decreasing one as a result of good roads and cars. The farmer's longer and physically harder work week and the necessity of chores, even on Sunday, may have some effect in limiting opportunity for parish participation. This does not mean that rural families participate less in parish activities. No studies are available on this subject. Urban parishes undoubtedly have a greater number of parish activities and organizations, but whether proportionately more urban than rural families participate would be a matter for investigation.

The financing of the rural parish in its methods and difficulties varies from parish to parish, depending on the size, on the debt, on whether there is a parochial school, and so on. A few qualities have a special influence, however, in rural parishes. One is that the source of income of the rural community is almost entirely dependent upon a single occupation, agriculture; thus the level of farm income and the harvest yield will set the limits of parish income. In the drought years of the 1930's, many rural parishes were almost without funds and in some cases pastors received donations of food and little more. The farm families, also, do not get weekly pay checks.

Their incomes tend to be seasonal and their church support may be paid in a single yearly lump sum rather than weekly. Likewise the rural parish is small and intimate. Everyone has an opinion, at least, about the "worth" of his neighbor, and gradations of the amount of church support based on income and family prestige are often used in rural parishes.[28] Bazaars and festivals are widely used to raise funds.

One final point — perhaps the most important of all — is pertinent to the physical aspect of rural parishes. Rural America is still primarily mission territory. In 1940, of the 3050 counties in the United States, about 1500 had no resident priest in rural areas, and 1000 of them had no resident priest at all in the county.[29] A majority of these counties are in the South. Further, the total rural population (57,246,000 persons in 1940) compared with the membership totals of all rural churches (17,084,410 in 1936) shows that far more than a majority of rural people are not members of any church, even if an allowance of several million is made for underenumeration in the 1936 census. Carefully made county surveys of religious characteristics of rural people rarely show more than half the rural people as active church members.

Two of the "four working aims" of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference are directly pointed at the fact that rural America is still mission territory: "the care of underprivileged Catholics living on the land" and "the conversion of the non-Catholics living on the land." A number of religious orders direct their efforts in part or entirely to native missionary effort.[30] In 1937, a new congregation, the Home Missioners of America or the Glenmary Missioners, was founded by Father Howard Bishop. Using street preaching, chapel cars, literature, and other specially designed approaches, its efforts are concentrated wholly on the conversion of non-Catholics in rural America. In 1946 the new congregation had seventeen priests, twelve Sisters, four Brothers, and twenty-five students for the priesthood and seven Sister aspirants.[31] Basic to the plan of the Home Missioners is the idea that as soon as there are

enough Catholics in a region, a parish will be formed and the Home Missioners will move on to another unchurched rural region.

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL PARISH

Rural society is characterized by more homogeneity and less social differentiation and stratification than is urban society. The homogeneity of the rural community arises from a number of factors. One is the size of the community, which is small enough so that members can know one another and family histories. A second cause arises from the common economic interest, agriculture. Even village residents are interested in crops and trends of farm prices, for their incomes are directly affected. Third, while cities are centers of immigration, perhaps from many parts of the world, the rural community has very few "outsiders" entering it. Its population is made up and maintained by natives. Finally, having less division of labor and fewer occupations, fewer opportunities for the accumulation of great wealth, insufficient numbers for a variety of classes, greater opportunity for ownership and consequent independence – rural society is less complex and differentiated than is urban society.[32]

This homogeneity of members gives the rural parish more of a natural unity than an urban parish would ordinarily possess,[33] and this unity has implications in all aspects of parochial work. In the instruction of children, in sermons, and in social contacts, the pastor can assume a common understanding among his parishioners. Very often to know the common problem is to know the special problem of all parishioners.

Rural homogeneity, of course, is not absolute, especially in American parishes. Three types of parochial stratification are most evident: differentiation between farm and village families; differentiation between nationalities; and differentiation because of race.

The first distinction is less marked each year. The standard

of living of farm people has been raised greatly in the past decade. There is also a lessening of the educational gap, though a smaller percentage of farm than of village or urban youth attend high school. Adult education has been carried on among farm men and women through farm organizations and the government's Extension Service. In twelve years the proportion of farm homes with electricity jumped from less than 12 per cent to more than 68 per cent in 1949. Electricity means more than light and power. It means increased leisure time and opportunity for self-improvement. In general the inferiority feeling of farm people in their contacts with village people is disappearing, and if the distinction once entered into parish societies, it is now being eliminated. It is noteworthy that members of all social and economic status groups in the community are joined in the single Catholic rural parish. It is not uncommon, as Ensminger points out, for several Protestant churches "to cater to families that have different levels of living and that are in different tenure positions and occupational groupings," while "The Roman Catholic Church has demonstrated that social differentiation is unnecessary . . . for where the Catholic Church exists, it serves all status groups within a given geographic area."[34]

Nationality parishes – German, French, Polish, Bohemian, Spanish – still exist in rural areas. Although assimilation and intermarriage are rapidly decreasing the need and demand for them, they are likely to remain in rural areas longer than in urban. In 1940 only 8 per cent of urban Germans, third generation or later, still spoke German; but 21.5 per cent of rural-nonfarm and 31.3 per cent of rural-farm Germans retained the language. For French of the third generation or later, 22.8 per cent of the urban, 51 per cent of the rural-nonfarm, and 72.1 per cent of the rural-farm, spoke French rather than or in addition to English.[35] It is clear that the language difficulty will remain longer in rural parishes than in urban.

Even in a territorial parish, the community is sometimes so

overwhelmingly of one nationality that a language other than English is customarily used in parish services. This creates a difficulty for members who are not of the dominant nationality. The solution in many rural churches is to have the sermon in the foreign language at one Mass and in English at the other. Cultural differences associated with nationality may still persist after the foreign language has fallen into disuse, but difficulties arising from these differences may be expected to solve themselves in another generation.

Racial differentiation transcends rural and urban distinctions. There is no evidence that rural communities assimilate or amalgamate racial groups more readily than the urban. Probably accommodation, through formal arrangements which prevent open conflict, is better achieved in rural areas. Actually, very few rural Negroes are Catholics, outside of southwest Louisiana where the French tradition is dominant. The 1936 religious census listed only 38 rural Negro Catholic churches (as compared with 140 urban) with 29,030 members.[36] In Catholic rural parishes of the South, where no special church for Negroes exists, Negroes and whites attend Mass in the same church, though segregation in the pews may be maintained. While there are few rural Catholic Negroes, the great majority of Indians are in rural areas. Those on reservations are served by special missions; otherwise they would presumably be accepted as members of the nearest parish. In spite of these examples of differentiation, by and large the rural parish is marked by the homogeneity of its members.

A second important characteristic of the rural community is its stability. Studies both in this country and in Europe indicate that about 90 per cent of farm operators have followed the occupation of their fathers. Stability of residence is another quality. In ten Ohio townships, for example, 65.3 per cent of family heads were found living within 10 miles of their birthplaces and another 12 per cent within a 10–24 mile radius.[37]

Combined with stability is the third characteristic – the

dominance of primary social contacts in rural areas. Sorokin and his collaborators have expressed the concept by stating that the bulk of a rural person's contacts are "durable, long-lived, substantial and solid. They may be friendly or inimical, good or bad, ugly or beautiful, but they stay, exist for a long time, and do not evaporate quickly as do similar city relations."[38] They contrast this with the urban type of social contact which they claim "is superficial and quite mechanical. It misses the most important thing, human personality and individuality, or man's 'heart and soul' "; while the rural person "goes beyond the 'social dress' of a man and comes closer to his heart, soul, or personality."[39]

The effects of homogeneity, stability, and dominance of primary social contacts are seen in the development of a distinctly rural mentality. The technique of developing and sustaining the rural parish must take this into account. Tradition has much greater importance, and change occurs slowly. On any problem rural people like time to ponder; they take a personal interest in local problems and are inclined to think they have both a right and a responsibility to solve them. On the other hand, a custom once established tends to persist, since a core of the initiated remains a lifetime and usages are passed on to succeeding generations. Tradition is reflected in loyalty to the parish, in attention to the cemetery, in types of parish organizations and festivals, in Rogation and Corpus Christi processions, and, sometimes unfairly, in what is expected, or not expected, of the pastor. Funerals and the wake which precedes them, and to a lesser extent weddings, provide concrete evidence of the homogeneity and stability of rural parishes. A family is joined in the sorrow of death or the joy of marriage by most members of the community.

The stability of the rural family, however, must not be allowed to obscure the mobility of some rural people, especially youth. Actually, migration to and from urban areas totals several million persons a year, with the net migration favoring

the urban. County by county data on farm replacement rates, 1940–1950, are the basis of estimates that about 69 boys leave farms to seek employment elsewhere for every 100 who remain. (Minnesota's most Catholic rural county has an estimated replacement rate of 248, or 148 leaving for every 100 who remain.)[40] Not all go to the cities, but probably a majority of the youth do. Migration begins at about 18 years and is rare after the age of 30; but a majority do not migrate more than 50 miles from home.[41]

The importance of this high migration rate of rural-farm youth is readily seen. It keeps down the growth of rural parishes, but illustrates one of the contributions which rural parishes make to urban — that of membership. Since the tendency is for the "best" youth to go to the city, the rural parish may be deprived of its potentially most capable leaders. From the standpoint of the youth themselves, their migration at an impressionable age from the personal atmosphere of the rural home and parish to the strange, anonymous environment of the city presents a special educational problem for parents and pastors. The transition from rural to urban environment may easily bring a cultural shock, with great dangers to morals and religious practice. Only a careful preparation of and check on the migrating youth can prevent these dangers from becoming realities.

Another social characteristic of the rural parish is that the family figures strongly in its make-up. One officer of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference has made the practice of inquiring of fellow priests, "How large is your parish?" He claims that invariably an urban pastor will answer in terms of individuals, while a rural pastor will answer in terms of families. This is a clue to the psychology of the rural pastor. Family participation and family responsibility both in liturgical and social action enter into his approach to his parish. This follows from the greater strength and unity of the rural family, especially the farm family. More isolated and more nearly self-sufficient, with the work of the father in

the same environment as the rest of the family, and with co-operative work requirements for all members of the household, the rural family has natural advantages over the more hectic, cramped, and individualistic lives of urban family members.[42] Greater privacy and fewer distractions give the rural family more opportunity for family prayer in common. The greater distance from church and the infrequency of parochial schools places a heavier responsibility on rural families for instruction of their children in religion. Studies are not available to make comparisons between rural and urban parishes as to defections caused by bad marriages. A study of a large Eastern city parish showed that 21 per cent of its 1242 married persons were lapsed Catholics, with about 40 per cent of those lapsed involved in invalid marriages.[43] The typical rural parish would not show nearly so high a percentage.

It is also claimed by rural sociologists that rural people are "naturally" more religious than urban people, though the varying concepts of religion make it difficult to interpret this conclusion. Still, rural people live closer to nature. They deal with fundamental life processes — birth, growth, death — in the rhythm of the seasons. They have daily incentives to recognize how directly and completely they must rely upon the Providence of God. Even if this be true, it is subordinate to the fact that Catholicism is a supernatural religion, and thus any attempt to try to prove that rural Catholics are better Catholics than urban ones would be completely unwarranted. But the claim may have value in indicating that the organic nature of rural life as compared with the man-made and mechanistic urban environment does give a natural aid for fostering the development of the supernatural life. Probably rural people can be led more easily to understand their dependence upon Providence. They will have familiarity with the content of the majority of parables in Scripture, which are rural in background. The imagery of the Psalms, the purpose of Rogation Days, and other elements of the liturgy may be more readily

appreciated. It seems almost certain that the vital and non-competitive daily work of the farmer is more easily sanctified than that of nearly any other of the occupations.[44]

Some of the rural sociologists who assert that rural people are more religious also claim that they are more superstitious, but with respect to the Catholic farmer this charge is so groundless as not to be worthy of mention. Intelligent, scientific farming and deep, religious faith in the Providence of God are certainly not incompatible.

A point of special social significance in the rural parish concerns the problem of intercredal co-operation and conflict. It is doubtful that the position of Catholics on abstaining from formal co-operation causes any real conflict. It is simply taken for granted that in strictly religious services Catholics do not participate in any but Catholic forms of worship. But the practical application of the principle is not always easy.

Since the majority of rural Catholic parishes are located in communities of mixed religious groups and since the intimate nature of the rural community involves daily, personal contact — understanding and tact are often required of the rural pastor and laity. Perhaps it is a question of discrimination against Catholics securing positions in the public school system; or the holding of a school function in a Protestant church; or attendance at a social (but perhaps semireligious) function of a Protestant parish society; or the propriety of certain types of social gatherings by Catholic organizations (card playing, dancing, serving beer).[45] Membership in certain fraternal, youth, and economic organizations or the activities of such organizations may raise problems for Catholics.

In general, however, it may be stated that the Catholic rural parish and its members enter into the spirit of bettering the community and of solving its problems. Their responsibilities as citizens are emphasized rather than weakened by their faith. The editor of the official publication of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference has expressed the conviction: "We always felt that the National Catholic Rural Life Con-

ference was right in its practice of cooperation with all men of good will in the rural life field. . . . It will always be good for all of us to cooperate with men of good will."[46] Concrete evidence of this was shown by the participation of thousands of rural Catholic parishes along with parishes of other denominations in the giant European aid project known as CROP (Christian Rural Overseas Program), which sent shiploads of food and seed and other supplies as gifts to suffering rural people of Europe.

Antagonism over pledges required for mixed marriages is often regarded as a source of conflict, but it is quite possible that the position of the Church is better known and respected by non-Catholics in rural than in urban areas. The number of mixed marriages in rural parishes would vary with the influence of many factors. Sufficient data are not available to make a satisfactory comparison of mixed marriages in rural and urban parishes, but one factor might be mentioned. Where the Catholic population is small, girls or boys may not be able to find anyone of their age and choice among the Catholic parish members. If mixed marriages are ever justified, and they are allowed, they are more so in rural areas than in urban, where the large Catholic population allows much more opportunity for choice.

The whole charge of religious differences being a divisive force in the rural community needs to be brought into balance. To begin with, the differences are accepted in most cases as a part of the reality of America. To disagree with one's neighbor without thereby coming into conflict with him is an established American tradition. The history of bigotry is evidence of exceptions to the rule, but the point is that differences without conflict can and do exist. If rural sociologists have no more to offer for the solution of intercredal conflicts than the establishment of a single community church with a vague and almost meaningless theology, they have contributed nothing to the sincere religious leaders who want to avoid conflict but not at the expense of compromising their deepest beliefs.

It is, moreover, quite outside the province of rural sociologists to measure the Church primarily in terms of community service. The rural parish exists to provide for the worship of God and the salvation of souls. Improvement of the community should be the normal effect of making better Christians out of the members. But this is not the primary purpose of the parish.

Even when it seems to divide the community, the rural church may serve other values. After a survey of 343 rural families near Madison, Wisconsin, a student concludes that "The rural church serves to integrate family, occupational, nationality, status groups, and the like, rather than community groups based on localities."[47] It would be difficult to prove that serving community interests as such is more important to human persons than serving family or nationality groups.

THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF THE RURAL PARISH

To assert that the primary purpose of the rural parish is to establish a spiritual community for the worship of God is not to exclude or minimize the secondary purposes and their effects, both direct and indirect, on the temporal community. It remains to examine the leadership role and status of the rural parish in terms of the whole community.

Judging from much of what has been written, the record of rural churches is not too impressive. Much space is devoted to their weaknesses and problems, but very little indication is given of parishes being vital forces in the community. Occasionally there is a sympathetic allusion to their *potential* leadership, but seldom is a rural parish represented as the central social institution of an American community. The monumental 1940 Yearbook of the Department of Agriculture, compiled by more than fifty experts and the greatest source book in print on economic and social conditions of American agriculture, ignores the rural church altogether.[48] Religion is mentioned but twice, and then to make the assumption that the rural church is going through a "molting period."

A check of community studies conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and by the various state colleges of agriculture shows a number of references to rural parishes, but the conclusions are not often encouraging. Among the most thorough surveys are six conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in 1940, intended to illustrate the cultures in contrasting types of rural communities from the extremely stable to extremely unstable rural societies. In two of them, the Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,[49] and the Spanish of New Mexico,[50] religious beliefs profoundly affected the daily life of the community members and shaped the culture at every turn. However, both of these groups are far from typical of American rural life, and in neither of them was the parish as such of immediate importance — not for the Amish because they do not believe in formal parish organization and churches, and not for the Spanish because the parish is a small mission visited by the priest but once a month. In the latter case, the little church was the center of village life and "visits" to the church were frequent. The remaining four communities, each typical of large sections of American rural life, showed the churches more as declining than thriving institutions. The majority of citizens still believed in religion but church attendance was low in all cases.

The role of the parish as an agency of community integration appears most impressive in studies of Ellis County, Kansas. There parish-centered rural life, combined with the solidarity of the Russian-German families, has strengthened community ties and fostered social stability in the face of drought years and dust storms which have produced disorganization in other places. Adaptation to social change has been orderly, and group traditions have not been broken abruptly. Neighborhoods remain organized around parish churches, and the expansion of these local settlements has enabled the descendants of the original immigrants progressively to occupy the county.[51]

Considering rural America as a whole, without special reference to the Catholic parish, it would seem that rural parish

life is not as significant as it is in other countries. In a study of a traditional Quebec rural parish, there is scarcely a page which does not reflect the influence of religious faith on daily life. No aspect of social life is separated from the parish: "The unit of social life in French Canada is the parish. It is the natural division, the 'society.' "[52] The belief that a religious-centered culture is possible only among semiprimitives is contradicted by the evidence of Quebec, where although the economy is more self-sufficient, the level of culture can stand the test of comparison with any American rural community. The same could be said for Ireland, where "far from being on the retreat, the distinctive culture of Ireland is increasing in strength and autonomy, however much it has learned to assimilate the technological and other developments of the modern age."[53] It is likely that an evaluation of religion and parish life in Belgium, Germany, and other nations would also show a greater intensity than appears on the average in rural America.

Without attempting to weigh causes, the fact is that many of the functions of the parish in other lands are handled in the United States by county, state, and federal governmental agencies, and by independent farm organizations, co-operatives, and fraternal organizations that on the whole are unrelated to parish or religious beliefs. The extent to which this is true can be seen from the study of Goodhue County in Minnesota, one of the twenty-four counties in the nation selected for investigation of social organization in typical farming areas.

Goodhue County is in the dairy region. About one third of its population lives in the city of Red Wing; the rest of the people (about 21,000) are rural. The county has 83 churches, of which 9 are Catholic. About two thirds of the county residents are church members. Also in the county there are 155 school districts and 428 other formally organized groups, of which only 110 are for town members alone. In addition there are 9 formal governmental agencies of major importance, such as the Extension Service, Soil Conservation Service, and

the County Welfare Department. It is obvious that the activities of the school plus those of the 428 formally organized groups — to say nothing of informal groups too numerous to mention — absorb the time, interest, and in many cases the money of the 31,000 citizens. Nor do these outlets include the commercial entertainment agencies. It would seem that parish activities would suffer from these demands on time and energy; yet it is encouraging that the investigators report: "Among various types of social organizations in the county, the churches rank first in the interest and loyalty commanded from the people."[54]

The social life of the rural American is plainly departmentalized. To a great extent it is also secularized. The religious-minded rural leader is disturbed by the development of all the social, economic, recreational, and educational activities outside the parish with no relationship to religion. He fears that it will result in the dissociation of religious principles from daily actions and thus hinder the development of integrated Christian persons. He believes also that the social institutions themselves will tend to become confused in their values and conflicting in their purposes.

What is the solution to the departmentalism and secularism of rural social organizations? A clue to the approach which is recommended by many rural pastors can be found in an address of the Most Reverend Peter Bartholome, Bishop of St. Cloud, Minnesota, to the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. He stated that the greatest contribution that the Conference could make to the land

> . . . must be primarily spiritual and ethical. The Rural Life Conference must be interested in the heart and soul of the farmer more than in the soil and the economic problems of the land. True, it must be interested in material planning and must foster movements such as cooperatives, distributism and soil conservation, but let these movements be permeated with the teachings of Christ and let them come into existence rather as a result of His teachings or at least correlated with them.[55]

From this point of view, the role of the rural parish is primarily spiritual. The parish cannot assume the responsibility for initiating all the social and economic activities needed by the community. But the parish is responsible for the formation of its members so that they may go out and establish organizations based on the teachings of Christ, or participate in existing organizations as Christian apostles. The parish is thus the *teaching* rather than the *organizing* center for movements aiming to solve the material problems of the community. Its members are the "middlemen" between parish and community.

To state the possible role of the parish in theory is merely to begin discussion of the problem. Practical necessities must also be taken into account. The pastor in particular has a heavy burden. To interpret the teachings of Christ in terms of modern rural life means that he must know well the rural environment. He will be called upon to make countless judgments concerning specialized organizations and techniques aimed at improving rural life. This does not mean that he must be a soil or livestock expert or a recreational director. But he needs some familiarity with these subjects. A recent survey of 231 rural pastors (including 35 priests) indicated a lack of preparation for many rural leadership activities. Only 25 per cent reported having specific training for rural work in college or seminary. Nearly all desired some further training, even though they were already experienced rural pastors.[56]

For Catholic pastors and lay leaders the National Catholic Rural Life Conference is the principal source of information and guidance. Besides its publications and diocesan organization, it has sponsored about 150 rural life schools and institutes of from one day to two weeks' duration. In 1945 over 1700 priests were enrolled in one of the schools or institutes.[57] The schools are designed more to stimulate than to provide a complete short course. Bishops have sent pastors to agricultural colleges for short courses and conferences. Units on rural sociology are included in the pastoral theology courses of

some seminaries and a number of seminaries have rural-life study clubs. As an experiment in "on the spot learning about rural life, its problems and its possibilities," Father George Nell, of Island Grove, Illinois, took a group of nine seminarians into his parish for a month in the summer of 1949. Each day was planned to acquaint them with the particular work and problems of a rural pastor and to gain firsthand knowledge of all the community agencies.

Leadership is required of the rural parish in many fields of action. The following are some of the areas in which this leadership is being exerted.

1. *Intensifying the spiritual life of rural parishioners.* The adaptation of the retreat movement and days of recollection for farmers has taken place in the past five years.[58] The blessings of the Church which are applicable to rural life have been translated and made available to farmers. The devotion to St. Isidore, patron of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference by papal decree, has been fostered, and thousands of pictures of the saint have been distributed and now find a place in farm homes. Permission to celebrate the feast of St. Isidore with special solemnity on March 22 was granted by the Holy See in 1947.[59] Cana conferences and premarriage courses have been extended to rural sections of dioceses. In the diocese of St. Cloud in 1949 the premarriage course was extended to every rural parish.

2. *Encouragement of rural economic organizations.* The National Catholic Rural Life Conference has taken a strong stand in encouraging co-operatives, credit unions, and other economic devices to improve the economic conditions of rural people, and many rural pastors have given active leadership. Father Duren's achievement in promoting community building in Westphalia, Iowa, is an example of what can be done even in a parish of only 100 families.[60] Explanations of the various government farm programs and leadership in extending them have been common in parish meetings. The Farmers' Home Administration (formerly the Farm Security Adminis-

tration), which provides credit and guidance to low-income farm families, has received special support from rural pastors, and at one time that support was instrumental in preventing the discontinuation of the agency. The maintenance of the family-sized farm is an objective for which much work is being done.

Experiences both in the United States and in other countries have shown that not only is parochial leadership of assistance in economic reform but also that it can make a unique contribution which no other agency can duplicate. The adult education, co-operative, and credit union movement of Nova Scotia, which merited papal approval, is a notable example.[61] In Belgium the parish guilds united to form the *Boerenbond.* With over 110,000 members before the war, it was the largest co-operative of its kind in the world and of tremendous importance in improving the status of Belgian farmers.[62]

3. *Supporting farm organizations.* The independent farm organizations, such as the Farm Bureau and the Farmers' Union, have become strong factors in rural society in the past quarter century. A large number of pastors have taken an active part in supporting them. The usual procedure has been to work with existing organizations and not to take sides in promoting one rather than another. Sometimes two of the organizations exist in the same community, and in such cases the pastor may work with both. Catholic members have usually taken the position of staying within the existing organization and trying to influence it from the local upwards.

4. *Improvement of rural culture and standard of living.* A quick glance through a standard rural sociology text will inform one of the health, housing, and other deficiencies in the standard of living of rural people. In addition, as the Catholic *Manifesto on Rural Life* stated in 1938, "By and large, the countryside is a place of cultural barrenness."[63] Increased farm income since 1941 has altered this condition somewhat, but the problems are far from solved. This is one area in which every rural pastor has done some work — and

probably every pastor has his special project. The county library, rural electrification, county and school nurses, study clubs, health and safety programs, fire-prevention and rodent-extermination drives, the school lunch program, folk dancing and music, home-talent plays, the arts and crafts – these and many other programs have received support from the parish rectory and leadership from parish members. A remarkable example of the transformation of a community is seen in the change from the miners' shacks to the model homesteads at Granger, Iowa. Although this was a government-financed project, leadership was supplied by Monsignor Ligutti, and it is significant that this experiment so closely related to a rural parish was nearly the only one of about 100 such projects which was successful in achieving its objectives.[64] Interesting also are the beginnings of a rural parish through a homestead project for urban workers which Father Joseph Urbain is developing at Millville, Ohio.[65]

5. *Preservation of the soil.* The prevention of soil erosion and building the soil are prerequisites for the sheer physical maintenance of the rural parish, as well as vital to the welfare of the people. A well-known slogan – "soil erosion means soul erosion" – is backed up with statistics of abandoned churches and low church membership in depleted soil areas. The technical aspects of soil preservation are part of the government Soil Conservation Service; but ultimately soil protection is a moral matter, a recognition of stewardship of the land and of the obligation to future generations. In explaining the spiritual motivation behind soil conservation, rural pastors have done some of their best work. The National Catholic Rural Life Conference, in conjunction with Protestant and Jewish leaders, has issued a statement on "Man's Relation to the Land," which has been widely circulated.[66] Monsignor George Hildner of the archdiocese of St. Louis has become nationally famous for, among other things, having organized flood-control projects and other forms of conservation.[67]

6. *Youth and recreational activities.* There is no official

American Catholic rural youth organization, such as the JAC of Canada, Belgium, and France, but there are few rural parishes without some provision for youth and recreation. Rarely, however, would the facilities or organization compare with those in urban Catholic parishes. If there are no official parish organizations, a pastor may be instrumental in getting the youth into 4-H clubs, the Boy Scouts, or other national organizations. In addition, Catholic fraternal societies may have youth and recreational programs which take the place of or supplement a strictly parish organization. One study on rural Catholic parish recreation has been made, covering fifty Midwest parishes averaging 133 families each. Only 20 per cent of the communities had any form of municipal recreation; 53 per cent had movie houses; 42 per cent had bowling alleys — but only one third were without pool halls, and only two were without taverns. Card playing was the most frequently listed parish activity, followed by bazaars, socials, athletics, dancing, home-talent plays, and parties. About one third of the parishes maintained year-round recreational programs, the rest seasonal. One third of the pastors favored a program attained through the joint efforts of the parishioners and other community groups. One reason advanced was that the small parish did not have enough members to provide a well-balanced program (though it might, for instance, provide a team for a community athletic league). A more frequently given explanation was that there was an obligation to provide wholesome recreation for the entire community.[68] The general experience is that provision for wholesome, creative entertainment is genuinely needed in rural communities.

CONCLUSION

In summary, it would be accurate to generalize that in many ways the condition of the Catholic rural parish is stronger today than at any time in the past. Although vast mission areas still exist, the physical job of building is no longer pressing. A pride in rural living has developed, and with it a desire for

improvement. The work of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference has increased morale and provided information for rural pastors and lay leaders to an extent which could not have been foreseen twenty-five years ago. A regular and orderly provision for religious education of youth is in force. Hundreds of pastors have provided leadership in meeting temporal problems. There are many examples of the influence that a parish can attain.

On the other hand, religious indifference among rural people as a whole is greater today than in the past. The radio, movies, newspapers, and automobiles have influenced the attitudes and values of rural people. Secularism is undoubtedly a stronger force than it was a generation ago. The rural parish is practically the only social organization outside of certain individual families which can be relied upon to place spiritual over material values. Its task is greater and more important than in the past when a Christian atmosphere could be taken for granted. The experiences of vital rural parishes have shown that the potentiality is there to match the need for spiritual influence.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER IV

1. The U. S. Bureau of the Census defines as urban all those living in places of 2500 or more population, and as rural all those living in the open country or in villages up to 2500 people. It is obvious that many towns and small cities are predominantly rural in atmosphere, even though classified as urban in the census. In 1940 the rural population was 43.5 per cent of the total national population.

2. *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies: 1936* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Commerce, 1941), I, 86–97.

3. In 1940 the census figures listed 22.9 per cent of the total population as rural-farm and 20.6 per cent as rural-nonfarm. But the Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimated the rural-farm population as only 19 per cent of the total population on January 1, 1949.

4. Raymond Philip Witte, S.M., *Twenty-Five Years of Crusading* (Des Moines: National Catholic Rural Life Conference, 1948), p. 1.

5. Adapted from Dwight Sanderson, *Rural Sociology and Rural Social Organization* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1942), p. 98. Figures are drawn from the 1930 census. Only a 5 per cent spot check is available from the 1940 census. In this sampling all groups declined – the urban average to .74 per cent and the rural-farm to 1.44 per cent.

6. "Some Implications of Population Trends to the Christian Church," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* III (1942), 84–86.

7. This possibility is based upon the higher fertility of Catholics found in various investigations. For a summary, see Sister Leo Marie, O.P., "Trends in Catholic Population in the United States," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* VI (1945), 27–28.

8. Witte, *op. cit.,* p. 5.

9. For a comparison of family size in rural and urban areas, see Sanderson, *op. cit.,* p. 224, and William F. Ogburn, "The Family and Its Functions," *Recent Social Trends* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933), p. 684.

10. Sister M. Christina, I.H.M., "Study of the Catholic Family Through Three Generations," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* III (1942), 149–150.

11. *Ibid.,* p. 145.

12. Data supplied by Rev. Joseph Ettel, pastor.

13. Cf. Clarence Farrelly, "Rural Resettlement," *Land and Home,* IX (1946), 23.

14. Very few American Catholic rural leaders (except some of those living in the heart of New York City) have taken the totally uncompromising stand against urbanism and industrialism that dominated the thought of the English Distributists. The English group is important, however, because its three great leaders — Chesterton, Belloc, and Father McNabb — have had wide influence on American leaders. The works of Father McNabb, *The Church and the Land* and *Old Principles and the New Order,* are essential reading for the background of the principles of the Catholic rural life movement.

15. Luigi G. Ligutti, *A Survey of Catholic Weakness* (Des Moines: National Catholic Rural Life Conference, 1918), p. 13.

16. No distinction between the National Catholic Rural Life Conference and the Rural Life Bureau, Social Action Department of N.C.W.C. was made until 1934, and for practical purposes the two may be considered as a single unit. Cf. Witte, *op. cit.,* pp. 146–152, for technical distinctions.

17. *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies: 1936,* p. 96.

18. Ligutti, *op. cit.,* p. 14. Cf. pp. 17–61 for a listing of the rural parishes in each diocese of the United States, by number in open country, in towns and villages in the population classes: up to 500, 500–2500, 2500–10,000.

19. Data from *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies: 1936,* pp. 86–97. For individual states, more recent surveys of the rural church can be obtained from the state colleges of agriculture. See, for example, Harold F. Kaufman, *Rural Churches in Kentucky, 1947* (Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 530; Lexington, 1949).

20. Ligutti, *op. cit.,* p. 14.

21. *Ibid.,* p. 15.

22. Witte, *op. cit.,* pp. 89–96.

23. *Ibid.,* p. 186.

24. Sister M. Joanna, "The Aledo-Peoria Way," *Land and Home,* VI (1943), 111–112.

25. *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies: 1936,* pp. 109–125.

26. J. H. Kolb and E. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society,* 3 ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1946), 3 ed., pp. 514–515.

27. Ligutti, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

28. Cf. C. J. Nuesse, "The Relation of Financial Assessment to Status in a Rural Parish," *The American Catholic Sociological Review*, IX (1948), 36–48. See also Gilbert Francis Wolters, O.S.B., *A Socio-Economic Analysis of Four Rural Parishes* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1938), pp. 155–157, who notes: "The envelope system was tried but was deeply resented by the people."

29. Howard Bishop, "The Home Missioners Find New Fields," *Catholic Rural Life Bulletin*, III (1940), 17.

30. Cf. Edgar Schmiedler, O.S.B., *A Better Rural Life* (New York: Jos. Wagner, 1938), pp. 80–91.

31. Witte, *op. cit.*, pp. 195–198.

32. Cf. P. A. Sorokin, C. C. Zimmerman, and C. J. Galpin, *A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology*, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1930), I, 203–216.

33. For an analysis which undertakes to prove that the urban parish fails to attain homogeneity and a common family spirit, see Leo Sweeney, C.M., "A Religious Society in a Secular World," *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, XLIV (1943–1944), 197–201; and "Real or Pseudo Parishes," *ibid.*, 429–436.

34. Douglas Ensminger, "The Rural Church and Religion," in Carl C. Taylor, *et al.*, *Rural Life in the United States* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), pp. 121–122.

35. Lowry Nelson, "Speaking of Tongues," *The American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (1948), 202–210. For a description of some parishes of German nationality membership, see Schmiedler, *op. cit.*, 56–76.

36. *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies: 1936*, p. 853.

37. Sanderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–91. See also Sorokin, Zimmerman, and Galpin, *op. cit.*, I, 208–233. An interesting example of stability is shown by Wolters in two Kansas parishes. In 1937, in spite of drought and depression years, 76 of the 88 families in the parishes were still occupying the same farms as they had in 1930. *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

38. Sorokin, Zimmerman, Galpin, *op. cit.*, I, 237–238.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 239.

40. Conrad Taeuber, "Replacement Rates for Rural-Farm Males Aged 25–69 Years, by Counties, 1940–50." Release of Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Dec., 1944.

41. Sanderson, *op. cit.*, p. 88. A check on 202 graduates of a Catholic rural Kansas high school showed that of the 100 alumni leaving the county, 66 had moved to cities (51 of the 66 were women). Of the 111 farm-reared graduates, only 54 still lived on farms. Wolters, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

42. Cf. Sorokin, Zimmerman, and Galpin, *op. cit.*, II, 5–50. In startling contrast to the placid life of the rural family is Father Sweeney's account of urban families in what was considered a model urban parish. The records showed that in three and one-half years "43.1% of the whole parish moved" their residence. Leo Sweeney, C.M., "A Continuous Survey of a Highly Mobile Urban Parish," *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, XLIV (1943–1944), 14–19.

43. Schnepp, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–43.

44. For a most impressive statement of the relationship between farming and Catholicism, see Most Rev. Aloisius J. Muench, *Partnership with God* (Des Moines: National Catholic Rural Life Conference, 1941). See, also, Sorokin, Zimmerman, and Galpin, *op. cit.*, II, 343–385; O. E. Baker, "The Church and Rural Youth," *Catholic Rural Life Objectives* (Des Moines: National Catholic Rural Life Conference, 1935); Wolters, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–169.

45. Cf. John E. McNamara, "Religious Difficulties Among Catholic Farmers," *Catholic Rural Life Bulletin*, II (1938), 21–22.

46. *Land and Home*, VII (1944), 45.

47. Louis Bultena, "Rural Churches and Community Integration," *Rural Sociology*, IX (1944), 257.

48. *Farmers in a Changing World* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1940). The present writer considers this a glaring omission in a work which has as its aim a report on "economic and social conditions" in American agriculture. However, it should not be inferred that the Department of Agriculture is indifferent to religious groups. Government agencies on all levels have been most co-operative in furnishing materials and speakers for the National Catholic Rural Life Conference summer schools and institutes and to the Committee on Town and Country Churches (which is sponsored by the Home Missions Council of North America, the Federal Council of Churches, and the International Council of Religious Education). The Bureau of Agricultural Economics has frequently assigned rural sociologists to work with church groups. Its mimeographed publications include several practical guides for rural pastors and churches by Orion Ulrey and Douglas Ensminger.

49. Walter M. Kollmorgen, *The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1942).

50. Olen Leonard and C. P. Loomis, *El Cerrito, New Mexico* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1941).

51. A. H. Anderson and Randall C. Hill, *Rural Communities and Organizations; A Study of Group Life in Ellis County, Kansas* (Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 143; Manhattan, 1948). See, also, Sister Mary Eloise Johannes, C.S.J., *A Study of the Russian-German Settlements in Ellis County, Kansas* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

52. Horace Miner, *St. Denis, A French-Canadian Parish* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 63.

53. Conrad M. Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1940), p. xxvii.

54. Frank D. Alexander and Lowry Nelson, *Rural Social Organization in Goodhue County, Minnesota* (Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 401; St. Paul, 1949), p. 5.

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56. Richard O. Comfort, "Survey of Activities and Training of Selected Rural Ministers in the United States," *Rural Sociology*, XII (1947), 375–387.

57. Witte, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

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59. *Ibid.*, pp. 212–215.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 215–217.

61. M. M. Coady, *Masters of Their Own Destiny* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1939).

62. Eva J. Ross, *Belgian Rural Cooperation* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1940).

63. *Manifesto on Rural Life* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1939), p. 26.

64. Cf. Luigi G. Ligutti and John C. Rawe, S.J., *Rural Roads to Security* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1940), pp. 171–185. For an evaluation of the Granger project along with eight other government homestead projects, *A Place on Earth, A Critical Appraisal of Subsistence Homesteads* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 1942).

65. Witte, *op. cit.*, pp. 194–195.

66. For the text, see Witte, *op. cit.*, pp. 169–172; or the symposium, *Rural Life in the United States* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), pp. 129–131.

67. An account of his work appeared in the *Reader's Digest*, XLII (May, 1943).

68. Alvan P. Heuring, "Parish Recreation in Catholic Rural Parishes," unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1943.

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CHAPTER V

THE PARISH IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

by DAVID H. FOSSELMAN, C.S.C.

THE VARIABILITY OF URBAN PARISHES

IN TERMS of population and material resources, as the statistical data presented in the previous chapter indicate, the urban parish is the stronghold of American Catholicism. Approximately 80 per cent of all American Catholics are urban, and 60 per cent of all Catholic parishes are urban parishes. In most large cities, except in the South, Catholics are more numerous than members of any other denomination. It is reasonable to assume that the dominant place of urban parishes in the American Church will be maintained in the future.

The task of the student of parish life would be lightened considerably if there were in reality "a typical city parish." But parishes, like all spatially demarcated social groups, manifest individuality in accord with a variety of conditioning factors, including such variables as community size, age of the parish, ecological position, ethnic and racial composition, occupation, and other socioeconomic characteristics. A New England mill town parish of 5000 members differs markedly in these respects from, say, a metropolitan Midwestern parish of 15,000, just as a Polish parish is distinguishable in many ways from a nearby Negro parish. While the ecclesiastical structure and function of all parishes, rural as well as urban, is essentially the same, between one parish and another there are significant visible differences due to the various conditioning factors and to such vitally important, though difficult to measure, qualities

as "parish spirit" and religiosity. From the pastoral point of view, interparochial differences are usually quite apparent and well known, contributing enormously to the desirability of some parishes and the undesirability of others as clerical appointments. One parish may be sought after particularly because it has "a nice class of people," or is located in "a solidly Catholic neighborhood," while another may be assiduously shunned because it is in "a terrible district," or because it is known to have "a very poor parish spirit."

Although the "typical" city parish does not exist, it is possible to distinguish several features of parochial organization which are more distinctively urban than rural and which are found in both ordinary territorial parishes and in national and racial parishes. The latter, which are discussed in another part of this work, comprise a considerable proportion of all Catholic parishes and, at least in terms of ecclesiastical definition, are for the most part an urban phenomenon. Differentiated from other Catholic parishes by language, religious customs, and cultural traditions, as well as by their unique status in Canon Law, national and racial parishes constitute important and distinct types of urban parish organization.

Rarely indeed will a territorial parish represent only one socioeconomic stratum; yet, since social stratification is an important selective factor in the spatial distribution of urban populations, a single social class is usually found to predominate in the ordinary city parish. Therefore it is possible to distinguish, besides racial and national parishes, several other types which have their basis in class differentiation. There is, for example, the "working-class parish," located in the medium and low rental areas which are usually the older residential sections, or sometimes in newer suburban areas where cheaper rentals and low-value homes are provided near industrial plants. Other types, distinguished on this crude basis, would include the middle-class suburban parish, identified with the residential areas of business and professional people; the upper-class urban type, not important numerically, but so distinctive as to merit

a special category; the "rurban" parish of smaller cities in predominantly rural regions, including both farmers and city dwellers; and the downtown parish which is recognizable in all older urban centers of the country.

The latter type, the downtown parish, is especially interesting in the analysis of urban parochial organization because it includes parishes which, in most cases, have passed through the various stages of development or have at one time or another been identified with the more common social characteristics of urban parishes generally. A sketch of the life history of such a parish would seem to promise more in the way of understanding than an attempt to elaborate a superficial analysis of urban parish types, for which concrete data are lacking. St. Patrick's parish in Washington, D. C., one of the oldest Catholic parishes in the United States, is admittedly unique in some respects, and Washington is hardly a typical metropolitan city, but the long history of this parish reveals stages of growth and decline which are probably not very different from those experienced by a large proportion of urban parishes. A review of the history of this one parish may help to place urban parishes in the United States in perspective.[1]

THE LIFE HISTORY OF A DOWNTOWN PARISH

The Foundation of the Parish. The organization of St. Patrick's parish was intimately connected with the foundation of the city itself. It is thus illustrative of the older type of urban parish which functioned as an isolated and relatively self-sufficient institution, independent in its educational and charitable endeavors of the wider, organized diocesan aid which characterizes such projects today. The first property for the erection of the parish church was purchased in 1794, four years after the designation of the District of Columbia as the permanent seat of the federal government. The first church was erected in 1796, four years prior to the actual removal of the government offices to their new location.

The immediate occasion for the establishment of a church

in the national capital lay in the necessity of providing for the spiritual welfare of the Catholics among the hundreds of workingmen who, at the solicitation of the city's commissioners, flocked to Washington to assist in the building of the federal city. Foreign countries contributed the majority of these workers, with the Irish the most numerous. Bishop John Carroll, whose jurisdiction then embraced the entire nation, appointed an Irish priest to minister to the new congregation. The latter's task was rendered exceptionally difficult, even for that missionary period in American Catholic history, by the depressed financial status of his flock. The occupations of the early immigrant Irish in Washington were predominantly of a skilled or semiskilled character, and not common labor, for an abundant supply of the latter was already available among the slave population of nearby Maryland and Virginia. Yet the feeble and grudging support which Congress and the nation at large accorded the project of building the new city rendered the promised jobs unavailable and the immigrants were quickly reduced to an impoverished condition. In the face of the grave obstacle thus presented to securing adequate financial support for the founding of a church, the first pastor was forced to employ personal funds in purchasing the necessary property and erecting on it a humble frame building. Following this achievement he soon resigned his unpromising charge and returned to his native Ireland.

The site selected for the church was close to the geographical center of the newly founded city. Location with reference to the center of population — a consideration of primary importance in present-day parish planning — was more or less meaningless in a situation where the meager population, numbering at that time about 500 persons, was scattered haphazardly over the 6110 acres within the city's limits, which were also the limits of the parish. The order and grandeur envisioned in L'Enfant's original plan for Washington found no reflection in the dismal reality. The single consideration available for predicting the direction of the future development

of the city lay in the fact that the sites for its two principal buildings, the President's House and the Capitol, had already been determined. Around each of these buildings clustered the rude shacks of the workers employed in their erection. St. Patrick's Church was placed approximately midway between them.

During the first four decades of its history, Washington experienced an increase in population of about 500 people per year. By 1809, when it became necessary to supplant the original church with a larger one to accommodate the growing congregation, the street on which the church faced showed prospects of becoming the principal thoroughfare of the city while immediately to the west of St. Patrick's lay the feeble beginning of the business section. The second pastor, with money inherited from his father, wisely embarked on an ambitious and remarkably farsighted program of property acquisition. Within five years after the completion of the new church, he had purchased nine additional lots adjoining the original parish holdings, all of which he later deeded to the Archbishop of Baltimore in trust for St. Patrick's congregation. The wisdom of this purchase was to be amply demonstrated three quarters of a century later when the rental accruing from the commercial use of part of this property was to prove the deciding factor in enabling the church to retain its original location in the heart of the city.

