

**5—A Any cleric should identify the acts Jesus wishes him to make present for others’ salvation, and determine precisely what words and gestures will be appropriate.**

2 Cor 4’s treatment of apostolic ministry, which is ministry of the new covenant that is *communio in the Spirit* (3.6), provides a model for clerical service. The ministry is given by God (4.1, 6). The minister is strictly a servant (4.5): “For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord with ourselves as your servants [slaves] for Jesus’ sake.” That point also is made clear by 3.3: “You show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us.” Since the content to be communicated by the minister of the new covenant is entirely from God and since the covenant itself is in the Spirit, the minister must not obscure much less alter what has been entrusted to him, and must do what he can by living a good life to make himself credible in presenting it (4.2): “We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians*, AB 32A:246, says: “In v. 2 one learns what kinds of things Paul has especially in mind when he writes about the forthrightness of apostles. Expressed negatively it means not hiding shameful things, not acting craftily, and not adulterating the word of God. . . . The latter part of v. 2 expresses the positive side of apostolic boldness. While others may act craftily and preach a false gospel, the Pauline apostolate is devoted to a full disclosure of the truth.” Fully disclosing the truth requires living in full harmony with what one preaches, and that commends one to every person’s conscience—providing that person is decent.

In carrying out the responsibilities of ministry, the weakness of the minister is not so much a handicap as he might think; in a way it is a real asset for doing what he has undertaken (4.7): “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us.” If ministers were really impressive people, those they serve might focus on them rather than on Christ, credit them with the message and its benefits, be distracted by relating to them. Their very weakness makes it clear that they are only conveying what is not their own, preaching not themselves but Christ. The suffering the apostle experiences in carrying out his ministry (and that others observe him experiencing) manifests the life of Jesus present and at work in him (4.10–11); (4.12): “So death is at work in us, but life in you.” And ministers’ humility and dedication should make it clear that they are acting not out of any short-run self-interest (4.15): “For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.”

Those who receive this *munus* need not lose heart (4.1, 16). Why not?

- (1) Both ministers and those served experience themselves being transformed by the Spirit (3.18).
- (2) Doing what God wants (avoiding episcopal wrongdoing and commending themselves to others’ consciences by exemplary lives: 4.2), ministers will be effective unless those served are blinded (4.3–4).
- (3) The ministry is directed toward the kingdom to come, and so the ministers’ focus must not be on present suffering and personal decline as one ages and wears out but on the glory to come (4.7–18).

A priest should care for the sick and dying, and use the Church's words; he should make Christ present in the bad situation, by both his actions and his words. Just as in giving homilies, a priest should not say anything unless sure beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus wants him to say it, so here—which means that priests will be conservative. The forum is for acting *in persona Christi*, and so if he acts without assurance it is Jesus' will, he usurps Jesus' forum—takes his pulpit from him. Obviously, priests should not act *in persona Christi* with any reasonable doubt that he wants it said or done. But that is a weak criterion. Beyond it, in important situations, a bishop and a priest should check each sentence and be confident beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus wants it said. (If this norm were followed, bishops' pastorals and papal documents would shrink!)

But what about circumstances in which spontaneity is required or reasonable? Priests should use appropriate means to assure they do not go over the line: pray to use only the words Jesus wants (and that the hearers will hear what Jesus wants heard), prepare for the occasion as well as reasonably possible, but above all have a habitual commitment to limiting themselves to faith and solid teaching of the Church and only adding what will help get that across. If priests fulfill their responsibilities in this matter, they can be confident that what they are saying is what Jesus wants said, because he would not give them the responsibility to speak for him and then leave them unable to fulfill it. But they should not utter theology or exegesis that is neither faith nor Church teaching. For instance, nobody should give my theology of sharing in divine nature, nor give the neo-Platonic theology of that, but keep close to Scripture, to other witnesses to the faith of the Church, and to examples that help people attend to that faith.

In making the commitment of Christian faith, people entrust what is most valuable to Christ—namely, their very souls, and the souls of those who must depend upon their judgment in matters religious, a group that always includes their small children and sometimes includes other dependents who are incapable of either accepting or rejecting the Gospel. In making the commitment of Catholic faith, people not only entrust themselves to Christ but to the Church, whose clerical ministers they believe can act in his person. So, clerics have very great fiduciary responsibilities, not only for the Church's temporalities and other means but for the faith of the Church, for her sacraments, for her laws, and for very souls of believers. Therefore, whenever a cleric in the exercise of the functions for which he has been ordained deliberately or negligently delivers something else in place of the action Christ wishes to make available, he betrays his trust. And if some cleric sincerely believes that what the Church has to offer is somehow defective and not what Jesus really wishes to make available, he ought to resign rather than pretend to act as a minister of the Church while proceeding as he thinks best.

DV 10 relates both Scripture and tradition to the magisterium. Tradition and Scripture are a deposit, to which the bishops and faithful together hold fast, going on accepting the apostles' teaching and way of life, celebrating the Eucharist and praying. They hold, practice, and bear witness together to what they received. The task of authoritative interpretation is entrusted to the bishops—the magisterium—“whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.” It is not above the word of God but serves it, teaching nothing but what is handed down.

PO 4 makes it clear that presbyters are to communicate the word to absolutely everyone, and that no matter what activity of evangelizing and catechesis they engage in, their duty “always is to teach, not their own wisdom, but God’s word and urgently to summon all to conversion and holiness.” In this regard, the job is very like that of the prophet who has the word of the Lord to convey—he would be a false prophet if he conveyed something else and claimed authority for it, and a derelict prophet if he wasted time honestly offering unauthorized advice of his own. And the goal is twofold: making the commitment of faith and fulfilling it perfectly.

In the outline, 5, A, 3, b, I say that clerics should not choose words and gestures on the principle that they must please people and keep them in the Church. The cleric should try to choose words and gestures that won’t needlessly alienate people and drive them out. But pleasing and keeping in must not be the principle—for in that case he will choose by that and compromise or conceal truths that he should preach, hoping they will do good by grace.

CIC, c. 834, §1, opens the code’s treatment of the sanctifying *munus* of the Church, saying this is chiefly by the liturgy “which is an exercise of the priestly function of Jesus Christ.” It also says: “In the sacred liturgy, the whole public worship of God is carried out by the Head and members of the mystical Body of Jesus Christ.” So, the liturgy is the action of Jesus and his people together. §2 adds: “Such worship takes place when it is carried out in the name of the Church by persons legitimately designated and through acts approved by the authority of the Church.” From this it follows that anyone who does what he/she is not designated to do, thereby fails to carry out liturgy. Anybody who substitutes for the specific acts approved by the authority of the Church, thereby replaces liturgy with his/her own personal action. Anybody who intersperses acts not approved by the Church’s authority thereby interrupts the liturgy, which, in general, is likely to detract from it.

There is a sense in which the ministry of the word is primary. CCEO 608: “Bishops, priests and deacons, each one according to the grade of his sacred order, have as their foremost duty [*primum munus . . . habent*] the ministry of the word of God, which is to be exercised according to the norm of law.” LG 25 says that among the chief duties (*praecipua munera*) of bishops the preaching of the Gospel stands out (*eminet*). And PO 4 says that presbyters have as their first office (*primum habent officium*) evangelizing everybody with the Gospel of God. However, one must bear in mind that the three *munera* are not separate. One first must accept what God gives, receive it, and help others accept and receive. That is essentially the prophetic *munus*, which includes all evangelization and catechesis, all preaching and teaching in the Church. However, what is accepted and received should have an impact on one’s life and relationships, should bring about conversion, form the Church, and be a leaven for the whole world. That is the kingly *munus*. And in thanksgiving one should offer all that back to God—the priestly *munus*. To separate the three and claim the primacy for the ministry of the word is Protestant.

Clerics act *in persona Christi* in the kingly function—that is, when they exercise authority to shape the community’s cooperation. This ought not to be thought to concern giving orders only—though sometimes it is appropriate to politely direct others in a straightforward way. It is not primarily concerned with administration of temporalities, though some decisions must

be made about such matters. Primarily it is in building up *communio*: in teaching and encouraging their people's real participation in the liturgy, in choosing and forming and commissioning members of their flock for their *munera* in it, and in fostering among members of their flock voluntary mutual help in living a Christian life.

*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 45:

In order to be authentic, the Word must be transmitted “without duplicity and without any dishonesty, but rather manifesting with frankness the truth before God” (2 Cor 4:2). The priest will wisely avoid falsifying, reducing, distorting or diluting the content of the divine message. His role, in fact, “is not to teach his own wisdom but the Word of God and to issue an urgent invitation to all men to conversion and to holiness”.(135)

Preaching, therefore, cannot be reduced to the presentation of one's own thought, to the manifestation of personal experience, to simple explanations of a psychological,(136) sociological or humanitarian nature; nor can it excessively concentrate on rhetoric, so often found in mass-communication. It concerns proclaiming a Word which cannot be altered, because it has been entrusted to the Church in order to protect, penetrate and faithfully transmit it.(137)

(135) Ibid.; cf. John Paul II Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, 26: I.c., 697-700.

(136) Cf. John Paul II *Catechesi* in the General Audience of 21 April 1993: “*L'Osservatore Romano*”, 22 April 1993.

(137) Cf. John Paul II, *Catechesi* in the General Audience of 21 April 1993: “*L'Osservatore Romano*”, 22 April 1993.

This may be useful to support the point that clergy must propose only the truth that Jesus wants proposed.

*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 15: “Having been sent and evangelized, the Church herself sends out evangelizers. She puts on their lips the saving Word, she explains to them the message of which she herself is the depositary, she gives them the mandate which she herself has received and she sends them out to preach. To preach not their own selves or their personal ideas,(43) but a Gospel of which neither she nor they are the absolute masters and owners, to dispose of it as they wish, but a Gospel of which they are the ministers, in order to pass it on with complete fidelity. 43. Cf. 2 Cor 4:5; Saint Augustine, *Sermo XLVI, De Pastoribus*: CCL XLI, pp. 529–530.”

The responsibility is to make Jesus' act of evangelizing present, bearing in mind that it is a gift to be received and handed on. And Jesus' evangelizing essentially includes all the essentials; see articles 6, 12.

*Evangelii Nuntiandi* takes evangelization in a very broad sense, so that a cleric's evangelizing activity includes everything he does *in persona Christi*. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 60, makes the point that all evangelization is ecclesial: the preacher, catechist, or pastor “acts not in virtue of

a mission which he attributes to himself or by a personal inspiration, but in union with the mission of the Church and in her name.” From this Paul VI draws an important conclusion: “if each individual evangelizes in the name of the Church, who herself does so by virtue of a mandate from the Lord, no evangelizer is the absolute master of his evangelizing action, with a discretionary power to carry it out in accordance with individualistic criteria and perspectives; he acts in communion with the Church and her pastors.”

From this it follows that in all his clerical acts, which are done *in persona Christi* or to make those acts really available and fruitful, the cleric is acting on behalf of the Church, and therefore should act, not individualistically, but in communion with the Church and her pastors. And that means acting in accord with all relevant and applicable ecclesial norms—canon law, liturgical directives, and the particular law and guidelines of the ordinary of the place.

A bishop is God’s steward (Ti 1.7); the apostles should be considered stewards of God’s “mysteries” and ought to be trustworthy (1 Cor 4.1–2). This conception fits well with the responsibility of the clergy acting *in persona Christi* to do precisely what Jesus wishes done and nothing else—it limits severely any room for innovation, which never can concern anything essential, for that is only to be safeguarded and developed, but only with regard to making the essentials maximally fruitful. And there, too, the bishop—and so his clerical helpers—is limited to pursuing fruitfulness according to the plan authorized by Jesus.

The parable of the wedding feast makes one thing clear: following Jesus’ plan for making his acts available will feed the guests better than one could do on one’s own.

2 Cor 3.3–5: “You show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our sufficiency is from God.” Paul is manifesting the attitude that every cleric ought to have, particularly in communicating the truth of the faith. The humility of Paul shines through these words. He does not pretend to be the author but presents himself only as an instrument Jesus uses to deliver the message. He makes it clear that he absolutely lacks the capacity to claim that what he delivered was his own; everything he gave them was a gift of God.

In the synoptics, Jesus often calls for faith in himself and his word. Paul never does that. Instead, he makes it clear that the gospel he preaches is Jesus’ message, the word of God, and not his own. Thus, he commends people to whom he had preached (1 Thes 2.13): “And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.”

Commenting on Hebrews, Albert Vanhoye, S.J., *Structure and Message of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Subsidia Biblica*, 12 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblica, 1989), points out the difference between the sacraments and the rites of the old law (72): “There are no more rites in the ancient meaning of the word, for the Christian sacraments are

closely linked with the personal offering of Christ. It is from it alone that they draw all their worth. They make the offering present and active in the existence of the believers so that this existence is transformed.”