Parish Schools and Institutions. Under the leadership provided by Father William Matthews during his fifty years as second pastor of the parish, St. Patrick's contributed extensively to the religious, educational, and social welfare of the Washington community. As the mother parish of the city it established as parish projects institutions which in modern times would be attempted only on a diocesan level or by the co-operation of several parishes.

The first foundation was an academy for the education of young men. In 1815 the pastor of St. Patrick's donated to the Jesuit Fathers at Georgetown College a lot adjoining the

church where they erected a building which soon housed a flourishing academy. Its facilities were used eagerly by the most prominent families of Washington and the nearby areas, Protestant and Catholic alike. Under Father Matthew's presidency this Washington seminary had become the foremost educational institution in the District by 1827, when its operation was suddenly terminated by the enforcement of a Jesuit rule which forbade the acceptance of tuition fees. For the next twenty years the building was used by successive individuals, usually the assistant pastors of St. Patrick's, for the operation of small private schools. When the Jesuits reassumed direction in 1848 the school once more expanded, receiving after ten years a charter from Congress under the title of Gonzaga College. By the year 1871 the commercial development of the neighborhood had so enhanced the value of the property that the school was transferred to a new location away from the center of the city.

Given the generally depressed economic circumstances of Washington's early years, it was natural that Father Matthews should seek to devote the resources of his parish to the assistance of the poor, especially the neediest among them, the neglected children. The Washington City Orphan Asylum had been founded in 1815. While the pastor of St. Patrick's was a steady contributor to this institution, he was nevertheless disturbed by the danger of Catholic children finding their way into it and growing up without instruction in their religion. In 1825 the Sisters of Charity responded to Father Matthews' request for assistance and under their direction a combination parochial school and orphanage was established, the Female Free School and Orphan Asylum. In 1831 the institution's name was changed to St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, when it received a charter from Congress, which body also donated twenty thousand dollars worth of city lots to be divided equally between St. Vincent's and the Washington City Orphan Asylum. New quarters were erected in 1849, and these served the needs of the institution until the encroachment of the business section

of the city made necessary its removal to the suburbs. The property near St. Patrick's Church was sold in 1899 for approximately twenty-five times its original cost.

St. Patrick's parish sought to provide the same kind of institutional care for Catholic male orphans as it had for orphan girls, but this proved to be a more difficult task. An abortive attempt was made in 1843 when Father Matthews called again on the Sisters of Charity to manage such an asylum, which, however, had to be discontinued after three years when the Sisters, having adopted the rule of St. Vincent de Paul which forbade them to teach boys, were withdrawn from the school. Nine years later the Sisters of the Holy Cross assumed the direction of St. Joseph's Male Orphan Asylum. A substantial edifice for the housing of this combination orphanage and day school was secured in 1866, one block from the church, and this location was retained until 1928 when, following the example of its sister institution, St. Joseph's was removed to its present site near the northeastern boundary of the District.

Immediately following the incorporation of St. Vincent's Orphanage in 1849, Father Matthews undertook the establishment of a select school for girls, using as his model the flourishing Georgetown Academy of the Visitation, then in its twenty-fifth year of service. The Washington Visitation Academy was started in 1850 in the building recently vacated by the boys' orphan asylum. Two years later the Academy purchased a new site directly across the street from St. Patrick's Church where it remained for twenty-five years an outstanding educational institution, patronized by the prominent and exclusive families of the city. In 1877 this school, too, succumbed to the invasion of the city's business district and moved to a new location which was in turn disposed of in 1922 for the same reason. The Convent of the Visitation was then moved outside the District, but the Academy was discontinued.

Other institutions which originated in St. Patrick's parish included a home for aged people conducted by the Little Sisters of the Poor, a House of the Good Shepherd, the school

of the subsequently erected Immaculate Conception parish, and Carroll Institute. The latter was an outgrowth of the Young Catholic's Friend Society, an association of the young men of St. Patrick's and other parishes devoted to the promotion of Catholic educational endeavors. Besides the assistance tendered to local parochial schools, the Institute itself conducted a night school for adults in its own spacious quarters. This building and that of Carroll Hall which adjoins St. Patrick's rectory have long served the Catholic population of the District as appropriate places for meetings and gatherings of every kind.

The Establishment of Daughter Parishes. The parish limits of St. Patrick's originally embraced all of what is now the city of Washington, with the exception of the Georgetown district, and hence all of the thirty-seven parishes now found in the city are in a sense descendants of the mother parish. St. Patrick's was directly instrumental, however, in the establishment of three "daughter parishes": St. Peter's in the eastern section of Washington, St. Matthew's to the west, and Immaculate Conception parish to the north.

Subdivision of a given territory with consequent multiplication of parishes is typically due in urban areas to the inadequacy of the original church facilities in the face of population pressure. A different reason, however, namely, difficulty of communication, was responsible for the first offspring of St. Patrick's. Washington's population in 1820 is given as 13,247 among whom there were probably not more than 2000 Catholics. The second church building, erected at St. Patrick's in 1809 and enlarged in 1820, was able to accommodate this number, but the wretched conditions of the streets and roads of the new city frequently made it impossible for members of the congregation living at a distance from the church to attend services. A chapel, built near the southern extremity of the city by a prominent member of the congregation in 1806 was too small to afford any significant relief in the situation. Consequently, in 1820 a committee composed of members of the mother parish was organized to secure subscriptions for

the erection of St. Peter's Church on property donated by Daniel Carroll of Duddington, a member of the Carroll family of Maryland and the original proprietor of Capitol Hill and most of the land in east Washington. The first pastor of the new church was appointed in 1821 and assumed the care of the Catholics residing in the southern and eastern sections of the city. That the congregation was of considerable size is deduced from the fact that Archbishop Maréchal confirmed a group of 200 persons there in 1822.

Spirited sectional rivalry during Washington's early years prevented accurate prediction of the city's future development. The northwest portion, however, eventually began to demonstrate the greatest expansion and, in 1830, of the 18,827 persons living in Washington, 70 per cent resided in an area that lay within a mile radius of St. Patrick's Church. The facilities of the latter were soon overtaxed, and in 1837 an appeal was made by the pastor to all the citizens of Washington for aid toward the erection of a new church, to be located one-half mile to the northwest of St. Patrick's. Father Matthews himself donated a house valued at $10,000 for the purpose, and the people of the city were systematically canvassed to procure the additional funds necessary. The year 1840 saw the erection of St. Matthew's Church, which was to become, a century later, the cathedral of the new archdiocese of Washington. The name of the new church not only signified its dedication to the apostle and evangelist, but also was intended as a tribute to the pastor of St. Patrick's Church.

The third church erected in the near northwest section of Washington, that of the Immaculate Conception, had its origin in the establishment of a school by the pastor of St. Patrick's parish. The ten-year period from 1860 to 1870 saw a tremendous increase in the city's population, which advanced during this single decade from 61,122 to 109,199. There was neither a public nor a parochial school in the area to the north of St. Patrick's, so in 1864 one was started under the direction of the Sisters of Charity from Emmitsburg, Maryland. At the

same time construction was begun on a building which was intended as a combination church and schoolhouse. This was completed in July, 1865, but the congregation continued under the pastoral care of St. Patrick's Church until the following year, when the assistant pastor of St. Patrick's was appointed permanent rector of the new parish. The congregation increased to such an extent between 1864 and 1870 that a new church had to be erected in that year.

With the foundation of Immaculate Conception Church the boundaries of St. Patrick's parish received their permanent definition. They embrace an area approximately three fourths of a mile square, which contains seventy-seven "squares" devoted to private use, in addition to twelve "reservations" owned by the municipal and federal governments. Within the territorial limits of the parish is located another church, St. Mary's, built in 1846 for the use of a national parish comprising all the German Catholics of Washington. Holy Rosary Church, a national church for Italians, is situated on the southeastern boundary of St. Patrick's parish.

The Building of the Present Church. The church erected in 1809 was permitted to remain during the lifetime of its builder, the venerable Father Matthews. Shortly after the termination of his fifty years as pastor in 1854, an attempt at the construction of a new church failed of accomplishment, the plans entertained for it being so grandiose that the Archbishop regarded them as wholly impractical. By the time of the Civil War – in the aftermath of which the Reverend Jacob Walter, fourth pastor of St. Patrick's, was to receive nationwide prominence for his determined but unsuccessful efforts on behalf of Mrs. Mary Surratt, executed in 1865 for alleged complicity in the assassination of President Lincoln – the deterioration of the church edifice had reached alarming proportions. By this time, too, the population of Washington was nearing the 100,000 mark and greatly increased facilities were required for the accommodation of Catholic worship.

The problem of the location of the new church of St.

Patrick led to the most severe crisis in the history of the parish. One group of parishioners sided with the pastor in maintaining that the encroachment of the city's business district upon the parish territory indicated the advisability of disposing of the original location of the church in favor of a more desirable site. This suggestion, however, aroused such a storm of opposition on the part of the older parishioners who were strongly attached to the present location that the Archbishop, when appealed to, decided in favor of the latter. The episode illustrates the role of sentiment as a determinant of ecological position in the life of an institution. Construction of the new church began in 1872 but had to be suspended for ten years, following the financial panic of 1873. Completion of the edifice was finally made possible by the leasing for commercial use of approximately one third of the parish property, and the church was dedicated in 1884.

With the erection of the present beautiful Gothic church, the parish entered upon a "golden age," its luster already somewhat dulled, it is true, by the conversion to business use of part of the area included within its limits. For the ensuing thirty years, St. Patrick's held a dominant position among the churches of the nation's capital. Religious functions of city-wide significance were celebrated there; the First Eucharistic Congress of the United States opened in St. Patrick's Church in 1895; and the Pan-American Mass celebrated annually since 1909 on Thanksgiving Day has long been an outstanding event. The parish choir under the direction of a choirmaster brought from Westminster Cathedral in England was for a time unsurpassed anywhere in the entire region. The parish societies included among their number all those commonly found in urban parishes as well as some which originated at St. Patrick's and were soon imitated elsewhere. Of the latter, the principal one was the League of the Good Shepherd, an organization of over 1000 men devoted to the propagation of knowledge of the Catholic faith among their fellow citizens. The new parish high school, erected in 1904,

attracted students from all parts of the city. The parish retreats conducted annually for the members of the parish were both an evidence and an important source of the lively faith which made these years glorious ones in the history of St. Patrick's.

The Downtown Church. Business and commercial establishments had begun to settle in the neighborhood of St. Patrick's even before the erection of the new church. In 1888, four years after its dedication, the pastor in his annual report observed that "the parish is losing ground every year and the people are all moving out on account of business occupying the houses. St. Patrick's is fast becoming the 'Church of the Strangers.'" In 1901 the congregation numbered 2500. Two years later the figure given was 3250, and in 1904 the reports disclosed "about 4000 to 4500 attending the church" though there were only "2300 people in the territory." Surrendering to the inevitable economic pressure of typical urban land use, the residents of the neighborhood who could afford to do so began moving to more desirable residential areas, although many still kept their affiliation with St. Patrick's. In a list of parishioners (probably pewholders) published in 1908, 106 of the addresses given were within the parish limits, while 181 were located elsewhere in the city. The parish report for 1925 gave 1000 as the "number of Catholics in the parish" but noted that during the mission conducted in December, 1924, 2685 persons received the Sacrament of Penance at St. Patrick's. A painstaking census of the parish undertaken in 1938 revealed 1522 persons who reported themselves as Catholics. Of this number 199 stated that they did not attend Mass on Sundays, and another 144 did so but infrequently. There were 422 white and 20 colored families, and 165 men and 111 women living in rooming houses. Over a third (515) of the total number of Catholics living in the parish territory attended the nearby churches of St. Mary (380), Immaculate Conception (67), Holy Rosary (66), and St. Aloysius (2).

The area embraced within the limits of St. Patrick's parish is today more than two thirds occupied by business establish-

ments. This section is bordered on the east and northeast by a fringe of two or three residential blocks, inhabited by low-income Negro and white families, and revealing all of the characteristics typical of the "transitional zone" of urban ecology. The St. Patrick's of today thus constitutes an excellent illustration of an institution found in nearly every large American city, the "downtown church." With only a handful of parishioners remaining in the immediate locality – although, of course, some who have moved to other, and often distant, areas still retain their affiliation with the church and attend services there regularly – the program is geared to an essentially transient population. Its facilities are utilized by the crowds which every morning leave their homes in the outlying areas for places of employment in the heart of the city. The morning and evening services at St. Patrick's are scheduled to accommodate this ebb and flow of the city's daily tide.

Holy Mass is offered each weekday morning at 7, 7:30, and 8 o'clock, and again at 12:10 p.m., the latter service being for the benefit of persons employed nearby who desire to attend Mass during the lunch period. The daily attendance numbers about 100 at each of the first three Masses and from 500 to 600 at the last. During the Lenten season these figures increase to around 300 at each of the first three Masses and more than 900 at the 12:10. Immediately following the latter service public exposition of the Blessed Sacrament continues until Benediction at 5:30 p.m., and throughout the entire afternoon the church is occupied by a continuous stream of persons who enter and remain for brief periods of prayer and meditation. Another feature of the daily program which attracts a large number of people working or shopping in the downtown district is the opportunity afforded them for confession. Confessions are heard daily from 5 until 6 o'clock in the afternoon, and on Saturdays from 1 p.m. continuously until 9. In accommodating the numbers of penitents on Saturday the five priests residing at St. Patrick's are assisted by two additional confessors from a nearby religious community.

The Sunday schedule includes the celebration of Mass at 6, 7, 8, 9, 9:45, 11:15, 12, and 12:45 o'clock. This large number of Masses in a parish with so few members indicates the manner in which a downtown church serves transients and people residing elsewhere in the city. The 9:45 Mass is a solemn function featuring the excellent parish choir, one of the best in the city. Baptism is administered regularly at two o'clock on Sunday afternoons, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given at 7:30 in the evening.

The facilities of the church are taxed to the utmost on holydays of obligation. Mass is offered sixteen times and the total attendance averages from 10,000 to over 12,000 persons. On these occasions the crowds are so large during the late morning and noon hours that it is necessary to use the parish hall adjoining the church for the celebration of Mass, and an elaborate system is required to cope with the direction of traffic entering and leaving the premises.

The pastor of St. Patrick's Church has the assistance of four additional priests who reside with him at the rectory. The provision of services in the church requires this number, although the amount of parochial work proper in such a downtown location does not, of course, suffice to occupy the full-time services of a staff of this size. As is usually the case in such a situation, therefore, all but one of the priests are assigned to the performance of additional functions of a diocesan nature. The pastor is chancellor of the archdiocese, one of the assistants is vice-chancellor, another is director of the archdiocesan youth organization and, since the war, supervisor of the displaced persons program, while another is an official of the matrimonial court of the archdiocese. The remaining assistant is charged with the keeping of the financial records of the parish and is also occupied in teaching in the girls' academy adjoining the church. This is a high school with an enrollment of 250 girls, nearly all of whom reside outside the parish. It is the only educational institution connected with the parish, the elementary school having been discontinued in 1949.

Counseling on personal problems constitutes an important part of the functions performed by the priests of this downtown parish. The people employed in the area and those who frequent its shops and stores avail themselves of the opportunity for consultation which St. Patrick's, because of its accessibility and relative anonymity, affords. The number, range, and variety of problems confronted by the priests stationed here is thus, understandably, greater than in parishes of a residential type. This fact, too, illustrates the downtown church's orientation toward the entire community rather than toward the territory of the parish itself.

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN PARISHES

The foregoing life history of St. Patrick's parish presents concretely some aspects of the urban impact upon parochial organization. Though the experience of this parish cannot be generalized for scientific purposes, it is suggestive in indicating the main characteristics and problems of urban parishes. These can now be summarized briefly, with some attention to the range of variations which can be found within the United States. It is perhaps needless to point out that each deserves separate study in itself.

The first obvious differentiating characteristic of urban parishes everywhere is their size. The national average for urban Catholic parishes reporting in the 1936 Census of Religious Bodies was 1939 members, a figure approximately five times greater than that for rural parishes.[2] Both within and among communities and regions, the variations from this average are considerable. Parishes in small cities, for example, ordinarily include from about 500 to 2000 or 2500 members; in subregional centers of 25,000 to 100,000 population, the average probably approximates 2500 members; while in the residential zones of the larger metropolitan cities the average is much higher and the range from about 2000 to as many as 20,000 members. In passing, it may be noted that almost 50 per cent of all urban parishes are in cities under 25,000, one

third in cities over 100,000, and the remainder in cities of the intermediate range.

Number of members is naturally an important factor in determining the number, types, and sizes of parish buildings; the financial base for parish support; the number of clergy or assisting religious, their duties and schedules; and the kind of interparochial relations and activities which can be expected. No attempt has been made to establish scientifically a basis for determining the optimum size of a parish, but it seems clear that once membership exceeds a few thousand souls, increasing size means increasing impersonality. The role of the parish as a specialized agency, one among the many operating in the city, tends more and more to be accentuated, and this is reflected in the number and kinds of contacts between clergy and laity and between the parishioners themselves. It is a common opinion that parishes in metropolitan areas, in which the majority of American Catholics are to be found, are too large for effective parochial ministrations and for the development of parochial solidarity. This is not only an American problem, of course; it is interesting to note that within recent years the bishops of the Netherlands have limited parishes to a maximum of 6000 or 7000 members each.[3]

Size of membership bears a natural relation to parish location, and this fact points up another significant characteristic of urban parishes. In rural areas or in cities with but one Catholic parish, though parish and community cannot be considered identical as in Catholic regions of the Old World, there is usually some degree of identification of the parish with the locality group as a whole. But wherever two or more territorial parishes co-exist in the same community, each becomes identified with the particular ecological areas which are included within its boundaries.[4] The specialized agency role again comes to the fore in establishing formal or informal links with the community organization. It is true that individual pastors of old and strategically located parishes may be assigned roles which are community-wide in scope, but these are likely

to be much more restricted than those available in rural or small-town parishes.

Location in a distinct area results in transfer to the parish of the prestige valuations assigned to the area and its residents. These are bound up with occupational and ethnic factors, among others. Through these transferred valuations a parish becomes known as "working class," "middle class," "Negro," or "Irish." Since Catholic parishes are normally organized on a territorial basis, few are composed entirely of members drawn from a single socioeconomic stratum, but, as already indicated, in American cities the territorial principle does operate to distribute parishes among areas which rank at different levels on the social scale.

The mark of the city is also seen in the heterogeneous character of the membership. A parish in the country may be composed almost entirely of members of one occupational group — farmers — and one in a village or small town will still reflect the unity derived from dependence upon a dominant occupation. Ethnic unity will often coincide with parish boundaries, though ethnic division and conflict are not uncommon. In a large city, however, even when located in an area of relative cultural homogeneity, the parish will draw its members from varied occupational categories and, increasingly, from varied ethnic groups. Nonoccupational and nonethnic interests will also be exceedingly diverse, and there will be little neighboring or other interaction on a locality basis. Again, the parish appears isolated and specialized; the heterogeneity of its members in things other than religion presents formidable obstacles to solidarity.

The mobility of urban dwellers is another such obstacle. Urban life demands of most persons daily movement through a variety of situations within the urban area on the plane of secondary contacts. One of the challenges to the urban parish is to help men and women to find some meaning in life lived according to this pattern. This challenge is complicated by the well-known occupational and residential mobility

of urban people, so that a very great burden is placed upon the parish in establishing and maintaining contacts with urban Catholics. Further, in so far as residential changes are related to the phenomena of city growth, the urban parish must accommodate itself to the "invasion" of new population groups and must face the problems of intergroup tension which so often arise.

URBAN PARISH ORGANIZATION

As has been suggested, the consequences of such factors as size, ecological position, heterogeneity, mobility, and others, are reflected in urban parish organization. The formal structure of parishes is virtually the same throughout the Church, since the official roles are defined in Canon Law. It is in the practical discharge of prescribed duties that differentiation based upon "accidentals" appears. In comparison with clergy in rural areas, urban parish priests must give a greater proportion of time to official tasks and parochial routine. There are more weddings, funerals, and baptisms in the city, at least numerically; more elaborate liturgical functions; more parish associations to supervise; more catechism classes in the schools; more rectory calls for aid, counsel, or co-operation in varied activities; more forms to be filled out; more official conferences in which to participate. As parishes increase in size, the number of priests assigned to them must increase, with greater specialization among them. Adherence to a fixed schedule becomes essential, in contrast with the flexibility possible in smaller parishes. The natural social consequence is greater formality in relations between priests and members of the parish, not necessarily in personal manner, though this may sometimes be observed, but in scope and duration of contacts. There is undoubtedly greater social distance between clergy and laity in urban than in rural parishes. There is also less lay participation in parish administration, with pastors assuming not only the executive functions prescribed in Canon Law but the auxiliary, administrative functions related to the parish fabric which in

rural or small-town parishes are often performed in part by the laity.

This greater complexity and specialization in formal structure inevitably affects informal organization. Though parishioners are "brothers in Christ," their relations with each other in the parish often seem to be confined to relatively impersonal contacts at public services. A minority of urban parishioners is identified with parish-centered congeniality groups and cliques which become visible in the activities of Holy Name Societies or Ladies' Sodalities, choirs, or corps of ushers. These informal groupings are usually related to social classes, political, occupational, or other affiliations. It is a well-known fact, of course, that housekeepers, sextons, or choir directors may have an influence on parish life far transcending that derived from their official roles. The parish clergy themselves participate in informal organization, not only within the parish, but with other priests of the community or diocese.[5]

CONCLUSION

There is not space here to consider in a practical and detailed manner the numerous social problems with which the parish in an urban setting must be concerned. Typically urban problems, such as family disorganization, overcrowding, inadequate provisions for health and recreation, racial tensions, labor-management conflicts, unemployment, and poverty, all require the attention of the parish. Obviously, the solution of many of the difficulties presented requires the use of specialized techniques, contact and co-operation with specialized agencies, and often some specialized grouping within the parish itself. The maintenance of parish unity and solidarity in the face of this required organization and specialization is itself a major problem.

The very nature of urban culture is a formidable threat to the solidarity of the parish. In a folk culture, such as is approximated in many rural communities, the parish may exercise an almost monopolistic domination over the lives

and interests of parishioners. The city parish, on the other hand, is constantly subjected to the socially disintegrating influences of urban conditions. Perhaps it is romantic to expect in the city parish the type of solidarity which is characteristic of a rural situation. The fact remains, however, that the parish is "the Church in miniature," and, as such, it must first reflect the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ and, second, diffuse throughout the community the supernatural charity which is the life of the Church.

Christian charity, as the primary constitutive element of intraparochial relations, implies the existence of a vigorous corporate union among the members of the parish. This spirit is one which is completely alien to the individualism of modern secularist society. The energies of the parish, therefore, must be directed toward the creation of attitudes which may act as a preservative against this destructive individualism,[6] and at the same time programs and activities must be encouraged which foster the development of familial bonds and group feeling among parishioners. The Catholic Church, by her very nature and constitution, is a family. Her doctrine, her liturgy, prayers and services are redolent of the spirit of genuine familial union and affection.[7] The primary task of the parish, the molecular unit of ecclesiastical organization, is to evolve the techniques and formulas necessary for the concrete application and demonstration in its group life of this essentially *social* spirit.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER V

1. For a more detailed account, see the author's doctoral dissertation, "Transitions in the Development of a Downtown Parish; A Study of Adaptations to Ecological Change in St. Patrick's Parish, Washington, D. C.," in preparation at the Catholic University of America.

2. *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies: 1936* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Commerce, 1941), I, 86–97.

3. See the comment by Léon de Coninck, S.J., "Problèmes de l'Adaptation en Apostolat. IV. La Paroisse Réadaptée," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique,* LXX (1948), 51–53.

4. The social effects of parish division in a growing city are carefully

reported in Everett C. Hughes, *French Canada in Transition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943).

5. See the remarks on "clerical culture" in G. Michonneau, *Revolution in a City Parish* (Oxford, England: Blackfriars, 1949), Chap. VI.

6. This point is well developed by Leo Sweeney, C.M., "Value Preservation and Isolation," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review,* XLIV (1944), 253–260.

7. Cf. Leo Sweeney, C.M., "A Religious Society in a Secular World," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review,* XLIV (1944), 197–204.

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CHAPTER VI

RACIAL AND NATIONAL PARISHES IN THE UNITED STATES

by THOMAS J. HARTE, C.Ss.R.

INTRODUCTION

AN OUTSTANDING characteristic of the Catholic Church in the United States is its cultural and racial heterogeneity. There are few American ethnic or racial groups which are not represented in the Church's membership. As recently as thirty years ago the parish organization of the Church followed, in a broad sense at least, predominantly national lines. It was then largely a church of first and second generation immigrant peoples who still lived in their Italian or Irish or German or other communities. "Immigrants in America," writes Maurice R. Davie, "bound by race or kinship and by language and other cultural ties, are impelled to settle by nationalities, for by staying together they can perpetuate in part their old culture while at the same time making necessary adjustments to life in the new country."[1] Catholic immigrants were no exception. Just as there were Irish and Italian and Polish settlements and neighborhoods, so there were parishes corresponding to these culture areas reflecting in many ways the individuality of the groups they served.

It is necessary to distinguish carefully between national parishes in a broad and in a restricted sense, or, to state this another way, between those that have no special status as national parishes in Church law and those that have. The

former are here designated as nonjuridical and the latter as juridical national parishes. In addition to these, parishes of Oriental rites and racial parishes must also be considered in this chapter.

NONJURIDICAL NATIONAL PARISHES

The general law of the Church requires that each diocese be divided into "distinct territorial parts," each part (or parish) having its own church, its determined population, and its own proper pastor.[2] The vast majority of American Catholics belong to territorial parishes which may extend for a few city blocks or, in rural areas, may embrace a township or even a whole county. Nonjuridical national parishes are simply territorial parishes which are identified with particular national or ethnic groups. Ecclesiastical authorities do not restrict territorial parishes to any determined Catholic group. Although all the parishioners at a given time may be of Irish extraction, all other nationalities have as much right to belong to the territorial parish as the Irish. One is affiliated with a territorial parish simply because he lives within a definite geographic area; once he moves out of that area he belongs officially to another parish.

National parishes, in this broad sense, exist today to the extent that cultural islands still persist in various sections of the country. Undoubtedly the rate of assimilation has proceeded at a fast tempo over the past several decades, particularly in urban areas, as language barriers have been overcome and the group solidarity of minority peoples has disintegrated.[3] The mixed parish, just as the mixed neighborhood, is much more common than it was thirty years ago, yet even today there are strictly territorial parishes which can be called Irish or Slovak or Italian or any one of a dozen other group designations. There is no way of estimating the number of such parishes in the United States, although it may be conjectured that nonjuridical national parishes constitute a considerable proportion of all Catholic parishes.[4]

All those that are popularly known as "Irish parishes" properly belong in this category since, as will be seen later, the juridical national parish is synonymous with a foreign language group. On the other hand, parishes which are commonly associated with the Poles or Italians or any other immigrant foreign-language group often are, especially in rural areas, merely territorial parishes.

From the ecclesiastical point of view, the nonjuridical national parish has no special status. It is organized and administered in the same way as any territorial parish. Nevertheless, the more stable national parishes tend to develop an individuality of their own and this with the co-operation of Church authorities. The administrative personnel of the parish and its institutions is often selected with a view to the ethnic composition of its population, so that priests and Sisters of Irish descent are assigned to an Irish parish, Italians to an Italian parish, and so on. The national origin of the pastor particularly is often a matter of grave concern to the parishioners, and the extent of their co-operation with him may depend ultimately on whether or not he is "one of our own kind." Not uncommonly, parish societies, religious devotions, and liturgical practices reflect the national origins of parish members. The feast of St. Patrick is celebrated with full solemnity in the Irish church; the Italian church is adorned with paintings and statues of saints unfamiliar to the non-Italian Catholic; the Old World system of dues payments sometimes persists in German churches; and the parishioners of the Polish parish still sing the centuries-old hymns and liturgical chants of their Polish ancestors. Warner and Srole quote an address by an Irish priest which is of interest in indicating how group loyalties may be fostered and strengthened by appeals to religious symbols and group traditions:

> God has been good to us. Our patron saints, Patrick and Brigid, have watched over us. It has not been done thus with every nation. Many a brilliant volume of Church history, blazoned with the names of saints, purpled with the blood of martyrs, has closed with

the sad record of defection and decay. Not so with us. We can look back through the early history of the Irish Church, when her sanctity and learning were a theme of praise.[5]

The variant types of nonjuridical national parishes are innumerable, differing from group to group, and from one region to another. The more distinctive characteristics of the ethnic parish will be pointed up in the following section which treats of national parishes in a more restricted sense.

JURIDICAL NATIONAL PARISHES

The historical circumstances which led to the establishment of national parishes in the United States have been described in a previous chapter.[6] Significant differences in culture, in religious traditions, and most of all in language, necessitated the erection of special parishes for Catholic immigrant groups from continental Europe. Eventually the national parish became, and was intended to be, a cultural center for Catholic ethnic groups, yet the most important factor leading to the adoption of this type of parochial organization was language.[7] So closely is language identified with juridical national parishes in America that the latter may be properly designated as "foreign-language parishes." Although the Irish concentrated in certain residential areas and established parishes predominantly Irish, there was never a question of legally erecting Irish parishes with a status similar to that of German or Polish parishes. The Irish understood the common language of the country, and therefore lacked a necessary justification for parishes exclusively Irish. This linguistic advantage, coupled with their immigration at an early period, cast the Irish in a role of intermediacy between the old Americans and the later immigrant groups.[8]

It was pointed out above that territory is the normal basis for the external organization of the Catholic population. One belongs to a certain parish because he lives within its officially prescribed boundaries. However, the Church's law also makes provision for the erection of parishes on the basis of language

or nationality.[9] Where such parishes are formally established the basis of organization is a specific national or ethnic group, not a geographical area. In practice, nevertheless, some territorial limitation is always implied, and sometimes specifically indicated, for national parishes. The functional role of any parish demands that it be accessible to the population it serves, and this presupposes reasonable territorial limits. In the case of the national parish the territorial qualification is of secondary importance; its jurisdiction extends only to the members of a specific ethnic group residing within its boundaries.[10]

Because of this emphasis on the persons rather than the territory included, the juridical national parish is often called a personal parish, as opposed to the ordinary territorial parish.[11] In a given community, for example, there may be two Polish parishes, each extending over one half of the total area of the community, yet including in its membership only those Catholics who are of Polish origin or descent. Non-Polish Catholics in the same community may belong to their own territorial parish, whose boundaries are said to be cumulative with those of the personal parishes.

However common the juridical national parish is in practice, it is clear that the Church intends it to be an exceptional organizational device. The Code of Canon Law lays down the general norm that such parishes may not be established without a special indult from the Holy See,[12] although a bishop is not bound by any such restriction in the erection of territorial parishes. Prior to the promulgation of the present Code in 1918, the bishops of the United States did not need the approval of Rome, having the power themselves to assign juridical status to national parishes.[13] The fact that this power is now reserved to the Holy See indicates the decided preference of the Church for the territorial type of ecclesiastical organization. This is not to say, however, that the status of the juridical national parish is subsidiary or precarious; the Code itself requires that no change be made with regard to

national parishes without the approval of the Holy See.[14]

Mention should be made at this point of the question of membership in national parishes. Must all foreign-language Catholics belong to national parishes? Are they free to join a territorial parish if that is more convenient? Are the children of immigrants free to change their parish affiliation?

On April 26, 1897, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith issued an authoritative answer to the first question when it declared that:

> Catholics who were not born in America but who know English, have the right to become members of the Church where the English language is used, and cannot be obliged to submit themselves to the jurisdiction of the rector of the church which was established for the people who speak the language of their country.[15]

This decision of the Holy See is interesting in its implications. Foreign-born Catholics who do not speak English seem to have no choice but to join their own language parish where such a parish exists. Those who have learned the English language are *free* to become members of a territorial parish. The language factor is obviously of prime importance to the Church; yet, at the same time, there is respect for the immigrant's right to continue his identification with his own group irrespective of his linguistic preference. This freedom does not extend to any parish of the immigrant's choice. A declaration of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, on January 15, 1938, decreed that: "When foreign immigrants and their children speak the English language and do not wish to belong to their own national parishes they must affiliate with the American territorial parish in which the English language may be spoken."[16] Thus, an English-speaking Slovak immigrant may not join a Polish church because he does not like his Slovak pastor; though he may have a knowledge of Polish, he must choose between his Slovak parish and the territorial parish in which he lives.

The children of foreign-language ethnic groups are accorded the same freedom in this matter as their parents. The decree

of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith already cited contains a special directive on children:

> The children born in America of parents who are not American and who speak a language other than English, upon becoming emancipated [21 years of age] are not obliged to join the quasi-parish to which their parents belong, but have the right to join a quasi-parish in which the language of the country, that is, English is used.[17]

Until they have reached their majority, therefore, children must follow the parish affiliation of their parents, and this arrangement continues through an indefinite number of generations.

In general, the official position of the Church on this question of membership in juridical national parishes is clearly to encourage assimilation into a larger community by lifting all barriers to affiliation with the territorial parish for those who speak English. At the same time, however, the individual's right to make his choice freely is fully guaranteed, and the right of the national or ethnic group to perpetuate its culture is likewise protected.

It may be admitted frankly that it is extremely difficult to assess the social importance of the national parish without further research. Seemingly, the juridical effects of membership in a national parish are relatively unimportant. Parishioners are required to have their children baptized in the parish church, to be married from this church, and they may share in the services provided by the parish for its members. Where parochial school facilities exist, for example, parishioners have the right and duty to educate their children there. In turn they have the obligation to support their parish by rendering whatever assistance they can financially or in services.[18] Such rights and duties are implied in the normal relations between every Catholic and his parish, and are in no way uniquely characteristic of the national parish structure.

The nonlegal effects which flow from this type of parish organization are undoubtedly much more significant. The national parish, in its ideal form, is a powerful factor in con-

serving group solidarity and ethnic tradition.[19] The priest, with rare exceptions, is racially and culturally identified with the group, and very often he is a strong advocate of the Old World culture. He speaks the language of his people, understands their customs, and encourages loyalty to the group in every way. The parochial school also serves a variety of functions in ethnic maintenance which are described by Payne as follows:

> In the first place it served a religious function and preserved in the young generation the language and traditions of the old country. This prevented total disintegration and held intact the best of the culture brought from the homeland. In the second place, the parochial school served to secure for the immigrant colony social unity and to preserve it through successive generations. The school served as a concrete institutional bond among the immigrants, by bringing them territorially together, by perpetuating family traditions, and by preserving unity between the old and the new generation. In contrast with the public school, which contributed toward family disorganization by introducing a new culture and a new language, the parochial school prevented this estrangement by making the children acquainted with the parents' language, religion and national history, and by inculcating respect for the traditional values of the country from which they came.[20]

The ritual of Church services, the sacred symbols, the traditional religious exercises, the church architecture and decorations, and the parish societies, all contribute a great deal to the conservation of the traditional values of the ethnic group. The group's religion and its culture complement each other most completely in the juridical national parish structure, each working to reinforce and to preserve the other. As long as a parish retains the distinctive status of a national parish, the group's right to integrate on all possible levels its traditional culture with its religion is fully guaranteed. English-speaking Catholics may attend Mass in the Polish church; but they cannot demand that the priest preach in English, or that the people translate their Polish hymns, or that their children be admitted to the Polish parochial school. If this were a terri-

torial parish, on the other hand, their wishes would have to be respected.

The *Catholic Directory* is the only source of information on the number and distribution of national parishes in the United States. Although it makes no special tabulation for national parishes, foreign-language designations are indicated throughout. Individual parishes are identified as "Polish" or "Slovak" or "German," and so on. The *Directory* for 1948 labels a total of 1535 Catholic parishes as national or language parishes. Assuming that this is a substantially correct listing of ethnic parishes in the strict sense, approximately 10 per cent of all parishes belong in the category of juridical national parishes. Can this be accepted as a reliable estimate? The writer leans to the view that it is probably a reasonable approximation. It is certainly not a precisely accurate listing, for anyone familiar with the organization of the Church in a particular area can discover here and there a parish that should be listed differently. Yet it seems reasonable to assume, for reasons too complex to be given here, that the data supplied by the *Catholic Directory* can be accepted as sufficiently reliable in this case.

The following table, compiled from the data presented in the *Catholic Directory* for 1948, is very suggestive as to the national and ethnic composition of the Catholic Church in the United States, exclusive, of course, of English-speaking peoples.

Group	*No. of parishes*
Polish	466
Italian	314
German	206
Slovak	152
French*	114
Lithuanian	103
Mexican	44
Hungarian	36

* Includes both French and French Canadians.

Bohemian	33
Portuguese	23
Spanish	11
Roumanian	10
Maltese	7
Hollandish	5
Belgian	5
Chinese	3
Filipino	1
Cape Verdian	1
Tyrolese	1
Total	1535

The reader should bear in mind that this table represents the distribution of juridical national parishes only. The proportionate strength of each ethnic group in the total Catholic population cannot be estimated from these data. For example, there is every reason to assume that Catholics of German extraction are proportionally more numerous than those of Italian or Polish descent. Over 70 per cent of German immigrants entered the United States between 1840 and 1890,[21] while the vast majority of Poles and Italians arrived years later. It is probable, therefore, that some German national parishes have ceased to function and can no longer be designated as national parishes. Moreover, proportionally more German than either Polish or Italian immigrants settled in rural areas, thus virtually eliminating the possibility of juridical national parishes. For obvious reasons the juridical national parish is, for the most part, an urban institution. Similarly, although Polish national parishes, as given in the *Directory,* are more numerous than Italian parishes, there is no reason to conclude that there are more Polish than Italian Catholics in the United States. Assuming that the majority of immigrants from both Poland and Italy were Catholics, then Catholics of Italian descent should be much more numerous than those of Polish descent. The total Italian immigration to the United States during the years 1820–1943 was 4,719,825; while the

number of Polish immigrants during the same period was 415,949.[22] It is more reasonable to explain the greater number of Polish parishes in terms of the relative ethnocentrism of the two groups, or of their relative dispersion geographically.

The regional distribution of juridical national parishes follows the expected pattern for foreign-born immigrants. The heaviest concentration is found in the industrial areas of the Northeast and Midwest. The state of New Jersey has 119 national parishes, New York has 255, Pennsylvania 372, and Illinois 134. The combined total for these four states is 880, which is 57 per cent of all national parishes listed. In the diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, approximately 50 per cent of all parishes are listed as foreign-language parishes. The largest concentration of French-language parishes is found in the New England area, and most Mexican parishes are located in Texas and California.

As for the future of national parishes in America, one may safely predict that their numerical strength and importance will decline rapidly under present immigration policies. Even among the French Canadians, probably the most adamant of all groups in resisting assimilation, there are clear indications that the younger generation is dissatisfied with its isolation.[23] Moreover, the dual system of parish organization now in use has led to endless administrative confusion, so that there is now an obvious reluctance on the part of ecclesiastical authorities to erect new national parishes. This is apparent in New York, for example, which has chosen to care for the increasing number of Catholic Puerto Rican immigrants through existing territorial parishes, rather than create new language parishes. And, most important of all, there is the clear policy of the Holy See, already discussed, of discouraging the establishment of new national parishes.[24]

ORIENTAL CATHOLIC PARISHES

The vast majority of Catholics in the United States belongs to the "Roman rite," which refers to the characteristic form

and language of liturgical functions as well as to the discipline by which the members of the rite are governed.[25] Approximately 2 per cent (664,197) of American Catholics belong to several different Oriental rites.[26] The groups belonging to these Oriental or "Eastern" or "Uniate" rites differ chiefly from the ethnic groups already considered in that they originate in eastern Europe or in Asia, and although they accept the same doctrines and the same supreme ecclesiastical authority as Roman Catholics, they are governed by a separate code of Church law and follow their own distinctive liturgies. These Uniate Catholics are not to be confused with Orthodox Oriental Catholics who reject the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff and, despite the name, are considered heterodox by the Catholic Church.

The Greek-Ruthenians constitute the largest single group of Oriental Catholics in the United States, numbering over half a million (583,897) members.[27] The Greek rite diocese of Pittsburgh "embraces all Greek Catholics of Russian, Hungarian (Magyar) and Croatian nationalities in the entire United States of America."[28] This diocese has a total of 187 parishes distributed over thirteen Eastern and Midwestern states, the largest concentration being in Pennsylvania.[29] The remainder of the Ruthenian Catholics are under the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Greek diocese, with headquarters in Philadelphia. There are 148 parishes in this diocese, spread over nineteen states from New York to California, but principally in the East and Midwest. Again Pennsylvania has more than any other state. Since both of these dioceses belong to the Byzantine rite, it is interesting to note that diocesan jurisdiction is divided on the basis of language or nationality, rather than on the ordinary territorial division. This is essentially the same principle used for the division of national parishes in the Roman rite. The Pittsburgh diocese uses the Greek language for its liturgical functions, while the Ukrainian Greeks use Old Slavonic.[30]

The Maronite Catholics, originating in Lebanon, Egypt, and

Cyprus, constitute the largest single group after the Ruthenians, numbering approximately 39,000. Catholics of the Melchite (or Melkite) rite originate principally in Syria and Egypt, and use Arabic as their liturgical language. Of these there are approximately 14,000 in the United States. Italo-Greeks, Roumanians, Syrians, Armenians, and Chaldeans, all with some variations in their rites, total approximately 29,000. On a very rough estimate there are about 100 Eastern rite parishes, exclusive of the Ruthenians, or a total of 435 parishes for Catholics of the different Oriental rites.

Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the legal status of the Oriental parish from the ecclesiastical point of view. Obviously it is even more exceptional than the national parish in the United States, and its uniqueness leads to many complex problems. The average American Roman Catholic is unfamiliar with the various Oriental rites, and is hardly conscious of any special bond of brotherhood with their members. A member of a national parish may change his allegiance to a territorial parish merely by declaring his intention, but the Syrian Catholic, for example, is prohibited from making this transfer without the permission of the Holy See, since for him it involves a change of rite.[31] Moreover, there is reason to believe that the forms and symbols of religious worship are more completely integrated with the ethnic culture of the Uniate group, even linguistically, than for Catholics of the Roman rite, thus making for increased difficulties in assimilation. There are strong ecclesiastical pressures, therefore, to preserve the group solidarity of Oriental Catholics, and, it would seem, serious religious obstacles preventing complete assimilation into the majority group.

RACIAL PARISHES

This section will be devoted exclusively to the question of Negro parishes. To avoid pointless discussion on the problem of race, the few Chinese parishes have been classified as national parishes. With regard to Catholic American Indians, a dis-

cussion of their parish organization does not properly belong here. There are approximately 400 churches in the United States and Alaska which minister to 95,335 Catholic Indians.[32] The majority of these can be classified as "missions" on the reservations, and therefore have a status quite distinct from that of parishes.

The Negro Catholic, like the German or Polish or Italian Catholic, is externally affiliated with the Church in one of three ways. He may belong to a territorial parish in which no ethnic or national or racial group predominates. Since he lives in a mixed neighborhood his parish is also mixed. Or he may belong to a territorial parish which is wholly or predominantly Negro, simply because it is a Negro neighborhood. Should a white Catholic live within the territorial limits of such a parish, he belongs to it as fully as his Negro neighbors. It is very likely, however, that a parish such as this in a predominantly Negro neighborhood will be popularly regarded as a Negro parish.

The third manner in which a Catholic Negro can be affiliated with the Church is through an exclusively Negro parish, which is *de facto* equivalent to the national parish already considered. The basis of organization for the Negro parish in this limited sense is race, and only secondarily the area in which its members reside. Thus all Catholic Negroes of one town or city may belong to a single Negro parish which has a cumulative territorial jurisdiction with the five or six "white" parishes in the same area.

From the legal point of view there are many difficulties in connection with the canonical status of exclusively Negro parishes. Canon 216 is usually cited as the juridical basis of the racial parish in the limited sense. This canon provides for the erection of parishes for the "diversity of language or of nationality of the faithful" and for what it calls "merely family or personal parishes." The so-called Negro parish in the United States cannot be classified as a language or a national parish, so commentators on Church law are inclined to call it a

personal parish. This designation is readily understood in terms of jurisdiction: the jurisdiction of the proper parochial authorities extends primarily to the persons of a certain group, and only secondarily to a specified area. Speaking of the canonical status of the Negro parish, one eminent canonist writes: "Such parishes are, according to the view here presented, designated in canon 216, no. 4, as personal parishes [and not national]."[33] Ciesluk, frequently cited in reference to the national parish, believes that colored parishes "could be included . . . in the general classification of those which are designated with the wording, *pro diversitate nationis* [parishes for different nationalities]," but feels that "it would be more appropriate to refer to colored parishes under the general classification of personal parishes. . . ."[34] It is interesting that neither canonist discusses the basic issue of why there should be exclusively Negro parishes, but rather seeks to interpret the general law of the Church so that it will cover this *de facto* form of parish organization. It should be indicated, furthermore, that not all canonists agree that the Negro parish can be classified as personal. Connolly, for example, does not accept the view that such parishes are personal "because membership in them embraces a whole class of people and is generic, whereas the personal type of parish seems to embrace a more specific and individual membership."[35]

Those who maintain that there is a legal sanction for the racial parish in Canon 216 logically conclude that the bishop may not erect or alter such a parish without the permission of the Holy See. Thus it is argued:

> If the membership of a Negro parish is determined essentially in view of the racial characteristics of the parishioners, and only modally by means of any territorial consideration, then such a parish belongs to that class of parishes for the erection of which a special apostolic indult is an essential requirement. Once the parish is erected with the authorization of the Holy See, the bishop cannot lawfully make any change or alteration in its status without previous consultation with the same Holy See.[36]

Those who support this position must also conclude that the racial parish, just as the juridical national parish, is an extraordinary form of ecclesiastical organization, to be established only with the greatest caution.

The formal or legal effects of membership in a racial parish are even more difficult to evaluate than in the case of national parishes. It may be presumed that the right to baptize and to perform marriages belongs, strictly speaking, to the pastor of the Negro parish. Similarly, the parish members have a strict right to share in parish facilities and, in turn, an obligation to support their parish. Is a member of a racial parish obliged to fulfill his religious obligations in his parish church? More specifically, must he attend Mass on Sundays and receive the sacraments (exclusive, perhaps, of baptism and matrimony) in the Negro Church? No general obligation can be laid down to this effect. The Code of Canon Law states explicitly that the law of hearing Mass may be fulfilled by attending a Mass celebrated in any Catholic rite, in the open air, or in any church or public or semipublic oratory.[37] Commenting on this law, a Catholic moralist writes: "There is, therefore, no obligation to hear Mass in the parish church, although the faithful should be admonished to go frequently to their parish church, where it can be done conveniently, that they may be present at Divine services and hear the word of God."[38] The Catholic Negro who is technically affiliated with a Negro parish is free before the law to fulfill his religious duties in any Catholic church in his community; and, conversely, no one is justified in denying him this freedom.

On the question of the right of the Catholic Negro to attend a parochial school, a prominent contemporary theologian has this to say:

> The Negro parent of Catholic children has just as much right as the white parent to have his children receive the benefit of the Catholic education provided by the Church. Hence, in the event that there is only one parochial school available, the Negro child of the parish has the same right to be admitted as the white child

with the same qualifications, as far as the principles and laws of the Church are concerned. If, however, the Church authorities have provided a separate school, with satisfactory educational facilities, for the colored children, it would seem that Negro parents could not claim a strict right to send their children to the "white school." Their right to procure a Catholic education for their children would not seem to contain a strict right to choose the particular institution in which that education is to be given.[39]

The present writer would qualify this statement still further. If the *proper parish* of the Negro parent provides educational facilities for colored, then he cannot demand that his children be accepted in the school of another parish unless he becomes a member of that parish. May a Negro Catholic transfer from a racial to a territorial parish within which he resides? There seems to be no valid reason why he cannot. For if the justification of the racial parish is found in Canon 216, and this seems to be the more common opinion, then the mind of the Holy See regarding the groups covered by this canon must be taken into account. There is the obvious fact that the national and personal parish is intended to be an exceptional form of parish organization, which is permissible for the good of a particular ethnic, national, or racial group. This is indicated in the Code itself, and it is abundantly clear from the pontifical decisions already referred to, which expressly declare that foreign nationals who speak English are not obliged to belong to a national parish. *A fortiori,* colored Catholics have a choice of belonging to their racial parish or to the territorial parish in which they reside. And should Negro parents choose to belong to a white or mixed territorial parish, they have a right to participate in parish services, including school facilities.

The best available source of information on the distribution of Catholic Negro parishes is The Commission for Catholic Missions Among the Colored People and the Indians, with headquarters in Washington, D. C. In its annual report for 1948 the Commission lists 408 "churches for the special use of Negroes."[40] Do these churches represent only racial parishes erected according to the prescriptions of Canon Law? There

is reason to believe that a considerable number of the parishes included above do not belong in this category. It is of interest to note that approximately 71 per cent of the 408 parishes are distributed over thirteen states in the South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Yet these same states comprise only 51 per cent of the total Catholic Negro population of 362,427,[41] although, according to the 1940 census, 77 per cent of the Negro population is still southern.[42] It may be concluded, therefore, that the exclusively Negro parish is more characteristic of the South than of the North, but the converse is only partially true, despite apparent indications from the general data. Although there are fewer exclusively Negro parishes in the North for a proportionately larger Catholic population, one must bear in mind that northern Negroes are 90 per cent urban[43] and that, consequently, Negro parishes in the North are considerably larger than in the South.

Because of the lack of accurate and detailed information it is impossible to offer here a complete description of the existing parish organization of colored Catholics in the United States. There are, certainly, many exclusively Negro parishes in the South; but there also are exclusively Negro parishes in certain sections of the North.[44] Some of these are probably racial parishes erected in accordance with the prescriptions of Church law, but it is very doubtful that all are. If the diocesan authorities consider them exclusively racial, then of course the practical effects are the same, regardless of their canonical status. In some cities in the North, on the other hand — New York, Boston, and Buffalo, for example — the diocesan authorities have officially abolished a segregrated parish organization.[45] In these cities there are predominantly or solidly Negro parishes, but they are simply territorial parishes in Negro neighborhoods. Negro Catholics are not required to belong to racial parishes, but are considered parishioners of the parish in which they reside. Fortunately, from the point of view of

better race relations, there is good reason to believe that the trend in the North is definitely away from the segregated racial parish organization.

In addition to these contrasting organizational principles, existing Negro parishes are differentiated from other parochial forms in numerous ways. A special treatment would be required to describe adequately the religious, social, and cultural impact of racial factors on the organization and functioning of the parish. Here it is impossible to do more than indicate the more important social characteristics of the so-called Negro parish.

The first point of note is the physical location of Negro parishes. In larger cities of the North and South the boundaries of a Negro parish usually include an older residential area which is characterized by deteriorated housing and all the physical features of a blighted or slum district. Not infrequently, therefore, the parish can be legitimately classified as a problem area, being identified with a high incidence of poverty, disease, and dependency of various kinds, and it may even have some prominence as a center of crime, juvenile delinquency, illegitimacy, and broken homes. From the pastoral point of view these conditions are a major concern since they constitute an unwholesome milieu for the moral well-being of parishioners, and determine to a large extent the direction and scope of the pastoral ministry. Special parochial projects and societies are often necessary to meet the urgent needs of the area, and close contact has to be maintained with the social welfare agencies of the community. Furthermore, the active opposition of numerous and militant Protestant sects — a factor not usually very important in urban white communities — sometimes renders the priest's apostolate among Negroes extremely difficult.

Wherever social segregation of the Negro population obtains, the Negro parish is to some degree separated from the full Catholic life of the white community. In some northern cities a concerted effort is made to integrate the religious life

of colored and white Catholics, but almost everywhere the practice falls short of the ideal. For purely religious functions, such as mass meetings, processions, or special services of a city-wide nature, there is usually a high degree of interparochial co-operation; but whenever social participation of a non-religious nature is involved, the Negro parish is usually excluded from the program, or the quality of its participation is variously restricted. The Negro parish branch of a national or diocesan Catholic society, whether it is primarily spiritual, or mixed spiritual and social, or primarily nonreligious, such as youth clubs or athletic organizations, frequently operates under serious handicaps because an inferior role is assigned to it in the activities of the larger organization.

Institutionalized patterns of segregation also affect the Negro parish itself in many ways. Legal or customary conventions sometimes prescribe that the parish church be erected within the Negro section of the community, and that the parochial residence be located in the white area. Social contacts between parish priests and parishioners may be effectively controlled by rigid standards determining when and where the white pastor may visit or entertain his colored flock. A state law may prohibit the marriage of two Catholics if one of them is white, while a city ordinance may proscribe the admission of a white child to a colored parochial school or forbid the pastor to ride a public conveyance in the company of the president of his Holy Name Society. Custom sometimes requires that the weekly pay of the church sexton be less in a Negro than in a white parish. Since the vast majority of Catholic priests working in Negro parishes are white, there are many delicate problems of acceptance and adjustment which affect the interaction of these priests and their Negro parishioners, and which condition not only the normal functioning of the parish but the parish spirit as well.

The Negro parish is also directly affected by the widely recognized residential and occupational mobility of the Negro population. Catholic parishes, particularly in the South, often

undergo a considerable membership turnover in a relatively short time, so that expansion through conversion is not infrequently equaled by losses through northward migration. Urban Negro parishes in the North face special problems related to mobility. They are almost always situated in areas of transition which have experienced successive invasions of ethnic groups, being inherited eventually by Negroes among whom the proportion of Catholics is quite small. A colored parish of 500 members understandably faces grave financial difficulties in maintaining a parish plant large enough to accommodate a former population of 15,000 white Catholics. This problem is further magnified by the low economic status of the vast majority of Negroes.

The high ratio of converts to "born Catholics" constitutes another important characteristic of the average Negro parish. In the past twenty years there has been an increase of approximately 56 per cent in the number of Negro Catholics, an increase due in great measure to the large number of converts annually. Conversions of entire families are not at all rare, but converts usually enter the Church individually. Consequently the religious life of a Negro parish tends to be organized on an individual rather than on a family basis, as is the case normally in white parishes. This gives rise to many important parochial problems, such as the unfamiliarity of converts with Catholic traditions, customs, and doctrines, a lack which the Church must supply completely without assistance from the family; the non-Catholic, and sometimes anti-Catholic home life of parishioners; a very high rate of mixed marriages; and numerous marriage difficulties arising from conflicts between the Church's legislation on this question and the prevailing standards of the Negro community.

From this rapid survey of some important characteristics of exclusively Negro parishes it may be safely concluded that this parish type differs markedly in many respects from territorial white parishes, and even from the so-called national parishes.

CONCLUSION

The discussion of specialized parish forms presented in this chapter is incomplete on many counts. Structure has been overemphasized to the neglect of the dynamics of the national and racial parish. The particular framework selected has been dictated more by necessity than by choice. Even if the critical data were available, the task of analyzing and interpreting the social processes involved is altogether too vast for a single chapter.

In all likelihood the national parish, like the foreign-language press and fraternal organizations of nationality groups, will one day disappear from the American scene. This consideration may distress the advocates of cultural pluralism as much as it will delight the exponents of cultural unity in America. Whether for good or evil, the national parish would seem to have played an important role in preserving cultural diversity. It is divisive to the extent that it fosters group differences, yet undoubtedly its social influence does not end there. For the ethnic parish is also integrative in so far as it provides an intermediate milieu in the assimilation of immigrant peoples into the Catholic life and social life of America. The precise nature and extent of its influence in the secular and religious spheres can only be determined by a careful investigation which should be carried through before this phenomenon has completly disappeared.

Of one thing we can be certain. The ethnic parish, whether national or racial, has had considerable importance in preserving the faith of millions of Catholics. In fact the ethnic parish form is an expressive symbol of American Catholicism and, in a sense, of America itself, for it symbolizes the heterogeneous racial and cultural mixture that is the American Catholic Church and that is America.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER VI

1. "Our Vanishing Minorities," *One America*, ed. Francis J. Brown and Joseph S. Roucek (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946), p. 541.

2. Canon 216, no. 4.

3. For an illuminating discussion of the operation of the assimilative process, see Edward Corsi, "Italian Immigrants and their Children," *The Annals*, CCXXIII (1942), 101–106.

4. See W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), pp. 156–219, for a discussion of Irish and French Canadian parishes; and John W. McConnell, *The Evolution of Social Classes* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), pp. 167–175, on the Irish, Polish, Italian, and French Canadian parish organization in New Haven, Connecticut.

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 157.

6. Chapter II.

7. John J. Harbrecht, *The Lay Apostolate* (St. Louis: Herder Book Co., 1929), p. 97.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 90. Cf. Milton L. Barron, "Intermediacy: Conceptualization of Irish Status in America," *Social Forces*, XXVII (1948–1949), 256–263.

9. Canon 216, no. 4.

10. Cf. Joseph E. Ciesluk, *National Parishes in the United States* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1944), p. 50.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

12. Canon 216, no. 4.

13. Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–47.

14. Canon 216, no. 4.

15. *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, XXX (1897), 256.

16. T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J., *The Canon Law Digest*, II (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1943), pp. 79–80.

17. *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, XXX (1897), 256.

18. Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–126.

19. See Warner and Srole, *op. cit.*, pp. 156–157; Thorsten V. Kalijarvi, "French Canadians in the United States," *The Annals*, CCXXIII (1942), 134–135; Joseph C. Roucek, "Polish Americans," in Brown and Roucek, *op. cit.*, pp. 138–139.

20. E. George Payne, "Education and Minority Peoples," in Brown and Roucek, *op. cit.*, pp. 496–497.

21. Carl Wittke, "German Immigrants and their Children," *The Annals*, CCXXIII (1942), 85.

22. Brown and Roucek, *op. cit.*, p. 636.

23. Warner and Srole, *op. cit.*, p. 542.

24. *Supra*, p. 164.

25. Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, pp. 130–131.

26. The statistics given in this section are adapted from the *Catholic Directory, 1948* (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1948), and Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–137. Ciesluk collected his data from the various chanceries. Yaroslav J. Chyz and Joseph S. Roucek, "Ukrainian Americans," in Brown and Roucek, *op. cit.*, p. 129, estimate that there are over half a million members of the Ukrainian and Ruthenian Catholic dioceses.

27. Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

28. *Catholic Directory, 1948*, p. 839.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 840–841.

30. *The National Catholic Almanac, 1946* (Paterson: St. Anthony's Guild, 1946), pp. 259–261.

31. Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–138.

32. *Our Negro and Indian Missions* (Washington, D. C.: The Commission for Catholic Missions Among the Colored People and the Indians, 1949), p. 20.

33. Clement Bastnagel, "Is a Parish for Colored People a National Parish?" *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CVIII (1943), 383.

34. Ciesluk, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

35. Nicholas P. Connolly, *The Canonical Erection of Parishes* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1938), p. 107.

36. Bastnagel, *op. cit.*, p. 384.

37. Canon 1249.

38. J. Aertnys and C. A. Damen, *Theologia Moralis,* I (Turin: Marietti, 1944), p. 426.

39. Francis J. Connell, C.Ss.R., "Rights of the Catholic Negro," *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CXIV (1946), 461.

40. *Our Negro and Indian Missions, 1949,* p. 19. See also Peter J. Kenney, S.S.J., "The Development of Catholic Mission Work among the Negroes of the United States, 1940–1947," unpublished Master's dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1947.

41. *Our Negro and Indian Missions, 1949,* p. 19.

42. *Sixteenth Census of the United States:* Series P-10, no. 1.

43. *Ibid.,* no. 20.

44. Thomas J. Harte, C.Ss.R., "Leadership Techniques of a White Pastor in a Negro Parish," unpublished Master's dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1944.

45. John La Farge, S.J., "The Roman Catholic Experience," *Survey Graphic,* XXXVI (1947), 61–62.

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CHAPTER VII

PARISH SOCIETIES

by FRANCES S. ENGEL

INTRODUCTION

THE antecedents of modern parish societies may be traced to groups which were organized before the parish itself took form. Apparently the first subsidiary associations within the Church were patterned on the *collegia tenuiorum* which existed in some places under the protection of the Roman Empire as private societies whose members undertook works of mutual aid. In the East, members of the clergy joined together in the *parabalanin* to care for the sick, while another group known as the *lecticarii* included laymen as well as clerics. At Constantinople a "college of deans" assisted with the burial of the dead. In the early centuries also, confraternities of prayer, growing out of works of charity and piety, began in the monasteries and soon extended, first to the secular clergy, then to the nobility, and afterward to all the laity. These had multiplied by the early Middle Ages and, from the ninth century onward, as their activities expanded, they tended to resemble the guilds.[1]

Medieval societies, to a great extent, were combinations of the confraternities of prayer, primarily religious in purpose, and the guilds, which came to emphasize temporal ends. The emphasis was often shifted from the religious to the temporal and back to the religious again. In the early Middle Ages, however, the guilds were primarily religious in character and many were organized as parish guilds. Their activities included

specific religious practices for personal and group sanctification, social activities, and the practice of acts of charity. Parish guilds endeavored to further the spiritual welfare of all the parishioners as well as that of their own members, and many of them provided special assistance for the parish church.[2]

Early ecclesiastical legislation concerning societies was local or regional and mainly prohibitive in character, in that it tried to correct abuses that had crept into these societies. In time the Church gave bishops control over confraternities by means of their visitations and enabled them to prevent abuses by requiring accounts of all expenditures. In the papal constitution *Quaecumque,* which Clement VIII published in 1604, a significant step was taken toward the control of all religious societies, the direction of their activities along religious lines, and the elimination of abuses. Although the prescriptions of this constitution neither directly affected the private lay societies nor bound the bishops, legislation was frequently enacted in confirmation of them, and it remained the basic law of the Church on confraternities until the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law, into which many of its provisions were incorporated.[3]

The Council of Trent (1545–1563) enacted the first legislation of universal application in this field. Its decrees "made parish life the center of a magnificent reordering of discipline among the clergy and faithful," and gave new meaning to parochial societies. As the Apostolic Delegate to the United States has remarked, "Set in the framework of the parish, these pious societies embrace all the faithful. Through them, both young and old, men and women alike, in a bond of solidarity and unity, are inspired and co-ordinated in works of piety and charity for the benefit of the entire community."[4]

Legislation concerning parish societies in the United States has generally emanated from the plenary councils of Baltimore and, more recently, the annual meetings of the hierarchy. Nevertheless, encouragement given to early societies and regulations imposed upon them by early provincial councils and

diocesan synods had far-reaching effects. The story of these developments cannot be adequately begun in this chapter. Something of their spirit may be sensed from the bishops' pastoral letter of 1919 which commented on the expansion of Catholic societies in order to keep pace with the rapid growth of the United States, increasing

> . . . their usefulness by selecting special lines of activity and by following these out wherever the cause of religion was in need. . . . They have enlisted our Catholic youth in the interests of faith and charity, provided in numberless ways for the helpless and the poor, shielded the weak against temptation, spread sound ideas of social and industrial reform and furthered the public welfare by their patriotic spirit and action.

The federation of organizations was welcomed "for the better attainment of their several objects and for the promotion of their common cause, the welfare of the Church."[5]

In every country parish societies of several types have been joined together at local, regional, and national levels. Some parish groups, such as the Holy Name Society and the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, are constituent units of international bodies established for the universal Church. Naturally variations are to be found in the structure and functioning of these societies, according to the cultural milieus in which they are organized. In the United States, for example, the pattern is complicated by the close — often subsidiary — relation of parish nationality and racial societies to their national groups. A relatively recent development toward co-ordination at local, deanery, diocesan, and national levels began with the establishment of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (1919). Through affiliation with the National Council of Catholic Men, the National Council of Catholic Women, and the National Catholic Youth Council, the activities of parochial and diocesan units can be assisted by the services of a national agency, and integrated into a national program.[6]

In summary, the Church has always fostered the growth of parish societies, employing them in a subsidiary but essential

role in the fulfillment of her own proper mission. With the passage of time there have been changes in organizational form, purpose, and function; but these societies today, as in the Middle Ages, occupy a position of paramount importance in the internal life and external structure of the Church. Limitations of data and of space make it impossible to present more than a fragmentary picture of parish societies in the United States.[7] Even the partial view of several key dioceses which is presented below should impress the student with the religious and social importance of parish societies, and the need for research in this field. Before proceeding with such analysis, however, it is necessary to consider certain formal aspects of ecclesiastical societies, particularly those which pertain to their status and defined functions.

CANONICAL DEFINITIONS

An intelligent understanding of the proper role of parish societies in the life of the Church does not demand an elaborate discussion of every canonical provision pertaining to these lesser ecclesiastical organizations. Certain fundamental distinctions and legal definitions are necessary, however, particularly in view of the widespread confusion which exists, even in the minds of Catholics, on these essentials.

1. *Important types.* The terms "society" and "association" are used in Canon Law in the broad sense of a voluntary formal union of persons striving for the attainment of a common objective. A parish society may be either ecclesiastical or lay in character. An *ecclesiastical society* is a "free union of the faithful established or approved by ecclesiastical authority for the exercise of some work of piety or of charity not prescribed for all the faithful."[8] Ecclesiastical societies are divided into (*a*) third orders secular and (*b*) pious unions, the latter comprising sodalities and confraternities. Societies instituted by the Pope are called papal societies; those instituted by a bishop are diocesan; and third orders and other organizations instituted by a religious superior are called religious societies.[9]

A *lay society* is "any association or pious union to which no official ecclesiastical recognition has been given. It is one which is governed and directed primarily by the laity. . . . Thus any society which is not established by the public ecclesiastical authority in the Church is designated in the law as a lay society whether it is formed by the clergy or by the laity."[10] Lay societies may be classified as (*a*) recommended societies, those which have received recommendation or praise but not formal approval from ecclesiastical authority; (*b*) licit societies, neither approved nor recommended, having as their end, in whole or part, works of piety and charity; and (*c*) illicit societies, including condemned, secret, and suspect societies.[11]

Technically, therefore, lay societies have no juridical existence within the Church, nor do ecclesiastical superiors have direct authority over them. But since the local Ordinary is the pastor of all who live in his diocese or territory, the lay society, as a union of his individual subjects, belongs within his jurisdiction. Consequently he has the right and the obligation to take cognizance of lay societies within his diocese in matters of general vigilance. Similarly, the local pastor has no particular rights by Canon Law over lay societies except those which he exercises in behalf of all his parishioners. Although exempt from the authority of the pastor in both internal and external rule, lay societies are, nevertheless, subject to his general vigilance.[12]

The functioning of the lay society depends upon and is restricted by the legal rights of the pastor. For example, the society's moderator or chaplain cannot lead public processions or impart public blessings without the pastor's consent. The members of a lay society may, however, lawfully perform works of charity and piety. It is the pastor's duty to institute such works if they do not already exist, to watch over them if they are already instituted, but not to interfere – although he may, for just reasons, suppress lay societies.

The ecclesiastical society receives the protection of Canon Law and enjoys privileges not accorded lay societies. The status

of an ecclesiastical society under Church law might be compared to that of an incorporated organization under civil law; supervision is given to the organization, which is held corporately responsible for its actions. Individual members of a lay society are responsible to the Ordinary in a manner similar to that of the individual members of an unincorporated alumni organization who are individually accountable in civil law for the actions and indebtedness of their association. Furthermore, a lay society may be accorded the status of an ecclesiastical society without a change in its purpose or function and, contrariwise, the local Ordinary may withdraw his official approval of an ecclesiastical society which would then become, should it continue in existence, merely a lay society.

Important though this distinction between ecclesiastical and lay societies is from the legal viewpoint, it is impossible to differentiate between these two types in the analysis of parish society data which follows, since the official sources available do not make this distinction.

Some further distinctions are useful in understanding the nature of parish societies. Both ecclesiastical and lay societies may be classified as *universal, i.e.,* established for the whole Catholic world, or *regional,* instituted for a specific city or parish. Any Catholic has a right to become a member of a universal society, while only those who live in a locality where it is established may join a regional or local society. A parish society, on the other hand, need not be confined to a single parish. "The same society may exist in another parish, or in all the parishes of a diocese, and still not be diocesan or regional because it was not instituted as such."[13] Moreover, some societies are called *general* while others are *special* societies. The Christian Mothers' Society, which exists in many countries, is a general society; the Catholic Church Extension Society, which is peculiar to the United States, is a special society. Neither the specific religious purpose of the parish society nor the territorial division changes the nature of the society nor gives it any ecclesiastical approval.

2. *Establishment of parish societies.* As a social unit the parish, territorial or personal, may lawfully form within itself groups of parishioners to assist it in achieving its own objectives. The traditional Catholic principle of subsidiary function is clearly applicable to this aspect of ecclesiastical organization. In the words of Father Clarke, it would be "against good social order for a diocese to assume exclusive control of parish societies, for such an act would constitute an infringement upon the natural rights of these societies. It would likewise be against good social order for a parish to assume all the tasks which could be performed by societies."[14] This suggests that the proper function of diocesan unions of parish societies, such as the Diocesan Holy Name or the Diocesan Sodality Union, should be to serve as aids to parish societies and in no way to dictate to them.

Any person who has reached his majority has the right to form a lay society. Although ecclesiastical approval is not required, no society can infringe upon the rights of the Ordinary or of the pastor. No new society can be established if the existing organizations are adequate, nor can a new confraternity of the same title be established in the same place.

3. *Organizational characteristics.* The origin and status of a parish society determine its hierarchy of organization, within the Church and within the State. This status may change from time to time, however, as new alignments are made with national or other organizations.

If a society is instituted by the Pope, it is a *papal society*, endowed with special privileges and subject to special regulations, administered by the Archconfraternity or Union established at Rome. This type of organization includes the two confraternities which the Code has ordered to be erected in each parish; the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament and the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.[15] These are established throughout the world, according to national patterns usually, through the assignment to each diocese of the responsibility for organization and supervision. Though the Confraternity of

Christian Doctrine has enjoyed the wider parochial development in the United States, there are many parishes which do not have a parish unit of the Confraternity. Hundreds of additional parishes do not have parish units of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. The degree of organization varies with the maturity, the history, and structure of the diocese, especially with the Ordinary's plan, mandate, and leadership, and the clerical and lay leadership and enthusiasm which he engenders for specific programs. In the United States, the Ordinary usually delegates to a diocesan director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine the responsibility for the proper establishment of parish confraternities, and their affiliation through the diocesan office with the National Center of the Confraternity, Washington, D. C., and with the Archconfraternity in Rome.

If an ecclesiastical society is instituted by the Ordinary, it is a *diocesan society,* responsible to him and to his delegated representatives, to the pastor for the parish unit and, usually, to a diocesan director for the Holy Name, the Sodality, and other diocesan unions. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that it is essential that each parish unit be approved or established by the Ordinary if it is to be an *ecclesiastical* society.

The Sodality of Our Lady is one of the organizations which finds diocesan unions of assistance to its parish sodalities. Affiliation through the National Office of the Sodality is required for aggregation to the Roman *Prima Primaria.* A society cannot be a Sodality of Our Lady without this aggregation. Hence many of the so-called Sodalities of the Blessed Virgin Mary which are not aggregated may be pious unions, but are not Sodalities of Our Lady.

If an ecclesiastical society is established by a religious superior it is a *religious society* subject to the special statutes of the community. Third orders secular and other religious societies are not necessarily parish societies. In fact, many of the more active organizations are national or at least city-wide in extent, centering their activities around a specific monastery or other religious house. The Third Order of St. Francis seems to be

more widely parochial than others. The Oblates of St. Benedict pledge "stability" to the abbey or monastery with which they are affiliated; however, there are some parish chapters.

Whether established by the clergy or by the laity, the *lay society* "is governed and directed primarily by the laity." Although the Church has the right of supervision in every society which has a religious end, this supervision is considerably restricted in the case of lay societies. The offices of moderator and chaplain are proper to ecclesiastical associations, but no specific regulation is made concerning these offices for lay societies. If these societies have such officers, they are elected or appointed by the members. Literally speaking, "lay societies are not bound by the special laws of the Church on societies."[16] However, lay societies in the United States seem to follow a pattern almost identical with that of similar parish societies which are established as ecclesiastical societies. This situation may be a result of habit on the part of Americans, who are notorious for their reliance upon their pastors for suggestions and decisions; it may be indifference; or it may be failure to understand the privileges and responsibilities of group participation.

Practically all of the organizations included in the four categories discussed above lend themselves to co-operative activity with national, diocesan, and other organizations. In many instances, a papal society is assisted by a national office. For example, the National Center of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine co-operates with diocesan and parish or district directors, according to the plan of the particular diocese. Some diocesan societies, such as the Ladies of Charity, are organized in many dioceses, but have no national counterpart in the United States. Religious societies show a similar variance, with some of the third orders and confraternities affiliated nationally as well as locally, while others function as single associations attached to a specific monastery or parish church.

It is probable that lay societies account for more of the

single, isolated parish societies than do the ecclesiastical societies, which usually tend to follow a diocesan pattern of organization. Nevertheless, many lay societies are affiliated with a national headquarters; in fact, the national office often fosters and encourages the formation of the parish society. By and large, an understanding of parish societies requires inclusion of national, state, regional, district, city, and neighborhood classifications as well as the Church divisions of universal, papal, diocesan, deanery, district, and parish.

The federations of the National Council of Catholic Men, the National Council of Catholic Women, and the National Catholic Youth Council further unify parish societies through parish council participation and affiliation in diocesan and national councils. The Catholic Central Verein of America represents another type of national affiliation of parish-centered units.

Although affiliated with a national nonsectarian organization, a Boy Scout troop in a Catholic parish can be classified as a parish society, in view of its combined spiritual and temporal end. On the other hand, the parish unit of the American Red Cross usually limits itself to knitting or sewing for the Red Cross and would, therefore, not qualify as a parish society. Both of these organizations are under the direction of national and regional offices which adapt the program to local needs. Participation of a parish Catholic Youth Organization as a member of a Community Chest presents another parish-community pattern. These are some of the myriad involvements of parish societies with other groups.

4. *Objectives.* The legitimate ends of parochial societies can be summarized as follows:

A true parish society, whether ecclesiastical or lay, must have *personal sanctification* as one of its objectives and must, consequently, provide the means to attain this end.[17] Christ founded the Church to provide mankind with the means of salvation; therefore this is the primary aim of the Church, of the pastor, of every public activity carried on in the parish, and of every society within the parish.

It is not necessary for every society to have works of charity and piety as its purpose, yet these are sufficient objects in themselves. The general law requires no specific acts of piety or charity: these are usually specified in the statutes of the society.

The increase of public worship is the special object for which all confraternities were founded; furthermore, other societies may have the same purpose.

Parish societies are usually instituted for religious ends, but no society with *licit temporal ends* has ever been condemned, so long as it was not the cause or occasion of abuse. Today certain beneficent societies, not entirely religious in purpose, have at least the implicit sanction of ecclesiastical authority. Expressly since the pontificate of Leo XIII, the popes have exhorted Catholics individually and collectively to work for a just social order. In 1931 the bishops of the United States urged "Catholic organizations to study the social teaching of the Church, so as to help prepare Catholics to take their full part in this great task [economic reconstruction] of our times."[18] Their statement of the previous year commended "the cooperation of Catholics in their organizations and as individuals with the federal, state, and city efforts to reduce unemployment."[19] Parish credit unions and co-operatives have been encouraged in many dioceses.[20] Bishops, priests, and Catholic lay leaders have everywhere provided countless testimonials to the effectiveness of temporal-religious activities of organizations to develop leaders, to unite diverse community interests, to improve community conditions and prevent delinquency, and to develop the spirit of solidarity as Catholics and as Americans.[21]

A SURVEY OF PARISH SOCIETIES IN FOUR DIOCESES

It is difficult to attempt an authentic portrayal of the functioning of parish societies in the United States, since basic data are lacking. Until such data are collected and analyzed, controversies over the effectiveness of the several types of organizations will continue to be inconclusive and

fruitless. Some information may be gained from general studies of associational participation which show that membership in the Church and its constitutent groups is the most frequent and, for many persons, the only form of affiliation.[22] Evaluation of these findings presents many problems, however. While the data suggest that membership in parish societies may be of crucial significance in the participation of some individuals, it is well known that, for many others, such membership is often merely nominal and without any deep identification on the social plane.

Another approach to the problem involves the use of data collected on the diocesan level. A considerable amount of information is provided each year in the reports of pastors to diocesan authorities. Since such reports are submitted and compiled for practical administrative purposes, they are quite deficient as instruments of research. They provide, in the first place, only limited types of data, chiefly on societies represented and their estimated membership frequently excluding any reference to parish societies. Satisfactory analysis would require the gathering of additional data on age and other characteristics of members, types of programs, extensity and intensity of participation, etc. Second, the reporting of pastors is often open to question both as to accuracy and completeness. In spite of these definite limitations, pastoral reports constitute one of the most important of the few sources of data presently available.

In an attempt to secure some concrete data for the present study, four dioceses were selected for the purpose of comparing the parish societies organized within them — the archdioceses of Detroit and Washington and the dioceses of Cleveland and Toledo. Basic data on the numbers of organizations were obtained from the annual directories of Detroit and Toledo[23] and, for Cleveland and Washington, from the *Status animarum* reports of the pastors. These data were supplemented by interviews and correspondence with diocesan officials, and by data from the office files of the National Council of Catholic Men,

the National Council of Catholic Women, the National Catholic Community Service, and the Youth Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference. It should be understood that the dioceses selected for study do not constitute a scientifically drawn sample, but they do provide some indication of the range in number and types of organizations, their membership and interrelation. Only a summary of the main findings is possible within the limitations of this chapter, but even this may indicate the possibilities in an approach to statistics now being gathered, crude though they be.[24]

Before examining major differences in parochial societies among the four dioceses, it might be well to list some of the most important sources of variability among parishes. These would surely include the following:

1. The diocesan organization and the Ordinary's plan, mandate, and personal leadership;

2. The individual pastor's interest, vision, capacity for leadership and for co-operative planning with lay members, and his awareness of the needs of parishioners for purposeful participation in parish group life;

3. Cultural backgrounds associated with nationality, racial, or other group affiliations;

4. Rural, urban, and regional differences;

5. The stability of the population and institutions in the neighborhood and parish;

6. The structure and position of the Catholic group in the community — *e.g.,* its spiritual, civic, economic, political, and social relationships;

7. Catholic schools, charities, hospitals, and other agencies in the parish and the community;

8. The selection and training of personnel, including the parish clergy — regular or secular, resident or mission — and orders of religious associated with parochial schools or societies;

9. The historical development of the diocese, community, and parish, its settlement patterns, traditions and mores, and *esprit de corps.*

Naturally these and other variables do not operate independently of one another. All must be evaluated in terms of the historical development and maturity of the parish and the diocese of which it is a part.

How these factors combine in unique patterns may be seen in a brief comparison of the archdiocese of Washington and the diocese of Cleveland. The former was, until 1947, part of the archdiocese of Baltimore, the oldest American see; the latter is a relatively old diocese, erected in 1848. The oldest traditions of the Washington archdiocese go back to Catholic Maryland of the seventeenth century; in the Cleveland area, except for the early colonization of the French, Catholics were not settled in any numbers until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Cleveland then began to grow as a typical American industrial metropolis. Washington, on the other hand, has been atypical from the beginning. It is cosmopolitan, a world capital with a highly transient population. Cleveland is also cosmopolitan, but as a melting pot of nationalities, reflected in forty-five national parishes in the see city alone. Washington has a large Negro population and conforms in many respects to the racial mores of the South; Cleveland, with several Negro neighborhoods, follows typical Northern patterns in race relations. Both cities have rural hinterlands, but the tobacco farming of southern Maryland contrasts sharply with the general and dairy farming of the Lake Erie region, and the Cleveland diocese contains several industrial subregional centers. Both see cities have numerous Catholic educational institutions, with Washington having the unique advantage of a large number of religious houses in the vicinity of the pontifical Catholic University. Due in part to the presence of these houses of study and the several colleges, unusually extensive and varied Catholic cultural, educational, and religious activities are to be found in the District of Columbia. The variety of opportunities for participation, coupled with the rather individualistic pattern of parochial organization inherited from the archdiocese of Baltimore, has tended to

emphasize nonparochial rather than parochial activities. There has been little inclination toward federation of existing parish societies, whereas in Cleveland, especially since 1921, interparochial and federated patterns of association have been developed to a relatively high degree. The many groups organized on the basis of nationality have also sponsored district or regional youth rallies and other activities which have cut across parish boundaries.

Some of the practical effects of differences such as these may be seen in statistical comparisons of the two dioceses. Table 1 reveals variations in proportion of parishes with societies. While these variations do not appear to be great, the archdiocese of Washington, with all but about 5 per cent of its reporting parishes having societies for adults, lacks societies for children and youth in more than one third of its parishes. This might well reflect the impersonalized apartment living prevalent in the nation's capitol and the high proportion of unmarried "government girls" and employed married women, as well as the lack of a well-defined pattern of Catholic youth activities.

TABLE 1

PER CENT OF PARISHES WITH SOCIETIES, DIOCESE OF CLEVELAND AND ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON, 1948

Diocese	*Number of*		*Number reporting*		*Per cent reporting with*	
	Parishes	*Missions*	*Parishes*	*Missions*	*Societies for adults*	*Societies for children*
Cleveland	200	4	191	2	92.2	79.7
Washington	85	29	83	16	95.9	64.6

SOURCE: *Status animarum* reports, 1948.

Further inferences may be drawn from comparisons of the number of societies represented, as shown in Table 2, which includes the data for Detroit and Toledo. The contrasts are especially marked between Cleveland and the other dioceses. The Cleveland figure may be accounted for in part by the many nationality groups resident in the diocese, since these tend to find expression in parochial societies. The same ob-

servation would apply to the large number of "general and unclassified" societies in Detroit. Nevertheless, the statistics suggest a high degree of uniformity in Detroit and Toledo, as compared with Cleveland and Washington. This is illustrated to some extent by comparisons of the numbers of parish units of each of the societies. With regard to societies of adults only, Detroit's 68 societies have 952 parish units, whereas Cleveland's 309 societies have but 886. The degree of centralization is apparently greatest in Toledo, where the 22 societies have 555 parish units. In Washington the 63 societies have 534 such units.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF PARISH SOCIETIES FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN FOUR DIOCESES, 1948

Age and sex groups specified	*Diocese of Cleveland*		*Archdiocese of Detroit*		*Diocese of Toledo*		*Archdiocese of Washington*	
	No.	*Percent*	*No.*	*Percent*	*No.*	*Percent*	*No.*	*Percent*
Number of parishes and missions	204	100.0	255	100.0	154	100.0	114	100.0
Number reporting	193	94.6	241	94.5	143	92.8	99	86.8
Number of parish societies	478	100.0	162	100.0	27	100.0	174	100.0
Societies for adults	*309*	*64.6*	*68*	*42.0*	*22*	*81.5*	*63*	*36.2*
Societies for men	104	21.8	14	8.6	5	18.6	15	8.6
Societies for women	187	39.1	34	21.0	16	59.2	21	12.1
Societies for both sexes	18	3.7	20	12.4	1	3.7	27	15.5
Societies for children and youth	*169*	*35.4*	*23*	*14.2*	*4**	*14.8**	*66*	*37.9*
Societies for boys	36	7.5	8	4.9	..*	. .*	20	11.5
Societies for girls	32	6.8	5	3.1	..*	...*	13	7.5
Societies for both sexes	101	21.1	10	6.2	4	14.8	33	18.9
General or unclassified	...	...	71	43.8	1	3.7	45**	25.9

SOURCES: Diocesan directories for Detroit and Toledo, *Status animarum* reports for Cleveland and Washington.

* Societies of boys and societies of girls were not listed in the Toledo *Directory*.

** Includes 2 Family Groups: fathers, mothers, children.

These statistics would be altered somewhat if the "general or unclassified" societies in Detroit and Washington could be more positively identified. Most are reported only by the names of their patron saints and it may be surmised that they

are pious unions having for their primary purpose the personal sanctification of members and the spread of devotion to their patron saints. Undoubtedly, moreover, many have secondary purposes which approach the aims of nationality societies, study clubs, athletic leagues, and other groups.

Table 2 also makes it clear that parish societies for women everywhere outnumber those for men. This is true in respect to both the number of societies and the number of parish units. Only in the archdiocese of Washington, perhaps by reason of the atypical features mentioned above, is there approximate equality. Since the number of parish units is significant for comparisons on this point, the requisite data are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF PARISH UNITS OF SOCIETIES FOR ADULTS IN FOUR DIOCESES, 1948

Sex groups	*Diocese of Cleveland*	*Archdiocese of Detroit*	*Diocese of Toledo*	*Archdiocese of Washington*
Number of parishes and missions	204	255	154	114
Number reporting	193	241	143	99
Societies for men				
Number of societies	104	14	5	15
Number of parish units	399	370	245	177
Societies for women				
Number of societies	187	34	16	21
Number of parish units	467	479	309	178
Societies for men and women				
Number of societies	18	20	1	27
Number of parish units	21	103	1	179
Unclassified				
Number of societies	..	71	1	45
Number of parish units	..	110	1	50

SOURCES: Diocesan directories for Detroit and Toledo, *Status animarum* reports for Cleveland and Washington.

The most frequently represented societies in the four dioceses surveyed are shown in Table 4. Space does not permit a

complete listing or the inclusion of the incomplete and possibly misleading membership statistics which are available. Variations among the dioceses appear clearly enough. It may be noted that an old and widespread organization such as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul might be relatively weak in an occasional diocese, such as Toledo, and that individual dioceses might have societies virtually confined to themselves, such as the "Young Men" or the "Young Ladies" in Toledo. The large numbers in the "All others" classifications for Cleveland and the "Unclassified" category for Detroit indicate the unique characteristics of these dioceses mentioned above. The most numerous pious unions for women are organized under varying names and constitutions, and contrast markedly in this respect with the Holy Name Society for men. The internal variation appears greatest in Cleveland as evidenced by the surprising total of 142 one-of-a-kind women's organizations and the six types of altar and/or rosary societies. It may be surmised, also, that the women's societies combine spiritual and mundane activities more than those for men, since they have in many places a reputation for success in organizing parochial fund-raising events.

Of all societies for adults reported, almost 82 per cent are pious unions which are primarily devotional in purpose. This proportion is virtually identical among societies for men, for women, and for both men and women. The range of variations among the dioceses is not great, the respective percentages being, approximately, 89 for Detroit, 79 for Washington, 78 for Toledo, and 74 for Cleveland.[25]

The Holy Name Society, a pious union, is easily the most prevalent organization. Altogether, it accounts for 49 per cent of the total number of parish units of men's societies. The reported membership in each of the dioceses exceeds the combined estimates for all other men's groups. Like the Altar Society or the League of the Sacred Heart in some dioceses, it is a "mass membership" society. Programs vary widely from parish to parish and diocese to diocese, but often

TABLE 4

SELECTED SOCIETIES FOR ADULTS IN FOUR DIOCESES, 1948*

Societies	*Diocese of Cleveland*		*Archdiocese of Detroit*		*Diocese of Toledo*		*Archdiocese of Washington*	
	No.	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*	*No.*	*Per cent*
Societies for men	*399*	*100.0*	*370*	*100.0*	*245*	*100.0*	*177*	*100.0*
Holy Name Society	163	40.8	221	59.7	105	42.8	95	53.7
Parish Council Cath. Men	2	0.5	.**	..**	91**	37.2**	.	...
Ushers' Club	10	2.5	65	17.6	..	...	4	2.3
St. Vincent de Paul Soc.	36	9.0	46	12.4	2	0.8	42	23.7
Catholic War Veterans	27	6.8	8	2.2	..	...	11	6.2
Young Men	..	..	..	...	46	18.8	.	...
Men's Club	12	3.0	10	2.7	..	...	3	1.7
Knights of St. John	12	3.0	3	0.8	..	...	4	2 3
All others	137	34.4	17	4.6	1	0.4	18	10.1
Societies for women	*467*	*100.0*	*479*	*100.0*	*309*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*
Sodality of B.V.M.	55	11.8	170	35.5	9	2.9	94	52.5
Altar Society	50	10.7	189	39.4	110	35.6	9	5.0
Rosary Society	22	4.7	36	7.5	3	0.9	.	...
Altar and Rosary Soc.	27	5.8	..	...	8	2.6	.	...
Ladies of Charity	..	..	..	...	..	..	26	14.5
Christian Mothers' Soc.	2	0.4	22	4.7	..	...	..	..
Parent-Teacher Assn.	26	5.6	2	0.4	2	0.6	4	2.2
Study Club	20	4.3	2	0.4	.	...	.	...
Sanctuary Society	8	1.7	..	...	..	.	19	10.7
St. Ann's Altar & Ros. Soc.	13	2.8	.	..	..	...	.	...
St. Anne's Society	10	2.1	12	2.5	..	...	.	...
Ladies' Cath. Benev Assn.	8	1.7	12	2.5	1	0.3	..	...
League of Sacred Heart	13	2.8	..	...	..	...	..	..
Parish Council of Cath. Women	6**	1.3**	.**	..**	96	31.1	..	...
Young Ladies	1	0.2	..	...	73	23.7	..	...
All others	206	44.1	34	7.1	7	2.3	27	15.1
Societies for men and women	*20*	*100.0*	*103*	*100.0*	*1*	*100.0*	*179*	*100.0*
Propagation of Faith	..	...	.	...	..	...	91	50.8
Third Order St. Francis	.	...	33	32.0	..	...	..	...
League of Sacred Heart	..	...	28	27.2	..	...	31	17.3
Conf. Christian Doctrine	..	...	..	...	..	...	12	6.7
Legion of Mary	..	...	5	4.9	..	...	10	5.6
All others	20	100.0	37	35.9	1	100.0	35	19.6
Unclassified	..	...	*110*	*100.0*	*1*	*100.0*	*48*	*100.0*

SOURCES: Diocesan directories for Detroit and Toledo, *Status animarum* reports for Cleveland and Washington.