This makes the point that Jesus’ own action, that of his own sacrifice, is made present in the sacraments which priests administer. Obviously, the sacraments differ, but not in making a different sacrifice present; rather they differ in how they bring it to bear for the benefit of Christians who receive the sacraments.

Vanhoye, 73: “Christian worship, it is evident, is not marginal to life but is at life’s core. It is the Christian transformation of existence, a transformation made possible by union with Christ and inseparable from a continual soaring of thanks towards God (13.14). It comes about in a community of believers, docile to its ‘leaders’ who make present the mediation of Christ, high priest worthy of faith (cf. 13.7) and merciful (cf. 13.17).”

This makes the point that clerical ministers do not mediate on their own but make Jesus’ mediation present.

Rv 22.18–19 “I warn every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if any one adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if any one takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.” Just what God gives is to be made present by the ordained as God’s gift. Nothing more and nothing less.

That means that clerics must be very clear about what God is giving. Of course, it includes not only the content of Scripture and the developed faith of the Church, but also the Church’s practices (the sacraments), and her very essential order. There is no place for picking and choosing with respect to that. Preaching part of the gospel (so as to avoid offending less than pious ears with the bad news inside the good news) is falsifying all of it. Sacramental practice reduced to Eucharist without penance is no longer the real medium of salvation.

St. Thomas, *S.t.*, 3, q. 64, a. 2, ad 3, makes it clear that those who act *in persona Christi* cannot hand on another faith or institute new sacraments any more than they can constitute another Church than his.

With ordination, the ordained receive the capacity to act in the person of Christ in pastoring in the narrow sense—in governing. Yet they cannot exercise this power without jurisdiction. See C. Zuckerman, “Aquinas Conception of the Papal Primacy in Ecclesiastical Government,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 40 (1973) 97–134.

One cannot do anything *in persona Christi* unless it is what Jesus wants done. Jesus certainly wants consistency harmony in his own action of governing the Church, and he has provided a definite structure within it. Thus, when the supreme authority of the Church has acted in the person of Christ to make law, issue orders, and assign or not assign someone to pastor a specific group of people, that action limits his to act in the person of Christ. In other words, everyone ordained received from Jesus himself the power he exercises in his person; but no ordained person can exercise governing power in Jesus’ person unless he is doing what Jesus wants done, and Jesus does not want his own acts of governing to be inconsistent. So, when

he does something through those exercising superior authority, no one subject to that authority can do anything at odds with it in the person of Christ.

Aquinas discusses this, and, I think, takes too broad a view of papal authority, probably because he does not regard the exercise of governing power in the Church as acting *in persona Christi*.

2 *Sent.*, d. 44, q. 2, a. 3, exp. text.

Respondeo dicendum, quod potestas superior et inferior dupliciter possunt se habere. Aut ita quod inferior potestas ex toto oriatur a superiori; et tunc tota virtus inferioris fundatur supra virtutem superioris; et tunc simpliciter et in omnibus est magis obediendum potestati superiori quam inferiori; sicut etiam in naturalibus causa prima plus influit supra causatum causae secundae quam etiam ipsa causa secunda, ut in Lib. de causis dicitur: et sic se habet potestas Dei ad omnem potestatem creatam; sic etiam se habet potestas imperatoris ad potestatem proconsulis; sic etiam se habet potestas Papae ad omnem spiritualem potestatem in Ecclesia: quia ab ipso Papa gradus dignitatum diversi in Ecclesia et disponuntur et ordinantur; unde ejus potestas est quoddam Ecclesiae fundamentum, ut patet Matth. 16. Et ideo in omnibus magis tenemur obedire Papae quam episcopis vel archiepiscopis, vel monachus abbati, absque ulla distinctione. Potest iterum potestas superior et inferior ita se habere, quod ambae orientur ex una quadam suprema potestate, quae unam alteri subdit secundum quod vult; et tunc una non est superior altera nisi in his quibus una supponitur alii a suprema potestate; et in illis tantum est magis obediendum superiori quam inferiori: et hoc modo se habent potestates et episcopi et archiepiscopi descendentes a Papae potestate. Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod non est inconueniens patrem esse superiorem in rebus familiaribus, et ducem in rebus bellicis; sed ei qui in omnibus superior est, scilicet Deo, simpliciter est magis obediendum, et ei qui vices Dei gerit plenarie. Ad secundum dicendum, quod in illis in quibus magis obediendum est episcopo quam archiepiscopo; archiepiscopus non est superior episcopo, sed tantum in casibus determinatis a jure, in quibus ab episcopo recurritur ad archiepiscopum. Ad tertium dicendum, quod monachus magis tenetur obedire abbati quam episcopo in illis quae ad statuta regulae pertinent; in his autem quae ad disciplinam ecclesiasticam pertinent, magis tenetur episcopo: quia in his abbas est episcopo suppositus. Ad quartum dicendum, quod potestas spiritualis et saecularis, utraque deducitur a potestate divina; et ideo intantum saecularis potestas est sub spirituali, inquantum est ei a Deo supposita, scilicet in his quae ad salutem animae pertinent; et ideo in his magis est obediendum potestati spirituali quam saeculari. In his autem quae ad bonum civile pertinent, est magis obediendum potestati saeculari quam spirituali, secundum illud Matth. 22, 21: reddite quae sunt Caesaris Caesari. Nisi forte potestati spirituali etiam saecularis potestas jungatur, sicut in Papa, qui utriusque potestatis apicem tenet, scilicet spiritualis et saecularis, hoc illo disponente qui est sacerdos et rex in aeternum, secundum ordinem Melchisedech, rex regum, et dominus dominantium, cujus potestas non auferetur et regnum non corrumpetur in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

However, even if governing power is given in ordination, in the sense that it is one of the things one is ordained to do *in persona Christi*, the power to act in his person is limited in this case by what others have done acting in her person. Thus the directness with which this power is received by each man ordained from Jesus himself in no way limits the primacy of the pope and the strict subordination of every ordained man to the supreme authority of the Church.

In general, thinking of power being given to Peter and then distributed about reflects a theory of governance that is voluntaristic. In fact, all those exercising governing power in the Church must discern what Jesus wants done and do just that; it is not up to them to make decisions and give orders. If pastors—the pope, bishops, and parish priests—would stop thinking they have that sort of personal authority, they would not give most of the orders they do, and would instead instruct and seek voluntary cooperation many of the times they are inclined to give orders.

The point of ordination is capacitation to act *in persona Christi*.

Some people suppose that presbyters and bishops act *in persona Christi* only when they confect the Eucharist, absolve, ordain. If that were true, deacons could not do anything *in persona Christi*. But Vatican II and documents issued since make it clear that clerics also preach and teach *in persona Christi*; the preaching of homilies is limited to the ordained, including deacons. So, in that, at least, they clearly do act *in persona Christi*. The Council and subsequent documents also make it clear that pastoral governance is carried out *in persona Christi*, and deacons can share in that.

People also tend to suppose that the ordained do *in persona Christi* only those things that the nonordained cannot do. I do not think that's true. In an emergency, anyone, even a nonbeliever, who intends to do what the Church does can baptize. Normally, however, baptism consummates the communication of revelation by preaching and its acceptance by faith; Jesus commands the process of preaching, baptism, and follow-up catechesis; so, when the ordained carry out the whole process, they act *in persona Christi* all the way.

At the Last Supper, Jesus blessed, broke, and gave; in the Mass, acting through the priest, he blesses, breaks, and gives. Thus, in distributing Holy Communion, the priest serves as Jesus' instrument in his self-giving to his people, as in the Consecration of self-giving to the Father. When convenient, the deacon assists; surely, in that case, he acts *in persona Christi*, though Eucharistic ministers, not being ordained, do not. They can at best serve only as Jesus' agents; they are not his living instruments. Considering this, one can see why it is preferable that deacons distribute Communion, and especially why they preside at Sunday liturgies in the absence of a priest. Unlike the lay person (even if she is a religious), the deacon makes present Jesus' own actions of gathering his people, instructing them, and nourishing them with his body and blood.



**5–B: A cleric not only should make Jesus’ acts present by appropriate words and gestures done *in persona Christi* but should do all he can to make Jesus’ acts humanly available—i.e., to promote people’s cooperating with them and being saved.**

This requires avoiding clericalism, and attending to the signs of the times.

When dealing with clericalism, begin by pointing out various things that some might take as evidence of clericalism and explain why they are not. It is not clericalism for the clergy to abide by liturgical norms that distinguish their role in liturgies from the roles of the faithful. It is not clericalism for clerics to call people to service rather than asking for volunteers. It is not clericalism for a pastor who has sought and listened to advice to make decisions rather than putting matters to a vote. It is not clericalism for clerics to wear their clerical uniform.

One instance of clericalism: some bishops and priests are extremely inconsiderate of lay people’s feelings. Written a letter or asked about something, they take a long time to reply, not worrying about the increasing anxiety. They make promises and neglect to keep them, heedless of the damage caused. If pressed, they dig in and refuse to be pushed—like a rebellious adolescent. All this pertains to abuse of power, a kind of arrogance. At the same time, such clerics often are absurdly deferential to superiors and to people who have worldly status, wealth and power.

LG 32 (on laity) stresses universal call to holiness and equal dignity of all members. The Council justifies special vocation of sacred ministry as a service for the sake of unity—cooperation and common fulfillment of the love commands. Clergy and laity need each other. Clergy, like Jesus, are to be brothers to those they serve.

Though Catholics express important truths by using words such as “priest,” “Holy Father,” and “magisterium,” the language is dangerous and it would be well to replace it. It is conducive to clericalism among the clergy and those who work closely with them; it is conducive to passivity among the faithful laity, who depend too much on the clergy to take the initiative; it is conducive to rebelliousness among dissatisfied laity, who feel oppressed by the clergy rather than ennobled by God’s tough love in Jesus; it is a huge obstacle to non-Catholic theists who fail to see the glory of God on Jesus’ face when they look at the Catholic Church, but instead are put off by what they regard as pretentious human usurpers of divine prerogatives bent on their own glory.

This section of the outline will be the best place to treat the various virtues that a cleric must cultivate—the general responsibilities about how he must behave that are not already treated in chapter 3.

AG 23–25 sets out the standard that priests going to the missions are to meet, and, in fact, the standard really ought to apply to every priest. So, this section is a short statement of what a priest needs to be.

Many responsibilities of priests that are not specific are common to other professionals—e.g., confidentiality, continuing education, fairness in dealing with parishioners one does not like and avoidance of favoritism, self-examination in regard to ministerial obligations and use of a

peer to help in such self-examination (this supplements standard spiritual direction, which treats only “spiritual life” and ignores work).

A priest must not take advantage of being alone in a parish to do as he likes, not to do the job, to serve himself rather than the parish.

LG 28 sketches the picture of the good presbyter: he gives paternal attention and solicitude to the faithful, provides good example, presides over and serves their local that it can worthily be called by the name given the whole people of God: the Church of God. They should bear in mind that by their daily behavior and care they ought to show believers and unbelievers, Catholics and non-Catholics, the face of a ministry truly priestly and pastoral, and to provide everyone with the testimony of truth and life.

AG 16 urges that seminarians make contact in a special way with the manner of thinking and acting of their own people—that they understand it and learn how to evaluate it. Such cultural sensitivity and criticism also are needed by clerics not in mission territories. It must be borne in mind that cultures of different neighborhoods and social strata in an established diocese in a first-world country can differ very greatly.

SC 59 makes a point about the sacraments in general: their purpose is to sanctify men, build up the body of Christ, and give worship to God. They presuppose and nourish faith—because they are signs consisting of words and objects. The very act of celebrating them disposes the faithful to receive in a fruitful way the grace they offer, to worship God, and to exercise charity.

Well, that is true, more or less. And so how the priest celebrates the sacraments is important: he must do all he can to do it in a way that will most likely be fruitful—and the payoff is defined clearly, not as making people feel good or encouraging them to come back, though that may be important, but in real spiritual benefits.

The Council goes on, though, to make a different true point: it is important that the faithful easily understand the sacramental signs. The cleric can do something about that, obviously, and should as part of making what he does *in persona Christi* really available and fruitful.

AA 7 makes it clear that the renewal of the temporal order is the proper function of the laity (see also AA 13 at the beginning which treats the apostolate in the social sphere as solely for the laity and AA 14 that deals with national and international political action), and AA 2–5 have made it clear that this is a real part of the saving mission of Christ and the apostolate of the Church. So, clerics should not make the mistake of thinking that the Church will not be present and doing her part in political, social, and economic spheres unless they take direct part in those matters.

AA 24 makes it clear that the hierarchy has a role in reference to lay apostolate: to teach relevant moral principles, to judge whether activities conform to the principles, to safeguard the good of the Church and to see to it that her doctrine and order are maintained.