* Only those societies are listed which have units in ten or more parishes.

** Since the Holy Name Society has been established as the basic unit of the Toledo Diocesan Council of Catholic Men, these parish councils are usually identical with the parish Holy Name Society. In Detroit, Parish Councils of Catholic Men or of Catholic Women are not listed, since the *Directory* "assumed that most parishes had such councils." The Cleveland Diocesan Council of Catholic Women reported affiliations of 28 Parish Councils.

demand little active participation beyond periodic corporate reception of Holy Communion. This is, of course, highly significant for regularity in spiritual duties, but the small proportion of other societies to pious unions – with the correspondingly small proportion in reported memberships – may be indicative of the failure of American parishes to penetrate into the manifold temporal phases of daily life.

Some attention should be given here to the affiliations of parochial societies in these dioceses with the National Councils of Catholic Men and Catholic Women. Women's groups are undoubtedly more often and more actively affiliated. The diocese of Cleveland has one of the most highly organized Diocesan Councils of Catholic Women in the country, with 122 parish and 85 other affiliations as of April 1, 1950. Parish councils, as federations of women's organizations, are mandated by the Ordinaries in Detroit and Toledo. As of April 1, 1950, the former had 172 such councils (not specified by parish), with five Altar Societies and 63 nonparochial organizations affiliated, and the latter had 106 Parish Councils of Catholic Women, 7 Altar and Rosary Societies; and 27 nonparochial organizations affiliated. In the archdiocese of Washington, which had no organized units of the National Council of Catholic Women, 1 parish and 6 interparochial organizations were independently affiliated.[26]

Parish Councils of Catholic Men are mandated for each parish in the archdiocese of Detroit and the diocese of Toledo. In the case of the latter, the mandate was given concomitantly with a diocesan reorganization of parish societies in 1948. The Holy Name Society was designated as the parish unit of the diocesan council. As of April 1, 1950, there were 35 Toledo affiliations with the National Council of Catholic Men, including 16 parish councils and 10 parish Holy Name Societies.[27] According to the archdiocesan *Directory,* "the Detroit Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Men is composed of representatives of nearly all laymen's organizations in the archdiocese."[28] The latter include, not only parish councils,

but such diverse groups as the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, the Catholic Interracial Council, the Kolping Society, the Catholic Lawyers' Guild, the Polish Roman Catholic Association of the United States, the Third Order of St. Francis, and numerous others. In the diocese of Cleveland, the diocesan council was reported as "inoperative" and only two parish councils were listed on the *Status animarum* reports, yet, on April 1, 1950, 27 parish councils were recorded as affiliated by the National Council of Catholic Men. Similarly, in the archdiocese of Washington, which had no archdiocesan council, 17 parish societies were affiliated directly with the National Council.

Due to the lack of comparable data on children and youth organizations for the four dioceses, it is impossible to do more than indicate the more important characteristics of these organizations. In the archdioceses of Washington and Detroit and the diocese of Cleveland, there were more different organizations for boys and girls jointly than were reported for either group separately. In Washington, organizations of boys comprised 8.5 per cent of all parish societies, those for girls 5.5 per cent, and those for boys and girls 10.1 per cent. In the Cleveland diocese, organizations for boys constituted 12.3 per cent of all societies, those for girls 9.1 per cent, and those for boys and girls 13.0 per cent. In Detroit, boys' societies comprised 7.7 per cent of all organizations, girls' societies 8.8 per cent, and societies for boys and girls combined 9.9 per cent.

In Washington, Detroit, and Cleveland there were a total of 63 different organizations of boys with 306 units or 33.7 per cent of the total organizations for children and youth. Girls in the same areas had only 50 organizations with 251 units or 27.7 per cent of all organizations for children and youth. Organizations with a combined membership were more diversified, comprising 144 different societies with 349 parish units, or 38.5 per cent of the 906 parish societies for children and youth.

Further analysis of existing data on parish societies for children and youth reveals one very significant fact – a wide-

spread dependence upon nonsectarian organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts of America. In the four dioceses studied there were a total of 221 parish units of Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, and Cub Scouts, comprising 72.2 per cent of all boys' organizations. The Toledo *Directory* supplied no information for girls' organizations, but the other three dioceses reported a total of 97 parish units of Girl Scouts and Brownies, accounting for 38.5 per cent of all organizations for girls. In other words, in the archdioceses of Washington and Detroit and the diocese of Cleveland, 44.5 per cent of all parish societies for boys and girls were affiliated with nonsectarian scout organizations. In some instances a scout troop or a unit of the Campfire Girls or a 4-H club was the only organization for children and youth in the parish.

While it may be granted that the programs of these organizations have been or can be adapted to meet many needs of parish youth groups, a reasonable question may be raised as to their effectiveness in meeting the specific needs of Catholic youth. Even when the programs of national nonsectarian organizations are flexible enough to permit Catholic programming, experience has shown that most, if not all, of the time and attention of leaders and members is devoted to the secular program.

Many dioceses are meeting the problem of training Catholic leaders through diocesan and parish youth councils which comprise approved youth groups within the diocese and parish respectively. These local or regional units are federated with the National Catholic Youth Council which was instituted by the bishops of the United States in 1937.[29] Data from the 1950 *Status animarum* reports for the diocese of Buffalo — one of the dioceses whose youth council is federated with the N.C.Y.C. — graphically contrast federation's achievement in co-ordination with the parish and diocesan heterogeneity described above. This coalescence is most apparent in the organizations for boys and girls jointly: 90 per cent of the parish units are Parish Catholic Youth Councils. On the other hand, the various

programs, and the national, diocesan, and local sponsorships of the affiliated groups of these parish councils, pay tribute to the validity of the Youth Council's paradoxical Catholic principle of unity in diversity. To cite a few examples: 50 per cent of the societies for girls are Junior Sodalities of the Blessed Virgin Mary; 33 per cent of the parish groups for boys are Junior Holy Name Societies; and 50 per cent of the total number of societies for boys and for girls are parish units cosponsored by the nonsectarian organizations of the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls. Even this partial analysis[30] underscores the imperatives of continued study, training, leadership, and program development for the youth apostolate — a cause which is receiving the sponsorship of the National Catholic Youth Council and its affiliated organizations. Many types of groups and programs are made available for children and youth by the national program organizations, such as the Junior Catholic Daughters of America, Columbian Squires, Holy Name Society, Sodality of Our Lady, Catholic committees on scouting and related groups; and by diocesan organizations, such as the CYO and the CYC. In turn, fraternization and co-ordination at national, diocesan, and local levels will improve performance and will enable each type of organization and program to take its "proper place" in helping the parish to meet the present and future needs of American Catholic youth.

CONCLUSION

At best this study is only a modest beginning on the important but little analyzed subject of parish societies. Although the data available point up trends, patterns, and problems, they are not extensive enough to be conclusive. It is impossible to do more at this point than to summarize briefly the more important findings of this limited research project.

1. A most pressing *desideratum* for future research in this field is the adoption of standardized report forms and uniform definitions and classifications of parish societies so that informa-

tion on the *Status animarum* reports can be used for comparative analysis.

2. Underreporting and overreporting seem to be common practices which affect adversely the reliability of parish statistics. Part of the underreporting may be occasioned by a failure to list each organization and by the tendency to take some for granted. Some of the rather typical omissions are the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the Holy Name Society, ushers' clubs, choirs, altar boys' societies, Third Orders, study clubs, parish credit unions, and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It is interesting to note that some of the parish units affiliated with a parish council are not mentioned on the pastor's report, possibly because they are considered as completely identical with the parish council rather than as separate co-operating societies. The writer recommends that the officers of each parish society be asked to submit an annual report to the pastor and to the Ordinary. This would serve as an important record and check list for officers and administrators.

3. Relatively few parishioners in the majority of parishes studied are members of parish societies. By and large, parish societies are something of a hit-and-miss proposition which the parishioner can take or leave without any feeling of personal responsibility.

4. The traditional Catholic organizational pattern by sex and age was found to predominate in the dioceses studied, although, Buffalo excepted, there seems to be a trend away from this pattern for children and youth societies in that joint organizations for boys and girls outnumbered those for either boys or girls exclusively.

5. Pious unions seem to be the only primary, uniformly typical parish society for adults. Perhaps this is because the pastor thinks of pious unions only as parish societies and fails to report other types, or because parishioners are finding their leisure-time interests and associations away from the parish. On the other hand, social and recreational societies account for the majority of parish societies for children and youth.

6. The most popular type of parish society seems to be the mass membership organization with considerable nominal membership and rather tenuous enrollment requirements.

7. Parish societies, especially those affiliated with diocesan or national organizations, are concentrated, with few exceptions, in the see city. This seems unfortunate when it is realized that Catholics in the more isolated areas urgently need the stimulus and encouragement of Catholic group life.

8. The wide diversity of organizations in the dioceses studied shows a disunity on the parochial and diocesan levels which diffuses Catholic strength in many unrelated areas. Counteracting this excessive isolationism is the slow, yet encouraging, advance in Catholic solidarity and *esprit de corps* reported by several of the dioceses which have brought their people together in parish and diocesan councils, federated with the National Councils of Catholic Men, Catholic Women, Catholic Youth. In this "larger Catholic unity of which each (individual and society) is a reflection," the writer sees the hope of the Mystical Body of Christ in America; the strengths and the joys of achieving individual and societal objectives and, with St. Paul, of doing "good to all men, but especially to those who are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:10).

9. Evident dependence upon nonsectarian cosponsored organizations, such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, suggests the need for an evaluation of the parish program for children and youth. It is necessary to investigate the extent to which Catholic programs and leadership are available and adequate, the place of nonsectarian sponsored activities, and the possibility of adapting them to meet the demands of a Catholic program.

10. Granting that "the criterion of service is need," this study has not found that the service given is satisfying the needs of the majority of parishioners for association with their fellow Catholics, for leisure-time activities, or for special group interests. Even in the more highly organized dioceses relatively few Catholic men find these associations in Catholic societies.

Proportionately more women than men band together in parish groups, yet large numbers of women have no parish society affiliations. A still smaller minority of boys and girls are members of parish organizations, so that hope for increased membership and participation in adult societies in the future is far from bright. Barring a return to parish-centered group life in which a "solidarity of interests" converges "toward the Kingdom of God," the writer is of the opinion that the average American parish is failing to meet the challenge of modern competition for the leisure-time and more-than-Sunday spiritual life of its parishioners, both young and old.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study has been made possible through the collaboration of Thomas D. Hinton, Executive Director, National Catholic Community Service; Margaret J. Mealey, Executive Secretary, National Council of Catholic Women; and James S. Mitchell, Executive Secretary, National Council of Catholic Men (during 1949 and 1950 when the data were being collected; now Associate Director, USO); and members of their national office staffs, Washington, D. C.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER VII

1. See the brief historical account in Thomas J. Clarke, *Parish Societies* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943), Chap. II.

2. *Ibid.* See also H. F. Westlake, *The Parish Gilds of Mediaeval England* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1919); Cardinal F. A. Gasquet, *Parish Life in Mediaeval England* (New York: Benziger Bros., 1906); Frances S. Engel, "The Medieval Guilds," *The Victorian,* XLV (1939), 44–49.

3. Clarke, *op. cit.,* pp. 17–19.

4. Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, *The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in the United States* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1947), pp. 74–75.

5. Peter Guilday (ed.), *The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy, 1792–1919* (Washington, D. C.: National Catholic Welfare Council, 1923), p. 187.

6. The publications of these councils are available from their central offices at 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 5, D. C. For a detailed study, see Sister Mary Martinita Mackey, B.V.M., "Patterns of Formal Organization in a Federated Group; the National Council of Catholic Women" (unpublished Master's dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1949). For history of earlier federation of Catholic societies, see James A. McFaul, *The American Federation of Catholic Societies* (Cincinnati, 1911).

7. For the sixty-year period, 1888–1948, no title mentioning parish societies as such is to be found in *The Guide to Catholic Literature* (Detroit: Walter Romig & Co., 1940, 1944, 1948). One book, E. F. Garesché, *Social Organization in*

Parishes (New York: Benziger Bros., 1921), discusses some aspects of parish social organizations. The canonical structure of parish societies receives detailed analysis in Thomas J. Clarke, *Parish Societies* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943), which has been an invaluable reference in the preparation of this chapter. To a limited degree, magazine articles have compensated for this book's lacuna. See *The Catholic Periodical Index* (New York: Catholic Library Association, especially 1940–1950).

8. Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4. See also William H. W. Fanning, "Catholic Societies," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1912), p. 71.

10. Clarke, *ibid.*, pp. 4, 7.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 88, 93, 94.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 100–101.

15. Canon 711.

16. Clarke, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 83, 125.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 45. See also Fanning, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–71.

18. "Statement of the Hierarchy of the United States on the Economic Crisis," *N.C.W.C. Review,* XIII (1931), 8.

19. "Statement of the Hierarchy of the United States Concerning Unemployment," *N.C.W.C. Review,* XIII (1931), 5–6.

20. Edwin V. O'Hara, "Parish Credit Unions," *N.C.W.C. Bulletin,* XII (1930), 21.

21. Interesting examples of the social effectiveness of parish societies can be found in the following studies: Gerald J. Schnepp, S.M., *Leakage from a Catholic Parish* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1942); Rev. William T. Magee, "The Role of the Sodality in the Social Life of an Urban Parish" (unpublished Master's dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1947); Edward D. Plawinski, "The Parish and Leadership in Community Civic Programs," *Proceedings of the Thirtieth National Conference of Catholic Charities* (Washington, D. C.: National Conference of Catholic Charities, 1944), pp. 204–205; Thomas J. Harte, C.Ss.R., *Catholic Organizations Promoting Negro-White Race Relations in the United States* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947).

22. See citations of these studies, Chap. VIII.

23. *The Catholic Directory and Yearbook, 1949, for the Archdiocese of Detroit* (Detroit: The Cardinal Newman Foundation, 1949). *Official Yearbook and Seminary Report of the Diocese of Toledo, 1948* (Toledo: Diocesan Chancery, 1948).

24. The complete findings will be made available elsewhere through articles and reports.

25. In computing these percentages, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith has been excluded, since it does not really function as a parish society, and since enrollment on a parish basis was reported for the archdiocese of Washington only.

26. Report: "N.C.C.W. Affiliations in Selected Dioceses, April 1, 1950," Margaret J. Mealey, Executive Secretary, National Council of Catholic Women.

27. Report: "N.C.C.M. Affiliations in Selected Dioceses, April 1, 1950," James S. Mitchell, Executive Secretary, National Council of Catholic Men.

28. *The Catholic Directory and Year Book, 1949, for the Archdiocese of Detroit, op. cit.*, p. 131.

29. Youth Department, N.C.W.C., *What Is a Parish Council?* (Washington, D. C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, n.d.).

30. Buffalo diocesan study will be completed during the summer of 1951: collation of data from the 1950 *Status animarum* reports and from survey made in March, 1951, by the Buffalo Diocesan Catholic Youth Council.

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PART III

SOCIAL RESEARCH IN THE PARISH

CHAPTER VIII

EMPIRICAL PROBLEMS FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH IN THE PARISH

by C. J. NUFSSE

INTRODUCTION

UNDOUBTEDLY a distinction must be made between two broad purposes for which social research may be carried on in the parish. One purpose is that of obtaining factual information as a basis for determining parish policies and practices. The parish census serves such an end. Through the census essential facts about the parish population and its standards of religious practice are secured, and these facts can be used in the immediate follow-up work of seeking out lapsed Catholics, validating marriages, and the like. Social surveys of the parish may serve a similar function in disclosing problem areas where parochial or allied efforts are needed. Both census and survey procedures are discussed at length in the chapters immediately following this.

The professional sociologist works with a somewhat different object in view, since his research is directed toward obtaining data which may be used in testing hypotheses suitable for integration within a growing body of theory. Systems of knowledge rather than immediate applications are his chief concern, though, eventually, advancement in the sciences provides a basis for improvements in teaching and in practice. Sociological data must be obtained mainly from investigation in the field, for social life can seldom be studied under laboratory conditions. Hence, the development of a sociology of the parish

requires as a first step the observation of actual parish life and the gathering of data bearing upon carefully formulated empirical problems.

Representatives of two distinct vocations, those of priest and scholar, are thus brought into relationship. Very little can be accomplished unless there is mutual understanding of what their respective roles entail and of their true complementary character. That pastors and sociologists can co-operate to their mutual advantage is abundantly clear from the limited amount of research in this field which has already been published or is known to be in progress. Not only the obvious necessity for getting along together, but the real gains to be obtained from the interchange of practical and theoretical knowledge, make this co-operation imperative. In this restricted field, as in social research in general, the interdependence of the scientist and the man of action is a basic fact which must be taken into account whenever investigations are planned.[1]

Recognition of the complementary aims and practical interdependence of pastors and sociologists suggests that, when it is feasible, research should be designed to serve both. The use of scientific techniques in a parish census or survey enhances the value of the data, inasmuch as they become useful for either theoretical or practical work. An investigation bearing upon some hypothesis relevant to the social organization of the parish may likewise be used in assessing the effectiveness of current practices. If it is discovered that participation in parish activities is limited to certain social strata, for example, changes in administrative procedures will be indicated. Careful planning will facilitate this dual purpose research.

It is the purpose of the present chapter to outline some types of studies which seem to combine both practical and scientific utility. A complete, detailed presentation of possibilities for investigation would be beyond the scope of the present volume and probably inappropriate at this stage of parish research. Instead, an attempt has been made to list the major areas in which parish research has been undertaken and to

provide illustrations of types of studies reported in each area. This procedure may help to place actual findings in perspective and to provide suggestions for future projects. It is intended to be suggestive only and not complete. The range of problems studied and techniques employed will broaden readily enough if interest in parish research is intensified.

DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES

Logically, among the first objects of study in a parish are the size, composition, distribution, and trends of change of its population. Identification of the population under study is a necessary preliminary step in any type of social research. Moreover, in order to attack the practical problems of parochial administration, a pastor must certainly know who his people are. The fact that so little exact information is available for all but a relatively small number of American parishes constitutes a major obstacle for parish research, to say nothing of the limitations it places upon pastoral work. As long as these basic data are lacking, it will be virtually impossible to design scientific samples of the Catholic population for intensive studies.

While the *Catholic Directory* annually publishes figures for the Catholic population of the United States on a diocesan and national basis, the manner in which these figures are obtained and compiled makes them wholly unreliable for scientific work.[2] The United States *Census of Religious Bodies,* taken in 1906, 1916, 1926, and 1936, is perhaps slightly more reliable, though decided underenumeration in 1936 renders the statistics for that year of little use, and all data must now be considered outmoded.[3] Undoubtedly an important aid and a powerful stimulus to Catholic population studies on the parochial or local level would be the organization of a national statistical or research agency, such as has frequently been proposed.[4] American Catholics have lagged notably behind Europeans in the establishment of such an agency.[5]

Properly executed studies in the future may be expected

to employ a dynamic approach in which the parish will be related to the entire Catholic population of the community, region, or nation, as well as to the total population on these levels, both in terms of the current picture and of observable trends. Past research on regional or national levels has been focused principally upon the problems of the differential in fertility between Catholics and non-Catholics.[6] This problem is of enormous importance to the future of Catholic parishes, but it transcends the limitations of a treatment of the parish as a social group.

STUDIES OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

A parish census, by definition, goes beyond the collection of purely demographic facts to obtain data on religious practices. This is the type of information in which pastors are most directly interested; hence it is not surprising to find numerous articles on "leakage" in the ecclesiastical journals. Published studies range in quality from mere guesses founded upon limited pastoral experience to careful analyses of historical and census materials.[7]

A pattern seems to be revealed by these studies. Of all Catholics in the United States, approximately 70 to 80 per cent maintain a standard of observance customarily termed "practical." Within the boundaries of an urban parish on the Atlantic seaboard, for example, 80 per cent of 3720 persons were found "living up to the essentials of their Faith" by the criteria of reception of the sacraments, especially Easter Communion, regular attendance at Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation, observance of the Friday abstinence, and valid marriage.[8] By the same standards, about 70 per cent of 2794 souls were found regular in an urban parish on the eastern north-south border.[9] Of 9920 individuals in a Cleveland parish, 17.7 per cent had lapsed;[10] and in a 20-year-old suburban parish on the midwestern north-south border, of 401 family units 6.7 per cent were founded upon invalid marriages and another 11.2 per cent contained one or more

members failing to make their Easter Communions.[11] In a recent census study of Madison, Wisconsin, based upon a sample including about one half the total population of the city 18 years old and over, the average number of church attendances per month for 6515 Catholics was reported as 3.52, while approximately 80 per cent of all Catholics were estimated to attend Mass on any one Sunday.[12] The only investigation on a diocesan scale supports these findings in its breakdowns according to marital status, parents' religion, education, place of birth and residence, and economic status, though no over-all computation for the whole population of 40,473 is reported.[13]

No study has been based upon a national sample because of the lack of data already mentioned. The studies which have been made are alike in enumerating or sampling, not only practicing parishioners, but all persons within parochial or other boundaries reported as Catholic by birth or conversion. This procedure is usually followed in a census and provides data of the utmost practical importance in estimating the tasks of conservation and missionary activity which confront the parish. From the point of view of sociological method, however, the findings of such studies cannot be related functionally to the parish group without further qualifications. It would be necessary, for example, to distinguish lapsed Catholics migrating into a parish, for whom the parish must assume responsibility, though it was not responsible for their lapse.

Related research confined to selected groups, most often college classes, can be interpreted only with difficulty, especially in view of the inadequate or biased samples of Catholics frequently included within these groups.[14] In general, results of surveys of this type are not inconsistent with those of parochial studies. A summary would be out of place, however, since these results are not directly related to the parish group.

Among the differentials which have been found to be most significant in research on the practice of the faith, most atten-

tion has been centered upon mixed marriages, which, not inaccurately, are regarded as an important channel of defection. The diocesan study in Florida reported as invalid 40 per cent of mixed marriages entered by Catholic men, 25 per cent of those entered by Catholic women.[15] The greatest amount of religious delinquency was found among the children of parents invalidly married.[16] Nearly all investigations have shown women more faithful to religious obligations than men. In Florida, native-born Catholics had higher rates for observance than foreign-born, with the difference especially marked when the latter originated in countries with traditions of laxity.[17] Rates of observance and amount of education were positively correlated; education in Catholic schools was found to be an important differential when it continued beyond the seventh grade.[18] There was a positive relationship between practice of the faith and improvement in socioeconomic status.[19] If the significance of these differentials is to be weighed, they must be studied within more specific contexts of ethnic and class affiliations; since the parish often represents a formal organization which serves as an instrument for ethnic and class maintenance or mobility, research bearing upon these differentials may be expected to reveal an important complex of relationships.

STUDIES OF PARTICIPATION

This same consideration applies to studies of participation in parish activities. Unfortunately, not much data on the parish can be obtained from the rather large volume of participation research. Data collected in one Eastern urban parish revealed 65 per cent of those eligible for membership belonging to the Holy Name Society or the Sodality; such membership was found to be closely related to the practice of the faith.[20] In a study of young parishioners from sixteen to twenty-four, of 117 males, 42 per cent claimed membership in the Holy Name Society, but of these less than 8 per cent attended with regularity; of 94 females, 23 per cent claimed member-

ship in the Sodality and of these 18 per cent attended regularly.[21] These societies require little more from members than monthly corporate reception of Holy Communion; membership in societies which involve additional duties is undoubtedly held by much smaller proportions of parishioners.

Analyses of religious differentials in participation on a community-wide scale reveal some things about the place of the parish in the total range of contacts with formally organized groups. About 20 per cent of adults in American rural and urban communities seem to have no affiliations with such groups.[22] Studies in rural New York have shown that "participants in church activities also participate in other voluntary organizations in larger proportions than those who do not take part in church activities,"[23] although this was not found to be the case in an earlier study in Wisconsin.[24] In New York State, when factors of land class and ownership were held constant, Protestants of all denominations were found to rank higher than Catholics in amount of participation.[25] Chicago Catholics were similarly found to be less highly organized than others in every occupational category,[26] but in New York City the differential was found only in so far as participation followed socioeconomic status lines, and Catholics were found to belong to organizations distinctive in type, *e.g.,* religious and political associations.[27]

Students of participation at Cornell University have attempted to draw upon extensive rural studies in formulating a set of "principles of participation."[28] A number of these seem relevant to the parish. Participation has been found to be a family trait, so that in encouraging individual affiliations, an approach through the family is important.[29] The first contacts in obtaining family participation can usually be made most successfully through wives and mothers, since they are the most active participants.[30] Since families have been found to rate themselves quite accurately on participation and standing in the community, participation may be viewed in part as expressing acceptance or rejection on the part of community

members and reactions of superiority or inferiority on the part of the individual families.[31]

Studies such as these suggest two things especially with regard to the planning of parish research. They indicate, in the first place, the necessity for measuring parochial participation in relation to the total participation of parishioners. Only through this approach is it possible to discover the associational significance of the parish to the individual members. It is probable, for example, that, for a fair-sized group in every community, church membership is the only form of participation in organized groups. Thus, a study of Boulder, Colorado, showed 29 per cent of adults belonging to no group and 19 per cent belonging only to a church.[32] It would be worth investigating the possibility that the parish has at least a unique symbolic value for persons in this category, and that it may be associated significantly with informal neighborhood and community participation, while for some with numerous affiliations it may be simply one of several activities, regarded in effect as not unlike the others.[33]

Adequate sociological interpretation of participation depends, further, upon the relation of group memberships to the social structure of the community. In this way it may be discovered that the parish serves integrating or disorganizing functions, or that it serves as an instrument of particular groups, especially ethnic and class groups, either preserving their solidarity or assisting their assimilation and mobility in the community system. Thus attention to the findings of structural studies is necessary.

THE PARISH IN AMERICAN ETHNIC AND CLASS SYSTEMS

Ethnic and class affiliations are usually closely related in American communities as a result of the positions occupied by succeeding immigrant groups relative to one another, and their upward mobility on a group as well as an individual basis. Foreign observers seldom fail to notice that, in the words

of one, "the striking quality of American Catholicism is the strength of its group loyalties."[34] To the extent that this is true it is not surprising to find parochial organization identified with and colored by ethnic and class cultures.

This is most apparent in the early stages of assimilation. During the first waves of immigration in the nineteenth century, Irish priests were found with their laborer flocks along the canal routes and in the cities, and wherever settlements were made "Irish" parishes were founded. It was the same with the Germans, who once sought an autonomous ecclesiastical administration which would deliver them from "Irish control." Later immigrant groups – Poles, Italians, French Canadians, and others – attempted to transfer to the American environment the community and parochial solidarity of their homelands. The parish was "the only structure that, at least in the beginning, was a pure reproduction of a structural type characteristic of the national society."[35] For this reason, and because of the central importance of religion in the ethnic cultures, the parish became an instrument of the ethnic group as well as of the Church.

This organizing function of the parish in relation to the ethnic group changed with the progress of assimilation. Even for the Irish in "Yankee City," now resident in the United States for a century or more, in the face of threatened loss of identity the Church has served "more than any other structure to organize the group as a community system."[36] Characteristically, by moderating the disorganizing effects of the assimilative process, the parish actually served both to preserve ethnic solidarity on the one hand and to facilitate assimilation on the other.

In performing this dual function, the ethnic parish was a matrix for the organization of parochial schools and ethnic associations which, as "structural fences,"[37] preserved group integrity while community contacts were broadened. Native Americans perhaps resented the "foreign" characteristics of these institutions, but they came to realize their value in

fostering respect for the parental generation which would have been undermined by contacts with public schools and submergence in native groups.[38] Moreover, as the older groups advanced socially, they became to some extent agencies promoting the assimilation of the later arrivals which replaced them in lower occupational and social positions. Thus, the Irish — and their parishes — came to occupy what has been called a position of "intermediacy."[39] In some places, later immigrant groups which were Catholic in religion found themselves settling in an "Irish-American," not simply an American milieu.[40] Interethnic marriages within the faith also facilitated assimilation, counteracting in this respect the segregation on grounds of both ethnic and religious affiliation which has tended to isolate Catholics from the main stream of American life.[41]

Assimilation accompanied by the upward mobility of ethnic groups has naturally presented parochial problems. One of these is interethnic conflict within or among parishes, due in the first place to cultural differences, but also to class distinctions attached to these differences. In New Haven, for example, the "lace-curtain" Irish live in one section of the city, occupy white-collar or public-service occupations, and worship at churches to which few Italian or Polish laborers belong; as the latter become more "Americanized" and move into higher-status occupations, they tend to join parishes with more ethnically mixed memberships.[42] Gravitation toward the "Irish" church and school has been noted in other communities also.[43] In spite of these distinctions and the controversies to which they have led, a solid front is usually presented when Catholicism itself is felt to be under attack, and the Irish have sometimes reacted to the dominance of Old Americans by championing the rights of the newer Catholic groups.[44]

Defections from the faith may be a more serious consequence of ethnic and class differences. According to a recent study of a small Midwestern community, the hostility of the Irish toward the small group of lower-class Poles in a Catholic parish

aggravated, as the pastor recognized, the neglect by the latter of their religious duties.[45] Opportunities for marriage into Protestant families of higher social status is another source of defection. The process and its effects upon Church and nation are described by an anthropologist:

> In many areas of Massachusetts the assimilated young move first from the confining walls of the Polish church or the Franco-American church into the Irish church, and here they reach the edge of safety, for once speaking English (learned it is true under unimpeachable auspices) the next step is likely to be mingling in the general American community, and participating in the American atmosphere of freedom of marital choice. Then comes the danger of mixed marriages to the occasional young Catholic who in the height of romanticism, combined with general approved American behavior, decides that he "will become a heathen for her sake" — not a Protestant, but a heathen. The bulk of the Protestant community will approve his behavior simply because it is American. Protestantism has won no convert, the wife will probably also give up any religious tie that she had. Another family has been secularized.[46]

In addition to data provided through studies of specific communities, some insight into the class position of American Catholics may be obtained from the analysis of returns on public-opinion polls. Using such sources, one student has estimated that from 30 to 51 per cent of Catholics throughout the country are in the lower-income group, and only from 6 to 15 per cent in the upper-income group;[47] another distributes Catholics as 9 per cent upper class, 25 per cent middle class, and 56 per cent lower class.[48] It is difficult, however, to know just what these class designations mean. Occupationally, Catholics are found underrepresented in professional and business categories, and dominant among urban manual workers.[49] Educationally, taken as a group, in every part of the country Catholics have lower levels of attainment than Protestants.[50] The various Protestant denominations, of course, are found to differ significantly from one another in the direction of class stratification. Parish research must undoubtedly take

account of these differences in evaluating religious observance and in relating parishes to one another and to the whole community. Parochial administration which does not take account of them will be correspondingly lacking in effectiveness.

THE INTEGRATION OF THE PARISH AND THE COMMUNITY

The whole area of ethnic and class differences in relation to parochial organization certainly deserves further study. The apostolate cannot be advanced without a realistic appraisal of the social structure within which it is undertaken. Common sense observation will not entirely suffice for such an appraisal, since it is too often biased by the personal background or the limited range of contacts of the observer.[51] Moreover, the advancement of the apostolate cannot be interpreted in the narrow sense of "convert-making" alone, but must surely include an appreciation of the role which the parish has to play in the integration of the community.

In peasant societies of the Old World, parish and community were usually identical. A study of an isolated French-Canadian community retaining its folk culture reveals this same identification.[52] Though having formally separate religious, civil, and educational units, the parish community really constitutes one social structure, with the *curé* its official and unofficial leader. In religiously diverse communities of the United States, this fusion of parish and community can seldom be found, except perhaps among such minorities as the Mormons or the Amish.

Something approximating the traditional role of the parish may be seen, however, among certain ethnic groups which have settled in rural regions. The Russian Germans of Ellis County, Kansas, provide an example. They are organized in parishes which are virtually coterminous with neighborhood and community boundaries and which serve as the principal integrating agencies in the local life.[53] Religious unity has, in this area, preserved the integrity of communities through

periods of drought and dust storms which have driven other peoples from the region. Russian-German farmers illustrate how an ethnic group may adapt itself gradually to mechanization, rising standards of living, and modern American ways, while retaining its traditional basis of unity. So successful has been their adaptation that, as population has grown, and as the area occupied by the group has expanded with the settlement of younger generations on the land, there has been no loss of community integration.

Where communities are more divided religiously, church groups are likely to appear as retarding rather than promoting community integration. In a small village-centered community near Madison, Wisconsin, the affiliations of 343 families were found to be scattered among 40 churches in covert competition with each other. Analysis revealed that these churches drew together small groups which were quite homogeneous in social, economic, and ethnic characteristics.[54] This complex differentiation, typical of urbanized America, is the extreme opposite of the Old World parish community.

As the size of a community increases, the relation of the parish to community integration becomes much more difficult to trace. The city parish is not a community; instead, as has been shown in a study of "Cantonville," a Quebec town undergoing industrialization, parishes are "unlike segments of a single community."[55] In contrast to the parish of rural Quebec, which comprises farm owners relatively equal in status, the parishes of "Cantonville" are differentiated not only territorially but also along class lines. This is the natural result of the differentiation of residential areas with varying connotations of status, and of the inclusion of several social classes within a territorial parish. Parish unity is put to a test by the introduction of these differences at the same time that the scope of parish activities is narrowed by the specialization which is characteristic of urban life. The spiritual effectiveness of the parish is drastically diminished under the impact of urbanization unless well-planned adaptations are made.

The nature of these adaptations is the subject of much discussion which cannot be reviewed here.[56] In this country, during recent decades, specialized interparochial, regional, and national movements — in family life, labor, interracial relations, rural life, recreation, and many other fields — have grown to sizable proportions, though not sufficiently to provoke the reaction toward revitalizing the parish which has developed from comparable movements in Europe.[57] These movements have sought to extend the apostolate in the modern environment, to fight specialization with specialization, as it were. Relations with the parish have not always been thought out, and conflict has sometimes resulted. Whatever the relative emphasis which is eventually given to parochial and specialized apostolates, the sacred function of the parish will remain that of incarnating Christ in the community — of supplying, in other words, the moral and spiritual basis for the integration of the community.

In the light of this function, the role of the sociologist may appear humble, but nonetheless useful. The cataloguing of problems in this chapter should illustrate at least this point. Research on the specialized problems already listed will be increasingly significant as these problems are linked within the more inclusive view of the parish as a social group. Studies of parish structure and functioning might apply to advantage newer research techniques developed in investigations of informal organization in industry, government, locality groups, and the like.[58] When, through the advantageous use of available techniques, the formal and informal structure of modern parishes is clearly revealed, their relation to community systems will become apparent, and a factual basis for planning the work of the apostolate will be established.

THE ECOLOGY OF THE PARISH

One aspect of the relationship of parish and community which must be included as a final part of this review of empirical problems of parish research is ecological position.

Ecological analysis at the social level is concerned with the spatial distribution of persons, groups, and institutions which is the result of constant, mostly impersonal competition for locations considered advantageous according to the values of the community.[59] It is common knowledge that distinctive areas within every community acquire varied reputations and come to symbolize the statuses of their respective occupants. From one point of view, the reputation of an area is ascribed on the grounds of its use and the status of its inhabitants; from another, the character of the land use and population is decisive in attracting or repelling enterprises or immigrants of various statuses into or from the area. Every community has its unique ecological organization, *e.g.*, its arrangement of business and residential areas, its upper-class homes and its places "across the tracks," its ghettos, slums, and the like.

The parish is involved in ecological interaction since it is, in its secular aspect, an enterprise which is subject to the necessity of competing for survival. It depends upon a population base from which it must obtain members who will maintain it by fulfilling their institutionally defined obligations, by contributing to its support, and otherwise. A parish which loses its population base is soon known to be a "dying parish." Studies of the ecology of parishes, therefore, are concerned with the circumstances under which parishes survive or fail in a given community or culture.[60]

Much less attention has been given to the ecology of Catholic than of Protestant congregations,[61] perhaps because the mobility of urban populations has had less serious consequences for the Catholic Church. One Catholic group has often replaced another in the lower-class neighborhoods in which immigrants first settled, and diocesan authorities have had simply to shift personnel in maintaining parish continuity. The double stratification on a class basis within Protestantism — that between denominations and that between congregations within the same denomination — has made adjustment to mobility much more difficult.[62]

Investigations of the ecological position of Catholic parishes, whether taken singly or on a community or regional basis, may be focused upon such problems as the location of the parish and its edifices, the differentiation of parishes according to urban areas, the effects of population mobility and succession, and the ecological distribution of religious affiliation and the practice of the faith.

With respect to rural communities, there is general agreement among sociologists upon the advantages of locating parish buildings in the hamlet, village, or town which is the trade center of the area served by the parish.[63] Location in trade centers usually makes it possible for parishes to serve larger populations than can be effectively reached from open-country locations. This guarantees a more secure economic base and permits a higher degree of parish organization, though in regard to the latter a point of diminishing returns may be reached when impersonal contacts among parishioners begin to predominate over personal. Probably, in so far as possible, the parish boundaries themselves should coincide with the boundaries of real neighborhoods, communities, or service areas existing in the locality. If this is the case, it is reasonable to expect increased unity in the parish and less friction derived from tensions between other groups.[64]

As has been pointed out, when two or more parishes are needed in a town or city, parish boundaries can no longer be identified with those of the community. Instead, they are inclusive only of differentiated business, residential, and perhaps rural sections, or sometimes of particular ethnic groups. Allocation of territory among parishes may be more or less arbitrary, or an attempt may be made to follow locally recognized divisions. In large cities the lack of community solidarity and the size of parishes has minimized the possibility of identification of parish and locality groupings, and has tended to make the parish church simply another specialized enterprise, except perhaps where religious and ethnic affiliations remain interconnected.

Lack of space prevents the consideration of typical urban ecological patterns, though these are usually highly visible.[65] The location of parishes is necessarily related to the ecological organization of the community, whatever pattern it presents, and to the urban areas which have been differentiated within it. Parish churches, it may be presumed, are located where, in the view of responsible ecclesiastical officials, they will be most accessible to the faithful. This follows from the territorial principle which is the canonical ideal. Where the faithful reside depends in turn upon the ethnic, occupational, and prestige groups to which they belong, and the areas occupied by these groups. In large industrial cities, Catholic churches are likely to be found in preponderance in the transitional and workingmen's zones where the laborers of immigrant origin first settled two or three generations ago. The parish plant itself, on the other hand, serves as a point of attraction for Catholic residents, and this fact tends to influence the structure of the community, and to preserve its subsystems, especially the ethnic.

The hypothesis that churches vary significantly in character from one urban area to another without regard for denomination was advanced as long ago as the 1890's by Charles Booth in his study of London's East End.[66] While Catholic doctrine and ecclesiastical organization are everywhere the same in their essentials, it is natural that parishes should exhibit the social and cultural traits of the population groups which they include. Parish problems also differ according to residential area and population group. Churches in central business districts are cut off from regular sources of support, since their resident parishioners are few, and they become "downtown churches" rather than parishes. Churches in zones of transition must attempt to meet the serious social problems concentrated in their areas and must often make radical adjustments to changing populations. Needs for welfare organizations, labor schools, study groups, youth clubs, and other types of parish activities vary considerably in amount and quality from one

residential zone to another. Middle-class and suburban parishes have their problems, too, especially in combating the subtle but insidious forces of secularism in daily life.

The relationship of the parish to urban residential areas is seen most clearly in a consideration of the effects of population mobility. This takes the form of a general shift in population, to which the movement of central business districts often presents the best index, and of a general centrifugal movement. Older parishes in the central parts of cities are thus depopulated and left "stranded." The hypothesis may be suggested that their adjustments are best made in the direction of service on a community-wide basis. To workers, shoppers, transients, and the few faithful remaining within their precincts, they can offer daily Mass, opportunities for confession and for consultation on spiritual problems, special devotions such as novenas, and the like. Alms or other assistance to the poor can be distributed. Lecture halls may be used for functions of general Catholic interest or for specialized classes. The clergy of these parishes probably can serve in diocesan and community capacities to a greater extent than the ordinary parochial clergy, since they have fewer parish duties.[67]

Internal mobility in American cities is not simply individual; it is preponderantly the movement of groups. In the past, incoming migrants from both the Old World and rural parts of the United States tended to settle in the deteriorated areas with cheap rentals near the central business district and industrial zones. As their status improved, economically and socially, and as they became culturally assimilated, they migrated in successive steps from the place of first settlement toward the periphery of the city and the suburbs. Opportunity for such movement has not been open to racially distinguished groups, and hence they have been forced to remain in segregated areas which expand into contiguous zones slowly because of the resistances encountered. For European groups to whom such stigmas are not applied, mobility continuing for

several generations usually means progress toward assimilation and relative scattering of the population. A study of population succession in the city of Chicago illustrates this process at work by presenting the median distance from the center of the city at which various groups lived in 1898 and in 1930:[68]

Racial or nationality group	*Distance in miles*	
	1898	*1930*
Swedes	3.9	7.0
Old Americans (white)	4.7	6.6
Irish	3.2	6.4
Germans	3.2	5.7
Czechoslovaks	2.7	5.3
Russians	1.6	4.8
Poles	2.8	4.6
Negroes	2.5	4.5
Italians	1.5	3.3

One nationality group succeeding another in a parish brings with it its own religious customs and its peculiar patterns of organization and leadership. During a period of invasion, before succession has become relatively complete, conflicts between groups may have serious disruptive effects upon parish life. These must be seen as a phase of the effects of cultural conflict upon the whole community. Repercussions occur on a different plane when the invading group is not Catholic, since in such a case the parish frequently becomes a medium of organization and a symbol of resistance for the group resisting invasion. Naturally, in the event of succession by a non-Catholic group, the population base of the Catholic parish is threatened. The ideal approach to the problem presented is undoubtedly the evangelization of the new population. Admittedly, the prospects of success in such activity will vary greatly with the groups concerned. It is tragic, however, to note how often evangelization is apparently avoided when the new group is regarded as one of lower status, especially if it is colored.

No attempts have been made to study the ecological distribution of religious practices in American communities. The study of church locations may be a sufficiently accurate means of arriving at conclusions on these matters, but investigations are needed to test the hypothesis. On a regional or national basis, patterns of distribution are more readily apparent, as the term "no priest land" itself suggests.

Among the most comprehensive investigations of the practice of the faith in relation to geography, as well as to cultural and historical factors, are those undertaken by Gabriel Le Bras in France.[69] French students of religious observance have produced maps, based upon carefully compiled data, to show remarkable regional differences in the preservation and the practice of the faith.[70] In general terms, these show that in rural France the practice of the faith as measured by Easter Communions is seasonal and lax in the central and Mediterranean regions, and regular in those areas relatively protected from the centers of modern civilization by distance and geography. An excellent study, concentrating on vocations to the diocesan priesthood in a single province during more than a century, shows that the source of vocations has shifted regionally over that period in response to various social factors.[71] These reports indicate some of the results which can be obtained by careful research.