PO 2–3: the Council here obviously is trying to project an understanding of the presbyterate that will free it from clericalism. Orders are for service in the Church; the priesthood of Christ

and of the faithful at large are the point of ordained priesthood. The ordained are taken from among the faithful and set apart not to separate them from others or for their own exaltation but to dedicate them to their special function for God's glory, which consists in people gratefully accepting what God has accomplished in Christ and realizing it in their daily lives.

PO 6: "In building up the Church, presbyters should deal with everyone with outstanding humanity, following the model of the Lord. Nor should they act toward them according to what will please people but according to the demands of doctrine and Christian life, teaching and even admonishing them as very dear children, according to the words of St. Paul."

Jesus was courteous and plainly exclusively concerned with others' true good. But he did not compromise and smooth over to avoid unpopularity; he never asked himself how many followers would be lost if he told people what they did not want but needed to hear.

PO 6 later points out that while a presbyter has duties toward all, he has the poor and lowly entrusted to him in a special way. That does not require reverse discrimination. It does require Christian fairness toward the poor and the inept, those who in a voluntary association usually would be given less attention, less care, even less courtesy and respect.

PO 8 deals with presbyters' relationships with one another—the legitimate place for priestly fraternity and mutual support, for solidarity as a body joined in a common service. The article includes the responsibility to give help to and if necessary admonish those in difficulties, and rightly support with prayer and brotherliness those who fail in some way. The article also mentions the advantages of some sort of community life for presbyters and recommends some form of it to them, subject to bishops' approval.

8. Priests by virtue of their ordination to the priesthood are united among themselves in an intimate sacramental brotherhood. In individual dioceses priests form one priesthood under their own bishop. Even though priests are assigned to different duties, nevertheless they carry on one priestly ministry for men. All priests are sent as coworkers in the same apostolate, whether they engage in parochial or extraparochial ministry. . . . All, indeed, are united in the building up of the body of Christ which especially in our times requires manifold duties and new methods. [The truth is that they should be united in building up the one body, but often they have other agendas.] It is very important that all priests, whether diocesan or religious, help one another always to be fellow workers in the truth (cf. 3 Jn 8). Each one, therefore, is united in special bonds of apostolic charity, ministry and brotherhood with the other members of this priesthood. This has been manifested from ancient times in the liturgy, when the priests present at an ordination are invited to impose hands together with the ordaining bishop on the new candidate and with united hearts celebrate the sacred Eucharist. Each and every priest, therefore, is united with his fellow priests in a bond of charity, prayer and total cooperation. [The lack of genuine *communio* among priests blocks effective witness: the world does not know that the Son was sent by the Father.] In this manner they manifest that unity which Christ willed, namely, that his own be perfected in one so that the world might know that the Son was sent by the Father (cf. Jn 17:23).

Older priests, therefore, should receive younger priests as true brothers and help them in their first undertakings and priestly duties. The older ones should likewise endeavor to understand the mentality of younger priests, even though it be different from their own, and follow their projects with good will. By the same token, young priests should respect the age and experience of their seniors; they should seek their advice and willingly cooperate with them in everything that pertains to the care of souls. [The jump to older and younger priests makes it clear that those involved in the Council recognized tensions on that basis. They of course do not recognize the divisions to which their own duplicity would give rise in the wake of the Council.] In a fraternal spirit, priests should extend hospitality (cf. Heb 13:1–2), [That does not mean that they may use the goods of the Church endlessly to entertain one another and party. One urgently needed reform is to provide bishops and priests with a decent stipend and to include entertainment of other clerics in personal rather than Church expenses.] cultivate kindness and share their goods in common (cf. Heb 13:16). They should be particularly solicitous for the sick, the afflicted, those overburdened with work, the lonely, those exiled from their homeland and those who suffer persecution (cf. Mt 5:10). They should gladly and joyfully gather together for recreation, remembering Christ’s invitation to the weary apostles: “Come aside to a desert place and rest awhile” (Mk 6:31). . . . One should hold also in high regard and eagerly promote those associations which, having been recognized by competent ecclesiastical authority, encourage priestly holiness in the ministry by the use of an appropriate and duly approved rule of life and by fraternal aid, intending thus to do service to the whole order of priests.

Finally, by reason of the same communion in the priesthood, priests should realize that they are obliged in a special manner toward those priests who labor under certain difficulties. They should give them timely help and also, if necessary, admonish them discreetly. Moreover, they should always treat with fraternal charity and magnanimity those who have failed in some matters, offer urgent prayers to God for them and continually show themselves as true brothers and friends.

The Council fails to say it, but genuine fraternal communion, since it is centered in communion with Jesus, also requires that when the admonition is not effective, a priest should report a seriously misbehaving brother to the bishop, and if the bishop fails to deal rightly with grave wrongdoing, should blow the whistle even on him. The military analogy helps here: a soldier would have a strict duty to turn in a buddy who was betraying the cause, being unfaithful to the commander, putting the whole in jeopardy. If he failed to fulfill that duty, he himself would be gravely at fault.

CIC, c. 280: “Some sort of community life is highly recommended for clerics; where it exists, it must be preserved as much as possible.” The idea is common residence and table (the parish priest and assistants in a rectory, with dinner together). It does not entail common property as common life in a religious community does. The idea is not so much sign value of community as mutual moral and psychological support—the benefits of friendship—but also includes studying together and discussion of their work—e.g., homilies and other pastoral matters. It is

especially important for newly ordained priests to have some sort of common life with an experienced mentor during their first year—cf. *Directory for Life and Ministry of Priests*, 82.

PO 9: treats the relationships of presbyters with those they serve as fathers and teachers. It begins from what they have in common—priests are brothers among brothers—and mentions the respect presbyters should have for the laity. It then focuses on service, beginning with leading the faithful to the unity of charity, promoting the common good, defending the truth, providing the sacraments, relating to separated Christians, serving non-Christians (presumably by going after them). The article ends by mentioning the responsibilities of the laity to follow priests, share their cares, and help them insofar as possible.

PO 14 takes up a challenge: the business of life, the distractions of many duties. The Council warns against trying to deal with this by a mere external arrangement of the works of ministry or by setting up a regular program of religious exercises—in other words, the old fashioned notion of cultivating an interior life will not work. That is not to say some of those practices don't have a place; they do. But the principle lays deeper. Priests must be determined, like Jesus, to follow God's will. That—personal vocation—integrates and unifies life. They are called to unite themselves with Jesus in doing this, and to share his pastoral charity: his determination to carry out his saving mission for all (saving is not to be understood narrowly, to mean just making it into heaven, but to include holiness). Prayer is required precisely to keep the principle in view and adhesion to it alive: to apply to oneself the action that occurs on the altar, one must penetrate ever more deeply into the mystery of Christ. Thus, priestly prayer supports his personal, active participation in the Mass, and this participation becomes the center of his cooperation with Jesus' saving work.

The Council ends by arguing that a priest who gets it all together in this way will be a team player: he will measure everything by God's will, which requires that he bring all his activities into conformity with the norms of the Church's evangelical mission, and that means working in harmony with their bishop and fellow presbyters.

In practice, the trouble with this is twofold. (1) When the bishops are divided from one another over what a presbyter believes to be essentials, and when some bishops are divided from the pope about them, the requirement of solidarity for presbyters becomes unclear, and so those firmly and rightly committed to organizing their lives as the Council teaches here are left more or less anchorless. (2) When the diocesan curia directs presbyters with the bishop's authority to do things—we're not talking about Church doctrine, canon law, or liturgical norms—that the conscientious presbyter is convinced are incompatible with pastoral charity, and the bishop refuses to discuss the matter, the presbyter can be perplexed.

PO 17 teaches: Priests as well as bishops will avoid anything that would put off poor people and will exclude every appearance of vanity (material showing off, conspicuous consumption) from their affairs. The concern obviously is to facilitate the fruitfulness of what the priest does. The Council in the same article commends voluntary poverty, community life, and sharing material goods as conducive to pastoral charity—keeping a complete focus on saving souls (and promoting their fulfillment in Christ) rather than having and enjoying things.

PO 19 deals with ongoing study and intellectual formation of priests: meditative study of Scripture, study of the Fathers and Doctors, knowledge of Church documents to be able to answer people's questions, consultation of best approved authors in theology, knowledge of human affairs. Bishops are to provide appropriate help in this—see 6–E.

PO 22: a conclusion and exhortation to priests. Elements of this exhortation probably should be developed into an affirmative encouragement toward the end of chapter 5, which will strike priests as very tough.

GS 4 begins dealing with the “signs of the times” and it is clear here that these are current and emerging features of the culture to be taken into account, so that pastoral work is relevant, but are not per se normative. In other words, one cannot ignore what is going on but it may be good, bad, or (as is usually the case) morally ambiguous and open to being used well or badly. The Church must interpret the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel; thus observing them is part of the “see” that must precede the “judge” and lead to act. The temptation is to judge before seeing, and so to judge falsely by literally not knowing what one is talking about or not attending to relevant characteristics.

Clerics should not suppress difficulties that come to mind or try not to think about doubts raised by their experience in pastoral work. Trying to conform without thinking destroys one's integrity. At the same time, they must not rationalize their own shortcomings, including compromises in pastoral work. Need not say everything one thinks but may never affirm what one considers false. In thinking about questions, must search for truth, not simply look for support for the answer that is desired—that is basic fault of intellectual life generally. When pressed, one can say: “I have a problem with that but do not think it my place to teach or preach anything at odds with the Church's teaching.” In preaching, must stick to what one is confident of and seriously strives to live by; otherwise, will be ineffective in giving witness.

GS 43: all pastors should bear in mind that by their daily behavior and concerns—solicitude, that is, what they worry about—they show the face of the Church to the world, and that people judge the force and truth of the Christian message by that.

LG 28 repeated in GS 43 calls on priests to share their care and work under the guidance of bishops and the pope, eliminate every sort of division, so that the whole human race will be led into the unity of the family of God. In GS 43 the Council goes on to point out how much damage is done to the spread of the Gospel by admitted human failings of those entrusted with the Gospel.

Part of the clericalist complex arises from a false sense of separateness and superiority. But are not the ordained separated from and set over the simple faithful? Qua ordained, yes. And the service for which a man is ordained should fully absorb his capacities, so that he never steps outside his “professional” role as a physician or teacher does. Moreover, he is set apart for life, unlike, say, a political leader, in a position most others never arrive at, unlike, say, parents. Yet the cleric also remains one of the simple faithful, in need of God's mercy and grace, in need of the forgiveness of the sacrament of penance, in need of instruction by the word, and so forth. And as Augustine made clear in his famous remark about what he was

as a bishop for and as a Christian with his people, that solidarity with the faithful always remains basic and important. So, the solution is not a superficial familiarity with and assimilation to the laity—“Just call me Father Tom or, even better, plain Tom” and wearing sports clothes—but real solidarity with them in sorrow and gratitude, and in struggling alongside them to live a holy life and sharing their human condition—for example, of poverty, of conscientious obedience.

Some treatment is needed of the place, but limits, of psychological helps and counseling and therapy in priests' lives.

Among clerics, there often is a good deal of envy—which shows up in detraction, unfriendly gossip about, the man who is succeeding in some way, getting ahead of the rest, becoming more popular with his people. Think of James and John, and the reaction of the others. This is a very questionable business: clerics should be fulfilling their responsibilities and not much concerned with others. In some way, the solution is to return to the basic reality of what the priesthood should be: service to Jesus and his people. If the focus is there, clerics should see that they are working together in a common enterprise, and should be glad when someone does well—like the winning team that is grateful for and to its biggest stars. This, though, requires a sense of working together, and that sense is hard to sustain when men are spread around, see little of each other, and operate pretty much as lone rangers. And we can expect more of that in the future. The whole is aggravated insofar as bishops deal with individual priests, and the cooperative relationship is not developed among the community as such cooperating under the bishop's leadership. So there is a problem here for bishops—to be dealt with in 6–E.

CIC, c. 275, §1: “Since clerics all work for the same purpose, namely, the building up of the body of Christ, they are to be united among themselves by a bond of brotherhood and prayer and are to strive for cooperation among themselves according to the prescripts of particular law.” Priestly fraternity is important, and needs to be built up; the men need to help one another, as soldiers or team members do, to provide their important service. So, they should support one another in all sorts of ways. Like brotherhood, that is quite independent on feelings of affection, or whether one enjoys spending time with another.

Priests ought not to be like fraternity brothers, who don't criticize one another and who would never rat on one another. Nor should they be like blood brothers, who will help and support each other in times of difficulty but who need not get involved in one another's work or profession. Rather, they are to be more like brothers in combat who are loyal to their nation, but care for each other and help each other survive and win.

But priests also need intimate friends, and that is important for their own fulfillment, and to avoid loneliness.

Human virtues of association are important insofar as they enable the priest to make Jesus' acts available—being courteous, friendly, serene, polite. Writing thank you notes, showing interest in personal concerns, and so on.

CIC, c. 276, §1: “In leading their lives, clerics are bound in a special way to pursue holiness since, having been consecrated to God by a new title in the reception of orders, they are dispensers of the mysteries of God in the service of His people.” Richer and clearer: CCEO, 368: “Clerics are bound in a special manner to the perfection which Christ proposed to his disciples, since they are consecrated to God in a new way by sacred ordination, so that they may become suitable instruments of Christ, the eternal priest, in the service of the people of God, and at the same time that they be exemplary models to the flock.”

This strongly suggests that the special elements of perfection Christ proposes to some but not all are proposed primarily to clerics, and that the basis is their suitability to act *in persona Christi* and example to the faithful. Ordination is a consecration to God.

This fits well with the idea that holiness is required of clerics especially by pastoral charity that seeks salvific benefits by the acts done. CIC, c. 276, §2, lists means of pursuing holiness, among which the first is: “they are first of all to fulfill faithfully and tirelessly the duties of the pastoral ministry.”

CIC, c. 285, says that clerics are to refrain from things unbecoming to or foreign to their state according to the prescriptions of particular law. The canon expressly excludes assuming any public office that entails participation in the exercise of civil power. C. 286: They are barred from various secular activities involving money and from conducting a profit making business or trade, except with permission of appropriate ecclesiastical authority. (Note: CIC, c. 1392: “Clerics or religious who exercise a trade or business contrary to the precepts of the canons [i.e., cc. 286 and 672] are to be punished according to the gravity of the delict.”) C. 287, §1: They are “to foster peace and harmony based on justice which are to be observed among people.” §2: They are not to have a part in conducting political parties or governing labor unions unless the rights of the Church or the common good requires it in the judgment of ecclesiastical authority. (C. 288: The restrictions in 285–87 do not apply to permanent deacons.) C. 289: Clerics are not to volunteer for military service and are to use exemptions from exercising functions and public civil offices foreign to the clerical state (which includes jury duty)—though the ordinary can give permission to volunteer and proper authority not to use exemptions.

These provisions probably serve diverse purposes. In some cases, what is at stake is at least partly simply keeping clerics doing what they’ve been consecrated for, not getting distracted. In some cases, it is at least partly a matter of not impeding the fruitfulness of their ministry. The latter is the case whenever an activity would involve them in matters that might be divisive even for solid Church members; their business is to promote unity.

The business of worker priests is not at stake here. If there is really an argument for priests working in order to evangelize, it would be appropriate for them to work. The trouble is that the situation is not apt for pastoral ministry but is for lay witness; moreover, the workers are more likely to subvert the priests than the priests convert the workers.

2 Tm 2.3–4: “Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him.” On the



one hand, the good soldier puts up with hardships and accepts battle scars; on the other, he resists getting distracted from the single purpose to which he has committed himself, the goal of his leader in combat. That applies to those who enlist for special service as close collaborators with Jesus. They must not be distracted into secular interests; they must concentrate on the things of the Lord, and make sure that everything they do contributes to the end. Their models should be Jesus' monomania and Paul's reasonable facsimile of it.

Good pastors do not stretch the idea of pastoral to mean consequentialist compromising, bending, and stretching of moral norms and the Church's law, without prejudice to making legitimate exceptions. They are free of clericalist arrogance and legalism, so that they clearly realize that they are dealing with sacred realities and moral truths, which cannot be got around. At the same time, good pastors are compassionate: they fully feel the pain people suffer, and do their best to ease it and avoid aggravating it, with the result that they proceed as gently as possible. In this, good pastors are like good surgeons, who cut away no more than necessary for the patient's good, provide pain relief insofar as compatible with health, are attentive to the patient's suffering and always sympathetic, and so do everything as gently as possible while making clear why they cannot spare the patient when that is impossible.

In Mt 23.8–11 Jesus, having excoriated the scribes and Pharisees, says to his disciples that they are not to be called "rabbi" or "father" or "teacher" for there is only one father (in heaven) and teacher (the Messiah). And he calls (23.12) for humility: All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted. Heb 7.15–10.18 makes it clear that Jesus is the unique priest of the new covenant. Jesus is the priest, the mediator of the new covenant (Heb 8.6, 9.15, 12.24) and he is the only mediator (1 Tm 2.5); he alone knows the Father and can reveal him to others (Mt 11.27).

In Jn 10.11–14 Jesus calls himself "the good shepherd" and says (10.16) there will be "one flock, one shepherd." He is the great shepherd (Heb 13.20) and the chief shepherd (1 Pt 5.4). Still, shepherds are mentioned as Church officers in Eph 4.11 and elders are addressed as shepherds in Acts 20.28. In Jn 21.15–17 Peter is designated shepherd of both lambs and sheep.

CIC, c. 787, §1: "By the witness of their life and word, missionaries are to establish a sincere dialogue with those who do not believe in Christ so that, in a manner adapted to their own temperament and culture, avenues are opened enabling them to understand the message of the gospel." CCEO 584, §2, puts it more clearly: "The evangelization of the nations should be so done that, preserving the integrity of faith and morals, the Gospel can be expressed in the culture of individual peoples; namely, in catechetics, their own liturgical rites, in sacred art, in particular law, and in short, the whole ecclesial life." This is a way of expressing the idea of inculturation with respect to the initial communication of the faith. The same idea applies to other situations of evangelization and catechesis. It's the truth of faith that is to be conveyed; what can be discarded are nonessentials that constitute obstacles for others to receive and accept the truth of faith. So, inculturation is an important part of the cleric's secondary responsibility: to do what he can so that what is done *in persona Christi* is fruitful for people's salvation and sanctification.

One problem with this: culture is very much a variety of cultures, not homogeneous. So, whose culture is going to be respected? If the culture of upper middle class Catholics in America who are most interested were taken as the target, the result would be alien to most lower class people.

Precisely because Jesus gathers up the Church and unites ministers with himself by ordination, they receive no authority whatsoever from their people, and so act unjustly toward them if they in any way act toward them independently of what Jesus wants to do with them and for them. In accepting orders and an assignment in which to exercise them, the ordained undertake a trust whose specifications are extremely strict, and so have no discretion to change its terms or act independently of them, but must carry them out conscientiously. By contrast, political officials in a democratic society, having been chosen by the people and being answerable to them, have discretion creatively to pursue the common good as they conceive it, and even in extreme situations to make exceptions to fundamental law—as Lincoln suppressed habeas corpus to preserve the union.

The social categories for the more respected occupations—professionals, executives, and public officials; entertainment, athletic, and media stars; artists and craftspeople; and so on—have no place for bishops and priests. For the sake of gaining an acceptable social status and a sense of their own identity, they are tempted to assimilate themselves, both in their own minds and in their lifestyle, to some of the more prestigious of these occupations. Doing that is a factor that makes for certain aspects of clericalism. It violates the obligation to give witness, for it conceals the uniqueness of what they really are.

They ought to realize that Jesus himself in his own day did not fit in, and the devil's temptations were to conform to the requirements of a social category. He often disappointed the expectations of people who regarded him as a prophet and wonder worker. He was neither a priest as people understood that role nor the Messiah they expected. At the end of his life, he appeared to be a disappointing pseudo-Messiah: the detested righteous man of Wisdom, the Suffering Servant of Isaiah.

Jesus came to mediate God to fallen humankind, to bring about their reunion with the Father and their transformation into his children. The ordained are to serve Jesus and their fellows by making his mediation available to them. That occupation, though it fits no prestigious social category, is far nobler than any other. Just as Jesus cared for nothing but the kingdom, so must the ordained.

St. Paul is an exemplar for clerics with respect to their obligation to be christlike. He is able to say: Imitate me as I imitate Christ (1 Cor 11.1). The death and life of Jesus is manifested in his flesh (2 Cor 4.10f). He tells of his own sin and of what God's grace has done for him. The ordained must be a man of God (1 Tm 6.11).

Sent to where Jesus wishes to be present, the priest needs to be a man whom people of all sorts will welcome into their midst and even into their hearts. Sent to bear witness to God's truth, the priest needs deep and solid faith. Sent to build up the new covenantal communion of sinful human beings with God and one another, the priest needs genuine and warm love to

reassure and attract all who are willing to give up their sins. Sent to make present Jesus' self-sacrifice so that the faithful will be able to join him in it and offer themselves, too, in thanksgiving to the Father, the priest needs lively hope so that he can gladly sacrifice everything else for Jesus and his kingdom.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 21–23, presents pastoral charity as the principle of priestly spirituality.

21 begins by affirming that by sacramental consecration the priest is configured to Christ as head and shepherd, and shares his authority. “By virtue of this consecration brought about by the outpouring of the Spirit in the sacrament of holy orders, the spiritual life of the priest is marked, molded and characterized by the way of the way of thinking and acting proper to Jesus Christ, head and shepherd of the Church, and which are summed up in his pastoral charity.” (Actually, the pastoral charity is the principle of appropriate clerical thought and action.) 21 goes on to explain that the authority and headship of the cleric is to be exercised, like Jesus' own, as dedicated service; the priest must be, like Jesus, victim. In this regard, the priest is to be a model for the priestly People, “which for its part is called to display this same priestly attitude of service toward the world—in order to bring to humanity the fullness of life and complete liberation.”

22 develops the idea of Jesus as head and servant by considering him as shepherd, and then articulates pastoral charity as the principle of the Good Shepherd's relationship with his sheep—series of quotes from NT. Jesus is the chief shepherd (1 Pt 5.4) because he appoints others to help; the apostles and their successors, including priests, continue his service “and are called to imitate and to live out his own pastoral charity.” 22 goes on to say that pastoral charity is a spousal love: just as Jesus, who is the Church's head and shepherd also is her bridegroom, so the priest “stands in this spousal relationship with regard to the community.” So, the priest both stands in the forefront of the Church and must, like Christ, live out spousal love toward the Church.

23 tries to clarify what pastoral charity is and to indicate exactly what it does for the priest. Pastoral charity is a gift of the Spirit which is the internal principle of the priest's spiritual life; it is gift of self to the Church; it is for the universal Church, not just a part of it; it is in communion with the bishop and fellow priests, a common spirit of service; it flows from love of Christ and is sharing in his self-sacrificing love for others; its source is the sacrament of orders, but is expressed and nourished by the Eucharist and realized in it. The final paragraph of 23 then makes it clear that pastoral charity is the unifying principle for all priestly life and service: “Only by directing every moment and every one of his acts toward the fundamental choice to ‘give his life for the flock’ can the priest guarantee this unity which is vital and indispensable for his harmony and spiritual balance.”

This last point is relevant to complaints by clergy that they lack sufficient time for their own spiritual life due to the press of pastoral duties. If the latter are carried out simply as required behavior, they are time consuming and burdensome without building up the pastoral worker. If clerics engage in spiritual exercises and prayer for their own self-perfection without regard to their pastoral responsibilities, those activities not only displace fulfillment of those responsibilities but are vain, since they do not build up the individual's genuine relationship

with God. If priests prepare well to preach and teach, to counsel and administer sacraments, they are praying. If they meditate with a view to maintaining their relationship with Jesus so as to have the proper motivation for serving his people, they are engaging in pastoral work while meditating. Loving Jesus means putting his cause first, and his cause is service to those to be saved and sanctified.

Pastoral love is not analyzed as well as one would like. The text makes it clear that, like conjugal love, the volitional heart of the matter is the firm commitment, in accepting ordination, to provide pastoral service with the intention Jesus has—to make God's gift's available to people and to encourage and support them in accepting and making the most of them: everyone a Catholic and every Catholic a saint. There also is an emotional dimension to pastoral love, a special attachment to Jesus that moves one to collaborate closely with him, share his work and self-sacrifice. Pastoral love is not separate from a priest's love of neighbor but is the proper form his love of neighbor takes—and it should extend to everyone, including nonbelievers, members of his family of origin, fellow clerics, and so on—just as Jesus' work for the kingdom left nobody out.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 26, deals with the dialectical bond between the priest's spiritual life and his ministry of the word, sacrament, and pastoral (in the narrow sense) charity. He must approach the word prayerfully, be formed by it, and be freed, so that he can preach the word itself (not himself) and do so effectively. Also with the Eucharist and sacraments; the more they sanctify him, the more effectively he administers them for others' benefit. And his exercise of the *munus* regendi requires human virtues of him, which in turn make him effective. (This last is like the way in which bringing up children sanctifies the parents.)