CONCLUSION

This review of sociological research bearing upon Catholic parishes in the United States has been organized in terms of conventional divisions of the field. Sketchy at best, it may nevertheless suggest empirical problems which are worthy of careful investigation by students of the Catholic parish. No attempt has been made to formulate these problems in detail and, needless to state, the principle of organization followed is only one of several which might have been adopted. The necessity for designing research which will bear upon significant sociological hypotheses should be apparent, and hence the

sociologist of the parish must point his efforts toward the development of an adequate frame of reference.

It seems appropriate, in conclusion, to recall the distinction made at the beginning of this chapter between the theoretical interests of the sociologist and the practical interests of the pastor, and to stress again that these interests are not ultimately incompatible but harmonious. With the accumulation of research and the systematic interpretation of findings, the sociology of the parish will in turn be recognized as an important auxiliary of pastoral theology. On the plane of personal motives, surely, pastors and sociologists, each in their own way, will seek to know the facts which pertain to the modern parish. Knowing the facts, they will serve the parish better.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER VIII

1. This point is developed in Carl C. Taylor, "Sociology and Common Sense," *American Sociological Review,* XII (1917), 1–9.

2. *The Official Catholic Directory* is published annually by P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York City. For comment on its reliability, see George A. Kelly, "Periodical Reviews," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* X (1949), 76–78.

3. Data on religion were collected in the United States Census of Population in 1870 and 1890. The *Census of Religious Bodies* has since attempted to supply for the lack of such questions in the decennial censuses.

4. J. Elliot Ross, "A National Catholic Statistical Bureau," *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* LXXXVI (1932), 29–41.

5. See, for example, the *Kirchliche Handbuch fur das katholische Deutschland* (Koln: Zentralstelle für kirchliche Statistik des katholischen Deutschlands, 1908–1943).

6. *Supra,* Chap. III. For a summary, Bernard G. Mulvaney, C.S.V., "How Catholics and Non-Catholics Differ in Fertility," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* VII (1946), 124–127.

7. *Infra,* Chap. IX, for citations.

8. Gerald J. Schnepp, S.M., *Leakage from a Catholic Parish* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1942), p. 28.

9. Augustine McCaffrey, F.S.C., *Youth in a Catholic Parish* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1941), p. 120.

10. Sister Mary Omer Downing, S.C., "An Investigation of Church 'Leakage' in an Urban Industrial Parish in Cleveland, Ohio," unpublished Master's dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1941.

11. Joseph P. Donovan, C.M., "Is This Parish Typical?" *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review,* XLIX (1948–1949), 539–544.

12. Louis Bultena, "Church Membership and Church Attendance in Madison, Wisconsin," *American Sociological Review,* XIV (1949), 384–389.

13. George A. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith; A Census Study of the Diocese of Saint Augustine* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

14. For examples of recent studies, see A. R. Gilliland, "The Attitude of College Students toward God and the Church," *Journal of Social Psychology,* XVII (1940), 11–18; E. P. Horne and W. H. Stender, "Student Attitudes toward Religious Practices," *ibid.,* XXII (1945), 215–217; Erland Nelson, "Student Attitudes and Religion," *Genetic Psychology Monographs,* XXII (1940), 323–424; Meyer F. Nimkoff and Arthur L. Wood, "Effect of Majority Patterns on the Religious Behavior of a Minority Group," *Sociology and Social Research,* XXX (1945–1946), 282–289; "Survey of Fifteen Religious Surveys," *Bulletin of the University of Notre Dame,* XXXIV (1939), 126–127. Also relevant are surveys of Catholic opinion now being conducted by a departmental committee at the Catholic University of America; see Thomas J. Harte, C.Ss.R., "Catholic Education as a Factor in Catholic Opinion," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* X (1949), 15–30.

15. Kelly, *op. cit.,* Chap. III. Edward S. Dunn, S.J., "Mixed Marriages in 1947," *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CXX (1949), 33–42, basing computations upon *Catholic Directory* statistics, concludes that 26 per cent of all valid marriages during 1947 were mixed.

16. Kelly, *op. cit.,* Chap. IV.

17. *Ibid.,* Chap. VI. McCaffrey, *op. cit., passim,* notes the problem of nonobservance among Italians. See also Sister Mary Rebecca Brenner, O.S.F., "Churchgoing among Our Italian Immigrants," unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1944.

18. Kelly, *op. cit.,* Chap. V.

19. *Ibid.,* Chap. VII.

20. Schnepp, *op. cit.,* pp. 244–246.

21. McCaffrey, *op. cit.,* pp. 45, 58–59.

22. Howard Beers, "Social Participation Studies," *Rural Sociology,* VIII (1943), 294, summarizing the literature.

23. W. A. Anderson, "Social Participation and Religious Affiliation in Rural Areas," *ibid.,* IX (1944), 243.

24. E. L. Kirkpatrick, J. H. Kolb, *et al., Rural Organizations and the Farm Family* (University of Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 96; Madison, 1929).

25. Anderson, *op. cit.*

26. Herbert Goldhammer, "Some Factors Affecting Participation in Voluntary Associations," unpublished Doctor's dissertation, University of Chicago, 1943.

27. Mirra Komarovsky, "The Voluntary Associations of Urban Dwellers," *American Sociological Review,* XI (1946), 686–698.

28. W. A. Anderson, *Some Participation Principles* (Cornell University Agricultural Extension Bulletin, No. 7; Ithaca, 1947).

29. W. A. Anderson, "The Family and Individual Social Participation," *American Sociological Review,* VIII (1943), 420–424.

30. W. A. Anderson, "Family Member Roles in Social Participation," *ibid.*, 718–720.

31. W. A. Anderson, "Family Participation and Social Status Self-Ratings," *ibid.*, XI (1946), 253–258.

32. Frederick A. Bushee, "Social Organizations in a Small City," *The American Journal of Sociology*, LI (1945–1946), 217–226.

33. Jean C. Falardeau, "The Parish as an Institutional Type," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XV (1949), 365–371.

34. Edward Littlejohn, "An American Letter," *The Dublin Review*, No. 441 (Autumn, 1947), 119.

35. W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), p. 161. See also the classic study of W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 5 vols. (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1920).

36. Warner and Srole, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

38. Cf. E. George Payne, "Education and Minority Peoples," in Francis J. Brown and Joseph S. Roucek, *One America* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946), pp. 496–497; Stuart A. Queen and Lewis F. Thomas, *The City* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1939).

39. Milton L. Barron, "Intermediacy: Conceptualization of Irish Status in America," *Social Forces*, XXVII (1948–1949), 256–263; also, John J. Harbrecht, *The Lay Apostolate* (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1929), p. 65.

40. See, for example, Caroline Ware, *Greenwich Village, 1920–1930* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1935), p. 129.

41. See Margaret Mead, "How Religion Has Fared in the Melting Pot," in Willard L. Sperry (ed.), *Religion and Our Racial Tensions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945), pp. 61–63; Elin Anderson, *We Americans; A Study of Cleavage in an American City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), p. 89.

42. John W. McConnell, *The Evolution of Social Classes* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), p. 169.

43. W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), pp. 356, 361.

44. Anderson, *We Americans*, pp. 24–25.

45. A. B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1949), p. 116.

46. Mead, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–70.

47. Hadley Cantril, "Educational and Economic Composition of Religious Groups: An Analysis of Poll Data," *The American Journal of Sociology*, XLVIII (1942–1943), 575.

48. Liston Pope, "Religion and the Class Structure," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, CCLVI (1948), 84.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 87; Wesley Allinsmith, "Social Economic Status and the Outlook of Religious Groups in America," Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, *Information Service* (May 15, 1948), p. 3.

50. Cantril, *op. cit.*, p. 573; Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 87–88.

51. See the remark of Harbrecht, *op. cit.*, p. 6: "the parish priest's knowledge

and understanding of the individual's character and of particular social and ethical situations under which the individual must live his life in the modern city is necessarily limited. Here his priestly ministry is proportionately handicapped by the limited number and faulty character of the contacts which he actually forms."

52. Horace Miner, *St. Denis: A French-Canadian Parish* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939).

53. A. H. Anderson and Randall C. Hill, *Rural Communities and Organizations; A Study of Group Life in Ellis County, Kansas* (Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular No. 143; Manhattan: 1948); Sister Mary Eloise Johannes, *A Study of the Russian-German Settlements in Ellis County, Kansas* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

54. Louis Bultena, "Rural Churches and Community Integration," *Rural Sociology,* IX (1944), 257–264.

55. Everett C. Hughes, *French Canada in Transition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943), p. 105.

56. *Infra,* Chaps. XI–XII.

57. *Infra,* Appendix A.

58. Hughes, *op. cit.,* applies these techniques to the parish with interesting results. See Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., *Southern Parish,* I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), and subsequent volumes to appear. The latter work was not available when this volume was in preparation.

59. Cf. the definition of ecological interaction by James A. Quinn, "That process of reciprocal modification, including both competitive and co-operative aspects, by which individual organisms or groups influence one another indirectly and impersonally by affecting some limited source of environmental supply upon which the others depend." In H. P. Fairchild (ed.), *Dictionary of Sociology* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944), p. 101.

60. Everett C. Hughes, "The Ecological Aspect of Institutions," *American Sociological Review,* I (1936), 180–189, provides a theoretical orientation.

61. For examples of the latter, F. Stuart Chapin, *American Social Institutions* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1935), Chaps. XI–XII; H. Paul Douglass, *The Church in the Changing City* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1937), and *One Thousand City Churches* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1926); Samuel Kincheloe, *The American City and Its Church* (New York: Friendship Press, 1938); Murray H. Leiffer, *City and Church in Transition* (New York: Willett & Clark, 1938); Ross W. Sanderson, *The Strategy of City Church Planning* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1932). See, also, R. D. Martin, "The Church and Changing Ecological Dominance," *Sociology and Social Research,* XXV (1940–1941), 246–257. On rural churches, see Edmund de S. Brunner, *Industrial Village Churches* (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930), and *The Larger Parish* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1934); see also H. N. Morse, *The Town and Country Church in the United States* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923).

62. Sanderson, *op. cit.,* 164 n., writes, "The Roman Church can easily shift one group of clergy to a different parish and introduce into a given situation, where different nationals are now resident, a new group of ministers who

speak the vernacular of the newcomers; thus institutional continuity is maintained and property is continually utilized. Protestantism adjusts itself less easily to such a situation."

63. Cf. Douglas Ensminger, "The Rural Church and Religion," in Carl C. Taylor, *et al., Rural Life in the United States* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), Chap. VII. The "larger parish" movement among Protestants is an attempt to unify all religious work on a community basis. See Brunner, *op. cit.;* Rockwell C. Smith, *The Church in Our Town* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945), pp. 138–141.

64. A statement by Ensminger, *op. cit.,* p. 117, may apply to Catholic as well as Protestant parishes: "The present strongholds of the open-country churches are in the more stable farming neighborhoods, where the majority of farms are owner-operated and population shifts are at a minimum. Some neighborhoods of common cultural heritage also tend to support the church strongly. A number of students of rural life have pointed out that the open-country church tends to be strong in areas where family security, rather than education, is the dominant value."

65. For a summary of current concepts of these patterns, see Noel P. Gist and L. A. Halbert, *Urban Society,* 3 ed. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1948), Chap. VI.

66. *The Life and Labour of the People of London,* 17 vols. (London: Macmillan Co., 1892–1897), VII.

67. A study now in progress at the Catholic University of America, "Transitions in the Development of a Down-town Parish," by David H. Fosselman, C.S.C., will show adjustments to ecological change in a metropolitan parish since its founding late in the eighteenth century.

68. Paul F. Cressey, "Population Succession in Chicago, 1898–1930," *The American Journal of Sociology,* XLIV (1938–1939), 59–69.

69. See his *Introduction à l'histoire de la pratique religieuse en France,* 2 vols. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1942–1945); also, "Influence of Environments on Religious Life; Introduction to the Investigation," *Lumen Vitae,* III (1948), 9–30, for a statement of the aims of these studies.

70. Gabriel Le Bras, "Description de la France Catholique," *Nouvelle revue theologie,* LXX (1948), 835–845, and "Commentaire sociologique des cartes religieuse de la France," *Lumen Vitae,* III (1948), 633–644.

71. Mgr. Perrin, "Un exemple de géographie religieuse; Les vocations sacerdotales en Ile-et-Vilaine de 1810 à 1945," *Économie et humanisme,* VI (1947), 523–529.

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CHAPTER IX

THE PARISH CENSUS

by GEORGE A. KELLY

DEFINITION OF THE PARISH CENSUS

CENSUS TAKING, in spite of the simplicity of the idea, is rather a rare phenomenon in American parish life. Some pastors, a minority to be sure, have made it a regular part of parochial activity. A few religious communities, such as the Parish Visitors and the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart, specialize in this work. Nonetheless, the parish census is still the exception rather than the rule. Evidently, the average priest finds it difficult to take a census.

The failure to utilize census techniques in American parishes may be explained, in part, by the lack of a strict definition of the term, "parish census." According to traditional practice, a parish census may be undertaken for one of three purposes: the compilation of membership statistics, the provision of data for scientific research, or the diagnosis and correction of the religious condition of the parish.

The *statistical census* aims at the accumulation of numbers. It emphasizes names and addresses. The parish list, compiled as a result of this census, generally contains only the names of churchgoing Catholics. The enumeration of Catholics that follows after a thorough sifting of collection envelopes, Catholic Charities' lists, or by way of the popular forty-eight-hour census, hardly deserves the name of census. The mere accumulation of bigger and better lists of names and statistics serves a purpose, but is not the kind of research of which the Church stands in need.[1]

The *research census* is of more interest to Church administrators, professional sociologists, graduate students, and Catholic statistical agencies. This enumeration of the Catholic population, scientifically prepared, administered, and controlled, collects data on fertility and mortality rates for Catholics, the pathology of mixed marriages, the effect of Catholic education on religious status, etc.[2] Most sample studies of parishes, even when made by pastors, belong in the category of research.[3]

The *therapeutic census* is, from the pastoral point of view, a parish census in the strict sense. This enumeration is made with a view to correcting or mitigating harmful religious and spiritual conditions among the Catholic people of a parish. It is further aimed at strengthening the faith and inspiring the faithful to greater religious devotion. Mother Mary Teresa Tallon, a pioneer in the field of the parish census, has expressed this point of view:

> The census visitation of families . . . embodies not only a systematic study of parish conditions but a veritable missionary crusade of Catholic Action. In this family visitation the wayward are instructed and reclaimed to the Church; faithful Catholics are exhorted to become fervent and apostolic. . . . All are urged to contribute, by personal interest and service, to the upbuilding of the Catholic cause.[4]

In the eyes of the priest or religious enumerator, therefore, the purpose of the parish census is reclaiming the lost sheep, validating invalid marriages, converting the unconverted, instructing the ignorant, leading the lukewarm and indifferent Catholics back to the sacraments, encouraging the faithful and inspiring them to greater devotion. From the viewpoint of the pastor this must be the chief purpose of a parish census, a purpose which is far different from that held by the statistical or research census taker, although the two points of view are by no means irreconcilable. It must be emphasized, however, that in all serious discussion of the parish census it is the therapeutic point of view which must prevail.

In the light of this discussion of the object of the parish

census, a definition is not difficult. A parish census, in the strict sense, means an official enumeration of all the Catholics residing in a parish, made by a priest or competent religious with a view to determining the moral and religious condition of the parish and with the intention of correcting existing moral evils.[5]

Since World War I scientific and religious journals have devoted a great deal of space to the parish census. Literary interest in the subject was aroused originally by the dissatisfaction of priests and sociologists with available Catholic statistics.[6] Some writing has been *inspirational* — aimed at stimulating pastors to take up censuses in their parishes.[7] Some has been *methodological* — outlining the ways and means of conducting a census properly.[8] A few writers have published *statistical* articles reporting conclusions based upon partial and incomplete research.[9] Not a little of the writing has been *alarmist,* depicting leakage, the horrible spiritual condition of Catholics in mixed marriages, and the like.[10]

OBSTACLES TO CENSUS TAKING

In spite of the fact that a great deal of this writing is angry and esoteric, it does establish the fact that in the past twenty-five years an interest in the parish census has developed among priests. Even granting this widespread interest, however, there are still serious reasons why the parish census remains more an ideal than an accomplishment.

Probably the greatest obstacle to census taking in the average parish is the present mode of organizing parochial activity. Much of the priest's work is done in the rectory. But it is to be doubted whether the rectory today is as much the center of priestly work as it once was. Many parish priests feel that the original command, "Go out into the highways and byways," is as much in need of fulfillment today as it was in the early days of Christianity.

New conditions and the demands of a new generation have created new problems for the zealous pastor. The decline of

the parish church, and its rectory, as the center of Catholic life in the community has brought proportionately fewer and fewer Catholics into direct contact with the priest. The era of radio, movies, television, and automobiles has disrupted the formerly close contact of the people with their parish churches. Then, too, in recent years a whole new body of agencies — social, political, and nonreligious — has risen to stand between priest and people. Catholic people have come to rely on social workers and civil servants, oftentimes to the exclusion of the priest, who once was the only one to whom they could turn in their hour of need. Consequently, a parish organization which is built on the assumption that Catholic people generally come to the rectory with their problems provides little place for census work.

Furthermore, even if the present mode of parish organization be accepted without criticism, there is still the problem of utilizing the priest's time to the best advantage of himself and his people. Take, for example, the work of instructing converts. In most parishes this is done on an individual basis. But if a priest in a city parish has nine would-be converts to instruct in a given week, he will find himself spending nine hours on these instructions. Group instruction in a schoolroom, with the use of blackboards and modern teaching aids, would probably be more effective, and save the priest eight hours of time weekly for other work.

When discussing the parish census two things must be remembered: it takes time and it takes the priest out of the rectory. If census taking is to become a normal part of parochial activity, the priest must have the time and must be free to work outside the rectory.

There is still another obstacle to the adoption of the parish census. This is the mental attitude of priests themselves. The very idea of a census is a challenge to the status quo in any parish. Priests, like all human beings, are easily trained to work in an established way. Once working habits are formed, it is difficult to adjust to new ways of doing things. If priestly

work seems successful without a parish census, and, if working hours are too crowded without home visitations, the busy priest sees no reason to change his routine.

Part of the failure in this respect may be laid at the doors of the seminary. Thousands of priests are ordained yearly without any systematic training in the ideals and methods of census taking. The practical aspects of parish life must be learned after ordination by trial and error. Seminary training in census methods would at least provide students with the will to find a way to make census taking work in the parishes.

It is sometimes argued that the mobility of parishioners makes census data relatively worthless after a short time. In the ordinary case, this is an exaggeration. Experienced census takers find much less mobility than critics of the parish census like to claim. Moreover, mobility, far from invalidating census procedures, emphasizes the necessity of a continuous parish census. When the first enumeration has been made, a parish society should be assigned the work of checking on in-migrants and out-migrants. Thus the census file will always be up to date.

REASONS FOR A CENSUS

All these considerations presume that the parish census is essential to a vitally functioning parish life. This is the very point that must be proved. Until priests are convinced that the census must become a regular part of parochial activity, there is little point in discussing the mechanics of census work.

There are three important reasons why pastors should utilize census techniques in administering their parishes: (1) the present mode of American life tends to make Catholics strangers to the Church; (2) Catholic people are further harmed by the dominant philosophy of the day, which is secularism; (3) there are evils which require immediate attention, *e.g.*, invalid marriages, nonattendance at Mass, failure to make Easter duty, unbaptized and uninstructed children, and similar matters. The parish census, in so far as it provides Catholic

people with the direct and personal ministration of the priest, is ideally suited for the eradication or at least the mitigation of these evils.

The assertion that the present mode of American life tends to make Catholics strangers to the Church should come as a surprise to no one, let alone an experienced parish priest. The average parish in the United States today reflects the features of the society around it. That larger society is urban and in every urbanized society individuals tend to become anonymous.[11] They become strangers, living among strangers, and strangers just as much to the priest and the Church as they are to the man who lives in the next house. In an urban society human relations are characterized by secondary contacts. There are very few primary or face-to-face relationships. People want to be let alone, and in an urban society they are let alone. The anonymity of modern living makes it possible for wayward Catholics to hide their sins and aberrations from the priest. One student at least has discovered that many Catholics desire to feel "secure from priestly interference in their lives."[12]

Wayward and lukewarm Catholics enjoy their role as strangers. The social complexity of modern life enables them to ignore the influence of the priest and to reject the discipline of the Church. Religious controls exercised in Catholic countries, or in small communities of the United States, tend to disappear or to be weakened in the face of urban anonymity. The disapproval of the priest or the Church or of Catholic neighbors, which would in the past restrain wayward Catholics, does not always restrain them today.

The parish census, which establishes direct and personal contact between the priest and his people, is an attempt to make Catholic people less strange and less anonymous. If new residents of a parish today will not, as of old, report to their pastor, it is up to the pastor to report to them.

Hand in hand with urban anonymity, as a harmful influence on Catholic lives, goes the secularism of the age.[13] No Catholic

parish, not even in rural areas, has escaped this washing of its people by the waves of secularism. Newspapers, radio, movies, schools, government agencies, political parties, business advertising, in fact all organs of propaganda, are inimical to a devout religious life, because they are controlled and administered by secularists. The voice of the Church is a "voice crying in the wilderness."

The function of the census is to make the parish less of a wilderness and to make the voice of the priest more readily heard by his people. Secularism and its influence on the lives of Catholic people can be rendered ineffective by a closer bond between the Church and its people. This should be one of the results of a parish census.

If these reasons for taking up a parish census do not appeal to a pastor, then certainly he cannot ignore the problem of rehabilitating the large number of Catholic people who have either defected from the Church or who do not live up to their obligations. Available research suggests that a minimum of 25 per cent of baptized Catholics do not practice the faith. A study of the diocese of St. Augustine, Florida, made in 1944, shows that only 76 per cent of all married people attended Mass every Sunday.[14] Only 70 per cent of the same group made the Easter duty.[15] These results confirm in part Schnepp's findings in a single parish in which only 70 to 75 per cent of the families were practicing Catholics.[16] One New York parish, upon the completion of a census, discovered that 37 per cent of all its people of churchgoing age had no record of church attendance.[17]

No one knows how valid these figures are for the Catholic population as a whole. But in themselves they are startling. Here are facts which should disturb the equanimity of the most complacent priest. Without adding any new data at this time and on the basis of the above statistics alone, it is evident that there is need for the parish census. If people are not going to Mass or making their Easter duty in these large numbers, it is certain that they are not living up to the

Catholic faith with its other manifold obligations. It is not difficult to understand the mind of the Holy See in a directive communicated to the American bishops by the Apostolic Delegate:

> To make the pastoral ministry by this means [the regular parish census] even more fruitful, the Sacred Congregation of the Council has instructed me to remind the Bishops of this country of their obligation to have parish priests keep an accurate and current census of the faithful entrusted to their care.[18]

> Parish priests should be charged to take up a census in every parish and mission, no matter what the difficulties or the outlook.[19]

ENUMERATORS

Once a pastor has decided to have a census in his parish, he must next decide who is going to take it. The choice lies between the laity, the Sisters, and the priests themselves.

Obviously, the laity are the most poorly equipped to undertake a census. The fact that the census often involves the disclosure of matters of conscience is a handicap. Respondents are more prone to conceal important facts from lay enumerators. Furthermore no pastor wants some of his lay people to be the repositories or the dispensers of intimate details in the lives of his parishioners. There is a great risk of gossip, if not of scandal. These objections to lay enumerators are serious.

In spite of these objections, however, the present writer believes lay enumerators may sometimes be used.[20] Lay enumerators will certainly take up an inferior census, but an inferior census is better than no census at all. In spite of the defects in their work, the lay members of St. Vincent de Paul Societies and Legions of Mary do excellent work, without the harmful effects that are too frequently prophesied. The laity, however, should not be used unless it is absolutely necessary.

The ideal census enumerators are priests and religious Sisters. The main advantages of using religious are that they are skilled in census taking and, what is more, devote full

time to visiting Catholic families in the parish. Another advantage in using Sisters has been stated by Mother Tallon: "Many fallen-away Catholics refuse to see a priest until they have been prepared, kindly and tactfully by the [Parish] Visitors during several calls."[21] The competency of these religious enumerators is beyond doubt, and rightly is their work called "a veritable missionary crusade of Catholic Action." Yet their numbers are few, and, if the parish census is ever to reach the stage where it becomes a general practice, it must be taken up by the priests. In fact, neither lay nor religious enumerators can perform the functions of a priestly visitation. The instructions of the Holy See are specific:

> It must be clearly understood, however, that the taking of the census by others than priests is but a preparation for the visit of the pastor or his assistant and can never take its place.[22]

Census work is part of the priest's "ministry of the word." It is a right which he cannot abdicate, an obligation which he may not allow others to usurp. Census work belongs essentially to the priest. It is an important priestly function and may not be delegated to others needlessly.[23] Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical on the priesthood, has said:

> The Catholic priest is the minister of Christ and dispenser of the mysteries of God in another way, that is, by his words. *The "ministry of the word" is a right which is inalienable; it is a duty which cannot be disallowed;* for it is imposed by Jesus Christ Himself.[24]

There has been a mistaken tendency to turn over the complete task of parish visitations to religious Sisters. This tendency must be resisted because it vitiates one of the main purposes of the census, viz., bringing the parish priest into direct contact with his people. In the view of this writer, an inferior census, conducted by parish priests, is to be preferred to a more efficient census conducted by religious Sisters.

There are certain circumstances which would suggest the advisability of using religious. They should be used when it

is impossible or most difficult for the priests to engage in parish visitations. This should be the exceptional case. They may be used whenever the pastor finds that Sisters would be more acceptable to certain types of laity than priests.

The danger that lies in having someone other than the priest make the parish visitation is that individual Catholic families will become merely names on an index card. It is one thing to note an invalid marriage on a census card, another thing to remember the faces of those who are invalidly married. In this bureaucratic age too many human beings suffer from the coldness and barrenness of a filing system. The work of the parish priest should not be so standardized.

This is as good an opportunity as any to protest the assertion, frequently made, that fallen-away or dormant Catholics will not accept the ministrations of the priest, unless the way is first prepared by someone else. In the whole state of Florida, only one group of people, the Latin Catholics of Tampa, were un-co-operative with the priests.[25] Sometimes a stone wall of opposition is encountered by the priest, either because of the anticlericalism of certain national groups or the bitterness of specific individuals. Ordinarily, no family is so far removed from the Church that, when properly approached by the priest, the members will remain unresponsive to his investigation. Some families require several visits before they co-operate, but this experience is common to all enumerators, regardless of sex or religious garb.

In the ideal order, therefore, religious enumerators are destined to be auxiliaries of the priest. In the world of practical reality, however, if priests are unwilling or unable to do census work, then the pastor should use religious and, in their absence, even the laity.[26]

THE CENSUS SCHEDULE

The next question to be decided by the pastor deals with the schedule or census card. Either an *individual schedule* or a *family schedule* may be used.

Diocesan Census—1944

DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

CARD Nº 5713

FAMILY SCHEDULE

Family Name_____

Street or R F D. Address_____

Incorporated Place, Town, City, Etc._____

Parish_____

Date_____

Enumerator_____

LINE NO	NAME Name of each person whose usual place of residence on June 1, 1944 was in this house hold, including those in armed service. Enter (X) after person furnishing information	SERVICE Indicate service of those in Armed Forces (A—Army, N—Navy, M—Marines, C—Coast Guard, W—WAAC, WAVES, SPARS)	RELATION Relationship of this person to head of household as wife daughter brother sister in law, etc	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION Sex—Male (M) Female (F)	Age at last birthday	Color or race	PLACE OF BIRTH If born in United States give State or Territory If foreign born give country as it was on Jan 1 1937	CODE (Leave Blank)	EDUCATION Highest grade of school completed If still attending encircle year	HOW MANY YEARS DID YOU ATTEND THE FOLLOWING Catholic Grammar School	Catholic High School	Catholic College	CODE (Leave Blank)	OCCUPATION—INDUSTRY AND CLASS OF WORKER OCCUPATION Trade profession or particular kind of work as salesman farmer music teacher laborer	INDUSTRY or business as grocer, farm public school shipyard
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11		12	13
1	(HUSBAND)														
2	(WIFE)														
3															
4															
5															
6															
7															
8															
9															
10															
11															
12															
13															
14															
15															
16															

The individual schedule has the advantage of providing a separate card for every individual Catholic in the parish, with all the data pertinent to him contained thereon. It has two serious disadvantages which must not be overlooked. In the first place, it makes the census filing system too bulky and unwieldy. More importantly, the individual card does not give the priest the opportunity to see at a glance the religious status of the whole family and the relation of one member to the other in matters of religious observance.

On the whole, the family schedule is preferable. Some object to it, however, on the grounds that its compactness does not permit questions sufficiently detailed to elicit reliable and accurate responses. For example, a family schedule ordinarily contains space only for checking when the respondent has received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation. This type of recording is viewed with suspicion since respondents, when asked whether or not these sacraments were received, can easily answer with a simple affirmative. But when asked the name of the church and the month, day, and

CLASS OF WORKER (Male persons 14 yrs. & over)	CODE (Leave Blank)	RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: Religious membership or preference as Catholic, Non-Catholic, None	FAMILY RESIDENCE: Do you live on a farm, in a rural area not a farm, in a city over 2 500?	Where have you lived most of your life: farm, rural area not a farm, city over 2 500?	HOME OWNERSHIP: Is home owned or rented?	What is the actual or estimated rental value?	CODE (Leave Blank)	OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS DUTIES: Check (X) in proper column for those who fulfilled these duties in Catholic Church: Baptism	First Holy Communion	Confirmation	Easter Duty (Yes or No)	How many times have you received Holy Eucharist in the last year?	How many times have you been to confession in the last year?	How many times have you been to Holy Communion in the last four weeks?	CONVERT: If a convert give year of conversion	MARITAL STATUS: Single (S), Married (M), Widowed (W), Divorced (D)	CODE (Leave Blank)	MARITAL DESCRIPTION: Date of Present Marriage (Year)	Age at Time of Present marriage	Were you married by a Catholic Priest?	If not was the marriage ever validated by a Priest? (Give year)	Number of children ever born to your present marriage	Number of children your home in your parents' marriage	Was your father a Catholic?	Was your mother a Catholic?	CODE (Leave Blank)
14		15	16	17	18	19		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	

year of reception, respondents are caught off guard and the enumerator is better enabled to detect lying or evasion. There is a great deal of truth in this objection; however, nothing prevents an enumerator from asking the fuller question and then recording only the simple fact of "yes" or "no." There is no point in recording the time and church of reception, as is done on the individual card, because few pastors will check the truth of the fuller answers.

The success of the census depends in great part on the preparation of the schedule or census card. The following list of questions is submitted for possible use by pastors in framing their own schedule. These questions in the main were used in the Florida survey.[27] Since the Florida census had a research purpose, the questions unsuited to a parish census will be excluded from the proposed list.

Although the Florida schedule was printed as a folder, some pastors may find a single 5 by 8-inch filing card more suitable for handy reference. The heading should provide space for the name and address of the family and, if possible, the telephone number. The telephone numbers of Catholic families are handy tools for a busy parish priest. If the family lives in an apartment house, the number of the apartment will be helpful.

The questions should be listed neatly and horizontally across the top of the schedule. (See illustration, pp. 244–245, for a sample of the Florida schedule.) There should be enough horizontal lines to permit the enumeration of a husband, wife, and at least eight children. These lines should be numbered.

An outline of suggested questions follows:[28]

I. *NAME.* This should include the name of every person living in the same household. If two families with different names reside together, two schedules should be used. The similarity of addresses or apartment numbers will indicate a mutual residence.

II. *RELATION.* This space records the relationship of all those enumerated with the head of the household.

III. *PERSONAL DESCRIPTION*

1. *Age at last birthday.* In the Florida survey the age factor proved relatively unimportant in matters of religious observance. Single people aged 20–29 tended to be more careless in making their Easter duty.[29] Married couples did not become lax in this matter until they reached 30 years of age.[30]

2. *Color or race.* This question will be asked only in those parishes containing mixed racial groups.

3. *Nationality, e.g.,* country of birth — Ireland, Germany, Italy, etc. Not all pastors will be interested in the answers to this question. Nonetheless, these answers do serve to explain the religious condition of certain Catholics. In the Florida survey, for example, the Easter duty precept was observed by foreign-born Catholics in the following way: British Islanders, including Irish, 81 per cent; Central Europeans, including Germans, 71 per cent; Western Europeans, including Italians, 44 per cent; Eastern Europeans, including Poles, 57 per cent; Canadians, 71 per cent; Latin Americans, 47 per cent.[31]

In Schnepp's study the nationality factor explained some variations. According to Schnepp, between 70 and 75 per cent of the Irish and Irish-American families were practicing Catholics, while less than 50 per cent of the German families were practicing.[32]

IV. *EDUCATION.* There is reason to believe that the practice of the faith is positively related to educational attainment. The Florida census revealed that increased education, even when obtained under public auspices, was associated with regularity of observance.[33] Catholic education was particularly significant in reducing the number of mixed and invalid marriages, and in promoting more faithful observance of religious duties, especially devotion to monthly Communion. Catholic high school education proved especially important for men.[34]

If recording the educational attainments of adults seems unnecessary, the questions on the parish-census schedule dealing with education may be restricted to children still attending school. They should include:

1. *School attended, e.g.,* St. Patrick's, P. S. 158, Hayes H. S.
2. *Grade.*
3. *Place of religious instruction.* The answer to this question will be filled out only for those attending public school.

V. *RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION.* This question will record the religion of non-Catholic spouses in mixed marriages. The enumerator may record the specific religion or religious preference of the non-Catholic, such as *Episcopalian, Baptist,* etc., or he may simply fill the space with the term *non-Catholic.* No subject will perplex the parish priest more than the mixed-marriage "problem."

In the Florida survey it was discovered that the real danger in mixed unions was that so many of them were contracted invalidly. Catholic parties in valid mixed marriages did not seem to deviate greatly from the religious standards of validly married Catholic couples. Women in valid mixed marriages compared very favorably with women in valid Catholic marriages. Furthermore, the mixed-marriage Catholics generally lived up to their prenuptial promises. Only in the cases of Catholic men, validly married to non-Catholic wives, was there any tendency to laxity, and this laxity was not alarming.[35] These conclusions have been confirmed recently by Judson T. Landis, sociologist at Michigan State College, who discovered that Protestant mothers and Catholic fathers separated or divorced three times as often as Catholic mothers and Protestant fathers.[36] This is some confirmation of the Florida discovery that mixed marriages involving Catholic women were not as dangerous socially and religiously as mixed marriages involving Catholic men.

VI. *ECONOMIC STATUS.* Many pastors may be unimpressed with the need of asking questions dealing with the economic status of their people. Yet there is a definite relationship between economic status and the practice of the faith. The Florida census showed that the unskilled workers, particularly in manufacturing industries, had higher rates for invalid marriages and lower rates for religious observance. The

largest proportion of mixed and invalid marriages was found among those Catholics with small incomes. In Florida it was generally true that improved economic status went hand and hand with improved religious observance.[37] Every pastor should be concerned about the economic condition of his people, to alleviate their lot whenever it is within his power. Pope Pius XI, in *Quadragesimo anno,* uttered a judgment which should be of interest to every zealous pastor:

> These [temporal] goods ought indeed to be enough both to meet the demands of necessity and decent comforts and to advance people to that higher, happier and fuller condition of life, which, when it is wisely cared for, *is not only no hindrance to virtue, but helps it greatly.*[38]

Every pastor is in a position to alleviate the distress of the poor. However, to provide charity, to help an unemployed father to find a job, to distribute clothing to scantily clad youngsters, to secure hot lunches and wholesome meals for poor children, to assist poverty-stricken expectant mothers, the pastor must know the facts. A census question on economic status is aimed at providing those facts.

Admittedly it is not easy to obtain accurate information on economic status. There are, however, a few suggested questions which may prove helpful.

1. *Occupation.* This will disclose the kind of work done by the head of the family, as well as the number of members in the family who work.

2. *Home owned or rented.*

3. *Actual or estimated rental value.*[39] These two questions provide measurable indexes of the economic status of Catholic people. They are asked in lieu of questions dealing with income. Income is a touchy subject. Not only is it difficult to determine the size of family income, but people hesitate to let information (at least accurate information) on income go beyond the threshold. On the other hand, home ownership and rental value reflect income, and people are not so secretive

about them. Besides, there is an objective norm to test the accuracy of responses on these items. Houses in the same area, or apartments in the same house, ordinarily have similar values.

The rental value of an owned home may be estimated on the basis of what would be paid if the owning family rented the house to someone else. The actual rent paid for comparable dwellings in the same area can be used to check the reliability of these estimates. It is true, of course, that some people live in homes that are beyond their means, while others, because of a housing shortage, earn more than their rents indicate. In the general run of cases, however, people are unwilling to pay more rent than they can afford and usually live in a home that conforms with their earnings.

VII. *OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS DUTIES.* From the pastoral viewpoint, this is probably the most important part of the schedule. Questions covering the following items will certainly be included:

1. *Baptism.*
2. *First Communion.*
3. *Confirmation.*
4. *Easter duty this year.* This question is phrased to prevent evasions, where possible.
5. *Number of times (Sunday) Mass was culpably missed in past four weeks.*
6. *Number of Communions received in past four weeks.*

These questions on attendance at Sunday Mass and the reception of Holy Communion are phrased in this way in order to obtain, in so far as it is possible, precise and objectively accurate answers. "Do you attend Mass regularly?" is an unsatisfactory question because it is vague. What is the meaning of the word "regular" and "irregular"? The use of such words in a census gives the respondent too much room for evasion. One of the characteristics of a good census schedule is that it avoids general and indefinite terms.[40]

By asking the respondent for his religious observance in any one month, the enumerator can hope to eliminate subjective

answers. The suggested phraseology, of course, assumes that performance within a month indicates year-round habits. As phrased, the question may do an injustice to some particular individual. A regular churchgoer may have missed Mass for four Sundays prior to the enumeration, and yet never miss Mass again during the year. If this failure is inculpable, he will be recorded as never having missed. If this failure was culpable, but he is faithful to his Sunday obligation throughout the rest of the year, then admittedly the question is not fair to him. Such would not be the ordinary situation. As a rule, people are consistently good, bad, or indifferent. The answer to the proposed question generally will indicate exactly how faithful to Sunday Mass a person is. The same considerations apply to the question on the reception of Communion.

There is, furthermore, a psychological advantage in the restricted wording of the question on Sunday Mass and monthly Communion. Respondents do not usually expect such direct questioning. It takes them off guard a bit and enables the enumerator to evaluate the truth of their responses.

7. *Church attended.* This question is particularly important where territorial parishes are in close proximity to one another or where there are national parishes within the confines of a territorial parish.

8. *Convert: actual or prospective.* The presence of a convert in a family is an important fact which may be used in evaluating the religious condition of a family. The census will also uncover many people who are interested in embracing the faith, but who, for one reason or another, have never applied for instruction.

VIII. *MARITAL DESCRIPTION.* Probably no information is more desired by the pastor than data on the validity of marriages. Those Catholics who are in valid marriages are generally faithful to their religious obligations. Invalid marriages, however, are a great source of defection.[41]

For the purposes of a parish census only two questions on marriage are necessary.

1. *Marital status: single, married, separated, widowed, divorced.*

2. *Validity of marriage.* Actually, the enumerator may enlarge the question to include the place and time of the marriage. A fuller question would elicit more reliable answers. Yet, all that needs to be recorded on the schedule is the validity or nonvalidity of the marriage. The average pastor probably will not be interested in the distinction between "valid" and "validated" marriages.

This series of questions should complete the census. Questions may be added to meet particular needs, but a schedule should never be made so long that it becomes unwieldy or tiring for the respondent. For this reason, questions on parish societies, Catholic literature, and the like, should be excluded. The roll book of every society will contain the names of members without making the matter a subject of special investigation.

The reverse side of the card may be used to record any explanation, fact, story, or condition, which will aid the priest in understanding a particular case. Sometimes this incidental information is more important than the data recorded on the schedule itself.

CENSUS ORGANIZATION

Before the actual census begins, the pastor must make certain preparations. He must secure a map of his parish, either from a real-estate agency, a city bureau, or a chamber of commerce. Rural pastors may use county atlases or rural-delivery maps available from the United States Postmaster General. This parish map should record the residential areas to be surveyed, as well as the presence of parks, business houses, abandoned homes, and similar information which will not be surveyed. Ordinarily, the census should begin at the outermost ends of the parish and in those areas not usually reached by the Church.[42]

A plan of contacting Catholic families must be decided upon. If religious enumerators are used, every home in the parish will be visited, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. This is a slow process but will assure as complete a census as can humanly be expected. If priests take up the census, they may follow the same practice of visiting all homes or visit only the families that are known to be Catholic. In this case the laity will have to be used. In the Florida census the laity were used to find out precisely where the Catholic families lived.

The parish should be divided into sections. The size of these sections will depend upon the density of the population and the area covered by the parish. No section should be made so large that it cannot be covered by a single lay person in a week. If lay assistants are used, they should be instructed by the priest in charge as to the sections they are to cover and the procedures to be used. Each lay enumerator should be provided with a package of 3 by 5-inch filing cards and a pencil. On each card should be printed the items in which the priest is interested: *name, address, telephone number,* and *the time requested or suggested for the visitation of the priest.* This last item of information is sought in order to save valuable time. Knowing the families that are not home during the day simplifies the work of the priest.

The lay people should be assigned to sections of the parish which are familiar to them. They must be carefully instructed to approach every house or apartment, no matter how positive they are that the people are Catholic or Protestant. When the priest begins his visitation of the homes, he can check on the thoroughness of the layman's work.

The task of these lay enumerators is an arduous one. They acquaint the people of the parish with the fact of the census. Although pulpit announcements and articles in parish journals publicize the census to churchgoing Catholics, it will be the laity who ferret out the lukewarm, the lax, and the lapsed Catholics. Warned against giving a rigid interpretation to the Catholic status of an individual or family, they must record

their every suspicion. And even when they are belligerently informed that the priest will not be welcome, thanks to their vigilance and courage, the priest will come.

When the lay enumerator contacts a resident, he will announce that a census of Catholics is being conducted, and inquire whether there are any Catholics living in the house. If the answer is affirmative, the worker records the desired information. If the worker is told that there are no Catholics living in the house, he inquires further whether anyone living there has been baptized in the Catholic Church, even though he has abandoned his Catholic affiliation. When the answer to this question is affirmative, or doubtful or evasive or apparently a lie, then the lay enumerator records the name and address of the family. If the answer is still negative, he thanks the party and departs.

Sometimes no one is at home at the time of the worker's visit. In this case the layman inquires of a neighbor whether any Catholics live in the house or apartment next door. In face of a positive statement that seems trustworthy, the enumerator follows the standard procedure. When the neighbor is unable to supply the information or will not or is doubtful or uncertain, then the worker should record the name and address on a colored card for purposes of revisitation. To avoid confusion and save time, the revisiting should be done only after the section has been completely canvassed.

When the lay person's work is finished, the work of the priest begins. Priests can go out on the census en masse or one priest can be assigned to the work all year around. Adjustments will have to be made to suit local conditions. Sometimes a division of labor works out advantageously. One priest does the visitation, another the validation of marriages, a third the instruction of converts, the organization of Sunday school, etc. This requires a full quota of priests.

When the priest visits the Catholic home, the first few minutes must be taken up with an explanation of the census, its purpose, etc. These first minutes are important. On the

impression he creates when he enters the home depends the success of the whole visit.[43]

If the home visited is composed of fervent Catholics, the priest should get down to business without delay. Time should be saved on the good families so that extra care can go into the visitation of the lukewarm or lax Catholic homes.