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 33, teaches that priests depend entirely on the Holy Spirit and should be aware of that gift—grace will sustain them. The pope quotes at length from an earlier address to 5000 priests, making it clear that the vocation to priesthood is a specific call to holiness—the holiness of being a good priest and needed to be an effective priest. The final paragraph of the quote adumbrates the distinction between acting *in persona Christi* and making those acts available:

Beloved, through ordination, you have received the same Spirit of Christ, who makes you like him, so that you can act in his name [one thing] and so that his very mind and heart might live in you [another]. This intimate communion with the Spirit of Christ—while guaranteeing the efficacy [one thing] of the sacramental actions which you perform *in persona Christi* [another]—seeks to be expressed in fervent prayer, in integrity of life, in the pastoral charity of a ministry tirelessly spending itself for the salvation of the brethren. In a word, it calls for your personal sanctification. [So, the Spirit requires the priest's personal holiness for the greater efficacy of what he does *in persona Christi*.]”

Holiness is required of the priest, not insofar as he acts *in persona Christi*, but insofar as he needs to do what he can to make those acts fruitful. *Pastores dabo vobis*, 43, has a helpful statement:

The ministry of the priest is, certainly, to proclaim the word, to celebrate the sacraments, to guide the Christian community in charity “in the name and in the person of Christ,” but all this he does dealing always and only with individual human beings: “Every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God” (Heb. 5:1).

So we see that the human formation of the priest shows its special importance when related to the receivers of the mission: In order that his ministry may be humanly as credible and acceptable as possible, it is important that the priest should mold his human personality in such a way that it becomes a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ the Redeemer of humanity.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 57, in treating pastoral formation, emphasizes the need to be formed in the exercise of pastoral charity: “It is a question of a type of formation meant not only to ensure scientific, pastoral competence and practical skill, but also and especially a way of being in communion with the very sentiments and behavior of Christ the good shepherd: ‘Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus’ (Phil. 2:5).” That sort of formation is aimed at developing the maximum likeness to Jesus in those who will be priests, for the sake of their pastoral effectiveness.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 59, quotes the synod fathers proposition 28, regarding the priest’s responsibility to defend human rights and dignity while avoiding inappropriate involvement:

The priest must be a witness of the charity of Christ himself who “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). He must also be a visible sign of the solicitude of the Church who is mother and teacher. And given that man today is affected by so many hardships, especially those who are sunk in inhuman poverty, blind violence and unjust power, it is necessary that the man of God who is to be equipped for every good work (cf. 2 Tm. 3:17) should defend the rights and dignity of man. Nevertheless, he should be careful not to adopt false ideologies, nor should he forget, as he strives to promote its perfecting, that the only redemption of the world is that effected by the cross of Christ.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 74, includes a profoundly anticlericalist paragraph:

The priest should grow in awareness of the deep communion uniting him to the People of God: He is not only “in the forefront of” the Church, but above all “in” the Church. He is a brother among brothers. By baptism, which marks him with the dignity and freedom of the children of God in the only begotten Son, the priest is a member of the one body of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:16). His consciousness of this communion leads to a need to awaken and deepen co-responsibility in the one common mission of salvation, with a prompt and heartfelt esteem for all the charisms and tasks which the Spirit gives believers for the building up of the Church. It is above all in the exercise of the pastoral ministry, directed by its very nature to the good of the People of God, that the priest must live and give witness to his profound communion with all. As Pope Paul VI wrote: “We must become

brothers to all at the very same time as we wish to be their shepherds, fathers and teachers. The climate of dialogue is friendship. Indeed it is service.” [*Ecclesiam suam*, III, AAS 56 (1964) 647.

This points to a pastoral approach that ceases trying to control and manage everything, one that invites and shapes general collaboration, using everybody’s gifts in an effort to carry out the parish’s mission as effectively as possible.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 75, exhorts priests to fidelity: “The priest must be faithful no matter how many and varied the difficulties he meets, even in the most uncomfortable situations or when he is understandably tired, expending all his available energy until the end of his life. Paul’s witness should be both an example and an incentive for every priest.”

Priests often excuse laziness by saying that they simply cannot do everything they should. The example of Paul’s energetic and all-out carrying out of his mission should be a model for them.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 78, deals with the laity’s role in the ongoing formation of priests. The pope says:

Priests are not there to serve themselves but the People of God. So, ongoing formation, in ensuring the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral maturity of priests, is doing good to the People of God itself. Besides, the very exercise of the pastoral ministry leads to a constant and fruitful mutual exchange between the priest’s life of faith and that of the laity. Indeed the very relationship and sharing of life between the priest and the community, if it is wisely conducted and made use of, will be a fundamental contribution to permanent formation, which cannot be reduced to isolated episodes or initiatives, but covers the whole ministry and life of the priest.

That will work to the extent that the priest is not clericalist, and will fail to the extent that he is. For clericalism makes the relationship one-sided: the people receive but do not criticize, communicate their needs, make constructive suggestions. Mutuality and cooperation, which benefit the priest himself and help him to his work, become possible insofar as clericalist attitudes and habits are overcome.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 82, makes the point that God wants priests to share Jesus’ heart—that moves from making his acts present to making them fruitful as he wishes: “God promises the Church not just any sort of shepherds, but shepherds ‘after his own heart.’ And God’s ‘heart’ has revealed itself to us fully in the heart of Christ the good shepherd. Christ’s heart continues today to have compassion for the multitudes and to give them the bread of truth, the bread of love, the bread of life (cf. Mk. 6:30ff.), and it pleads to be allowed to beat in other hearts — priests’ hearts: ‘You give them something to eat’ (Mk. 6:37).”

*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 16–17, deal with authority as an *amoris officium* and the temptation of democratism. The first stresses that authority must be exercised as service rather than in an overbearing manner, and backs that up with several Scripture quotes. The second warns against disdaining the configuration of the clergy to Christ, head and shepherd, because of an incorrect view of community—namely, thinking of the Church as a society formed by the will of its members rather than as a covenantal community (with a

hierarchical structure) given by God along with all her wealth and action, whose members' freedom comes into play only by their accepting the gift and cooperating in enjoying it.

The treatment basically is sound. However, it omits emphasis on the fact that the clergy can rightly do only what Jesus wants done, which greatly boxes them in. They can act in his person, and so make those acts present, and then do what they can to make his acts available—to promote the relationship and cooperation that he seeks in doing his acts. But beyond that, they have no power. So, if clerics act as they should, the faithful (and prospective converts) will be able to see them as part of the gift accepted by faith, not as authorities who impose anything.

*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 27, says that priestly fraternity should lead priests to provide one another goods “of the warmth of friendship, of affectionate help, of acceptance, of fraternal correction.” That would mean helping and shaping one another up in faithfulness to common responsibilities, not merely supporting one another regardless. This falls under priests' responsibilities to do only what Jesus wants done—and he wants them to do these things so as to help each other make his acts fruitful.

Specific problems of cooperation among priests (and deacons, and priests and deacons with one another) need to be treated in this section. One of those problems is that of the relationships between clerics living and/or working together. Here is the problem of priests in a rectory. Either there is an appointed head for this group—a pastor, with assistants and, perhaps, priests in residence—or not. If not, the relationship should be fraternal and collegial; they support and help each other as possible, but their primary pastoral responsibilities are basically individual. But if a pastor, how far should the others be expected to obey?

John Paul II, General Audience 28 July 1993, 3 (OR Eng, 4/11 Aug. 1993), p. 7, has a very good statement setting out the norm excluding the Church's pastors from direct involvement in social and political action, particularly by taking sides; this is necessary for the pastor “in order to remain a man for all in terms of brotherhood and, to the extent that he is accepted as such, of spiritual fatherhood.” He explains that the norm is defeasible in exceptional cases to support the cause of peace and justice, then sums up: “Thus the Church still has her own task: proclaiming the Gospel, limiting herself to cooperating in her own way in the common good, without aiming at or accepting a political role.”

The norm is defeasible without undercutting the general principle that the ordained ought to do only Jesus' acts and what they can to make them available. In extreme circumstances, direct action may be necessary to bear effective witness to a particular point (Bishop Vaughan's participation in operation rescue) or to manifest love of neighbor, which otherwise would be gravely obscured by one's seeming indifference (the teaching brothers rescuing the injured and nursing them).

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2442: “It is not the role of the Pastors of the Church to intervene directly in the political structuring and organization of social life. This task is part of the vocation of the lay faithful, acting on their own initiative with their fellow citizens. Social

action can assume various concrete forms. It should always have the common good in view and be in conformity with the message of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church.”

Clerics ought to convey the relevant Church teaching and gospel message, and the norms guiding the faithful’s action. But the laity ought to pursue the secular goods directly.

*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 41:

In giving the Word of God, which he himself has received with joy, the priest is reminded of the exhortation given by the Bishop on the day of his Ordination: “Therefore, making the Word the object of your continual reflection, always believe what you read, teach what you believe, carry out in your life what you teach. In this way, through the doctrine which nourishes the People of God and with life’s upright testimony which comforts and sustains them, you will become a builder of the temple of God, which is the Church”. Likewise regarding the celebration of the sacraments, and in particular the Eucharist: “Be aware, then, of what you are doing, understand what is being fulfilled and why you are celebrating the mystery of the death and Resurrection of the Lord, bear the death of Christ in your body and walk in the newness of life”. And, finally, regarding the pastoral guidance of the People of God so as to lead them to the Father: “Therefore, never turn your face from Christ, the Good Shepherd, who has come not to be served, but to serve, and to seek and save those who are lost”.(124) (124) *Pontificale Romanum—De ordinatione Episcopi, Presbyterorum et Diaconorum*, cap. II, n. 151, Ed. typica altera 1990, pp. 87–88.

The document quotes this in the context of a norm that priests ought to make the liturgy the matrix for their personal spirituality, their personal prayer and devotion.

*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 44, gives a formulation of what it calls “functionalism”:

Pastoral charity faces the danger, today especially, of being emptied of its meaning through so-called “functionalism”. It is not rare, in fact, to perceive, even in some priests, the influence of an erroneous mentality which reduces the ministerial priesthood to strictly functional aspects. To merely play the role of the priest, carrying out a few services and ensuring completion of various tasks would make up the entire priestly existence. Such a reductive conception of the identity of the ministry of the priest risks pushing their lives towards an emptiness, an emptiness which often comes to be filled by lifestyles not consonant with their very ministry.

Another name for that might be that the priest reduces himself to being a machine for delivering the sacraments, canned up homilies, and the like. That might suffice for making Jesus’ acts (or some of them) present, but lacks the effort to make them available, thus emptying out the priest’s own life.



*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 55:*

As pastor of the community, the priest exists and lives for it; he prays, studies, works and sacrifices himself for the community. He is disposed to give his life for it, loving it as Christ does, pouring out upon it all his love and consideration,(173) lavishing it with all his strength and unlimited time in order to render it, in the image of the Church, Spouse of Christ, always more beautiful and worthy of the benevolence of God and the love of the Holy Spirit.

This spousal dimension of the priest as pastor will help him guide his community in service to each and every one of its members, enlightening their consciences with the light of revealed truth, wisely guarding the evangelical authenticity of the Christian life, correcting errors, forgiving, curing the sick, consoling the afflicted, and promoting fraternity.(174)

(173) Cf John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, 22–23: l.c., 690–694; Apostolic Letter *Mulieris dignitatem* ( 15 August 1988), 26: AAS 80 ( 1988), 1715–1716.

(174) Cf Ecumenical Vatican Council II, Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 6; C.I.C., can. 529 § 1.

Rather well put on the complete dedication required: do the very best you can for your people.

*Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 62:*

The obligation to follow the Magisterium in matters of faith and morals is intrinsically united to all the functions which the priest must perform in the Church. Dissent in this area is to be considered grave, in that it produces scandal and confusion among the faithful.

...

As for the ministry of Christ and of his Church, the priest generously takes on the duty to faithfully fulfill each and every norm, avoiding any sense of partial compliance according to subjective criteria, which creates division and has damaging effects upon the lay faithful and public opinion.

While not all dissent is grave and some exceptions need to be made to norms, these statements indicate pretty well the need for priests to act, not on their own, but as agents of the Church.

*Pastores dabo vobis*, 72: “The intellectual dimension of formation likewise needs to be continually fostered through the priest’s entire life, especially by a commitment to study and a serious and disciplined familiarity with modern culture.” *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 79: “Such organization [formal programs of formation] must be accompanied by the habit of personal study, since periodic courses would be of little use if not accompanied by serious study.[note omitted]”

So, priests must go on studying in a serious way—study is a requirement for doing the job properly.

*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 79: “Another sign of this love [i.e., pastoral love] is concern not to wound the other person, especially if he or she is weak in faith,(129 [Cf. 1 Cor 8:9–13; Rom 14:15]) with statements that may be clear for those who are already initiated but which for the faithful can be a source of bewilderment and scandal, like a wound in the soul.”

Even proposing God’s authentic word *in persona Christi* can be wrong at times: when it is likely to be misunderstood or, if understood, is unlikely to be received and likely to provoke resistance. For example, preaching about hell that is not fully subordinated to preaching about the kingdom, as Jesus’ always was, is dangerous and counterproductive. Counseling a suffering person by saying: “The sufferings of the present are not worthy to be compared to the glory that will be revealed” can be inappropriate until one has shared their awareness of the evil they are suffering, felt it with them, and taken appropriate action with respect to it—e.g., carefully carried out the liturgy the Church provides for the sick and dying and dead.

*Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, 18, makes the point that the bishop is one of the faithful, and so is both disciple and teacher, etc.; then 19 goes on to make the point that, as responsible for leading others to holiness, the bishop has a special reason to strive for holiness.

*Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, 21, speaking of bishops makes a point that holds for each and every cleric, namely, that having been “conformed” to Christ by ordination, he “is urged to fashion himself in a special way after Christ both in his personal life and in the exercise of his apostolic ministry, in order that the mind of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 2.16) may pervade his whole way of thinking, feeling, and all his dealings with men.”

The idea here is precisely the notion that the ordained must, to make Jesus’ acts available, become as much like Jesus as possible.

*Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, 28: calls on bishops to practice poverty, and specifies, among other things: “Likewise he has home that is modest in furnishing, style and staff. He is modest in dress and conduct and has modest income and expenses.” That also is good advice for priests. The notion that they need to live up to the standard of professionals or upper middle class respectability is faulty, takes time and attention away from ministry, and sends a false message.

*Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, 28: “He will avoid every appearance of lordship or of secular business.” That applies equally to priests. Lordship is being a big-shot, an important public figure. Of course, the bishop or pastor is an important person, particularly to his people. But the important public figures have a certain lifestyle and manner of behavior which announces and promotes their status. That is contrary to the slave-role of clerics, which ought to be made clear to everyone. The appearance of secular business confuses matters as to what is important and how people are to cooperate.

*Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, 28: “Finally, he [a bishop] practices such restraint in functions and administration and in attending purely civil ceremonies that it is clear to all that he subordinates everything else to his spiritual duties.” This ought to hold for all clerics. They ought not to become so involved in managing affairs and in representing the

Church in an official way to outsiders that they neglect direct pastoral service. Doing so has the bad result that preaching, administering the sacraments, and personal pastoral leadership together with their fruits seem to count less with them than the other things that fill their time and take their energy. That is counter-witness. Moreover, it often is the consequence of a faulty organization of time and energy, that reflects either arbitrary personal preferences for such business or a wrong judgment about what is important.

Of course, the opposite point also can be made. Clerics can love direct pastoral work and find desk work repulsive. The bad result is that they neglect the planning and oversight they should carry on, and perhaps even the preparation of service.

CIC, c. 840:

The sacraments of the New Testament were instituted by Christ the Lord and entrusted to the Church. As actions of Christ and the Church, they are signs and means which express and strengthen the faith, render worship to God, and effect the sanctification of humanity and thus contribute in the greatest way to establish, strengthen, and manifest ecclesiastical communion. Accordingly, in the celebration of the sacraments the sacred ministers and the other members of the Christian faithful must use the greatest veneration and necessary diligence.

This canon makes it clear that the sacraments are cooperative actions of Christ and the Church, and without inconsistency one can expand that to my account. The definition makes clear how important the sacraments are by articulating their many benefits: they express (and so bear witness to) faith and also strengthen the faith of those who participate with appropriate dispositions; they are (due) worship of God; they sanctify well-disposed participants; and they establish (baptism), strengthen (all the other sacraments in diverse ways), and manifest (all the sacraments) the *communio* of the Church.

Given their great importance, everyone involved in the celebration should be very reverent and exercise due care. The sacraments are precious; act accordingly, rather than treat them as one treats common—and even disposable—things.

CIC, c. 843, §1: “Sacred ministers cannot deny the sacraments to those who seek them at appropriate times, are properly disposed, and are not prohibited by law from receiving them.” Since the faithful have a right to the sacraments, the presumption is that the conditions are met, and the sacraments must not be refused unless it is clear that the conditions are not met.

§2 of the same canon provides that “Pastors of souls . . . have the duty to take care that those who seek the sacraments are prepared to receive them by proper evangelization and catechetical instruction.” However, that does not justify coercion to go through a program provided by the parish if parents prefer other ways of preparing children to receive the sacraments.

CIC, c. 848: “The minister is to seek nothing for the administration of the sacraments beyond the offerings defined by competent authority, always taking care that the needy are not deprived of the assistance of the sacraments because of poverty.”

Clergy ought to know what the diocesan policy is and should never ask for more. If more is offered, should make it clear that the excess is not necessary, and only accept as a gift something certainly meant to be such. Clerics not only should forgo stipends from the poor, but seek out and offer the sacraments to poor people who might be shy about asking for them due to the hardship of providing an offering and/or their inability to contribute to the parish.

CIC, c. 1011, §2: “Clerics and other members of the Christian faithful must be invited to the ordination so that as large an assembly as possible is present at the celebration.” CCEO, 773: “Sacred ordinations should be celebrated with the greatest number of Christian faithful possible in a church on a Sunday or feast day, unless a just cause suggests otherwise.” Why? The demand to get as many there as possible seems to be an element of clericalist self-celebration in canon law itself. It would be reasonable to invite all particularly interested parties, including the faithful to whose service the newly ordained will be first assigned and all the clerics in the diocese or religious institute province to which he will belong. But pushing for the biggest possible attendance seems inappropriate.

The ordained should avoid clericalism and strive to help others overcome it.

In part, clericalism is the clergy’s form of two things found in all professions: the perversion of solidarity among colleagues and low expectations about professional responsibility.

The perversion of solidarity leads members of the group to act like members of a fraternity: they pursue group self-interest rather than help each other promote and safeguard the common good to which the whole profession ought to be ordered—e.g., the justice that the legal system can protect and secure for lawyers. Among clergy, the tendency to fraternity in that bad sense is increased by seminary training and common practices that intensify a pseudo-familial feeling of brotherhood. Brothers, in fact, seldom are interested in much more than what they have in common: the family’s interests. But the clergy ought not to be turned in on itself like that. The good they should cooperate for transcends the group; it’s the kingdom of God. Thus, as “brothers” clerics find it very hard to turn in someone who is alcoholic or into drugs or even into sexual abuse of minors; the temptation is to cover for him, to treat such things as his private affair, not be interfered with. But as co-workers with Jesus, each should regard such things as serious problems that must be confronted. Sexual abuse of minors is like treason in the military, something absolutely intolerable. For it is leading others into grave sin, and betraying Jesus, both by abusing one’s role of acting for him, and abusing him in those seduced: What you do to one of these, you do to me.

In part, clericalism is grounded in the assumption that, for their share in its common good, other members of the Church depend on ordained ministers in ways they really do not. In part, clericalism is grounded in the legalistic conception of moral life and of the clergy’s responsibility to shape that life—that conception leads clerics to think of themselves on the analogy of the neighborhood cop who enforces the law prudently, condones some law-breaking, and so forth.

In part, clericalism is grounded in a misunderstanding of the priesthood of the ordained. It is imagined to be priesthood in the same sense as Christ’s though a lesser degree of that, and of

course entirely dependent upon and subordinate to it. So, the priest is thought of as being able to mediate personally in a sense that the other faithful cannot; is thought of as being literally another Christ, exalted above the faithful in general simply by being ordained.

But in part, clericalism is spiritual snobbery (which sometimes is found in religious as well as clerics) rooted in the assumption that close collaborators of Jesus are per se holier than the lay faithful. In the case of clerics, the snobbery is nurtured by the mistaken view that the ordained priest is the same kind of priest Jesus is—a true mediator between humankind and God—but of lesser degree, and so is in a true sense another Christ. The false assumption of per se greater holiness also has been reinforced by the legalistic misunderstanding of morality as mere rule-keeping, which treated the call to holiness as a matter of counsels addressed only to the elect—religious and clerics.

Sometimes, clericalism is shared in by religious and laypeople who cooperate closely with clerics and participate in (and sometimes even usurp) clerical powers and activities, and some elements of clericalism can be shared in by other religious.

Clericalism is a serious obstacle to the human availability of what clerics do *in persona Christi*. Clericalism impedes clerics from rightly understanding their responsibility to encourage and help the laity to carry out all of their responsibilities; it also impedes clerics from being as well motivated as they should be to fulfill their responsibility in this regard. Clericalism tends to provoke some lay people's resentment and cynicism at the offending clergy's highhandedness and pretensions of superiority. Clericalism tends to foster both passivity and spiritual complacency in other lay people, namely, those who accept the clericalist view of the role of the lay faithful.

There is such a thing among perfectly orthodox clerics as pastoral insensitivity: presenting the relevant truth in a way that surely will not dispose the person to listen to it and take it to heart. The act is done *in persona Christi*, perhaps, but without Christ. Against that, pastoral sensitivity is desperately needed.

What pastoral sensitivity is not: watering down, compromising, abstaining from speaking the necessary truth.

Thus, genuine pastoral sensitivity is really important and good. It means understanding the person's thought and feelings, knowing how best to try to elicit the appropriate response, and doing that. So, Jesus is pastorally sensitive in dealing with Zacchaeus: inviting himself to dinner flatters Z. and puts him in a position of wanting to be a good host, so that the criticism of the crowd provokes Z.'s repentance. Much more effective than telling Z.: You there up in the tree: repent and make restitution!

John Paul II, Letter to Priests for Holy Thursday 2002, 5, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 27 March 2002, 6–7, makes the point:

Every encounter with someone wanting to go to confession, even when the request is somewhat superficial because it is poorly motivated and prepared, can become, through the surprising [p. 7] grace of God, that “place” near the sycamore tree where Christ looked up at Zacchaeus. How deeply Christ's gaze penetrated the

Jericho publican's soul is impossible for us to judge. But we do know that that same gaze looks upon each of our penitents. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation we are agents of a supernatural encounter with laws of its own, an encounter which we have only to respect and facilitate. For Zacchaeus, it must have been a stunning experience to hear himself called by his name, a name which many of his townsmen spoke with contempt. Now he hears it spoken in a tone of tenderness, expressing not just trust but familiarity, insistent friendship. Yes, Jesus speaks to Zacchaeus like an old friend, forgotten maybe, but a friend who has nonetheless remained faithful, and who enters with the gentle force of affection into the life and into the home of his rediscovered friend: "Make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today" (Lk 19:5).

But JP II goes on (in 8, p. 7) to point out that God's mercy is effective only if it overcomes all the resistance caused by sin, so that the penitent really is contrite. And he warns against laxity: "Laxity is misleading and deceptive."

Similarly, with the woman at the well. Jesus asks her for a drink and strikes up a conversation. Once engaged, he hits her with the truth about both her personal life (five husbands) and her religious faith (not up to snuff). But in the context of friendly conversation: he's showed his personal interest by asking this woman for a drink and the conversation is almost playful, certainly not threatening.

All clerics need to do whatever they rightly can to overcome divisions among themselves. Differences in experience, abilities, backgrounds, and so on are a condition for cooperation; in themselves, they in no way impede it. But all differences arising from moral defects and sins are divisive; they impede cooperation. And differences in no way bad in themselves—e.g., among people of different races or ethnic backgrounds—sometimes occasion moral evils, such as racial discrimination, ethnic antagonism.

Some moral evils that make for divisions are recognized as evil even by the guilty or by virtually everyone else; or, at least, those who are most centrally responsible do not believe themselves bound in conscience to continue behaving in ways that generate the division. Such evils are easier to deal with. The ones that are more difficult are those where clerics disagree about matters that one side, at least, considers admit of no compromise—e.g., disagreements over whether certain kinds of acts are always objectively gravely wrong, the disagreement over the ordainability of women, the position some held about the acceptability of certain liturgical changes that led them to the conclusion that they were bound in conscience to continue celebrating according to the pre-Vatican II missal.

Pointing out and resisting evil is divisive, not because doing so is wrong ("uncharitable"), but because the evil pointed out and resisted is divisive, and because evil often provokes a response that, being imperfect, includes its own admixture of evil, often minor but sometimes grave.

Everyone ought to recognize that division always will be present in the Church. They should not be frantic because things are in a mess, and should not expect any approach to straighten everything out. Faithful clerics and people generally must neither be optimistic nor

pessimistic but hopeful: they must be confident in providence and expect to see the mess straightened out and made sense of only in the heavenly kingdom.