The condition of the Catholic home in which there is little religion will be immediately obvious to the priest. The manner in which he is greeted, the embarrassed silence, the reluctance to admit him, all are indications of the kind of people who live there. It is in these homes that the priest must be most careful. His first effort will be to gain admission to the home. Once in the apartment or house, he should try to be casual and relaxed. He must remember that the person is probably embarrassed, uncomfortable, or even angry. He may begin by discussing the weather, the health of the baby, anything and everything that will get the respondent to sit down. While the census card should be used without hesitation in good Catholic homes, it should remain hidden from diffident Catholics, at least during the early part of the interview. The priest should lead up to the matter of his visit casually. Once he gets to know by heart the questions he has to ask, he can ask them without referring to the card at all. He must start on the innocent questions, *e.g.*, "Is this your only child?" Gradually, he can lead up to questions on the religion of the husband, attendance at Mass, the validity of the marriage. He need only introduce the census card into view when he already has all the information he wants. If he introduces it too early, the respondent will realize that the statements are being recorded and may become un-co-operative. If a particular respondent proves difficult, it may be wise to interrupt the interview at an early stage. Sometimes it takes two or three visits to get the desired information. Frequently, a Catholic wife may not wish to talk before her non-Catholic husband and would prefer the priest to return when she can talk more freely. The priest must be shrewd enough to size up the human situation and to

know when a continuance of the visit is fruitful. At no time during any visit should a priest censure the respondent or any member of the family. Not only will harm be done in that single home, but the word will spread throughout the parish that the priest is coming around to Catholic homes to "bawl the bad Catholics out." It should be the most exceptional case where the priest finds a Catholic, lax as he may be, completely un-co-operative. After a visit to the difficult Catholic homes, the last words of the respondent are usually in this vein: "Father, I didn't want you to come, but now that it is over I am glad you did come."

The one phenomenon which always impresses a visiting priest is the frankness and honesty of Catholic people. Some priests cynically testify that the laity can lie very glibly, especially when well-guarded secrets are involved. The truth is that even weak Catholics find it difficult to lie to a priest, and when they attempt to evade an answer, their discomfort is so obvious that by tactful questioning the priest is enabled to elicit the truth. Catholics who are brazen in their refusal to answer the questions of the priest are few and far between. At times the priest will find arrogant Catholics taking special delight in parading their defection before the priest, but these cases, thank God, are rare.

As much of the remedial work as possible should be done as soon as the facts are brought to light. This particularly applies to the validation of invalid marriages. Laymen can be used to develop a filing system which will show the mixed marriages, the invalid marriages, the children in public school, the children in need of instruction, the prospective converts, etc. Where the subjects might involve gossip or scandal, the teaching Sisters or professional secretaries from outside the parish can be hired to do the typewriting.

Every pastor, however, must remember that the census is not an end in itself. It represents only the beginning of a revitalized parish life. The census should result in an expanded school, enlarged Sunday school classes, promotion of religious societies,

etc. The data uncovered by the census can have the effect of making the pastor use his laity more in the reconstruction of Catholic life in the parish. A Legion of Mary can perform magnificent services, once a census has been taken, under the guidance of an informed priest.

CONCLUSION

The census will not cure all the ills of the parish. It will not recoup all the lost souls for Christ. There will be disappointments and heartbreaks. Human beings, considering what they are, will still remain invalidly married, lax in attending Mass, habituated to sin, careless about their children. Even so, many dormant Catholics will be reclaimed, if not immediately, then at least sooner than if the priest had never visited them.

The practice of making a parish census will not take root in all parishes, or even in a majority of them, overnight. In twenty-five years the parish census has come a long way. It would be a mistake at this stage of census development to impose censuses from the top. Perhaps diocesan officials might encourage parishes voluntarily to attempt census work and assist them by preparing a standard schedule for use by all parishes in a particular diocese. In this way university professors, research experts, and graduate students could use the results gained by a standardized schedule. However, professional sociologists must be patient. They must not expect parish priests, harassed by practical problems, to be interested in the research point of view. If census work is made to appeal to priests for practical reasons, and pastors or dioceses are encouraged to publish honest and unexpurgated accounts of the results of these censuses, the Catholic statistical bureau, envisioned by Father Ross, will come sooner than many think.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER IX

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4. *Ibid.,* pp. 20–21.

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13. See the statement of the American hierarchy, Nov. 16, 1947, "On Secularism," *The Catholic Mind*, XLVI (1948), 1 ff.

14. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith*, p. 61.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

16. Schnepp, *Leakage from a Catholic Parish*, pp. 61–75.

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18. Most Reverend Amleto Cicognani, Letter of the Apostolic Delegate to the Bishops of the United States, in T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J., *The Canon Law Digest*, 2 vols. + supp. (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1943), II, 147.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

20. This represents a change of mind. Cf. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith*, p. 205.

21. Tallon, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

22. Cicognani, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

23. On this point, see O'Grady, "The Parish Census," *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, LXXX (1929), 42.

24. "Ad Catholici Sacerdotii," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XVIII (1936), 15. Translation from *Catholic Mind*, XXXIV (1936), 49. Italics supplied.

25. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith*, p. 13.

26. For the purposes of this paper the writer presumes that the actual collection of religious data will be in the hands of the priest or religious.

27. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith*, pp. 208–209.

28. For the proper manner of filling out a schedule, see *Instructions to Enumerators,* published by the United States Bureau of the Census.

29. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith,* p. 89.

30. *Ibid.,* p. 58.

31. *Ibid.,* p. 145.

32. Schnepp, "Nationality and Leakage," *op. cit.,* pp. 157–158.

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38. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXIII (1931), 202. Translation from *Two Basic Social Encyclicals* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1943), p. 139.

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41. Kelly, *Catholics and the Practice of the Faith,* p. 199.

42. An aid in locating Catholic families is the "List of Registered Voters," published by the board of electors for each assembly district and obtainable from district officials.

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CHAPTER X

THE PARISH SURVEY

by GERALD J. SCHNEPP, S.M.

THE DEFINITION OF A PARISH SURVEY

THE first social surveys in the United States were made in the latter part of the nineteenth century and were designed to stimulate in the public a sense of its responsibility for the correction of social conditions. Gaining momentum after World War I, the survey movement possibly reached its peak in the early thirties. From her study of the subject, Pauline V. Young concludes that surveys have been concerned with

> (1) current or immediate conditions, (2) of a social pathological nature, (3) having definite geographic limits, (4) having definite social implications and social significance, (5) being capable of measurement and (6) of comparison with situations which may be accepted as a model, and (7) being concerned with the formulation of a constructive program of social advance.[1]

Lundberg points out that the social survey is not a special method of research but that it is rather "a type of organization of field work," and, as conventionally used, the term designates "(*a*) a more or less comprehensive inquiry into numerous aspects of a situation, (*b*) as it exists at a given time in a given community, (*c*) with rather definite educational, propagandist, and ameliorative purposes. As such it may utilize any or all known methods of inquiry."[2]

Paraphrasing these and other statements, we may say that a social survey as applied to parish research — or, a parish survey — is a comprehensive investigation of measurable and

significant social, economic, and religious conditions as they exist in a specific parish at a specific time, with the purpose of recommending and urging ameliorative action for those aspects which do not measure up to an ideal norm of parish life.

This definition poses certain difficulties for the parish surveyor, some of them related to the apparent decline of the survey movement, some of them related to elements in the definition itself. Regarding the first, Lundberg suggests four reasons why surveys under private auspices seem to be decreasing: "(1) the rising standards of sociological inquiries, (2) the shrinkage of private research funds, (3) a more discriminating scrutiny of 'survey' projects by the Foundations, and finally (4) the great extension of governmental records and inquiries. . . ."[3] The implications for parish research are fairly obvious. Students of parish sociology certainly must make every effort to keep abreast of the increasing refinements of sociological research, and should regard intensive surveys limited to only one or a few aspects of parish life as preferable to broad investigations which it may be impossible to do well.[4] Funds for Catholic sociological research have thus far not been abundant, but they may be forthcoming in the future. It is conceivable that the hierarchy, pastors, and lay people of means will be less hesitant to invest in parish surveys if they become convinced of their value in the work of the apostolate and are assured that the best techniques will be used. Finally, "the great extension of governmental records and inquiries" will be of help to parish surveyors on such matters as health, income, housing, and the like, but will not provide information on the religious aspects of parish life.

Among the difficulties posed by elements in the definition of a parish survey, only two need be considered. First, how can one make an investigation of "measurable and significant . . . religious conditions"? The answer is not so difficult when one considers that there is much information still to be gathered on such matters as mixed and invalid marriages, participation in parish religious and social activities, and adherence to

external religious practices such as Sunday Mass, Easter duty, baptism of children — all of which are measurable and significant. Methods of record-keeping are improving but they are still far from adequate, from a statistical point of view, and the statistics available give little or no insight into the deeper problems of parish life. Some of these deeper problems might be exposed by intensive studies based, for example, on carefully planned interviews, case studies, or attitude scales. The application of these techniques to parish research is in its infancy; but parish surveyors and researchers must develop them if parish sociology is to grow and yield fruit for the apostolate. Of course, there always will be matters of a spiritual nature, the measurement of which will remain beyond the scope of the methods and techniques of sociologists.

The determination of "an ideal norm of parish life" is a more elusive problem. Some of its external elements seem obvious, however. An ideal parish would certainly have no invalid marriages and no mixed marriages; all children would be baptized; every parishioner would be faithful to external religious observances; and so on down the line of "measurable religious conditions." As the social surveyor sets up ideals of infant mortality, maternal mortality, and the like, with a theoretical zero as the goal, so the parish surveyor may work toward the attainment of analogous ideal norms.

It may be well at this point to distinguish the terms "parish survey" and "parish research" for they are technically different. In brief, the purpose of the parish survey is to describe the situation in a given parish, here and now; parish research for scientific use is concerned with "disinterested exploration into uncharted regions for the purpose of arriving at principles or laws relative to the behavior of persons, groups, or institutions."[5] By way of example, the parish surveyor would gather and interpret facts on the relation between education and number of children of Catholics in a particular parish; the parish researcher would examine the facts on education and the birth rate from a number of studies and attempt to

discover the laws or principles at work. The two purposes are not incompatible, however.

ORGANIZING THE PARISH SURVEY

Now that the characteristics of the parish survey have been discussed, it is logical to consider the organization of such a survey. The various procedures will be presented systematically, though in specific projects they will never be undertaken in exactly this order. Their treatment here is necessarily brief, to meet space limitations; those interested in more complete discussions of one or the other phase of organization will find suitable references listed in the footnotes and in the bibliography of this chapter.

Selecting the parish. If a pastor desires to secure assistance in surveying his parish, he will do well to contact one of the Catholic colleges which has emphasized parish sociology.[6] Up to the present, the most complete parish surveys have been made by graduate students working under the supervision of departments of sociology or schools of social work. This is not ideal, as there should be a national Catholic research agency which would make a staff of experts available to parishes all over the country. But the present method has certain advantages: (1) The graduate student usually makes a complete parish census as part of the survey.[7] (2) Close supervision assures the use of scientific techniques. (3) The cost to the parish is negligible.

If a student is looking for a parish to survey, he should decide on the type of parish and, in a general way, the purposes he has in mind. Thus, he may wish to study a Negro parish, a downtown parish, a rural parish, or a national parish. With something definite in mind, he may then approach colleges and universities, the chancery office, or priests in the area in which he plans to work. He may meet opposition in some quarters; it will be necessary to explain that the name of the parish need not be revealed and that all personal information gathered will be kept confidential. If the investigator agrees

to take a parish census as part of the survey and thus supply the pastor with an up-to-date file of his parishioners, opposition will be reduced. As the value of parish surveys becomes better known, it is likely that general opposition will be lessened.

Director of the survey. Once the parish has been selected, the director of the survey should go to the area and acquaint himself as completely as possible with its spirit. He should confer with the pastor, the assistants, key lay people, and others over a period of a week or two. The purpose of this preliminary study is to determine which are the most pressing problems, what means can be used to investigate them, what resources are at hand — in brief, what orientation the study should take as to both subject matter and methods.[8] In order to do an adequate job, the director must be a good organizer, well informed in the fields of social surveying and parish sociology, and skilled in the techniques of research, especially interviewing. Mistakes made in planning will affect the whole project, and it is of the greatest importance to keep errors at a minimum.[9] His preliminary investigation completed, the director should write up his first report and submit it to the pastor for his approval. The report will include such items as: (1) purpose of the survey; (2) probable sources of data; (3) methods to be used; (4) budget; (5) time to be covered; and (6) parish census plan, *i.e.*, what parish census data will be supplied to the pastor.

Selecting the staff. When the report has been approved, the director is ready to set up headquarters — preferably in the rectory — and select his staff. If he can secure persons already trained in research techniques, he is fortunate. For example, if personal interviews are to be used extensively, he should look for priests, doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers, or Parish Visitors.[10] He may have to use untrained or partially trained persons, however, and then it is imperative to draw up detailed instructions for interviewers; and to conduct several briefing sessions before, and periodic staff conferences during, the research period.[11] Lundberg deplores "the practice of

sending high-school and immature college students indiscriminately into the field" because it "often becomes the basis of deep prejudice against all field workers in the community."[12] If untrained persons are used, thorough instructions and close supervision are essential.

Besides the field staff, statisticians and clerical workers will be needed. If a college is nearby, students may be drafted to help, provided that their work is closely supervised. Clerical workers — usually volunteers from the parish — will type reports and the cards for the parish file, as well as assist on the tabulation. Since they will handle the original schedules, care must be exercised to select people who can be entrusted with confidential information.

Several filing systems will be needed: the parish file, consisting of typed cards with the usual identifying information; the original data file, for the returned schedules; the secondary data file, for reports and other published and unpublished material on the area to be surveyed; the tabulating file, with compartments to keep work accomplished separate from work to be done; and the "idea file" to record ideas for interpretation which occur to the director, field workers, tabulators, and others as the survey proceeds. If filing work is divided among a group of volunteers, it may be best to assign a file to each person. Much time and effort, to say nothing of patience, will be lost if files are not kept up to date and orderly.

Sources of information. Before gathering original data, the parish surveyor will search for all possible sources of information already in existence, in order to prevent waste of time and money in duplicated effort and to direct the study to problems which previous investigators have uncovered. These sources should be evaluated to distinguish the primary from the secondary sources.

There are long lists of official and unofficial documents and publications which may be of value in a survey.[13] With the purpose and scope of the survey in mind, selection has to be made; for a parish survey, the following will be most valuable:

a) Historical accounts: diocesan and parish histories; newspaper and magazine articles; published and unpublished studies of the parish and of the area. When using these sources, the surveyor should be neither gullible nor hypercritical. While developing "the habit of methodical doubt" he should nevertheless "avoid hypercriticism which makes the tool the goal and not the means to the end of knowledge, of the truth."[14]

b) School records: reports of boards of education and of attendance departments of both public and private schools; statistics and other information from the parish school; reports of groups sponsoring released time programs for religious instruction in the area.

c) Parish records: the parish census file; weekly bulletins and other publications; minutes of meetings of parish societies; the pastor's annual report to the chancery office; registers of baptisms and marriages; confirmation, Communion records; financial reports; reports of athletic, dramatic, study club, convert classes, and other activities sponsored by the parish.

d) Diocesan records: annual report of the diocese; reports of diocesan organizations and agencies such as Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Rural Life Bureau, Superintendent of Schools, Councils of Catholic Men and of Women, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; reports on baptisms, Communions, confirmations, deaths, marriages, mixed marriages, separations, annulments; financial reports; statistics and other information regarding the diocese from the annual issues of *The Official Catholic Directory.*

e) Health records and vital statistics: from city, state, federal, or private agencies; special studies of this area — mortality and morbidity statistics; birth rates; marriage, separation, and divorce rates; dietary information; hospital and insurance company studies.

f) Census reports: general, for the city; special, for the census tract or tracts in which the parish is located. If this area has been used for special sample studies or demonstrations, the information will be in published form; if not, the information

can be furnished by the Bureau of the Census, on I.B.M. cards.

g) Public and private welfare agencies' reports: statistics on public assistance and service cases handled by the department of public welfare, Catholic charities bureau, other family and child welfare agencies; case studies made by these same agencies; data on recreation, housing, and other social information from city planning board, social planning council, recreation department, housing council, and the like; delinquency and crime statistics and case studies.

h) Economic data: wage and cost-of-living studies; rental and home-ownership studies; budget studies for this area; studies of lending agencies, including credit unions; employment statistics; payrolls; reports and studies by the Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture and county agent (especially for rural parish surveys), Federal Reserve Board and other national agencies, as well as studies by local private sources such as chamber of commerce, labor unions, banks, and industrialists.

The director will ordinarily make a quick overview of possible sources and then divide the research among his assistants in order to avoid duplication. Before embarking on this part of the survey, workers should be advised of procedures for compiling bibliography and taking notes.[15] Whatever is gathered should be filed immediately for ready reference by all members of the staff. Much of this material can be located in libraries; some of it will have to be secured by contacting the indicated agencies, either by personal visit or by correspondence.

Techniques to be used. The director must select, on the basis of the purposes, scope, and resources of the survey one or more techniques which seem best adapted to secure the information desired. Nine possible techniques will be discussed briefly in the following section: (*a*) schedule; (*b*) questionnaire; (*c*) personal interview; (*d*) group interview; (*e*) case study; (*f*) participant observation; (*g*) correspondence; (*h*) diaries, life histories, autobiographies; and (*i*) scales.

a) *The schedule* is a formal list of items on which information is desired, the information to be supplied by persons interviewed but the answers to be entered by the interviewer. It is distinguished from the questionnaire in that the latter is answered directly by the informant. Before constructing a schedule, dummy tables should be drawn up so that items covering all the desired information will be included.

Rules for constructing schedules are many but the following are the most important: (1) include objective and quantitative data only, that which is easily observable and can be answered by "yes" or "no" or by a number; (2) wording should be such as to be easily grasped by the *least* intelligent members of the group studied and so designed "that no suspicion, antagonism, or resentment is aroused";[16] (3) avoid leading questions which suggest the reply; for example, instead of "Are the children baptized?" use "When was the child baptized?"; (4) avoid subjective evaluations such as "good," "fair," and "bad"; evaluations should be made on the basis of objective data, such as attendance at Mass, reception of the sacraments, and the like; (5) data secured should be comparable from group to group. Before a schedule is adopted, it should be pretested, the results studied to discover defects, and revisions made to remedy them.

b) *The questionnaire* is a list of questions which is placed in the hands of the informant by mail or otherwise with instructions to fill in the answers and return the form. The rules for drawing up the questionnaire are the same as those for the schedule, with still greater emphasis on clarity of statement so that the resulting data are not biased by misunderstandings; hence, pretesting is essential.[17] The principal difficulty with questionnaires is the small proportion of replies — said to be between 5 and 20 per cent when distributed by private and relatively unskilled persons — and the consequent certainty that conclusions based on these inadequate data will be biased. To obviate this difficulty, one or more follow-up letters must be sent; because of this, the supposed economy of the questionnaire method over the interview is questioned by some observers.

There may be a temptation to distribute questionnaires in the pews at Sunday Mass or with the parish bulletin. This procedure is not to be encouraged because the returns are likely to be unrepresentative, since (1) many people will not fill it out in church and will forget to bring it back the following Sunday; (2) no follow-up is possible; and (3) those who fail to appear at Mass will not be included. In fact, the questionnaire should play little part in the parish survey; it is probable that the desired information can be secured much more reliably by other methods.

c) *The personal interview* takes place in a congenial atmosphere with the purpose of eliciting information and attitudes which would not be revealed if a more formal method were used. Much has been written about the technique of interviewing, especially by social workers for whom this method is particularly important, but much still remains to be done in the scientific study of the subject. All agree that it is important to prepare for the interview; to establish *rapport* and gain the confidence of the interviewee; not to take a condemnatory attitude but rather one of acceptance; and to avoid emotional involvement. Pauline Young has done excellent work in this area, and every potential interviewer should read her work, which is among the best in the field, and consult it frequently for checking his mistakes and improving his technique.[18]

Since a parish survey may frequently uncover conscience matter, should interviewing be done only by priests? An argument in favor of an affirmative answer is that priests are sometimes asked to hear confessions of parishioners in the course of interviews. Another consideration, however, is that lapsed Catholics do not always welcome the priest to their homes; experience shows that they are sometimes more likely to respond if approached by a less authoritative person who, if successful, can pave the way for eventual reconciliation. Parish Visitors, the Legion of Mary, Catholic social workers, and others have done and are doing much good work in this

field. Revelation of conscience matter to others than priests is almost inevitable in parish research which will touch on such matters as invalid marriage, failure to attend Mass, and the like. The interviewer who is not a priest cannot, of course, give direct treatment when such revelations are made; but he can attempt to develop a state of mind which will make the lapsed Catholic willing to accept priestly ministrations.

d) *A group interview* is a meeting of persons qualified to speak and relate experiences on a given topic. It is used in order to obviate the necessity of interviewing each person separately. People are less likely to exaggerate in a group than in a personal interview, since others who know about the subject are present. Exchange of views and clash of opinion are encouraged, in an effort to get at the truth. The chairman plans beforehand a discussion guide but must be ready to follow up lines of thought he did not foresee. One speaker stimulates the others and the responses may add to or modify the original statement. Note-taking by the chairman must be limited to jotting down key words which will aid in making up his report later and noting mentally individuals in the group who should be personally interviewed to secure more details on material which they apparently are unwilling to discuss in public.

e) *The case method* implies intensive investigations in order to discover greater detail about motivation, conduct, interrelationships, and similar matters which will not be revealed by questionnaires and schedules. Young states that "the scientific modern survey especially is concerned with social attitudes, personal and group interests, public opinion, group tradition, cultural background, and other data which can be advantageously secured by means of the case method."[19]

Despite the value of the case method, it is not easy to apply well, principally because of two difficulties: that of selecting representative cases for study and that of reducing the qualitative material to quantitative terms. The latter is the greater difficulty and the present method of informally

classifying and evaluating case histories is not considered adequate by experts in research techniques. Lazarsfeld and Robinson have done important work in suggesting improved techniques, but their method is too involved for reproduction here.[20] A student who wishes to use the case method should make a special study of the subject.

f) *The participant observer* becomes "as nearly as may be a member of the group he investigates. That is, he settles in the community and participates in the everyday life of the group."[21] In the parish survey, a member of the staff might move into the parish, secure employment in the area, join parish organizations, and so on, all the while observing attitudes and gathering information to "reveal aspects of the culture that more formal methods cannot portray."[22] Persons already living in the area may be trained to serve as participant observers; if so, careful instructions and training in objectivity are essential. For certain types of problems, the participant observer technique is invaluable; but before using it the investigator should study the experiences of others in order properly to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the method.[23]

g) *Correspondence* will be used only to secure information which cannot be gathered in any other way. It may be desirable, for example, to contact persons no longer living in the parish who may be able to answer detailed questions or give leads to some line of research which should be followed. In evaluating correspondence, it is well to remember several things: descriptions will be of things as they *were,* not as they *are;* memories may fade and the tendency may be to "glorify" past experiences. Former officials of the parish may be inclined to be defensive about certain practices and, therefore, their testimony should be weighed with that of others in order to secure a balanced view.

h) *Diaries, life histories, and autobiographies* possess certain advantages which make them indispensable in sociological research. Probably the greatest volume of such material in

Catholic circles consists in personal accounts of conversions to the faith. While few, if any, of these were written for purposes of research, their content is useful in arriving at an understanding of the process and in working out practical programs in regard to convert classes, convert visitation, and the like.

If the personal documents under discussion are to be used in parish research, it must be remembered that the sample will be selective because not everyone can keep a careful diary, and few have the ability or can be induced to make the effort required for a life history or an autobiography. However, if the purposes of the survey will be well served by the use of such documents, the director should not overlook the possibility of securing them.

i) *Scales* can be used to obtain objective measurements of certain types of phenomena. *Psychometric tests* and *scales* measure attitudes, morale, character, social participation, and psychoneurotic tendencies. Sociometric scales may be used to measure housing, health conditions, or socioeconomic status.[24]

The development of a scale which can survive rigorous scientific scrutiny is a long process.[25] The parish surveyor should examine the scales which have been developed for possible application in his study,[26] and, in his published reports indicate those areas where the use of a rating scale would have been valuable if available, as a stimulus to research in this field.

Evidently not all of these techniques will be used in any one project; two or three techniques, well applied, can be combined to make a survey which will be a valuable contribution to parish sociology. As the survey progresses, it may be necessary to adopt one or the other additional techniques in order to make an intensive study of a certain problem. A director who is constantly in close touch with his project will recognize these needs as they arise.

Informing the parishioners. In order to secure the maximum of co-operation from the parishioners, it is usually advisable to make public announcements at Sunday Mass and in the parish

bulletin that, during the next few weeks or months, a "parish census," "parish enumeration," or "parish visitation," will be made. Since the pastor has an obligation to take a census periodically, the people have an obligation to answer the ordinary questions asked: names, addresses, reception of the sacraments, type of marriage, membership in parish organizations, and the like. However, this obligation does not extend to all types of information the parish surveyor might like to obtain. Therefore, it may be wise to make some further explanation that additional information will be asked, that there is no obligation to answer, but that the congregation's full co-operation is desired since the parish study will make an important contribution to the work of the church.

Despite these precautions, the parish surveyor is in much the same position as any other investigator and he must rely on the skills and techniques which have been developed to secure valid data from all kinds of informants: the overwilling, the co-operative, the indifferent, the sullen, and the resentful. It has also been found that, even when announcements are made, some parishioners will profess to have heard nothing about the survey when the field workers arrive. This makes it necessary for each field worker to carry with him his credentials – a letter from the pastor will suffice.

In certain types of studies, the wisdom of advance notice is debatable. Particularly in a conflict situation, previous announcement may cause the informants to "get ready" for the field workers, to divide themselves into "pros" and "antis," to determine to say nothing, to get worked up into an excitable state, or to generate new social tensions.

For the parish survey, some advance publicity will probably have to be given, especially if a parish enumeration is taken as part of the survey. However, if a conflict situation is to be explored, it will be wise to explain as little as possible about the situation to be studied.

Gathering the data. With the purposes, scope, and methods of the survey determined, the materials and filing systems set

up, the field workers selected, and the parishioners informed, the director is about ready to begin the field work.

A map of the parish should be obtained, probably from the city surveyor's office; other maps, such as those used by the Bureau of the Census will also be helpful. These maps, together with city street-and-address lists are needed in order to work out a systematic plan for coverage of the parish — whether this plan calls for a complete enumeration or merely a sample study.

Each field worker should be furnished with an address book listing the homes he is to visit, with space for brief notation such as the name of the family if Catholic; "Protestant," or other religious belief, if that is the case; or, "no answer." The latter homes should be marked for revisits. Workers should bring in their schedules at the end of each day; the director should check the number covered and also examine the material entered to determine if the proper information is being gathered. If defects are found, the worker or workers in question should be given another briefing before the next day's work begins. Periodically, the director should check the progress of the survey to discover if the timetable originally set up is being adhered to.[27] If field workers are paid for their services, experience seems to indicate that the best results are achieved if they are paid a given amount for each schedule turned in, rather than on an hourly or daily basis. However, if the case, interview, or other similar method is used, a salary schedule may have to be followed to get the best results. To insure uniformity of data, a field staff meeting once a week for exchange of views and experiences is essential.

Most of the Catholic parish surveys made thus far have been complete enumerations; therefore, the problem of *sampling* has not entered into them. But sampling procedures will be useful if a larger area, such as a diocese, is to be surveyed for certain types of information or if an intensive study, covering many items, is to be made as part of the parish survey. Time and money are saved, and the results of a careful sample study

are much the same as those of a complete enumeration. The parish surveyor, therefore, should know the main types of sampling and the principles governing them. These cannot be treated within the space limitations of this chapter; for details, the reader is referred to specialized discussions of the subject.[28]

Classifying the data. The raw material of research must be organized and classified if it is to take on meaning. First, it must be tabulated; then, interpreted.

If possible, machine tabulation should be used, in order to eliminate a large amount of tedious work. This must be known beforehand, however, and the schedules, questionnaires, and other instruments so devised that they will be adaptable to machine tabulation.[29]

Hand tabulation can be done directly from the schedules onto tally sheets; or, preferably, by first entering all the data on large master sheets, using a line for each case. The latter method makes cross tabulation easier, particularly if a system of coding is used.[30]

In any case, it is of the utmost importance to have a careful system of classification so that significant differences will not be hidden under similar categories. This system must be worked out when the schedules, questionnaires, and other instruments are being constructed; great care exercised at that early stage will "pay off" when the time comes to tabulate. This may involve considerable detail. Thus, one parish surveyor classified his schedules into five categories: Catholic marriage, mixed marriage, invalid marriage, single person, and both parents non-Catholic. Then, Catholic marriages were divided into five types, mixed marriages into eight types, and invalid marriages into eleven types. Finally, each of these types was subdivided according to a code including thirteen different circumstances.[31] Coding according to such a classification results in quick identification of a case. An example from this particular system chosen at random would be a case labeled II-B-5 which designation combines all this informa-

tion: mixed marriage; woman Catholic, man lapsed Catholic; man separated, out of this home. The detail to which a surveyor carries his classifications depends on the use he intends to make of the data.

When the tally is completed, the totals should be checked for accuracy, and transferred to tables.[32] When there are sufficient cases, numbers should be reduced to percentages; for example, a reader will get some idea of proportions if he is told there are 137 mixed marriages in which the woman is the Catholic party, and 81 where the man is Catholic; but a clearer notion emerges if he is told that the percentages are 63 and 37, respectively. Whenever percentages are given, however, the basic figures should also be given, so that the extent of the study is immediately evident.

Analysis of the data will require the application of numerous statistical concepts and formulas. Among these may be mentioned types of averages — the mean, median, and mode; the standard deviation for measuring variations from this tendency; the coefficient of correlation for determining relationships between two factors; measures of statistical significance such as the Chi-square, and the like. The director of the parish survey must be familiar with these concepts, even if he delegates the actual work of computation to his staff. The student in this field should consult the standard textbooks in statistical method.[33]

Reporting the data. After one has gone to the trouble of making a careful parish survey, the results should be published, in order to guide those who are responsible for programs of action as well as to make the findings available for other surveyors and researchers. There are a number of periodicals which are willing to publish such reports; and, of course, the findings can always be published in book or pamphlet form.

The plan of the report will be suggested by the purpose and scope of the survey, as well as by the actual data which have been collected, classified, and analyzed. In general, it

should include: (1) a description of the parish studied, covering both the environmental situation and the main characteristics of the population such as distribution by age, sex, marital status, and religious practice; (2) a full presentation of the method used in the study, its limitations, and any special difficulties encountered; (3) the main body of the study, which may be divided into a number of sections or chapters; (4) the conclusions and recommendations, including suggestions for further research; (5) appendixes for copies of schedules, questionnaires, scoring devices, codes, instructions to enumerators or interviewers, and other research materials used in the study, as well as supplementary tables of statistics which have not been reproduced in the body of the report itself.

The style of writing should be simple and clear so that there is no danger of misinterpretation of what is written. Qualifications should be introduced where necessary so that the interpretation does not go beyond what the findings show; if speculation is indulged in, a practice to be discouraged, this should be clearly indicated. Clarity of presentation can be improved by well-drawn tables and especially by the use of graphs and charts which can summarize quickly and effectively large masses of data.[34] Care should be taken to preserve the anonymity of the parish, if that has been guaranteed, and also the anonymity of informants if case histories, interviews, life histories, and the like are used; names and other identifying information should be changed.

In writing the report, it will be well to bear in mind the words of Young:

> The social surveyor organizes and classifies his data with a view to presenting concrete facts regarding the social problems which confront the group. He aims to present his data in a manner which will interest and be of value to . . . leaders and administrators. These concrete and realistic data, properly organized and systematized, will serve as a "frame of reference" for planning a constructive program of . . . reform and as a means of arousing public consciousness. . . . Leaders are largely interested in the facts as they were secured in the field and as they realistically describe and

diagnose the existing . . . conditions in a given place at a given time. These data should therefore be presented in all of their concreteness and reality pertaining to a definite geographical area and specific time.[35]

Finally, when the report is completed, there should be no delay in giving it as wide publicity as is consistent with the nature and purpose of the survey. As already indicated, every effort should be made to have it printed either in a periodical or as a separate publication, so that the results will be available to other students of the parish.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the parish surveyor should be sobered by the thought that he is faced with a difficult field of study but one that bears great promise for the apostolate.

Evidence that it is difficult, if evidence is needed after what has been outlined in this chapter, is found in the fact that past surveys have been criticized from many points of view. For instance, Deming lists thirteen factors "that affect the usefulness of surveys": variability of response; differences between different kinds and degrees of canvass; biases due to the interviewers, the auspices, the imperfections in questionnaires and tabulating, nonresponse, late reports, and unrepresentative selection of data, period covered, or respondents; changes in the universe before tabulating; and errors in sampling, processing, or interpretation.[36] Again, Ellwood thinks that the two main mistakes made by social surveyors in the past have been that they have not sufficiently studied "processes, movements, and tendencies," and that they have failed to take into account "such non-material elements of culture as traditions, standards, values, opinions, and beliefs prevalent in the group."[37] On the other hand, Lundberg believes that "the principal defect of social surveys up to the present time has been the lack of standardized procedure and the resulting incomparability of the data accumulated. . . . Unless the data collected with reference to one community can be evaluated according to recognized standards . . . they are of doubtful scientific value

and are unsafe as guides for social action." Urging the development of "standardized measuring-sticks," he feels that, if we had them, comparisons between communities, and, we might add, between parishes, would become more valid than comparisons made to date.[38]

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER X

1. *Scientific Social Surveys and Research* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1942), p. 55. This volume contains a good account of the development of the survey movement, pp. 3–53.

2. George A. Lundberg, *Social Research,* 2 ed. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942), p. 389.

3. *Ibid.*

4. A number of Catholic parish surveys have been made. Their authors would probably be the first to admit that their work leaves much to be desired; but as pioneers in the field who, in the main, attempted one-man surveys, they should not be judged too harshly. This does not mean that their techniques should not be subjected to criticism nor that future investigators should not profit from their mistakes. For a number of such surveys, see the bibliography at the end of the chapter under the names: Jacobi, McCaffrey, Schnepp, Wolters. A careful study of these will show that there has been a wholesome tendency to restrict the scope of parish surveys.

For some Protestant experience in this field, see works of Edmund de S. Brunner as follows: *A Church and Community Survey of Salem County, N. J.* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1922); *Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923); *Church Life in the Rural South* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1923); *Surveying Your Community* (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1925); and *Industrial Village Churches* (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930); Brunner and H. Paul Douglass collaborated on *The Protestant Church as a Social Institution* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1935). Some of Douglass' own works include: *The St. Louis Church Survey* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1924); *How to Study the City Church* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1928); and *1000 City Churches* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1929). C. Luther Fry is the author of *Diagnosing the Rural Church* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1924) and *U. S. Looks at Its Churches* (New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930). Other authors and their works: W. C. Bower, *A Survey of Religious Education in the Local Church* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1919); Ross W. Sanderson, *The Strategy of City Church Planning* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1932); and H. H. Gerth, "Midwestern Sectarian Community," *Social Research,* XI (1944), 354–362.

5. Noel P. Gist and L. A. Halbert, *Urban Society* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1933), p. 636.

6. For example, the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.; Fordham University, New York; Loyola University of the South, New Orleans, Louisiana.

7. For examples, see Augustine McCaffrey, F.S.C., *Youth in a Catholic Parish* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1941), and Gerald J. Schnepp, S.M., *Leakage from a Catholic Parish* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1942).

8. See Lundberg, *op. cit.*, p. 391.

9. W. E. Deming lists thirteen common mistakes in "On Errors in Surveys," *American Sociological Review*, IX (1944), 359–369.

10. Some of the congregations of nuns who devote themselves to parish visiting are: Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, 328 W. 71st St., New York; Dominican Sisters of Adrian, St. Joseph's Convent, Adrian, Mich.; Social Mission Sisters, 1452 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio; Mission Helpers, Servants of the Sacred Heart, W. Joppa Road, Towson, Md.; Helpers of the Holy Souls, 112 E. 86th St., New York; Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity, 3501 Solly St., Holmesburg, Philadelphia, Pa.; and Sisters of Social Service, 1120 Westchester Place, Los Angeles, Calif.; see Schnepp, *op. cit.*, pp. 277–279.

11. For samples, see Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 153–157; Lundberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–168.

12. *Op. cit.*, p. 354.

13. For such lists, see F. Stuart Chapin, *Field Work and Social Research* (New York: The Century Co., 1920), pp. 38–45; and Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 103–104.

14. Chapin, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–37. See the "Summary of Principles of Criticism," pp. 36–38.

15. For more detail on systematic note-taking and note-keeping see Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–113.

16. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 151. For further discussion of these and other rules for constructing schedules, see pp. 149–153, and Lundberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 162–178.

17. For tests of a good questionnaire, see Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–171.

18. *Interviewing in Social Work* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1935).

19. *Scientific Social Surveys*, pp. 236–237.

20. P. F. Lazarsfeld and W. S. Robinson, "The Quantification of Case Studies," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, XXIV (1940), 817–825. The gist of the method is given in Lundberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 385–386.

21. Lundberg, *op. cit.*, p. 375.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Cf. Florence Kluckhohn, "The Participant Observer Technique in Small Communities," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLVI (1940), 331–343; and Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 122–126.

24. Young, *Scientific Social Surveys*, p. 362.

25. See, for example, Percival M. Symonds, *Psychological Diagnosis in Social Adjustment* (New York: American Book Co., 1934); *Diagnosing Personality and Conduct* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1931); and Edward B. Greene, *Measurements of Human Behavior* (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1941).

26. See bibliographies in works cited in preceding footnote. Also bibliography in Young, *Scientific Social Surveys*, pp. 557–562; and in Lundberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 251–252.

27. More details on field work organization are found in Chapin, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–74, and in Lundberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 352–359.

28. Paul Hanly Furfey, "The Sampling Problem," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* VIII (1947), 258–265; U. S. Bureau of the Census, *A Chapter in Population Sampling* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947); Chapin, *op. cit.,* pp. 98–128; Young, *op. cit.,* pp. 304–306; and Lundberg, *op. cit.,* pp. 134–157.

29. For more detail on machine tabulation, see Lundberg, *op. cit.,* pp. 174–175.

30. Five codes adaptable to parish research – for classifying marriages, mixed religious status families, type of education, marriage of parents, and occupation – are found in Schnepp, *op. cit.,* pp. 339–345.

31. *Ibid.,* pp. 339–340.

32. There are many rules for constructing tables; see Calvin F. Schmid in Young, *Scientific Social Surveys,* pp. 261–266.

33. Russell L. C. Butsch, *How to Read Statistics* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1946) is designed for the beginner. Application of formulas for the mean and other concepts is clearly described in Schmid, *loc. cit.,* pp. 270–304. A few of the many other books are: Helen M. Walker, *Mathematics Essential for Elementary Statistics* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1934); R. Clyde White, *Social Statistics* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1933); and Albert E. Waugh, *Elements of Statistical Method,* 2 ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1943).

34. See Schmid, *loc. cit.,* pp. 318–359, and Karl G. Karsten, *Charts and Graphs* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1924).

35. Young, *Scientific Social Surveys,* p. 517.

36. W. E. Deming, "On Errors in Surveys," *American Sociological Review,* IX (1944), 359–360.

37. Charles A. Ellwood, *Methods in Sociology* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1933), pp. 96–97.

38. Lundberg, *op. cit.,* pp. 391–392.

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PART IV

THE PARISH APOSTOLATE

CHAPTER XI

THE PASTORAL MINISTRY IN TRANSITION

by FRANCIS B. DONNELLY

> To what does the Church owe her successive triumphs? . . . She knew how to give up, in due time and without regret.
>
> — CARDINAL SUHARD

ADAPTATION AND CONQUEST

HIS HOLINESS, Pope Pius XII, by a special decree dated April 11, 1949, has established in Rome a pastoral training school for the newly ordained priests of his own diocese, thereby beginning a new phase in the training deemed necessary for the pastoral ministry. In his most recent Exhortation he has called for the establishment of a similar institute of pastoral training in every diocese or at least in each area.[1]

This new development is proof that at the present time the pastoral apostolate is in a state of transition. People have changed in our generation. Life has changed, and it will change still more. We are living in a period of spiritual crisis. To remain faithful to its unchanging task of rendering the human receptive to the influx of the divine, the Church's apostolate must of necessity adapt and subordinate itself to the changed situation. "To minister unto" — that is the essence of the apostolate. Never should it presume to dominate and to impose *its* demands upon the men it is appointed to serve. Rather with true deference and humility, it must be a servant ministering unobtrusively to the actual needs of souls.

With a divine insight bestowed upon them, the popes of

our day have repeatedly alerted the Church to the need of new pastoral thinking and adaptation. Pius XI, in his very first encyclical, *Ubi arcano,* praised the ingenuity of those priests who were devising new apostolic methods to meet changing conditions.[2] At the close of his pontificate, he repeated that commendation in *Divini Redemptoris,* his encyclical on Communism, but then added that there was much still to be done.[3] On several intervening occasions, he had explained why pastoral methods had to be modified. It was because new areas of human activity were being constantly opened up, while the Christian foundations of the existing social order were at the same time being progressively sapped.

> The needs and conditions of our times have indeed extended day by day the field of this apostolate, with new and important battles being waged all along the way and upon the terrain opened up to us by the development of civilization.[4]

> Because of changes in custom and life, the needs of the day demand that the clergy and laity should create accordingly new forms of the Christian apostolate.[5]

Our present Holy Father has several times called for the adaptation desired by his predecessor. He has explained that the very nature of the Church calls for a continuous adaptation:

> The living body grows, develops itself, tends toward maturity. The Mystic Body of Christ, like the physical members who compose it, does not live or move in the abstract, outside the unceasingly changing conditions, of time and place. It is not and cannot be segregated from the world which surrounds it. It is always of its century, advances with it day by day, hour by hour, adapting continually its manner and its demeanor to that of the society in which it must operate.[6]

More recently he has renewed the appeal for new apostolic methods, to be formulated and adopted under proper episcopal authority:

> In like manner, he [the priest] must promote all those forms of the apostolate which today, on account of the special needs of the Christian people, are so very important and urgent. . . .

We are far from holding that the apostolate must not be in keeping with the reality of modern life and that projects adapted to the needs of our time should not be promoted. But since the whole apostolate carried on by the Church is by its essence under the control of the Hierarchy, new forms must not be introduced save with the Bishop's approval.[7]

Quite obviously, our generation is not as receptive to divine truth and grace as a true Christian order would be. Men have put themselves in an earthly bondage, within a social framework which they can indeed alter but not escape. Their mores and their mentality are being shaped more and more exclusively by the pressing realities of earth, with little regard for those of heaven. Pius XII has described the situation to the priests of his own diocese as follows:

When we look at mankind around us, and ask ourselves if it is disposed and ready to receive that [superhuman] reality within itself, unfortunately for many the answer cannot be in the affirmative. The supernatural world has become alien to them; it no longer speaks to them. It is as if the spiritual faculties for knowing such lofty and salutary truths had become atrophied or had died within. Some have tried to explain this state of mind by the deficiencies of the Church's liturgy. They believe it would be enough to purify it, to reform it, to give it primacy, in order to see the straying souls of the present day rediscovering the paths of the divine mysteries.

Whoever thinks this way shows he has a very superficial conception of the spiritual anemia and apathy of today. Its roots are much deeper. We have already spoken of this to you the last two years. The progressive exclusion of religion from all areas of social life, the inundation of irreligion in all its forms, the blinding fascination of remarkable achievements in the whole field of material life – have all visibly weakened in many people the readiness and disposition to understand and to assimilate the values of the supernatural life, and particularly the mysteries of faith.[8]

The mission of the Church to infuse divine truth and life into the world is thus spurned by many as a worthless and meaningless gesture and, what is worse, even deemed offensive to man's rightful freedom and autonomy. Human nature is

considered to be so noble, or is to some so degraded, that man is thought to be incapable of further elevation as a child of God. Men are isolating themselves from God behind a wall, which some in their arrogance even strive to make "high and impregnable."