Envy is divisive. Personal ambition for prestigious positions is divisive. Arrogance and the desire to dominate others is evil and divisive. Proceeding individualistically out of enthusiasm or impatience—I'd rather to it myself!—is evil, and it leads people to be lone wolves, which is a form of divisiveness. Attachment to one's goals without subordinating that to love for the common good is evil, and divisive—it leads people to avoid each other. Laziness is evil: it provokes the resentment of those more committed and discourages them by leaving them without the support they need. Disagreements about essentials—such as disagreements about Church teachings that at least some regard as essential—even if arising without personal sin on either side, are divisive: conscientious people cannot ignore such disagreements and cooperate wholeheartedly despite them.

The basic remedy for presbyteral division is unity with Jesus and in him. The more every presbyter realizes that he is only to do what Jesus wants done and to do it as he would, and that Jesus was far more concerned for those he served than for his own self-satisfaction, the less they will be divided. Pastoral service is a common responsibility that requires cooperation to fulfill: see *Pastores dabo vobis*, 74: “Unity among the priests with the Bishop and among themselves is not something added from the outside to the nature of their service, but expresses its essence inasmuch as it is the care of Christ the Priest for the People gathered in the unity of the Blessed Trinity.”

Something like the assumption of good will all around involved in ecumenism is needed, despite the fact that in reality all of us are sinners, so that there really is more or less bad will all around. Everyone needs to be conscientious and needs to respect others' obligation to be conscientious. That means considering seriously: do I really have an obligation to do or to resist this divisive sort of thing? If not, don't. It also means: how can I avoid putting pressure on and somehow get along with the others, assuming their good will, who claim to feel bound in conscience to do what I regard as wrong? Everyone must avoid compromising his own conscience by “prudentially” doing what he believes wrong or omitting to do what he believes strictly obligatory. For example, bishops should not continue to authorize others to do what they believe it would be wrong to do themselves, with the thought that taking action would be too costly, being tolerant and smoothing over the matter will have to be adequate, or incremental action eventually will solve the problem (while, meanwhile, souls are lost!).

A bishop and even the pastor of a parish can do various things to promote unity of the diocese's presbyterate.

- (1) He can set an example of ministry and life that, if followed by every cleric in the world, would overcome and eliminate existing divisions; so he must avoid divisive vices such as ambition, laziness, being a lone wolf, etc.
- (2) He can engage others richly and constantly in deliberation and planning; people are more likely to cooperate when they have been consulted and helped work out the plan.
- (3) He can exercise discipline regularly and firmly with respect to the small minority who are so bad that the vast majority will not support them.

(4) He can and ought to press the Pope to face up to and, with the other bishops' help, decisively resolve issues of faith and morals that divide the collegium.

(5) Where the divisive evil cannot be overcome or significantly mitigated by a bishop and his presbyterate no matter what they do, the bishop can try to help his clergy understand the situation and work with them to find a *modus vivendi* consistent with the consciences of everyone concerned, and clerics of each diocese ought to press their bishops to do that.

Some are likely to try to develop a sort of common ground project—an attempt by so-called moderates to look for compromises to resolve issues. That approach ought not to be taken except by people who judge themselves bound in conscience to take it. For, where the problem is over things that at least some regard as essential, attempts to compromise will not solve it and may well generate greater division.

International Theological Commission, *Texts and Documents: 1969–1985*, ed. Michael Sharkey (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989), 73: “The early Church, by including the life and writings of Paul in the canon (Acts and Epistles), inclines us to think that it saw in him the exemplary type of apostle. To be a priest of the New Covenant is to be a minister of the Gospel, and, in the light of the concrete life of Paul, the Church understood what is the supreme, exemplary, and normative form for carrying out the apostolate as witness to a personal love of the Lord Jesus and to a total involvement in the proclamation of the Gospel and in the daily solicitude for the Churches.”

Thus, Paul ought to be used as a model here, especially with respect to dedication and manner of behaving.

In Mt 7.22, the many who will have said “Lord, Lord,” but not done the Father’s will are clerics, for they identify themselves by having acted *in persona Christi*: “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?” He replies (23): “And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.’” Here we have not merely the compartmentalization of Christian life that leaves much to venial sin, but an overarching religious commitment that is corrupted by self-deception. In that case, life as a whole is not really firmly anchored in faith.

Jesus goes on in Mt 7.24–29 and Lk 6.46–49 to point out that putting his teaching into practice is building on solid rock—the truth of faith—whereas hearing the teaching but failing to put it into practice is building on sand (Mt) or on the ground with no foundation (Lk), in other words living one’s life without anchoring it in faith.

Clericalism interferes with the clergy’s accessibility. It sets an obstacle to the availability of the saving works Jesus wishes to do through them. Accepting that bad consequence violates pastoral charity. So, clericalism must go.

Jesus was very accessible. In the Gospel in which the lady touches the hem of his garment, he is on his way to deal with the dying little girl, but stops to deal with her. A seminarian said in a homily that Augustine says, in a homily, referring to the “woman who had an issue of blood” (in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 1st series, vol. 6, sermons xii, 7, and xxvii, 8) that the garment can be taken as referring to the apostles, and extended that to clergy. Like Jesus,



they should be accessible. (In vol. 6, sermon xii, 7: “Look upon the apostles as the garment, by the texture of unity clinging closely to the sides of Christ. Among these apostles was Paul, as it were the border, the least and last . . .”)

The seminarian did not point out how Augustine’s identification puts the clergy into their place. It is a long way from thinking of oneself as another Christ to thinking of oneself as his garment. Of course, that exaggerates in the other direction. The clergy really are organs—living instruments—of Christ, which means that they are much closer to him than his clothes, though still entirely subordinate to him and their action to his.

Popes, bishops, and pastors tend to adopt the style of political leaders and managers. There is much to be learned from them. But one must discriminate carefully. Many manipulate people. This involves a lack of candor that is not necessarily lying. For example, a parish will be closed in a year but the bishop and pastor agree meanwhile needs some repairs. People are not told about the coming closing because it is thought it will go more smoothly if it is sprung on them close to the day. They contribute, not thinking about the parish closing—it is a nonissue. But when the parish is closed, parishioners know it was a long time coming and they remember contributing for those “recent” repairs and are resentful. What the pastor and the bishop did may have been good management, but it was not sound pastorally. People should have been told; in fact, they should have been involved in deliberation about the problem and been among the first the bishop informed of his decision.

Another subtle sort of manipulation: have a meeting to discuss something, because people will complain if you don’t. But the meeting is not going to make a difference. So people who come are wasting their time.

Candor is essential for cooperation. There are limits: one knows some things that it would be wrong to share. But thinking that others who should cooperate won’t is not a good reason for omitting candor appropriate if they would. And candor is absolutely essential when cooperation needs an all-out commitment. The uncandid leader cannot excuse himself by saying he never lied to or deceived anyone.

Clericalism, by narrowing vision of who counts, can lead to failure to love neighbors, even with respect to basic fairness—and all the more so with respect to Christian mercy.

Mt 10.24–25: “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master; it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.” This is in the context of Jesus’ naming and sending of the Twelve (Mt 10.1–15), who are the prototypical clerics.

Clerics often respond to bad treatment: this ought not to happen to me, a priest! They need to recall that Jesus underwent all sorts of frustration and ill treatment, and were warned to expect the same sort of thing. Their attitude suggests that they think they deserve better than Jesus, that they are above him, not like him. As in his case, so in theirs, the occasions of mistreatment are part of their vocation; this is the opportunity to bear witness to the truth, to manifest charity, mercy, love of enemies. Responding badly simply is failing to do the job

they have undertaken, and losing out on the fulfillment the Lord had in mind for them by including this moment in the life of good deeds prepared for them.

Clerics sometimes think they are above their teacher and master in another sense: they think they can improve on what they are authorized to do *in persona Christi*. They have the truth of faith to teach and should make sure they are not teaching another gospel—perhaps one that seems more attractive or easier to accept. (2 Jn 9 [in the NAB]: “Anyone who is so ‘progressive’ as not to remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God; whoever remains in the teaching has the Father and the Son.”) They have the liturgy the Church has given them and should provide that for the people. They have the responsibility for shaping the *communio* in its cooperation. If they try to be creative in these matters—e.g., in the hope of making more available Jesus’ acts—they are putting themselves above their master, and failing to make his acts present, that is, no longer acting *in persona Christi*.

1 Cor 4.1–5:

1 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. 4 I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. 5 Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God.

Paul is making clear what the role of the clergy is and to whom they are responsible. They are not the principals in the Church, but helpers of Christ and stewards (care-takers) of what God has provided for the benefit of the Church. As stewards, they are responsible. But they are not responsible to the people or to any human authority. Moreover, they are not only responsible to their own consciences. They are responsible to the Lord, who will judge them in the end—so they had better do everything possible to make sure their consciences are right.

In 1 Cor 9.19–22 Paul says he has made himself a slave to all, and so has done what he could to accommodate all sorts of people. 22: “I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” He is making it clear that adaptation to make one’s service more effective is essential to the life a cleric undertakes. Paul also states his reason for so much self-sacrifice, namely, that it is in his ultimate self-interest: “I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings” (23).

2 Cor 6.3: “We put no obstacle in any one’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way.” This remark makes clear Paul’s determination not only to make God’s gift in Jesus present but as available as he could make it. He wants the Corinthians to accept the message, and so wants it to be the case that, if they do not accept it, that will not be through any fault of his, but due to their own resistance that he could not overcome.

Gal 4.19: “My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!” Paul here expresses his sadness and pain at the backsliding (by wanting to conform to the law rather than hoping in their oneness with and in Christ) of the Corinthians to whom he had preached the gospel, and helped them to become formed by living faith in Christ. Now he must work to restore their faith to a living condition, so that they will again really be Christians, living in Christ and he in them. The analogy with mothering that Paul uses makes clear his intense concern and pastoral charity. Like a mother (as understood at that time), Paul does not provide the seed of Christ in them, but by preaching the gospel he plants the seed provided by the Holy Spirit, and then in a motherly way nurtures the seed he had planted.

Paul provides advice for clerics (2 Tim 2.23–36): “Have nothing to do with stupid, senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth.”

Some controversies do not concern anything essential to the faith. Clerics’ concern should be to help people get ahold of revelation and live according to it. So, controversies about matters that don’t bear on revealed truth are just a big distraction: they generate divisions. If one can hold the faith completely intact on either side of an issue, clerics should not take either side, since doing that will just needlessly alienate people who hold the other view. So, even controversies about civic issues and the like that are legitimate for the laity to be involved in are out of bounds for clerics, and so are stupid and senseless for them.

When people are off the track with respect to essentials, they need to be corrected. But gentleness is in order. The point is not to get even or make it clear to everybody around how wrong the erring are, but to get those who have got off track to get with the program. Clerics must not make repentance difficult but rather do all they can to facilitate it. The point that God may provide the grace to repent should encourage the cleric’s effort. At the same time, there’s no guarantee, and, if repentance is not forthcoming, he ought not to be discouraged from ongoing efforts or moved by desperation to unhelpful harshness.

Paul is not here dealing with everything. He might have mentioned, but does not, that sometimes those who are off track on essentials have to be dealt with not only in view of promoting their personal repentance but warning others—something Paul himself often enough does. It’s a matter of good judgment how best to fulfill the responsibility to protect other members of the faithful while not putting needless obstacles in the way of repentance by the erring. But gentle efforts to get someone to repent errors about essentials do not preclude making the error and its seriousness clear enough and the exhortation public enough to provide salutary warning to those who might be misled.

Tit 2.7–8: “Show yourself in all respects a model of good deeds, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, and sound speech that cannot be censured, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us.” This is addressed to Titus himself. Paul wants him to be a model for others, to teach the gospel not only with words but a corresponding Christian life of good deeds. The integrity required in teaching means truthfulness that cannot be called into question by anyone. Teaching one thing publicly and another quietly

undermines one's message. Concern about what opponents can say is not simply a matter of vanity or self-respect. It is concern for the effectiveness of preaching and teaching, since what is really questionable undercuts effectiveness. Many bishops and priests failed to see this in the sex abuse affair. Bishops tended to regard offenses as a problem in other respects, but not as the disaster for apostolate that they actually are.

Jas 2.15–16: “If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?” This example is gross: the Christian who should meet a poor person's urgent needs gives only charitable-sounding words. In fact, this is adding insult to lack of mercy. No cleric is likely to miss the point Jas is making when it comes to dealing with those who are physically poor.

But what about spiritual poverty? People's need to hear the gospel, their need for that spiritual food, and their need for the clothing of Christian communio—those needs are just as real as physical ones and inherently far more important. Dying of starvation is horrible, yet that person can be saved; dying in sin is horrible and irremediable. Moreover, clerics accept a special responsibility to cooperate with Jesus in meeting others' spiritual needs, and so are betraying the undertaking that ought to shape their lives if they fail to do what they can to meet others' spiritual needs and instead cover over their neglect with mere pious good wishes.