Faced with this distressing situation, the apostle of the Church, whether he be priest or layman, cannot help but feel this deliberate exclusion and the conspiracy against Christian influence. In a mood of pessimism and despondency he is apt to write off this generation as a lost one, as many of its writers have done, and then seek solace in dreams of the generations to come who upon hearing the Gospel preached to them will seek to be saved from sin. In the words of Pius XII:

> When indeed the new priests go forth from these houses of study to take up the ministry entrusted to them, even though they possess sacred knowledge and fervent piety, nevertheless as they experience the atmosphere of the world and are caught in the midst of the hazards and difficulties of our age, they not infrequently feel they are not sufficiently prepared to meet the growing needs of people. At times their own spirits sink when they are themselves bitterly opposed, not even without danger to self, by the enemies of Christian teaching and virtue.[9]

Yet, never should the apostolate resign itself to defeat and hopelessness. Mindful of the injunction of Christ — "Have confidence, I have overcome the world" — a way out of the difficulty must be found. There is a way. Through the popes, the Holy Spirit is directing the Church to it. It is a revision of her apostolic methods. Pius XII continues:

> It is necessary therefore that the young men recently ordained be trained in the proper knowledge and methods which they need to be able to carry on easily, suitably and promptly even the new forms of the apostolate introduced by our age.[10]

Since the fundamental problem facing the pastoral ministry is that people are deliberately cutting themselves off from the influence of the Church and since the prevailing trend every-

where in the world today is to isolate the Church from social institutions, the challenge before the apostolate is to devise a strategy of penetration and influence that will once again give recognition and primacy to the imperative requirements of the spiritual order. When we say such is the task of the apostolate, we are saying in effect that it is a responsibility incumbent on the whole Body of the Church, clergy and faithful. For it is the whole Mystical Body that must labor for the salvation of the world, the people together with the clergy, each in the manner suitable to it. When we say this is the responsibility of the Church, we are also saying that it is in particular the burden of the parish, which indeed is the Church in action.

The parish is a community of Christian souls under the spiritual care of a pastor. But it must never be a closed community, isolated from the life around it. The parish is a miniature of the Mystical Body, participating in its nature and sharing its mission. By the declared wish of its Founder, the kingdom of heaven on earth is a leaven to permeate life; it is the grain of mustard seed becoming a giant tree; it is a seed that grows continuously night and day. A static parish no less than a declining parish is therefore a contradiction. What was it that Christ said? Yes, of course — preach the Gospel to everybody; go to the very ends of the earth; compel people to come in; there is to be one fold and one shepherd. Surely, we do not have to ask ourselves: did He mean all this? What we must do is to ask ourselves: how is the pastoral ministry fulfilling this responsibility at the present time?

Wherever a parish exists, whether it be in a Catholic or non-Catholic country, in the missions or at home, its function is not only to conserve its membership but to be the direct and principal organ of Christian conquest. The pastoral ministry is to keep and render the human receptive to the divine, for in and through the parish is Christ extended and communicated to all who desire Him. To the parish church and to the parish priest, souls must come to be regenerated and sanc-

tified. Out from the parish proceed the enlightenment of authentic divine guidance and a dynamism of true supernatural love. Consequently, the more contact breaks down between the parish and the world about it, the more the parish is turned within itself and the world is turned from it. It is the duty of the parish priest and his collaborators in the apostolate to reach out into the world, to renew contact with it, to work without ceasing for its restoration under Christ.

What is the extent of the parish's responsibility? Certainly the pastoral ministry should not restrict itself to those who already have some contact with the Church, to whom the priest ministers when they present themselves to him. Abbé Michonneau in his stimulating presentation of the ministry within his own parish graphically sketches the all-embracing scope of the parish as follows:

What about the other meaning of a "parish"?

The other concept consists in this. Having studied a map of the parish, or – better still – having made a walking tour of the whole place, we say to ourselves: Our parish is this entire territory: all those living inside this section are committed to our care, without any exception made because of nationality or immorality or hostility to the clergy. Nothing can free us from the obligation of caring for their souls. Hence all those who do not come to us, and whom we will never get to know unless we go to them: all those we meet – including Algerians and Chinese – they are all our parishioners. We have to say to ourselves, "We, their priests, have the care of their souls."

Our parish life should inform the life of all these people: the spiritual life of those who have any (and how can we tell if a spark is not still there, even in those who seem most distant?); their workaday life; their life at home, at rest. That life is made up of the very air they breathe, the things that occupy them, the joys and sorrows they have known, the influences which play upon them – the influence of the doctor who tends them, of the paper that interprets the world for them, of the leaders who direct them, of the public house at the street corner, of the theatre which sees them more often than the church does.

Our parish . . . we see it at noon, when the factory lets out its workers; at mid-afternoon, when the children get out of school; in the morning, when buyers line up outside the shop, in the evening when the suburban trains roll in with wave after wave of our people; at night, with the young fellows and girls on the corners.

This is our parish, and we must recognize that fact, for souls are at stake.

Does not every priest feel the same way?

In theory they do. In practise how many act according to the logic which such a theory demands?

We have not reached the point of revising the numbers given by our Lord in the famous parable; that is, we do not say that ninety-nine sheep have left the fold, and one faithful one remains. And yet, we remember a saying of one of our professors in the seminary: "We do not go after the lost sheep any more. We let them run off to the hills, these ninety-nine lost ones, while we argue about who is going to fondle the one that is left."

This comes about because we confuse in practise the Kingdom of God with our own kingdom — the advance of God's reign with our own influence over a flock. What does it matter if it is small, as long as we have it well in hand?[11]

Indeed, this is a radical conception of pastoral responsibility. But it is a viewpoint that differs in no particular from the all-inclusive concept of the parish which our present Holy Father has presented to the parish priests of Rome:

The former spiritual conditions of society have undergone a profound change. The priest, therefore, must adapt his ministry. He has two tasks to perform in his parish: one among the faithful, from whose ranks he will draw the leaders of Catholic Action; and one from among those who are far from all religious practise. For them, too, he will assume responsibility, and give them all the care and devotion of a good pastor.[12]

Solicitous about the present conditions of the Christian life [in Rome] we have exhorted you, as pastor of souls, not to restrict your zeal to those who already participate themselves in the life of the Church, but to seek out with no less earnestness the straying

souls who live far from her. As you know, they are exposed to great danger. They are not because of that lost irretrievably. Many, perhaps most, can still be won back and put on the right path. Everything depends on making contact with them. . . . Make it the principal object of your thoughts and the secret, as it were, of your apostolic and priestly labors to approach those who have become estranged from the Church and to live close to those who are burdened and oppressed.[13]

Many reading these words will dismiss them as not of like urgency for the Church in the United States, with its crowded churches and varied activities. Let all such remind themselves of the continual leakage from the Church in practically every parish and of the unconverted souls who live all around them. Everywhere, there are huge multitudes living within the confines of our parishes, but yet outside the Church. Among those who belong to the Church, there are very many who are not with her heart and soul. It is the wish of the Good Shepherd that all without a single exception hear His voice and come to know and love the truth. That must be the aim and norm of our pastoral ministry.

THE PERSONAL APOSTOLATE

Coming to a more practical consideration of the problem, let us outline in a tentative and general manner the line of development the pastoral ministry must follow in order to meet the situation which confronts it. Its efforts in this direction cannot be haphazard or occasional if the present crisis is to be resolved successfully. The pastoral ministry in its entirety must be recast along certain definite lines. First, and above all, it should be made much more direct and personal in its contact with souls. Together with this, it must be steeped in realism, taking full account of the various environmental factors that shape individuals and the entire community. In other words, it must know persons and things as they really are as a precondition for making them what they should be.

A *direct* apostolate is not new to the pastoral ministry. It is its very essence. But once a Christian mentality has been

induced into a community and a consequent way of life has been accepted as the pattern of conduct, even if not fully and faithfully adhered to, the pastoral ministry is ably supported and seconded by strong environmental forces. Individuals are influenced greatly for good by the social pressure of the group even though there be some strong personalities who rebel against it. In this situation the action of the pastoral ministry can afford to be more general and impersonal, reaching the group as a whole, and yet thereby exerting effective influence on the individual. Each individual will feel strongly the need of adapting himself to the imperatives the community imposes. The necessity of the direct, personal influence of the priest is thus considerably less, though for a deep and lasting conquest of a soul it can never be wholly dispensed with. At least each sacramental ministration must touch the individual soul to have lasting effect.

In our age, however, extended and increased direct, personal contact is absolutely essential, because so many are alienated from religion and its influence due to its increasing isolation from human affairs. A mentality and pattern of life are gaining ascendancy which make the supernatural, and even the spiritual, seem remote and more or less unreal. Even those who profess their acceptance of the spiritual as the basis of life tend to overlook or at least to minimize the implications of that profession. If and when they are touched by the spiritual, it will be because they have in a very real sense experienced a "conversion." Each one will have to become aware of the personal nature of the call which Christ makes to the individual soul and perceive clearly the indispensable necessity of a personal response. This is true not only of the convert and the repentant sinner, but even of the routine Catholic who is held to his duties in great part by convention or the habit of an early training. This is not the day for the Christian without deep roots. We have need of convinced and earnest militants without limit as to number or quality. They are needed in the secularized world of the present, and they are needed badly.

Only a direct, personal apostolate to as many individuals as possible who can be led not only to resist the world but to overcome its influence will save the day for the Church. The time has passed when souls could be won for Christ by being herded into groups. The number of people who are willing to be led as a mass from above is on the wane. We may regret the change. But let us not ignore it.

Spiritual leaders, as far apart in distance as Abbé Michonneau and Bishop Sheen, attest to the fact that the spiritual malaise of our age is the disorder within man's soul. Men are half conscious of the emptiness within them that follows upon the abandonment of God. They know they need something, and yet they reject God's dominion over them, which is the only source of true peace. Materialistic though they be, they will grasp at spiritual values which seem real and living. The apologetics that will convince them will not be from the textbook showing up fallacy and error. It must be that which is its own proof, which convinces because it gives something positive to one's personal life. As Abbé Michonneau puts it, the believer must show the nonbeliever what happened to him. From the personal conversion of one will conviction and love of the Christian way of life be generated in the other. That is the onus resting upon every apostle, be he priest or layman, to give testimony of a disinterested and supernatural love. The call to become a member of Christ is a personal one, and it entails a personal response.

Individual priests, even very many of them, have striven to make their apostolate personal and direct. Their zeal should be recognized and encouragement taken from their example. But it is not enough that some follow this pattern in their ministry. The pastoral ministry as a whole must be so organized. Frequent personal contact must become its dominant note. It is no exaggeration to say that at the present time the tone of the ministry is much more impersonal than personal. How much personal contact is there between the priest and the individual soul? How much more might there be? This

contact varies all the way from friendly greetings exchanged with everybody in the streets of the parish to taking the time to show a fatherly interest in the life and problems of anyone whom the priest has occasion to meet. It is the difference between waiting for people to come, whether it be to the sacristy or rectory, and going out to them and making the most of any opportunity that presents itself to know them better. There are even such things as the apostolate of the church door on Sunday morning and the apostolate of the sidewalk at all times. A personal ministry means going when possible to the homes of people and meeting them there, or, as has been done in some places, meeting families of the same block in the home of one of them. The watchful shepherd of souls seeks always to know and to be known.

To be fully effective more than the personal apostolate of the priest is necessary, especially in first contacts. There should be that of the lay apostle as well. More and more of the laity must be taught the value of personal contact with neighbor, fellow worker, friend, wherein soul meets soul.[14] Understanding, sympathetic interest, disinterested service — in a word Christian charity — will always break down indifference and suspicion, and even hostility. It is up to the priest to show the way and to lead his faithful, devoted laity to become aware of and concerned for the thousands around them who know little or nothing of Christ. This is the challenge voiced by Abbé Michonneau:

> We are not trying to patch up the ills of the world around us; we are trying to rebuild it completely. For that we need real militants who will fill their surroundings with the spirit of Christ, so that men and women will want to know and follow this Christ. We are not interested in gaining recruits for our church services, but we are passionately interested in gaining recruits for Christ. The creation of this new and revolutionary Christian atmosphere depends on the common efforts of each and every Christian. . . . Every man has his own little world to influence, to change, to christianize. This is what we must do as united individuals.[15]

THE INSTITUTIONAL APOSTOLATE

However widely and remotely the pastoral ministry may extend its personal contact, never should it regard its mission as thereby completed. A parish is a community of people in a given territory, souls who must be reached. But it is a community that is fully immersed in life, impacted by every prevailing social force. Even when it is supposed that individuals are being brought within the radius of the pastoral ministry, their constant submission to the play of other social influences is not to be overlooked. If it would be lastingly effective in its supernatural mission, the apostolate should take cognizance of all competitive forces. Man's sociality has its roots in his very being. The apostolate ignores this at its own peril. The parish, therefore, in a very real sense must be part of the community, sharing its life but also shaping its destiny. It can fulfill this role only by a concerted apostolate within all social institutions.

No one has better stated this problem and the only solution for it than Cardinal Saliége:

> Social pressure is an undeniable fact. Every day it makes itself felt more strongly. It operates in rectories, in rich homes, in working circles. No one escapes it. Robinson Crusoe's day is past.
>
> What is the job of Catholic Action? Unless I am mistaken, it is this: to modify social pressure, to direct it; to make it favorable to the spread of the Christian life; to let the Christian life create a climate, an atmosphere in which men can develop their human qualities, can lead a really human life, an atmosphere in which the Christian can breathe easily and stay a Christian. . . .
>
> Catholic Action cannot act unless it takes flesh in temporal institutions, the spirit incarnate in matter. Through these institutions, it creates a climate, it directs social pressure. It no longer affects the chance individual, the isolated individual, but the whole mass or at least the greater part of a given mass. Those who guide it are not cut off, they do not form a pious congregation; wherever God puts them they are sources of action, springs of initiative, creators of institutions. . . .
>
> In taking flesh, Catholic Action comes out of its dream and gets

into reality; into the social, the material, the economic and the temporal. It acts.[16]

The prime social factor confronting the apostolate today is its very antithesis, secularism. This is the curse of our age. Religion, accountability to God, the afterlife are either rejected outright as worthless superstitions or else they are deemed scarcely relevant to the practical concerns of life. Many adopt this viewpoint as the complete philosophy of their life. But the great majority are only infected with it. They profess some form of religious persuasion and a respect for God's dominion. But, in practice, they repeatedly think and act as if earthly well-being was the paramount consideration. They settle one problem after another on this basis, and they fail to see the inconsistency between their mode of conduct and their professed allegiance to God and His law.

All classes are under the spell of secularism. We could not say that Catholics as individuals are more free of it, though perhaps they succumb less quickly to its insidious influence. Wherever one discerns a diminishing concern about the one thing that is necessary and, by contrast, continual efforts to achieve earthly security or temporal advantage in one form or another, there secularism is gnawing away. There the kingdom of this world is challenging the dominion of the kingdom of heaven. The spirit of secularism not only has entered men's hearts and is shaping their personal lives, but what is most disastrous, it is permeating all social institutions. It is everywhere, in everything that the apostolate must reach and turn toward Christ. To be realistic in its approach, the pastoral ministry must recognize secularism as the principal barrier to its success. Secularism must be seen in all its ramifications and challenged everywhere by a strategy of penetration and active presence. The whole power of the Mystical Body, aided by the collaboration of all men of good will, must be pitted against it. Then there will be no doubt of the eventual result.

It is a fact that this wall is standing. It is a long and thick partition which divides into two closed camps the Church and the

City of men. The first priestly duty of our days is to appreciate this fact and look straight at the world. It is an anxious moment.[17]

A second social factor of which the pastoral ministry must take cognizance is a real, though, as far as our own country is concerned, not clearly defined stratification into social classes. By its own admission, American sociology has been tardy in devoting itself to the various phases of this problem.[18] Like the family skeleton that is kept in the closet, class distinctions are somewhat taboo, since they are taken to contravene democratic ideals. Yet initial studies reveal that American life is no exception to the universal formation of differentiated groups within the one national community, bound together by many predominating ties.[19] Similar living and working conditions, common needs and aspirations, prompt individuals and families to group together and to develop a uniform way of life. Traditionally, Catholic thought has recognized the existence of classes and the necessity of harmony among them. As the late Cardinal Maglione once wrote:

There can be no question for Catholic sociology of mistaking them or even of being in opposition to them or of suppressing them, but rather it has the duty to preserve and guide them. . . .[20]

Class is more a natural phenomenon than a voluntary creation, spontaneous rather than artificial. Unlike titled status or estate, class lacks legal recognition and definition. Accordingly its consequences are more subtle and harder to discern. Just because class differences are so deeply rooted, they cannot be ignored with impunity. Whenever the pastoral ministry opposes an attitude or tendency that class engenders, it will be sure to meet stubborn opposition. A case in point is the marked resistance to the social doctrines of the encyclicals among some unorganized white-collar workers, not to speak of the middle and professional classes.

Let us recognize that many changes have been occurring in American Catholic life. A generation ago, perhaps, our people were a relatively homogeneous unit. Now they are a

stratified group, even very often within the same parish. Economic advantage, social aspiration, educational opportunity leave their mark upon them as upon others. People should not be taken to be entirely similar, when they are not so. Some revisions in our pastoral approach have become imperative for success. To some extent the apostolate must be diversified according to social milieu, as the recent popes have urged:

> In order to be listened to, the apostle should not speak to the representatives of an abstract humanity belonging to all places, all times, all conditions, but to such and such a group of his fellows — at such a time, in such a place, at such a level of the social hierarchy. This is one of the golden rules outlined by the late lamented Pontiff, who was the vigorous promoter of Catholic Action and remains its unseen inspiration.

Until varying mentality and need are countered by an understanding apostolate, the pastoral ministry is not doing its utmost to dispose the human under its care to divine truth and grace.

Once the pastoral ministry begins to search into the realities of the social order in which it must fulfill its mission, soon it will come to recognize the existence and the influence of many varied social conditions. Thereby will it be saved from the danger of approaching men as if they were above and outside the conditions of earth. Above all, the pastoral ministry will not become inadequate for its mission simply because even good zealous men, long faithful in the service of the Lord, are failing to adapt themselves and their methods to a changing situation. To understand the cultural groups within a parish, their characteristics both favorable and unfavorable for the winning of souls, is indeed a mark of priestly genius and certainly more than a matter of human understanding. Not less difficult is a reorientation of the parish's whole ministry in the event a complete turnover of population occurs, especially when the newcomers are of another religion and even of quite a different race. To carry on with the old

methods, ministering merely to a remnant flock, is hardly a realistic, hardheaded apostolate. There is the case, too, of the parish of transients in a neighborhood that once was stable and residential. Pastoral responsibility is no less binding as regards the casual parishioner than the permanent. All that changes is the method of fulfilling it. Similarly, just because a parish is now made up of factories and industries when once it consisted almost entirely of homes does not mean that the apostolate should abdicate to the situation. Let it seek admittance in one way or another to every place in which Christ should reign. Let it open the doors of the church wide for everyone passing by to find grace and peace therein.

CONCLUSION

These are only some factors. Sociology has many more to report. But more especially it can direct investigation into varied social problems by means of its proved techniques. What is seen only in isolated cases is not understood as well as when seen with better perspective and with a keener understanding of underlying causes as a sociological condition. A study of mixed marriage or of alcoholism, for example, makes a far deeper impression and arouses more ready determination to meet the problem than the patient handling of single cases. A further advantage to organized research is that it can readily cross parish boundaries when the situation so warrants and it furnishes an enduring record for changing personnel. All that it demands is a concern to discover the true situation and the readiness to admit any further changes as they occur.

But it is not enough to know. There must be the yearning to change, to reconcile, to integrate. Here is where the apostle enters upon the scene. The very magnitude of the task confronting the apostolate, the highways and the byways it must enter, the depths to which it must plunge, make it imperative that the pastoral ministry have a lay ministry in a rightful collaboration. Secular life must be gained for Christ. Let us send the necessary missionaries out to do it.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER XI

1. *Menti Nostrae:* Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Pius XII to the Clergy of the Entire World (Washington: National Catholic Welfare Council, 1950), nn. 102–105.

2. "We know well, for We Ourself have seen and shared and esteem highly all their indefatigable efforts on behalf of the flock of Christ, their self-sacrifice and keenness in new endeavors to meet new necessities," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XIV (1922), 694, as translated in *The Pope and the People* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1937), p. 248.

3. "We are happy to voice Our paternal approval of the zealous pastoral activity manifested by so many bishops and priests who have with due prudence and caution been planning and applying new methods of apostolate more adapted to modern minds. But for the solution of our present problem all this effort is still inadequate," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXIX (1937), 98, as rendered in the official English text issued by the Vatican Polyglot Press and reprinted in *The Catholic Mind,* XXXV (1937), 167.

4. Excerpt from, "Lettre a Mgr. Swireskas et aux Evêques de Lithuanie, December 27, 1930," in *L'Action Catholique,* ed. E. Guerry (Paris: Desclee de Brouwer et Cie, 1936), p. 32. The present author's translation.

5. Letter addressed to the bishops of the Argentine, February 4, 1931, as translated in, Luigi Civardi, *Manual of Catholic Action* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1943), p. 261.

6. Address to the alumni of the Papal College of Anagni on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation, April 29, 1949.

7. *Menti Nostrae, op. cit.,* nn. 57, 119.

8. "Instructio Pastoralis ad Parochos Urbis et concionatores sacri temporis quadragesimalis: de Sacramentis," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXXVII (1945), 35. Author's translation.

9. "Motu Proprio: de Pontificio S. Eugenii Instituto," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XLI (1949), 165. Author's translation.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Revolution in a City Parish* (Oxford: Blackfriars, 1949), pp. 11–12.

12. As quoted in Robert Kothen, *The Priest and the Proletariat,* trans. Frank Maher (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1948), p. 11.

13. "Hortatio pastoralis ad parochos urbis et concionatores sacri temporis quadragesimalis," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXXVIII (1946), 185. Author's translation.

14. "That these whole classes of men may be brought back to Christ whom they have denied, we must recruit and train from among them, themselves, auxiliary soldiers of the Church who know them well and their minds and wishes and can reach their hearts with a tenderly brotherly love." *Quadragesimo anno, Acta Apostolicae Sedis,* XXIII (1931); translation from *Two Basic Social Encyclicals* (New York: Benziger Bros., 1943), p. 189.

15. *Op. cit.,* pp. 100–101.

16. "Action Catholique incarnée." Translation in the Brooklyn *Tablet,* Nov. 8, 1947.

17. Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard, *Priests in the Modern World,* trans. from the French (London: *New Life,* July/August, 1950), p. 51.

18. Robert S. Lynd, quoted in Richard Centers, *The Psychology of Social Classes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), pp. 8–9.

19. *Supra,* Chap. IX.

20. Letter to La Semaine Sociale, Bordeaux, France, July 11, 1939, as translated in *Principles of Peace,* ed. H. C. Koenig (Washington, D. C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1943), n. 1360.

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CHAPTER XII

THE MISSIONARY ROLE OF THE PARISH

by PAUL HANLY FURFEY

INTRODUCTION

THE thesis of this chapter is that under the circumstances which prevail in contemporary American society the missionary role of the parish is exceedingly important and deserves much more emphasis than it usually receives. The ordinary day-by-day religious life of Catholics is lived out in the parish, and naturally draws attention to its role in the preservation of the faith. But the parish also exists to spread the faith.

One may find a good many relevant suggestions in contemporary French parish life. The Church has suffered a great deal in France from the gradual alienation of the working class and the persecution of anticlerical governments. It has been a bitter experience, but it has taught its lesson. The French have learned, the hard way, that traditional methods are not always effective under modern conditions. They have been forced to reconsider the role of the parish in present circumstances. There has been no tendency to try to alter the essential role of the parish as defined by Canon Law, but in the area which lies around this central core of parish life there have been truly revolutionary developments. In the course of this chapter some of the possible lessons which we in America may learn from modern French parish life will be considered.[1]

THE PARISH AS A CENTER OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

It should be beyond dispute that a major orientation of parochial activity ought to be toward the conversion of non-Catholics. The spiritual welfare of these non-Catholics is, by Canon Law, a responsibility of the pastor.[2] The divine command, "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature,"[3] creates a duty which rests directly on the pastor, in so far as the non-Catholics living in his parish are concerned.

One may sometimes wonder whether the missionary role of the parish is taken seriously enough. The Catholic population of the United States lies somewhere between one fifth and one sixth of the total. In a parish of two thousand souls there will therefore be, on the average, some nine thousand non-Catholics living within the parochial limits. In planning the work of the parish what relative share of time and attention should be devoted to the two groups? How much of the parish energy should go to the care of the two thousand Catholics and how much to the conversion of the nine thousand non-Catholics? Of course it is impossible to define the proper division with mathematical precision; but it does seem safe to assert that the salvation of the nine thousand should be a major concern in parish planning.

Can we say that a parish is well organized, that its priests are fervent and its laity active, unless zeal for conversions is at a high pitch? Suppose that the parish has an impressive church building, a modern school, a comfortable rectory and convent. Suppose that all the parish societies are flourishing. Suppose that the priests are exemplary in their constant attention to the sick and the poor. Suppose that the spiritual life of the people is intense. Suppose, even, that the priests welcome with kindness and instruct with intelligence whatever prospective converts come to the rectory of their own accord. Can we say that this parish is completely fulfilling its role unless, in addition, there is a constant effort to go out

and reach non-Catholics in some planned, systematic way? The very fact that a large majority of the people living within the parochial limits are not members of the Church should be enough to constitute the parish as, in a sense, a missionary parish. The priests should look on themselves as missionaries. Their thinking should be missionary thinking.

When we read of the foreign missions we realize very clearly that the activity of the Church in these areas is oriented toward making conversions. We know, of course, that foreign missionaries also care for the spiritual welfare of those who are already Catholics, but we think of their work principally as the apostolic work of bringing non-Catholics into the Church. Why do we not apply the same thinking to ourselves? As long as the vast majority of our fellow citizens do not share our faith, should we not consider the United States as being, quite factually, a missionary country, and should we not keep the missionary viewpoint in mind when we come to define the role of the parish?[4]

The growth of the Church in the United States is, indeed, a legitimate cause for pride. The annual number of conversions has reached an impressive total, and it is increasing. The number for the year ending January 1, 1948, is 115,214; but this is a relatively small part of the net increase of 807,524 in the Catholic population over the preceding year.[5] One must infer that the growth of the Church in this country is due much more to natural population increase, the excess of births over deaths, than to success in making converts.[6] While the present rate of conversion is certainly encouraging, it must be greatly accelerated if we are to think realistically about "the conversion of America."[7]

There are sound reasons for suspecting that we are neglecting many opportunities for making converts. One is the frequent testimony of converts themselves that they received very little help or encouragement from Catholics before their conversion.[8] While the work of making converts is sometimes very difficult, it may also prove on occasion to be surprisingly

easy, as the following incident illustrates. In a certain Catholic college an old colored man was employed as doorkeeper. He had been at the job longer than anyone could remember, meeting Catholics constantly, yet he remained a non-Catholic. One day a priest at the college said to him rather casually, "Tom, wouldn't you like to join the Church?" His answer was immediate, "Yes, indeed, Father; I've just been waiting for someone to ask me." One wonders how many other non-Catholics, like Tom, are just waiting to be asked. The story illustrates the point that, while contact with Catholics may dispose a person to conversion, it may still be necessary for someone to take the initiative in extending an explicit invitation. How many souls are lost to the Church because we often neglect to take the initiative?

Father James J. Navaugh has suggested some of the reasons why Catholics are not more missionary-minded. There is the tendency to accept passively the status quo. There is the fear of arousing antagonism on the part of non-Catholics. There is the realization that Protestantism is crumbling and the consequent half-conscious feeling that former Protestants will enter the Church more or less automatically. Again, some who have made tentative efforts at a systematic apostolate have become discouraged at the lack of immediate results. Finally, lack of knowledge of the proper methods of procedure makes some hesitate to begin.[9]

Abbé Michonneau gives a more subtle reason, the influence of the *milieu paroissial,* that is, the influence of the congenial atmosphere of parish life which centers immediately around the church. Priests and people enjoy in common their participation in liturgical worship. They mingle at meetings of parish societies and various social events held under parish auspices. Under these circumstances, which prompt self-satisfaction and mutual admiration, it is easy to forget that the parish is more than the *milieu paroissial.* The non-Catholics and lax Catholics who desperately need the attention of priests and apostolic lay people may be forgotten. The attractive character of work

among fervent Catholics may become a temptation, and may distract attention from the apostolate where indifference and opposition are encountered and where the consolation of immediate results is often denied.[10]

THE QUESTION OF PARISH ACTIVITIES

A proposal to expand the apostolic work of the parish naturally invites the question, "How will the priest find time for this additional work?" American priests are busy as it is. There are not many laggards among them; the majority are enthusiastically occupied with their work and find that it fills their time pretty thoroughly. Is it realistic to ask that they take on still more activities? Abbé Michonneau faces the question frankly. His answer is that the existing activities of the parish must be re-examined and that all those which are less important than the work of the apostolate must be ruthlessly curtailed. The good may be the enemy of the best, and parish activities which are good in themselves may steal the priest's time and distract him from his missionary work which is more essential. Abbé Michonneau submits to a searching criticism the various parish activities — *oeuvres,* the French call them — and his words are applicable enough to American conditions to deserve a brief review here. He considers parish activities under four headings.[11]

1. *Recreational activities.* Here belong various sorts of clubs, summer camps, athletic teams, and the like. Abbé Michonneau is rather severe in his judgment of such activities. The chief objection is that they are not essentially religious; the priest is not ordained to become an athletic coach. One might argue that such things bridge the gap between clergy and laity; they establish contacts which the priest may follow up. This is true, but there are better ways of getting the same result. It is better if the priest makes his contacts while acting within his own proper sphere. Above all, Catholic Action brings priest and people together on a much higher plane. But do not clubs and recreational activities at least occupy children's time and

keep them out of mischief? Yes, but they may also take the children away from their homes; it would be better to educate parents to their responsibilities and encourage family recreation. Besides, it is practically impossible for the parish to compete with all the recreational facilities of a large city. Instead of trying to segregate our youth, let us encourage them to mingle with others and be apostles.

2. *Educative activities.* Study clubs and other activities of an educative character need not be judged so harshly; yet even here certain questions must be raised. There is some danger that these activities may foster the development of an elite whose members are more interested in their own self-development than in the good of their neighbors. Especially in a working-class parish there is some possibility that snobbishness may make its appearance. The intellectual work accomplished by a Jocist group is much more practical, much more closely tied up with the daily life of the members, than is the work of the average study club. Abbé Michonneau does not discuss the parochial school. Certainly no experienced priest would question its advantages. Yet may it not happen that the outstanding accomplishments of the parochial school may distract the priest's attention from the needs of those who lie outside its sphere?

3. *Charitable activities.* Parishes have traditionally been involved in a wide variety of charitable endeavors, ranging from conferences of the St. Vincent de Paul Society to more elaborate projects such as day nurseries. No one would dare to question the worth of these activities which bring the charity of Christ into our modern world in such practical ways. One may, however, question how far they should be the responsibility of the parochial clergy. Abbé Michonneau would apply ruthlessly the principle, "It is not desirable that we should forsake the word of God and serve at tables."[12] Let the priest turn over to lay organizations and to religious communities specialized for the purpose the responsibility of caring for the poor.

4. *Propaganda activities.* Under this heading belong the press, the cinema, and the theater. The press can be a great aid to missionary work. The priest should encourage the spread of Catholic literature in his parish. He should have his parish bulletin and supplement it with tracts and posters. He should not be afraid to take time to edit these properly and make them attractive. Parish motion pictures have great possibilities, but the number of suitable films is insufficient. Rather than run the risk of presenting unsatisfactory films, the priest might do better to omit parish motion pictures and encourage the laity to fight for decent pictures in the local movie theater. A parish dramatic group has propaganda possibilities, but it is time consuming and involves many difficulties.

Abbé Michonneau's ideas have not escaped criticism even in his own country, and, in any case, it would be dangerous to apply too literally the French experience to the United States. Yet perhaps it would not be going too far to assert that his criticisms should at least stimulate us to an examination of conscience. Do we American priests perhaps allow ourselves sometimes to be distracted from true priestly work by secular details which could be turned over to others or omitted entirely? We should not ask ourselves whether we are using our time *well* but whether we are using our time in the *best* way possible. Complaints are sometimes heard about a shortage of priests in this country. Is it a real shortage? There are missionary areas in which there is a really acute shortage of priests and in which, nevertheless, converts are flocking to the Church in extraordinary numbers. Why? Because the missionary priests know how to concentrate their time and energy on real missionary work.[13] Does not their experience perhaps hold a lesson for us?

THE ROLE OF A MILITANT LAITY

There is another way in which the missionary effectiveness of a parish may be multiplied, namely, by enlisting the laity for the work. One cannot listen to a discussion of French parish

life very long these days without hearing the word *militant.* A *militant* is more than a fervent Catholic; a *militant* is one who is not only fervent but apostolic. A Catholic who frequents the sacraments assiduously, who carefully avoids sin and schools himself in the virtues, who reads spiritual books and joins pious societies, who submits himself to spiritual direction, and does nothing beyond this is very praiseworthy, no doubt, but he is not yet a *militant.* To deserve this appelation he must be anxious to share what he has with others, he must be apostolic, he must have the missionary spirit.

In France the term is used most frequently of the more active members of *les mouvements spécialisés,* the "specialized movements," that is, organizations made up of members of the same social class or state of life who try to solve in a Christian spirit the problems peculiar to their condition. Some of these specialized movements, such as the Jocists, represent Catholic Action in the strictest sense. Others, like the *Mouvement Populaire des Familles,* are broader in scope. They accept members who are not practicing Catholics, but their spirit is derived from a solid nucleus of Catholic leadership. The apostolic work of the *militant* in such an organization has a very realistic basis. He presents the Catholic religion to his fellows, not as a series of generalized abstractions, but in its concrete application to the life which they share in common. *Militants* can make conquests for Christ in localities where the priest himself would never penetrate.

Militants come from all walks of life, they may differ greatly among themselves in temperament and ability, but they have certain qualities in common. For one thing, of course, they must be serious about their own religious life; for a person cannot conquer others for Christ unless he is himself deeply imbued with the Christian spirit.[14] *Militants* emphasize particularly the pursuit of that special type of holiness which is appropriate for their own state and condition of life. If the *militant* is a truck driver, then he strives to be a saintly truck driver. He seeks opportunities for becoming

holy within this particular job. He tries to analyze from a Christian standpoint all the moral issues which the job involves. Thus he is in a position to discuss the Catholic religion with his fellows in very concrete terms. Such a presentation can be exceedingly convincing because it is conveyed in language which his hearers can understand.

Militants have characteristically an insatiable thirst for a better and better knowledge of their religion; at their meetings and conventions a great deal of time is given to lectures, discussion, and study. This educational work, however, is seldom on an abstract level. The intellectual task which the *militant* faces is the task of applying the doctrine of the Church to his own concrete situation. When he studies the encyclicals he does not ask what they mean as abstract teaching; he asks what they mean as applied to the factory where he works, the home where he lives. He strives for insight into Catholic doctrine, for insight into his own situation, but above all for insight into the relation between the two.

The *militant* often shows a remarkable daring in his apostolic work. St. Paul exhorted Timothy to "be urgent in season, out of season."[15] It is not enough to preach the faith at seasonable times, times when it is conventional to do so. The faith must also be preached "out of season." It is by carrying out this advice of St. Paul that the *militant* often does his most effective work. He is not afraid to press the subject of religion wherever he may be, on the streetcar going to work, on the assembly line at the factory, on the street corner with his fellows. Because he is full of his subject, he makes conquests for Christ on unexpected occasions. His effectiveness as an apostle can be very great.[16]

Of course the *militants* do not take over the whole responsibility for making conversions; they work as auxiliaries of the priest and in close co-operation with him. As members of a Jocist group, they bring an interested companion to a meeting, introduce him to the chaplain, and give the chaplain the chief responsibility for his instruction from that point on.

They tell the parish priest about families which could profit from pastoral visits. Abbé Michonneau has found that the "home meeting" (*réunion à domicile*) is very effective. A family of *militants* invites its neighbors, relatives, and friends to visit at its home some evening and meet the parish priest who will discuss religious questions with them.[17] Thus in various ways fervent lay people can further the work of the apostolate, but always in close conjunction with the priest.

If the role of the American parish is to be interpreted increasingly in a missionary sense, it seems clear that a militant laity must play a very important part in the development. The parish clergy must not merely be missionaries themselves; they must also train the laity to be missionaries. The situation appears promising. Perhaps most priests will agree with the observation of the present writer that there has been a remarkable renascence of apostolic spirit among lay people in this country in recent years. The work of the Legion of Mary has opened many eyes to the possibilities of the lay apostolate.[18] Other societies, such as sodalities, can be infused with the same spirit. The future will perhaps be still more promising if we profit by the French experience and apply the principle that "like should evangelize like." We already have in our country some groups similar in spirit to the "specialized movements" of France. There are some Jocist groups, and the Cana movement has its specialized interest in the problems of the Christian family. All these organizations can be very important in the apostolate if they continue to develop. It would perhaps not be too much to assert that the success of the parish in its role as a missionary center will depend on the extent and character of lay participation more than on any other single factor.[19]

THE FACTOR OF SOCIAL CLASS

The trend of recent sociological research has been to show that the class structure of American society plays a very much more important role in our group life than the average

person realizes. It has been shown that in the average city some half-dozen social classes are distinguishable whose members are drawn together by the consciousness of a common status and common attitudes and by a more or less latent opposition to the members of other classes. Membership in a certain class depends largely on money, but also on family background, community influence, personal qualities, and other factors. An individual's class position profoundly influences all aspects of his life. The various classes tend to differ in their etiquette, dress, amusements, family structure, and in many other ways. The more the question is studied, the more clearly does the importance of class control stand out in all the various departments of life in the community.

It has been shown that social class influences religious activities also. Upper-class people tend to join certain churches; and lower-class people, to join others.[20] A person of low class status is made to feel awkward and out of place when he attends an upper-class church. In "Middletown" the Lynds found that "in certain prominent business-class churches girls' Sunday-school classes, led by socially prominent women, have become social sifting devices for the tightly competitive girls' club life in high school."[21] Hollingshead found that class influenced the religious activities of "Elmtown" profoundly; for example, he has reported the complete failure of a Methodist minister to merge two girls' clubs in his church into one because the clubs represented different social strata and the upper-class girls revolted against the merger.[22] McConnell points out that the function of Protestant churches as centers of social activities tends to loom rather large in comparison with their function as a center of worship and therefore the class position of an individual looms correspondingly large in relation to his acceptability as a member.[23]

Most of the published research on the relation of social class to religious life has dealt with Protestant churches; but there is no reason to doubt that the same phenomena recur, at least to some extent, in Catholic churches as well. The

present writer has been privileged to follow very closely the apostolic work of some seminarians among people of the very lowest social class of a large city. The people have been very receptive and there has been a gratifying number of conversions among non-Catholics, while lapsed Catholics have returned to their duties. These people object very strongly, however, to attendance at their parish church. Although it is by no means an upper-class parish, they feel definitely out of place there in their shabby clothes. With the approval of the parish, the seminarians therefore have arranged to have Sunday Mass celebrated for the benefit of their converts in a public hall at some distance from the parish church. The arrangement has worked very well indeed. In the meantime an effort is being made to integrate these people into the life of their parish in spite of their consciousness of class status.

American priests are beginning to realize quite clearly that race discrimination is often a bar to the conversion of the Negro in this country. Negroes are indignant when they are segregated in the rear pews of a white church or otherwise made to feel that they are unwelcome. Probably few priests realize that social class as well as race can act as a barrier. The poor man who enters an upper-class Catholic church may feel as awkward and embarrassed as a Negro who enters a white church. Class discrimination can be a bar to conversion in precisely the same way as race discrimination. If the missionary efforts of the parish are to succeed, class barriers must by all means be avoided.

The writer knows of no sociological studies of the class structure of French parishes; but French priests are very conscious of the matter from their everyday experience. There is certainly a very widespread opposition to the Church among the working classes in France, and this opposition has a definite class basis. The situation is not the same as it is in the United States. Here the workingman feels discrimination in certain individual parishes; there he feels that the Church as a whole is out of sympathy with him. The two

situations have enough in common, however, to make the thought and experience of French priests interesting to us.

Many French priests feel that if they are to labor successfully in a working-class parish a certain *déclassement,* a voluntary renunciation of social class, is necessary. To be successful among proletarians a priest must adopt, not only their level of living, but even their speech, their manners, and their culture.[24] The most radical application of this idea is made by the priest-workers who dress like workingmen, take jobs in factories, live in working-class dwellings, allow themselves to be called by their first names, and, in general, conform closely to the proletarian way of life. Priest-workers do not intend to keep their jobs permanently. They work perhaps only for a few months, or perhaps for a couple of years, after which they return to full-time priestly ministry. Last summer the writer visited a shack — it was nothing but a shack — where three priest-workers were living in a proletarian suburb of Paris. There can be no doubt that they shared the life of the poor in a very literal sense. To talk to a priest-worker is an experience not easy to forget. They have a very deep and contagious enthusiasm which is most impressive.

The technique of the priest-workers is, of course, extreme. Even in France it is permitted by the hierarchy only as an experiment, and not all qualified observers are favorably impressed. Probably there is hardly anyone who would advocate it for the United States. Yet it does have its lesson for us. The work of the parish clergy cannot be effective, here or elsewhere, if there is a class barrier between priest and people. If the level of material comfort in the rectory is very conspicuously above the parish average, if there is even a trace of snobbery in the priests' attitude toward poorer parishioners, if upper-class members of the parish are consistently singled out for favors, it is inevitable that some will be hurt and alienated. The danger is as old as New Testament times. It might be well for some of us to read the second chapter of St. James and examine our consciences!

Closely related to the problem of class consciousness is the problem of money. The priest who is conspicuously detached from material things is likely to be very effective in his apostolic work, while the suspicion that a priest overvalues money quickly alienates people from him. In France the issue is very tense. In the working class there is a stubborn belief that the activity of the Church is essentially a business. As the Abbé Michonneau says, "To the worker, we are carrying on a trade, apparently a profitable one."[25] The suspicion that priests are too money-minded has certainly not gone to such lengths in the United States, and yet some suspicion does exist here and there, as anyone who keeps close contact with the people will realize. If the parish is to be effective in its missionary role, the priest must not be too demanding in his efforts to raise money, he must scrupulously avoid anything that savors even remotely of commercialism, and, above all, he must be conspicuously unselfish in the use of his own personal funds.[26]

THE LITURGY AND THE APOSTOLATE

Besides being the corporate prayer of the Church and the vehicle of the sacraments, the liturgy has great educative value. It schools the people in the great mysteries of the faith and makes them familiar with the outstanding saints, the heroes and heroines of the Christian life. Not everyone, however, is able to grasp the profound meaning of the liturgy and to appreciate its full beauty. It requires some thought and planning to make the liturgy properly intelligible to the people. This is particularly true in a parish imbued with the missionary spirit where prospective converts and new converts are present in the congregation. In such a parish if the liturgy is so presented that it is as understandable as possible, it can become a potent method of religious education and have enormous value as an aid to the apostolate.

The first essential, of course, is that the sacred ceremonies should be carried out with dignity and exact attention to the

rubrics. If the priest celebrates Mass hurriedly and carelessly, if a badly trained choir sings inappropriate music, if the sanctuary is unkempt and not scrupulously clean, few will be edified. A prospective convert, dropping into such a church, will receive a poor impression. On the other hand, if the whole atmosphere of the church and the attitudes of the priest and people express a devout seriousness, the prospective convert will perhaps catch something of the same spirit. He will realize that the sacred ceremonies are very precious to Catholics and his interest will be aroused.

Certain well-known methods of making the liturgy more intelligible are already being widely used in this country. A gratifying number of Catholics habitually follow the Mass in vernacular missals. The dialogue Mass is no longer a novelty and it has proved to be an excellent device for securing the more active participation of the congregation. An increasing literature is available to explain the spirit of the liturgy to those who are interested.[27] The laity is showing also a renewed interest in the Divine Office. One finds lay groups reciting or singing Compline regularly at their meetings or at least on special occasions while not a few have adopted the custom of reciting the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin privately. All these things are signs of a new appreciation of the liturgy by the laity.

Probably many of us have forgotten that the Council of Trent ordered pastors and others having the care of souls to explain frequently during Mass, personally or by others, some of the sacred texts and something of the mystery of the Holy Sacrifice, especially on Sundays and feasts.[28] We ought to take this mandate more seriously. It is an excellent means for reaching the ordinary Catholic. Perhaps the principal weakness of the liturgical movement as it now exists in this country lies in the fact that it has reached principally the educated laity. If priests would regularly explain the liturgy to their people during Mass, they would reach a much wider group.[29]

For the average Catholic the use of Latin in the liturgy

is an obstacle to full understanding. Of course he may follow the liturgy in translation by using a vernacular missal or similar book. Some, however, have felt that this is not enough and have favored the use of the vernacular in the liturgy itself. In England there exists an English Liturgy Society, and an American equivalent, The Vernacular Society has recently been organized. In his encyclical *Mediator Dei* Pope Pius XII censured those who had presumed to use the vernacular in the liturgy without proper permission and called attention to the value of the world-wide use of Latin as a striking sign of the unity of the Church. However, he left the door open for a moderate use of the vernacular with, of course, the necessary permission.[30]

Permissions to celebrate some part of the liturgy in the vernacular have been given on occasion. Last summer the writer assisted at a Mass celebrated in French, except for the Canon (*Sanctus* to *Pater Noster* exclusive) and some of the Offertory prayers. The Mass was celebrated by a priest of the *Mission de France* in a private house for the benefit of a group of workingmen at about eight o'clock in the evening. The French translation used was rather free and the whole ceremony had an atmosphere of informality and intimacy. At one point the celebrant interrupted the Mass to explain one of the texts of the proper of the day. After the Gospel, instead of a formal sermon, there was a free discussion between priest and people with questions and answers. Probably few would advocate the use of just such methods in the United States. Yet the fact that they are allowed occasionally does underscore the desire of the Church to make the liturgy intelligible to the people. We can at least imitate the zeal shown by the priests of the *Mission de France* in their desire to make the liturgy as understandable as possible to their people, even if we may use different methods.

Although innovations may not be introduced into the liturgy itself without extraordinary permissions, we have a somewhat freer hand in what the French call *la para-liturgie*.

This term refers to ceremonies which are not strictly part of the liturgy, but which are liturgical in spirit and which are carried out in the church or in close connection with it. It would probably be correct to classify as "paraliturgical" such ceremonies as a May procession or the Three Hours on Good Friday. Some French priests have seen in the further development of such ceremonies an excellent means of popular religious education. The Abbé Michonneau, for example, has composed special ceremonies of a paraliturgical character for Christmas and Easter as well as didactic ceremonies centering around the missions, the apostolate, baptism, the Gospels, and so on.[31] The development of paraliturgical functions must, of course, be characterized by prudence and good taste and must be subject to the regulation of the bishop. However, under proper precautions, it could well be a very great aid to the apostolate.

CONCLUSION

This brief review of the role of the parish in its missionary aspects has, one may hope, brought home one important point. The conversion of America is a problem which has no one, simple solution. It can be accomplished only by an intelligent combination of a large number of different techniques which experience and a Catholic zeal for the salvation of souls may suggest. The particular methods to be used will vary with the circumstances of time and place. To pick just those which are best adapted to present American conditions requires insight and intelligent planning. Yet, though some of the methods may appear strange, and even startling, they must all be an expression of one old and traditional spirit, the thirst for souls which our Lord communicated to His Church.

FOOTNOTES – CHAPTER XII

1. See H. Godin and Y. Daniel, *La France, pays de mission?* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1943); H. Ch. Chéry, *Communauté paroissiale et liturgie; Notre-Dame Saint Alban* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1947); and G. Michonneau, *Paroisse, communauté missionaire* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1945). Abbé Michonneau's book

has been translated under the title *Revolution in a City Parish* (Oxford: Blackfriars, 1949), but references herein will be to the French edition.

2. Ordinarii locorum et parochi acatholicos, in suis dioecesibus et paroeciis degentes, commendatos sibi in Domino habeant." Canon 1350. James J. Navaugh, "The Pastor and Non-Catholics," *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CXVIII (1948), 241–247, discusses this obligation.

3. Mark 16:15.

4. Paul H. Furfey, "Is Ours a Missionary Country?" *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CXX (1949), 8–18.

5. *The Official Catholic Directory, 1948* (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1948), table following p. 1360.

6. It seems clear that the fertility of Catholics averages higher than that of others. The question, however, is quite complicated. For a very competent brief review of the matter, see Bernard G. Mulvaney, C.S.V., "How Catholics and Non-Catholics Differ in Fertility," *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* VII (1946), 124–127.

7. John A. O'Brien, "Enlisting Our Laity for Convert Work," *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CXX (1949), 388–397, complains of the "snail-like pace" at which the work of conversion is proceeding and demands that the annual number of converts be raised "well beyond the million mark."

8. A typical instance is given in, James G. Keller, "Reaching the Hundred Million," *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* CXVII (1947), 336, where a convert is quoted as saying, "One thing I cannot understand is why Catholics in general do so little to share their vital message from God with those who are starving for it. I had to push my own way into the Church," p. 336.

9. Navaugh, *op. cit.*

10. Michonneau, *op. cit.,* pp. 51–62, and *passim.*

11. *Ibid.,* pp. 103–172.

12. Acts 6:2.

13. A missionary priest from the Congo made a great impression on Abbé Godin when he boasted of the effectiveness of the missionaries as compared with the home clergy. "We might increase tenfold the number of our priests; we might have an impressive budget. If we were to use your methods, we would come to the same result as you. The territory gained would be maintained with great difficulty and little by little *we would lose ground like you.*" Godin-Daniel, *op. cit.,* p. 84.

14. Godin and Daniel note, however, that a new convert may become apostolic even before he has fully reformed his own life. They call such individuals *militants intermédiaires* and give examples like the following: "Jeannette, in the course of a flirtation, conquered George for Christ. George makes rapid progress and becomes too serious for Jeannette, who recommences with another." "In the course of their black-market activities together, Leo conquered for Christ in a profound manner Jules and Andrew; you may be sure that when the section wants to have a little celebration, nothing is lacking." *Op. cit.,* pp. 101–102.

15. 2 Tim. 4:2.

16. The best material on the work of *militants* and the theory behind it is

to be found in the standard works on Catholic Action, such as, Luigi Civardi, *A Manual of Catholic Action* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1943). A very simple introduction is, Canon Tiberghien and Louis J. Putz, *Apostles of the Front Lines* (South Bend: The Apostolate Press, 1944). See, also, Fernand Lelotte, *Pour réaliser l'Action Catholique* (Paris: Casterman, 1937), and R. Fournier, *La théologie de l'Action Catholique* (Montreal: Granger Frères, 1940).

17. Michonneau, *op. cit.*, pp. 234–239, describes a typical meeting of this sort.

18. Concilium Legionis Mariae, *The Official Handbook of the Legion of Mary* (n.p.: Concilium Legionis Mariae, 1944).

19. The remarks of O'Brien, *op. cit.*, are very much to the point.

20. W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), pp. 356–359, give an interesting analysis of the class membership of the various churches in "Yankee City."

21. Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown in Transition* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1937), p. 306.

22. August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1949), pp. 254–255. The whole of Chapter 10, "Religion and Religious Behavior," from which this incident is taken is worth reading.

23. John W. McConnell, *The Evolution of Social Classes* (Washington: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), pp. 171–172.

24. The late Cardinal Suhard protested against certain exaggerations of this idea in his preface to Michonneau, *op. cit.* See especially pp. 12–13.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 303. See the whole startlingly frank discussion of the "bruit d'argent autor de l'autel," pp. 301–332.

26. The successful efforts of the Abbé Remillieux at the parish of Notre-Dame Saint Alban on the outskirts of Lyons to avoid the slightest suspicion of money-mindedness have attracted wide attention in France. See Chéry, *op. cit.*, pp. 21–43. The good priest was deeply touched at the compliment paid him when he was elected vice-president of the *Comité de Libération* of his quarter in 1944 and was told in explanation of the choice, "Vous au moins, vous avez vaincu l'argent." I shall never forget the gusto with which he recounted the incident to me when I visited his parish.

27. Martin B. Hellriegel, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* (St. Louis: Pio Decimo Press, 1944), is an excellent example of this type of literature. The work of Msgr. Hellriegel in his St. Louis parish is outstanding.

28. "Mandat sancta Synodus pastoribus et singulis curam animarum gerentibus, ut frequenter inter Missarum celebrationem vel per se vel per alios, ex his, quae in Missa leguntur, aliquid exponant atque inter cetera sanctissimi huius sacrificii mysterium aliquod declarant, diebus praesertim Dominicis et festis." *Conc. Trid.*, Sess. 22, Cap. 8, *D-B*, 916.

29. The Abbé Remillieux does this very effectively at his parish on the outskirts of Lyons, as the present writer can testify. See Chéry, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–66. Chéry's whole volume is well worth reading as a description of a parish deeply imbued with the liturgical spirit.

30. For the passage in question, see *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXIX (1947), 514–545.

31. *Op. cit.*, pp. 78–85.

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APPENDIX A

PARISH RESEARCH IN OTHER COUNTRIES

CANADA

by JEAN C. FALARDEAU

IN 1941, according to the national census, Roman Catholics comprised 43.3 per cent of the total Canadian population. Almost 60 per cent of all Catholics lived in Quebec where the population is 86 per cent Catholic and 80.8 per cent French-speaking. There has been no significant study of the social or parochial organization of Catholics in Canada outside Quebec. The scientific literature on religious life in non-French-speaking Canada is restricted to social historical accounts of frontier unrest, the genesis of reform religions, and the growth of sects as well as the gradual establishment and institutionalization of Protestant denominations. S. D. Clark's *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948) provides an example. A survey of social research on the Catholic parish in Canada must therefore be devoted exclusively to studies in French-speaking Canada.

Studies of the traditional French-Canadian parish. From the origin of New France, around the middle of the seventeenth century, down to the present time, French Canadians have been Catholic and the structure of their originally peasant society has, to a great extent, been determined by the institutionalizing patterns of the Church. Accordingly, an interest in research on the parish can be traced back to the very first general historical essays on French Canada. It was natural that these should deal with the ecclesiastical organization of the

local society, and therefore ultimately with the parish. The studies in which sociologists can find valuable data or analyses of some aspects of parochial organization fall into six main categories.

In the first place, there are monographs describing some of the early communities established by the French pioneers at the beginning of the colony. To this category belong such worthy contributions as Abbé Henri-R. Casgrain's *Une paroisse canadienne au XVIIe siècle* (Québec: L. Brousseau, 1880) and J. Edmond Roy's *Histoire de la seigneurie de Lauzon,* 5 vols. (Levis: privately printed, 1897–1904).

Of broader scope and more general interest are histories of the Church at various periods, and economic and social studies of the original settlement pattern and later phases of colonization in French Canada. The most informative works at this level are Abbé Auguste Gosselin's painstaking history of the Church in French Canada, *La Mission du Canada avant Mgr de Laval, 1615–1659* (Evreux: Eure, 1909); *Vie de Mgr de Laval* (Québec: Demers et Frère, 1890); *L'Eglise du Canada depuis Mgr de Laval jusqu'à la cônquete,* 3 vols. (Québec: Laflamme et Proulx, 1911–1914); *L'Eglise du Canada après la conquéte, 1775–1789* (Québec: Laflamme, 1917); Gustave Lanctôt's scholarly studies of the political status of the early Canadian Church, *Situation politique de l'Eglise canadienne: Servitudes de l'Eglise sous le régime francais* (Montréal: G. Ducharme, 1942); and of the formal and informal organization of rural municipal government in French Canada, "La participation du peuple dans le gouvernement de la Nouvelle-France," *Revue Trimestrielle Canadienne,* XV (1929), 225–239; "Le régime municipal en Nouvelle-France," *Culture,* IX (1948), 255–283; and even William B. Munro's authoritative *The Seignorial System in Canada: a study in French Colonial Policy* ("Harvard Historical Studies," XIII [New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907]). For a thorough report of colonization trends and of the successive geographical distribution of parochial communities one may still consult with interest Abbé

Ivanhoë Caron's "Colonization in the province of Quebec under French domination, 1608–1760," *Statistical Year-Book, Province of Quebec, 1915* (Québec: Bureau of Statistics, 1915), pp. 17–101, while the Reverend Gonzalve Poulin, O.F.M., has contributed the most accurate and the most sociologically oriented report of the changes in the juridical and social structure of the French-Canadian parish in his "L'Evolution historico-juridique de l'institution paroissiale au Canada francais," *Nos Cahiers* (Montréal: Studium franciscain, I [1936], 144–155, 165–186, 298–315; II [1937], 97–122, 203–217).

The research area that has attracted the greatest number of semiprofessional writers on the parish is that of local history. There are between four and five hundred monographs on rural and urban parish communities in Quebec of which one finds the impressive list in Antoine Roy's "Bibliographie des Monographies et Histoires de Paroisses," *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la province de Québec pour 1937–1938* (Québec: R. Paradis, 1938), pp. 254–364. Whereas some of these local histories show true sociological insight, most of them follow a more or less stereotyped pattern which does not reach beyond the superficial and anecdotal. If critically used, they provide the sociologist with indispensable raw data from which comparative studies of French-Canadian parishes can be made. Such generalizations have been attempted in writings of a fourth category which could be labeled the rhetorical or patriotic. In the most sober of these, such as Pierre G. Roy's "La paroisse et l'habitant canadien sous le régime francais," *Catholic Historical Review,* XVIII (1933), 472–491; Abbé Philémon Desmarais' "La paroisse facteur d'économie," *Revue trimestrielle Canadienne,* XXIV (1938), 309–327; Mgr. M. Landrieux' *La paroisse canadienne dans la province de Québec* (Dumois par Ouges, 1926); or the two brilliant essays of the Rev. M. A. Lamarche, O.P., "La paroisse, gardienne de la vie sociale," and "La paroisse, gardienne de la vie agricole," *Etudes et Discours* (Montréal: A. Menard, 1929), Chaps. V, VI, one finds a clear formulation of the historical function of

the parish as an integrating unit of community life as well as a "rampart" for the religious and cultural survival of French Canadians in North America.

The body of laws and regulations which governed the parochial organization of New France consisted of the prevailing canonical laws of the Catholic Church and of the Custom of Paris. It was automatically abrogated by the British conquest; but parts of it were later incorporated into various laws, and eventually developed into what is now an elaborate Parochial Code, supported and supplemented by the present Canon Law, by the Quebec Civil Code, and more particularly by special legislation. Of considerable interest to sociologists are the numerous studies in which, since about the middle of the past century, jurists have investigated the legal structure of the parish. The most noteworthy of these juridical essays either state the principles and the modalities of Church-State relations in French Canada, such as Mgr. L. A. Paquet's *L'organisation religieuse et le pouvoir civil* ("Droit public de l'Eglise," II; 2 ed.; Québec: Laflamme, 1920); or constitute general exegetical treatises of existing parochial legislation in Quebec, such as J. U. Beaudry's *Code des curés, marguilliers et paroissiens* (Montréal: Presses de la Minerve, 1870), Edmond Lareau's *Histoire du droit canadien,* 2 vols. (Montréal: A. Périard, 1888–1889), S. Pagnuelo's *Liberté religieuse au Canada* (Montréal: C. O. Beauchemin et Valois, 1872), P. B. Mignault's *Le Droit Paroissial* (Montréal: C. O. Beauchemin et Fils, 1893), J. F. Pouliot's *Traité de droit fabricien et paroissial* (Montréal: Wilson et Lafleur, 1936); or concern themselves with the canonical legal status of the parish considered as a unit of the Church, such as Mgr. Paul Bernier's *De patrimonio paroeciali* (Québec: privately printed, 1938); or, finally, suggest the broader legal principles in the light of which canonists and civil lawyers may restate a juridically more meaningful definition of the parish, such as Michel G. Giroux' "La situation juridique de l'Eglise catholique dans la province de Québec," *Revue du Notariat* (Oct.–Nov., 1945), and L. P. Pigeon's "Legis-

lation civile des paroisses," *Revue du Barreau* (Feb., 1949).

Only two studies actually constitute contributions to social research on the parish. The French-Canadian pioneer sociologist, Léon Gérin, provided the first systematic investigation of the parish as the basic unit of social organization in rural Quebec in his admirable monograph on "L'Habitant de Saint-Justin," *Mémoires de la Société royale du Canada,* 2e série, IV (1898), 139–216. His *Le type économique et social des Canadiens* (Montréal: Editions de l'Action canadienne-française, 1938) was methodologically inspired by the frame of reference and concepts of LePlay and the "Ecole de la Science sociale." Gérin minutely analyzed the parish as a community, the elements of which were independent, landowning, socially equal families. Kinship cohesion, neighborhood solidarity, and parish consciousness were found to be the intimately connected factors of social integration. The foremost leader was the *curé* who dominated the submissive local society. More recently, an American anthropologist, Horace Miner, also investigating the Quebec rural parish in his *St. Denis, A French-Canadian Parish* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938), has carried Gérin's analysis many steps further by pointing out in more detail the extent to which the parish in its traditional form depends upon the ethnic and class homogeneity of its parishioners. The frame of reference used in this study is that of cultural anthropology, and the parish community is viewed as a closed, self-sufficient, local society of an intermediary type between the social segment and the social organ.

From these two studies as well as from the diverse sources mentioned previously, it is possible to construct the following synthesis of the main features of the traditional parish in Quebec. As has been pointed out repeatedly — see Jean C. Falardeau, *Paroisses de France et de Nouvelle-France au XVIIe siècle* ("Cahiers de la Faculté des Sciences sociales de Laval"; Québec, 1943) — the French-Canadian protoparish reproduced the metropolitan model of the mid-seventeenth-century rural parish in France, with some changes determined either by the

geographical environment or by the first bishop of Quebec, Mgr. de Laval. Seignorial estates were established in the colony from the first but, due to the absenteeism of a great number of the seigneurs of New France, the parish became the significant frame of social life. Whereas there had developed in rural France an elaborate system of local municipal organization parallel to the parochial structure, there was no system of municipal government in New France. The spiritual leader of the community, the *curé,* who, unlike his colleague in France, was *not* appointed permanently to the same village, but "movable" according to the bishop's will, took over many responsibilities of municipal leadership and became the secular as well as the religious leader of the local group committed to his care. He was the civil functionary responsible for the registration of the civil records; and, since there was no standardized school system during the whole of the French regime, he, in most cases, took the initiative in having a school built in his parish and in hiring and supervising the teachers. After the British conquest, when municipal units were created and when school municipalities were established, their boundaries were made to coincide with those of existing territorial parishes. The parochial pastor was assisted in his administration of the parish by the "board of wardens" (*conseil de fabrique*) which assumed the character of a substitute organ of local government but always remained submissive to the decisive authority and control of the pastor. The role of faithful parishioner totally absorbed that of citizen. As Gérin and Miner have pointed out, the whole social life of the rural *habitant,* until very recently, was completely motivated by his participation in a parochially defined religious system of action. The adhesion of all to the Church's religious and social canons, as transmitted by the parish ministers, affected the definition of correct social behavior, the size, the organization, and the life cycle of families, the yearly round of activities, and the life orientation of individuals.

Studies of the changing parish in contemporary cities. There

has been, of late, a revival of interest in historical and juridical studies of the parish in Canada, stimulated by both the French and English sections of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association (*Société Canadienne d'Histoire de l'Eglise*), and evidenced in their annual reports since their foundation in 1933 (see, in particular, *Rapport 1947–48:* M. l'abbé R. Lemelin, "L'Erection des paroisses au Canada, sous le régime francais," pp. 65–72; L. P. Audet, "La paroisse et l'éducation élémentaire, 1608–1867," pp. 101–124). Mention can also be made of a great number of studies prepared as theses at the School of Higher Commercial Studies in Montreal (*Ecole des Hautes Commerciales*) which, although they seldom bear specifically on the parish, provide valuable data on the geographic, demographic, and economic structure of many regions and communities of contemporary Quebec. See *Etudes Economiques,* 7 vols. (Montréal: Beauchemin, 1931–1937).

But the significant research trends and developments of the past two decades have been toward the study of what becomes of the French-Canadian parish as a territorial and social unit in growing industrial towns. One man greatly responsible for this reorientation is a former professor at McGill University in Montreal, now at the University of Chicago, Everett C. Hughes, whose *French Canada in Transition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943) is already a classic on social change in contemporary Quebec. See also his "French-Canadian Communities," in the *Bulletin of the Society for Social Research* (Chicago; June, 1938). In a rapidly industrialized small town like that analyzed by Hughes, each parish is not a community by itself but a segment of a single community. The Church, in this changing milieu, attempts to adjust parochial organization to the exigencies of city life. There is, within each parish, a greater division of labor among the priests and increased routinization of religious services. The parish has to surround itself with subsidiary organizations which deal with people along class lines. Church-centered associations organized in terms of sex, age, and social

condition flourish, but absorb only one part of the people's interests which are defined in terms of occupational ambition, social mobility, and other secular orientations. In the same vein, although less scholarly, are a few theses written by McGill University students who have endeavored to ascertain the degree and the forms of structural change which parochial organization undergoes in a metropolitan center like Montreal, or in urban communities of various types. Good examples are S. G. Garland's "The Church in the Changing City" (unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1929), and Pearl J. Lieff's "The Urbanization of the French-Canadian Parish" (unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1940).

Hughes was also instrumental in helping to organize, in 1943, a Center of Social Research in the Faculty of Social Sciences at Laval University in Quebec City, where he had been a visiting professor the year before. A thought-provoking memorandum which he published then, *Programme de recherches sociales pour le Québec* ("Cahiers de l'Ecole des Sciences sociales"; Québec, 1943) emphasized the urgency of empirical studies of French-Canadian society and outlined the broad problem areas on which students should first concentrate their attention. One such area which Hughes pertinently suggested as fundamental was the parish – see Jean C. Falardeau, "Problems and First Experiments of Social Research in Quebec," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science,* X (1944), 365–371. As a result of his original influence and under the guidance of this research center, a number of monographs on local communities were prepared by students. These studies can be more properly characterized as social surveys than as systematic studies; yet, many of them constitute valuable structural-functional analyses of contemporary parochial communities (see René Croteau, "Saint-Antoine-de-Tilly," Thèse pour la maîtrise en sciences sociales, Université Laval, 1946; Lomer Brisson, "La paroisse de Saint-Sauveur de Québec au service du peuple," 1947). For the past three years, the collective field research required of first-year students as

a training supplement to a course on social research has consisted in a survey of one of the lower-town parishes in Quebec City (see the mimeographed reports of the center: "Survey de la ville de Québec-Ouest," 1947; "Survey de la paroisse de Notre-Dame-de-Pitié," 1948; "Survey de la paroisse de Saint-Malo," 1949). These surveys are descriptive accounts of the history and of the present ecological pattern of each of the parishes. They report on the population structure, the social and economic status of a representative sample of families, the school problems, the associational pattern and membership, and, finally, the religious, welfare, and recreational activities linked with, or officially sponsored by, the parish. The data gathered in the course of these surveys is being used for comparative purposes in a more intensive study of a working-class parish, in Quebec City. This is a long-range student research project of the Department of Sociology.

It should be appropriate to conclude this sketchy inventory with a few words concerning the main assumption on which this project is organized. In most of the monographs previously mentioned, the concept of the parish applies indiscriminately to an ecclesiastical structure, a type of social organization, an ecological unit, or a local social group. In the present work an attempt is made to treat the parish as a social institution. The significance of this approach is outlined in Jean C. Falardeau, "The Parish as an Institutional Type," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science,* XV (1949).

The parish can fulfill its function ideally where it is superimposed upon an isolated community whose whole population not only is Catholic but can be easily held, without outside interference, under the complete control of the Church ministers. In a city, the parish church remains the locus of religious services, but the pattern of parochial relationships assumes new characteristics. The more secular-minded urbanite remains satisfied with a minimum of religious practice; the community to which he feels bound is not the parochial group but the whole urban community. He ranks parochial buildings,

as well as their supporting territories, in terms of nonreligious criteria, and he chooses his center of worship in this perspective. The parochial churches tend to become enterprises competing for a critical clientele, while their attending ministers become anonymous functionaries with whom only casual contacts are made. Except for a small nucleus of more devout people who focus their social life on active participation in parochially organized religious associations, the majority of the people in urban parishes are only nominal members of these associations and set a higher value on membership in associations organized around secular interests. Even if they remain sufficiently submissive to Church control, they are members of special Church-sponsored groups like the Catholic Action movements whose recently institutionalized pattern does *not* take into account the traditional parish structure. The changing structure and functions of the parish in modern cities offer one of the most fruitful areas for empirical studies to sociologists everywhere, but especially in North America.

GERMANY

by NIKOLAUS MONZEL

translated by ALFRED C. RUSH, C.Ss.R.

FORTY years ago, the Austrian, Heinrich Swoboda, in his book *Grossstadtseelsorge* (Regensburg, 1909), made a study of the care of souls in about thirty European towns. He also investigated parochial conditions in seven large German cities. His statistics provided clear evidence of the rapid growth of cities and of the abnormal size of urban Catholic parishes. His principal demands were for the division of large parishes into smaller ones, each having, at the maximum, 6000 souls, and for the limitation of supraparochial ecclesiastical societies to their roles as supplementary agents for the cure of souls in the parish.

This emphasis on the principle of parochialism was then relatively new. In the nineteenth century, Catholic societies and organizations had in large measure taken over duties linked with the care of souls because the old parishes were no longer capable of performing their tasks. There were two reasons for this. In the first place, parishes had become too large, especially in the industrial cities, due to the increased population. In the second place, their natural substructure, which for many centuries consisted in their legal and social union with the civic community, had disappeared. The rise of flourishing specialized organizations of the nineteenth century, through their highly organized life, alienated many Catholics from the religious community life of their parishes.

Although Swoboda's work was a beginning in the study of the sociology of the parish, it was only in 1924 that other studies on this subject appeared. In this year, Professor Wilhelm Schwer of Bonn published the important article, "Die alte Pfarrei in der neuen Stadt," in the *Bonner Zeitschrift für Theologie und Seelsorge,* I (1924). Schwer maintained that parishes had arisen 1500 years ago in Germany, as elsewhere in Europe, out of the co-operation of the civil and municipal authorities on the one hand and the ecclesiastical authorities on the other. Blood relationship and the economic bond between families and those enjoying joint proprietorship of the land had supplied the common basis and also the boundary for the spiritual unity of the parish. In the medieval town, the civic community and the religious community exercised an influence on each other in their legal and social relationships. Levying of taxes, military organization, care of the poor, the sick, and the like, were ordered mainly along parish lines. The civic power had an influence in the naming of pastors and in the administration of parish funds. The fact that a citizen belonged to this or that parish was precisely the basis for his civic and legal status. On the other hand, only those living in the town or within the boundaries of the parish had the right, and also the obligation, to attend services in the parish church and to receive the sacraments from the pastor. Excepted, of course, were cases of necessity and travel.

Schwer pointed out that this intimate connection between the civic and the parish community has disappeared within recent times, both *de jure* and *de facto.* Politically and economically, the modern city is a different structure from the medieval town. The parish has no part at all in the development of the modern city. Parochial limits do not conform to any natural boundary. The lives of the parishioners are led for the most part outside the parish. Ecclesiastical law no longer binds parishioners to receive the sacraments and to attend Sunday Mass in their proper parish. The intimate relation between the civic community and the parish has also disap-

peared in rural areas. Nevertheless, Schwer predicted that the territorially limited parish will continue in the future to be the most active agency for the cure of souls. Care must be taken, however, to divide parishes so that they do not become too large. In place of the ancient and now no longer extant social substructure of the parish, a new one can and must be constructed, based upon the conscious development of human relations in organizations for youth, charity, trade unions, and the lay apostolate. Schwer, together with the social philosopher, Theodor Litt, calls this, a "rationalization of communal life"; that is, a change from a community involuntarily imposed as a result of natural circumstances to one consciously constructed and voluntarily sanctioned. This general sociological law ought to be observed in the life of the Church and of the parish.

A new, conscious "will to communal life" of this type became evident in the years following World War I in the German *Wandervogel-und Jugendbewegung*. Constantine Noppel, S.J., in his book *Die neue Pfarrei* (Freiburg, 1939), pointed out that this new desire of youth for community interests was a force for the strengthening of parochial community life. It is true that the various groups of the German *Wandervogel-und Jugendbewegung* were not based on parochial boundaries and, in fact, did not even originate under ecclesiastical auspices. Catholic youth, captivated by this movement, viewed the religious organizations of the nineteenth century as products of the liberal, individualistic concept of society. This concept loosed the people from the traditional organic structure to which the ancient parish belonged and bound them together in large organizations according to definite specialized purposes. The Catholics, attracted by the new spirit of community, turned for the fulfillment of their desires in the religious sphere to the organic community of the parochial family. Professor Werner Schöllgen of Bonn in his book, *Grenzmoral; Soziale Krisis und neuer Aufbau* (Düsseldorf, 1946), has shown that this desire for the *Pfarrfamilie* expresses an essentially Christian desire, since the Christian ethos is not societal

(*gesellschaftlich*) but communal (*gemeinschaftlich*), and the parish group is of the type known sociologically as community (*Gemeinschaft*). Thus two basic concepts of modern German sociology are applied in the consideration of the parochial community. See Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft; Grundbegriffe der reinen Soziologie,* 8 ed. (Berlin, 1935).

The liturgical movement has emphasized more strongly than the youth movement the principle of parochialism. The Benedictines of Maria Lach and Beuron especially were leaders in this work. Here mention must be made of the following studies: Abbot Ildefons Herwegen, O.S.B., "Liturgische Erneuerung und Seelsorgserneuerung," *Bonner Zeitschrift für Theologie und Seelsorge,* II (1925); Athanasius Wintersig, O.S.B., "Pfarrei und Mysterium," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft,* V (Münster: O. Casel, 1925); Albert Hammenstede, O.S.B., "Die Pfarrei als Lebens-und Arbeitsraum der Seelsorge" [Proceedings of the Seventy-first Congress of German Catholics held at Essen in 1932], *Ergänzungsbuch des Berichtes* (Essen, 1932); Mauritius Schurr, "Die übernaturliche Wirklichkeit der Pfarrei," *Benedictinische Monatsschrift,* XIX (1937). These authors maintained that the parish should serve as the sole sphere for the cure of souls. They made their claim by reason of what they called the *Dogmatik der Pfarrei.* Viewing the parish from the sociological viewpoint, one is not able to penetrate to the very essence of the parish, since, as they point out, the parish is primarily a "supernatural entity." Accordingly, one author (Wintersig) says that the sociological viewpoint can only serve as a preparatory consideration; while another (Schurr), and later also Gustav Gundlach, S.J., maintains that it presupposes the dogmatic basis and must be built upon that. In such a *Dogmatik der Pfarrei,* the parish is designated as an *ecclesiola,* and as an essential copy of the Church. Only he who consciously lives out this bond with his parish is a truly living member of the visible body of Christ (Schurr).

A new influence which strengthened the emphasis on the principle of parochialism was the suppression and destruction

of ecclesiastical organizations through National Socialism. The bond between pastors and parishioners remained the last social basis for the cure of souls and the religious life of Catholics. In this situation Johannes Pinsk wrote an article, stemming from the liturgical movement, on "Die religiose Wirklichkeit von Kirche, Diozese und Pfarrei," *Der katholische Gedanke,* VI (1933). Anton Stonner pointed out in his article "Zur Wiederentdeckung von Pfarre und Pfarrei," *Das Wort in der Zeit,* I (1933–1934), that the parishes themselves, by reason of their territorial boundaries and limitations, are much stronger and more secure than ecclesiastical organizations founded for specialized purposes. In 1935, under the pseudonym, Johannes Christian, there appeared at Freiburg the work of a Catholic theologian, entitled *Volk und Pfarrei im Leben des Volkes,* in which it was maintained that Catholics form in a parish a parochial group with very definite racial, national, and vocational characteristics. The parish represents the entire people of God in a definite territory. The high point of this representation is the Eucharistic Sacrifice. This Sacrifice is to be offered also by the whole nation through its parishes. To them is confided "the priesthood of the nation." Gustav Gundlach, S.J., likewise, wrote in an article, "Zur Sociologie der Pfarrgemeinde," *Das Wort in der Zeit,* I (1933–1934), that it is precisely in the parish that the Church can grow conjointly and become entwined with the natural social life; for the parish, because it is locally and historically deeply rooted, can help religious life to become effective as a force to develop and form home and nation. Gundlach also points out that, although the pastorate is erected by ecclesiastical authority, still the parish manifests associational characteristics of its own, just as the entire Church is an established organization with a hierarchical constitution and at the same time is a *coetus fidelium.* The sociological law according to which larger social structures build upon smaller applies also to the parish.

This strong emphasis on parochialism aroused opposition among members of the clergy engaged in extraparochial organ-

izations. Thoughtful observers of ecclesiastical life challenged the dogmatic basis for the principle of parochialism. One article which illustrates this point of view was written by Joseph Höffner, a professor in the seminary at Trier, under the title, "Um das Pfarrprinzip," *Trier Theologische Zeitschrift,* LVI (1947). Professor Oswald von Nell-Breuning, S.J., published an article in the same volume entitled, "Pfarrgemeinde, Pfarrfamilie, Pfarrprinzip," in which he opposed the designation of the parish as an *ecclesiola,* holding that this term can be applied only to a diocese. Nell-Breuning points out that in addition to territorial parishes Canon Law provides for personal parishes; that, moreover, a juridical or legal person (*e.g.,* a monastery) may be a pastor; that all orders and religious congregations are exempt from membership in a parish; and that the relationship of spiritual fatherhood and sonship is found in the small intra- and inter-parochial groups as well as in the parish. He stressed that in the unbelieving modern world there are spheres of life that cannot be reached by the parish clergy. Hence, besides the principle of parochialism, which takes precedence in the ordinary care of souls, other kinds of ministerial care of souls and of religious associations are necessary.

The discussion of the principle of parochialism was reviewed by H. Roth, "Die Kirche in der Welt" in the *Loseblatt-Lexikon* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1947). Karl Rahner, S.J., has written the most comprehensive and penetrating study of the subject in his article, "Friedliche Erwägungen über das Pfarrprinzip," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie,* VII (1948), reprinted in Alfons Kirchgässner, *Pfarrgemeinde und Pfarrgottesdienst* (Freiburg, 1948). Rahner points out that it is in the parish that the Catholic of the present day seeks an organic community which can provide refuge from the anonymity of the masses. He quotes all the exceptions from the principle of parochialism made by Canon Law and then emphasizes the fact that in our day the local neighborhood is no longer, as in former centuries, the only all-embracing sphere of activity in a

Catholic's life. School and work draw men away from their local neighborhoods and parish circles. The deep social differentiation resulting from vocational and cultural necessities tends to widen the gulf between individuals despite their local proximity. Moreover, ecclesiastical law grants Catholics the opportunity to organize freely into groups. Group organization is especially needed in our time since the spiritual nostalgia of members of highly specialized groups cannot be satisfied by mere local proximity or by territorially divided parishes. Therefore, besides the principle of parochialism, the vocational principle and the principle of free association are also justified. Rahner shows in an historical survey that the principle of parochialism was never the only valid principle for the Christian care of souls. His historical arguments provide a complement to those of Professor Schwer.

A new impetus in the development of the sociology of the parish resulted from the displacement of peoples occasioned by World War II and its consequences: the evacuation of cities, the admission of those dispersed from the provinces beyond the Oder-Neisse line and the refugees from the Russian zone of occupation, the lack of homes in the destroyed cities, etc. Jakob Clemens, using carefully prepared statistical material, has shown in a fine sociological article, "Eine Grossstadtpfarrei nach dem Kriege," *Stimmen der Zeit,* CXLIII (1949), the adjustments made in a parish in Cologne. Otto B. Roegele has furnished an empirical presentation of the conditions in the whole of Germany in "Der deutsche Katholizismus im sozialen Chaos," *Hochland,* XLI (1949), with material – statistical and otherwise – supplied largely by the diocesan chanceries. Until 1943 there existed in Cologne the Zentralstelle für kirchliche Statistik which covered the whole of German Catholicism. Its central office published annually the *Kirchliche Handbuch für das katholische Deutschland,* of which H. Krose, S.J., was editor. This central office and its material was destroyed in the war, but has now been re-established. In the department of sociology of the Catholic theological seminary of the University of Bonn,

under the direction of the present writer, a group of students began work on the sociology of the parishes of Bonn during the summer semester of 1949.

To the references mentioned above the following may be added: Konrad Algermissen, "Pfarrei," *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche,* 2 ed. (Freiburg, 1936), VIII; Max Kaller, *Aus einer Grossstadtpfarrei* (Freiburg, 1923); Carl Maier, *Dorfseelsorge* (Freiburg, 1937); W. Meyer and P. Neyer, *Lebendige Seelsorge* (Freiburg, 1937), and *Gestaltkräfte lebensnaher Seelsorge* (Freiburg, 1939); W. Schwer, *Der soziale Gedanke in der katholischen Seelsorge* (Köln, 1921); Ulrich Stutz, "Pfarrei, Pfarrer," *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (Leipzig, 1904), XV.

POLAND

by FRANCISZEK MIREK

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THE Polish people accepted Christian baptism in the Latin rite in the year 966. The first historical Polish ruler, Mieszko I, whose second name was "Dagome," placed himself and his kingdom immediately under the protection of the Holy See, as was then the custom in western Europe. This "act of offering" bound the country of Poland from the very beginning of its history to the Latin culture and, religiously speaking, to St. Peter's in Rome. It is not surprising then that the research work of Polish scholars, especially the historians and jurists, has concentrated on the concrete relationship between the Polish nation and Rome, and on the historical circumstances preceding this religious and political affiliation.

Among students of the history of parochial organization in Poland, three names are outstanding: Professor Władysław Abraham, the author of *Origins of Patronage Laws in Poland* (Lwów, 1899) and of *Organization of the Church in Poland to the Middle of the Twelfth Century;* Stanisław Zachorowski, who wrote *Origins of the Polish Parish* (Kraków, 1908); and Stanisław Kujot, who organized parishes in the present diocese of Toruń and whose work is described in the *Annals of the Scientific Chronicle Society of Toruń,* IX–XII.

With the spread of interest in historical studies, Polish students, especially religious, undertook research on the history

of separate dioceses and parishes in Poland. In 1864, the Bishop of Kraków, the Most Reverend Anthony Galecki, encouraged and even commanded all pastors to write historical accounts of their respective parishes, using as sources all available historical records. Bishop Romuald Jałbrzykowski of Vilno issued a similar order in 1927, sending to all his pastors a schedule which they were to follow in recording information pertaining to their parishes. Some of the items included on the schedule are outlined here:

1. *Territory* — Geographical location of the parish; boundary lines; map of neighborhood indicating rivers and roads, area in miles, location of forests, type of soil, etc.
2. *Population* — Exact number of people; language spoken; local customs and habits of the people; proverbs used; recreation; styles of clothing and kinds of foods commonly used; industries; kinds of homes; architecture; laws; kinds of furniture and working utensils; and the general plan or layout of the village.
3. *Class structure* — Public and private properties; manor houses or mansions and their extent; extent of the peasantry; types of craftsmen; types of farming, covering the number of orchards, livestock, the extent of farm trade, and the number of market places.
4. *Organized services* — The number of co-operatives and business organizations; educational standards and kinds of schools; the number of clubs, libraries, and educational societies; the number of subscriptions to periodical publications; sports; and political organizations.
5. *Archaeological monuments exclusive of the church* — Old and new cemeteries; old castles; military fortifications; churches of other religious denominations, such as Jews, Mohammedans, etc.; old monuments; and epitaphs specifying names, places, and dates.
6. *The parish church* — style of architecture; internal decorations, covering carvings, sculpture, and paintings; the number of chapels and the kinds of altars; the number of convents, their names, and the extent of their possessions.
7. *Organization of the parish and its history* — When and by whom the parish was founded; the number of parishioners; reasons for changes in the size of the parish; the number of Jews; heresies prevalent in the past or present; patron saint of the church; relationships with public authorities; biographies of former pastors, including descriptions of their pastoral labors; types of church

devotions introduced; employees of the church, *e.g.*, sexton, organist, janitor, etc.; church societies and organizations and their purposes.

8. *Endowments of the parish, the pastor, and church employees* — Original endowments; present endowments and reasons for changes.

9. *Parish records* — Description of the parish chronicles; information of general use; an accurate catalogue of the parish library and archives, including precious manuscripts, etc.

Obviously Bishop Jałbrzykowski's schedule pertains more to historical than to sociological research on the parish group.

Unfortunately most of the descriptive and historical research begun in Polish parishes has been interrupted and temporarily discontinued as a result of World War II, and because of the lack of sufficient sociological preparation in Polish theological schools. Sociology is taught in Poland in secular institutions for students of economics, law, and philosophy; the theoretical interests of these students do not at the present time include the social group called the parish.

The literature of Polish sociology does, however, include three works which treat the Roman Catholic parish in some detail. The first of these is well known to American readers. *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America,* by W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927), includes chapters on "The Polish-American Community" and "The Super-territorial Organization of Polish-American Society," in which the importance of the parish is shown. A second work, similar in theme, is that of Joseph Chałasinski, "The Parish and the Parish School among Polish Immigrants in America," in *Przegląd Socjologiczny* (Warsaw, 1935), pp. 633–711. This is based upon the research of the author in Polish records in South Chicago during 1933. These two publications present a wide range of interesting material about the past and present organization of Polish Roman Catholic parishes in Poland and America. The parish is discussed not as a specific type of social group, but as an instrument for preserving the national characteristics of Polish people in America.

In the present writer's work, *Elementy społeczne parafii*

rzymsko-katolickiej, wstęp do socjologii parafii [Social Elements of a Roman Catholic Parish, an Introduction to a Sociology of the Parish] (Poznań, 1928), an attempt has been made to present a theory of the parish as a specific social group. In order that a Catholic parish may be distinguished from other religious groups, it must be compared with them as to characteristics, marks, duties, and principles. A study of eight different national parishes, five in the vicinity of Paris, one in Australia, one in Poland, and one in Greece, revealed the following common characteristics: (1) *sacerdos missus,* a priest appointed by an ecclesiastical authority in union with the Bishop of Rome; (2) the instrumentalities of contact between the priest and the native people; (3) the interaction of priest and people resulting in their incorporation into the Mystical Body of Christ; (4) the institutionalization of parish life by the organization of societies in conformity with Church law.

The second part of the book describes an experiment which was made to test the hypothesis that these four characteristics are essential to every Catholic parish. An examination of about 10,000 Roman Catholic parishes in France for the period after the separation of the Church and State in 1905 clearly confirmed this hypothesis. The history of this conflict, in which the national legislature attempted to reorganize parochial life in France, proved that the parish can relinquish certain traditional characteristics and functions, but not all. In order that it fulfill its essential mission it must have a priest appointed by the proper ecclesiastical authorities; this priest leader must share with his people some mutual cultural bonds; there must be external observance of the laws of Christ and of His Church by priest and people; and the religious life of the parish group must be organized or institutionalized.

The third part of *Elementy społeczne parafii rzymsko-katolickiej* is concerned with a sociological analysis of these four characteristics. The following partial list of chapter headings from this section indicates something of its content:

The pastor as a socializing agent in the parish — the social im-

portance of celibacy — the mission of the pastor by the proper authorities as a foundation of the pastor's relationship with the parishioners — the instruments of contact in a parish group — the relationship of a particular territory to a specific parish group — local culture as an instrument in parish relations — the pulpit, confessional, missions, home visiting, etc., as instruments of contact — the psychological foundations of participation in the life of the Church — cultural accommodation and assimilation in a parish — informal and formal activities of the parish — the parish and ecclesiastical institutions — the Church in general — positive and negative characteristics of parochial institutions.

The conclusion of this work advances a plan for the introduction of a new specialized discipline in the field of theology. "Paroikology," or the science of the parish, would comprise three major divisions: (1) general paroikology, treating the general sociological aspects of parochial groups; (2) special paroikology, devoted to analyzing specific types, such as large city parishes, small city parishes, parishes in villages, small towns, rural areas, mission parishes, military parishes, etc.; (3) specialized training in paroikological research, including the techniques of scientific investigation and field observation. Data collected by trained students would be recorded in specified centers where it would be easily available for whole regions.

Needless to say this plan was and is a *"vox clamantis in deserto."* The only one who took an interest in these problems was the late Cardinal Hlond. In his pastoral letter of 1933, entitled "Parish Life," the Cardinal officially promulgated many of the ideas contained in *Elementy społeczne parafii rzymsko-katolickiej*. He defined the parish as a "true Catholic society having within its limits the Church of Christ, its own organized life, its own administrative organization, its own pastor, its own laws and activities, its own obligations and limitations." He described the parish as a center for the care of souls, the center from which grace is radiated throughout the Church, which develops Catholic customs and habits, which preserves Catholic culture, the center from which the gospel of Christ is preached to all the people. The Cardinal also discussed the mutual rela-

tionships which exist between pastor and parishioners, and methods for rebuilding parish life. "When the whole world and the lives of people are violently changing," the Cardinal concludes his letter, "and the destruction of Christian culture is threatened — your place at that moment is at the side of your parish priest."

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