There must be a real effort, then, to make available—to promote the fruitfulness of—the acts of Jesus that clerics make present. Pastoral charity focuses precisely on this. People are not to be helped to feel better about their sins and told, “Go in peace,” but to be helped to escape their bondage to sin so that they truly will be at peace. That adds a further injury to the betrayal of responsibility, for it misleads the needy person into imagining that his need has been met. It is like feeding the starving person with some sort of food that will make him feel full without providing any nourishment—the fat that cannot be digested, sugarless gum.

1 Pt 5.1–4:

[1] So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed.

[2] Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly,

[3] not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock.

[4] And when the chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory.

In v. 1, he exhorts elders under three titles—as fellow elder or colleague in ministry, as witness or apostle who was there, and as sharer in the glory to be revealed or fellow Christian. In vv. 2–3, he warns against three ways of going wrong and recommends three contrary ways of doing it right.

1) Don't exercise ministry under constraint. If someone does not want to provide pastoral service, he should not accept the office. If he does wish to serve, he ought to recognize and keep in mind the inherent value of doing so not only for those served but also for himself.

He grows in holiness by serving well and serves well only if he serves willingly, not merely dutifully doing the job, but doing it with enthusiasm—"as God would have you," as an added phrase that appears in some manuscripts puts it. The cleric who does the job willingly not in a merely dutiful and minimalistic way will be hungry for souls, creative, energetic. He will not be satisfied with providing expected services and running a tight ship. He will want everyone in his diocese or parish to be a Catholic and every Catholic a saint.

2) Don't exercise ministry for shameful gain but eagerly. In affluent countries today, probably most clerics are not much motivated by money grubbing. But some do go after stipends and provide better service for those who pay well, and some are eager for assignments that provide plusher quarters, better meals, more gifts, and so on. More common is looking for intangible shameful gain: psychological satisfaction as the motive for serving and dissatisfaction as a motive for avoiding service. Some people are rewarding to serve, and there is nothing wrong in enjoying the reward. But one must not make getting that reward become the determinant of whether service is provided. People who are unrewarding to serve often are in great—even greater—spiritual need than those who respond well. The good minister's efforts will be expended with a view to meeting others' spiritual needs rather than his own psychological ones.

3) Not domineering. The way to lead is not by manipulation, exerting pressure, hectoring people. Even moral instruction that is straightforward and blunt has only limited use. Good example, on the other hand, always is worthwhile and likely to be helpful, and is indispensable as a complement to sound teaching presented in a gentle and humble way, not as one's own, but as the truth of the gospel received with others as a divinely given and saving gift.

Pius XI, in the encyclical *Ad catholici sacerdotii*, argues (Carlen 216:33–36 pp. 503–4; AAS 28 (1936) 20–22) that priests must be holy mainly from the priest's status as mediator, the priesthood's great dignity, priests' superior status in the Church, and the evil of hypocrisy.

33. Nevertheless, it is quite true that so holy an office demands holiness in him who holds it. A priest should have a loftiness of spirit, a purity of heart and a sanctity of life befitting the solemnity and holiness of the office he holds. For this, as We have said, makes the priest a mediator between God and man . . .

34. For this reason even in the Old Testament God commanded His priests and levites: "Let them therefore be holy because I am also holy: the Lord who sanctify them." . . . "A great dignity," exclaims St. Lawrence Justinian, "but great too is the responsibility; placed high in the eyes of men they must also be lifted up to the peak of virtue before the eye of Him who seeth all; otherwise their elevation will be not to their merit but to their damnation."

35. And surely every reason We have urged in showing the dignity of the Catholic priesthood does but reinforce its obligation of singular holiness; for as the Angelic Doctor teaches: "To fulfill the duties of Holy Orders, common goodness does not suffice; but excelling goodness is required; that they who receive Orders and are

thereby higher in rank than the people, may also be higher in holiness.” . . . The priest is also the almoner of God’s graces of which the Sacraments are the channels; how grave a reproach would it be, for one who dispenses these most precious graces were he himself without them, or were he even to esteem them lightly and guard them with little care.

36. Moreover, the priest must teach the truths of faith; but the truths of religion are never so worthily and effectively taught as when taught by virtue; because in the common saying: “Deeds speak louder than words.” The priest must preach the law of the Gospel; but for that preaching to be effective, the most obvious and, by the Grace of God, the most persuasive argument, is to see the actual practice of the law in him who preaches it. On the other hand, they who “say and do not,” practicing not what they preach, become like the scribes and Pharisees. . . . A preacher who does not try to ratify by his life’s example the truth he preaches, only pulls down with one hand what he builds up with the other. On the contrary, God greatly blesses the labor of those heralds of the gospel who attend first to their own holiness; they see their apostolate flourishing and fruitful, and in the day of the harvest, “coming they shall come with joyfulness carrying in their sheaves.”

But even here we see some sense of the importance of holiness for promoting the availability of the blessings that Jesus wishes to deliver through those who act in his person.

Pius XI, *Ad catholici sacerdotii* [AAS and Carlen 216]—after dealing with celibacy, detachment from material goods, and obedience—teaches that priests must be learned men:

57. But the portrait of the Catholic priest which we intend to exhibit to the world would be unfinished were We to omit another most important feature—learning. This the Church requires of him; for the Catholic priest is set up as a “Master in Israel” (Jn 3.10); he has received from Jesus Christ the office and commission of teaching truth: “Teach . . . all nations” (Mt 28.19). He must teach the truth that heals and saves; and because of this teaching, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, he has a duty towards “the learned and the unlearned” (Rom 1.14). But how can he teach unless he himself possess knowledge? . . . The priest should have full grasp of the Catholic teaching on faith and morals; he should know how to present it to others; and he should be able to give the reasons for the dogmas, laws and observances of the Church of which he is minister. Profane sciences have indeed made much progress; but in religious questions there is much ignorance still darkening the mind of our contemporaries. This ignorance the priest must dispel. . . . It is the priest’s task to clear away from men’s minds the mass of prejudices and misunderstandings which hostile adversaries have piled up; the modern mind is eager for the truth, and the priest should be able to point it out with serene frankness; there are souls still hesitating, distressed by doubts, and the priest should inspire courage and trust, and guide them with calm security to the safe port of faith, faith accepted by both head and heart; error makes its onslaughts, arrogant and persistent, and the priest should know how to meet them with a defense vigorous and active, yet solid and unruffled.

58. Therefore, Venerable Brethren, it is necessary that the priest, even among the absorbing tasks of his charge, and ever with a view to it, should continue his theological studies with unremitting zeal. The knowledge acquired at the seminary is indeed a sufficient foundation with which to begin; but it must be grasped more thoroughly, and perfected by an ever-increasing knowledge and understanding of the sacred sciences (see CIC [1917], c. 129; [1983], c. 279, §1). Herein is the source of effective preaching and of influence over the souls of others. . . .

61. Sometimes, it is true, and even in modern times, Our Lord makes the world, as it were, his plaything (Prv 8.31); for he has been pleased to elect to the priestly state men almost devoid of that learning of which We have been speaking; and through them he has worked wonders. But he did this that all might learn, if there be a choice, to prize holiness more than learning; not to place more trust in human than in divine means. . . .

62. In the natural order, divine miracles suspend for a moment the effect of physical laws, but do not revoke them. So, too, the case of these saints, real living miracles in whom high sanctity made up for all the rest, does not make the lesson We have been teaching any the less true or any the less necessary.

Pius XI, *Ad catholici sacerdotii* [AAS and Carlen 216.51]

51. Thus the Catholic priest is freed from the bonds of a family and of self-interest—the chief bonds which could bind him too closely to earth. Thus freed, his heart will more readily take flame from that heavenly fire that burns in the heart of Jesus; that fire that seeks only to inflame apostolic hearts and through them “cast fire on all the earth” (Lk 12.49). This is the fire of zeal. Like the zeal of Jesus described in Holy Scripture (cf. Ps 68.10 (69.9), Jn 2.17), the zeal of the priest for the glory of God and the salvation of souls ought to consume him. It should make him forget himself and all earthly things. It should powerfully urge him to dedicate himself utterly to his sublime work, and to search out means ever more effective for an apostolate ever wider and ever better.

Thus the pope puts the pursuit of appropriate learning by priests on the same level as the three vows. Neither celibacy nor detachment from material things are of much value if they do not lead to zeal like Jesus’ monomania. And notice the last line: the priest needs to be creative, to search out means.

Pius XII, *Menti nostrae*,

58. But the priest must remember that the closer he is united to Christ and guided in his activities by the spirit of Christ, the more fruitful his ministry will be. Thus, his priestly work will not be reduced to a purely natural activity which tires the body and mind and draws the priest himself away from the right path with no little detriment both to himself and to the Church. But his work and his labor will be fruitful and corroborated by those gifts of grace that God denies to the proud but concedes generously to those working humbly in “the Vineyard of the Lord,” not seeking

themselves and their own interests (cf. 1 Cor 10.33) but the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Hence, faithful to the teachings of the Gospel, let him not trust in himself, as we have said, and in his own strength but let him place his faith in the help of the Lord. “So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God Who gives the growth” (1 Cor 3.7).

This is teaching the importance of pastoral charity and also of the humility which relies on God and prays always for his help. With it, the priest is not seeking himself and his own interests, but the glory of God and the salvation of souls. He is one with Jesus in intention, and his activities are guided by the Spirit. So, his work does not lead to burn out, and it is fruitful.

Congregation for the Clergy, *The Priest, Pastor and Leader of the Parish Community* (18 Oct. 2002), 12–13:

12. The ministerial priesthood, to the extent that it conforms to the life and priestly work of Christ, introduces a new dimension to the spiritual life of those who receive this most precious gift. It is a spiritual life based on participation in the *gratia capitalis* of Christ in His Church, which matures through ministerial service to the Church: it is a holiness in ministry and through ministry.

13. Deepening “awareness that one is a minister of Jesus Christ” is, therefore, of vital importance for the spiritual life of the priest and for the effectiveness of his very ministry. Ministerial relationship with Jesus Christ “gives rise to, and requires in the priest, the further bond which comes from his ‘intention,’ that is, from a conscious and free choice to do in his ministerial activities what the Church intends to do” (*Pastores dabo vobis*, 25). The phrase “to do in his ministerial activities what the Church intends to do” is enlightening for the spiritual life of all sacred ministers and invites them to a greater appreciation of personal instrumentality in the service of Christ and the Church, and to give that expression concrete expression through their ministerial activity. “Intention,” in this sense, necessarily implies a relationship with the actions of Christ in, and through, the Church. It also implies obedience to His will, fidelity to His commands, and docility to His actions: the sacred ministry is the instrument through which Christ and His Body, the Church, operate.

The first unit (12) is misleading, because the ordained participate in Jesus’ grace of headship only insofar as they are empowered to act in his person, which in no way makes them personally holy. The second (first § of 13) is much better, because it makes it clear that the ordained are not per se holy but can become holy in and by fulfilling their ministerial responsibilities—and not otherwise.

John Paul II, Letter to Priests on the Occasion of Holy Thursday 1979, 5, *L’Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 17 April 1979, 7:

In fact, the priesthood of Jesus Christ is the first source and expression of an unceasing and ever effective care for our salvation, which enables us to look to him precisely as the Good Shepherd. Do not the words “the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep” [21 (21. Jn 10.11)] refer to the Sacrifice of the



Cross, to the definitive act of Christ's priesthood? Do they not show all of us that Christ the Lord, through the sacrament of Orders, has made us sharers in his Priesthood, the road that we too must travel? Do these words not tell us that our vocation is a singular solicitude for the salvation of our neighbor; that this solicitude is a special *raison d'être* of our priestly life; that it is precisely this solicitude that gives it meaning and that only through this solicitude can we find the full significance of our own life, perfection and holiness?

The Pope is making the point here that the salvation of souls is the point of priestly service and that working at that job is how priests are to become holy.

John Paul II, Letter to Priests on the Occasion of Holy Thursday 1979, 7, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 17 April 1979, 7–8:

Our pastoral activity demands that we should be close to people and all their problems, whether these problems be personal, family or social ones, but it also demands that we should be close to all these problems “in a priestly way”. Only then, in the sphere of all those problems, do we remain ourselves. Therefore if we are really of assistance in those human problems, and they are sometimes very difficult ones, then we keep our identity and are really faithful to our vocation. With great perspicacity we must seek, together with all men, truth and justice, the true [p. 8] and definitive dimension of which we can only find in the Gospel, or rather in Christ himself. Our task is to serve truth and justice in the dimensions of human “temporality” but always in a perspective that is the perspective of eternal salvation. This salvation takes into account the temporal achievements the human spirit in the spheres of knowledge and morality, as the Second Vatican Council wonderfully recalled, (27 [GS 38–39, 42]) but it is not identical with them, and in fact it goes higher than them: “The things that no eye has seen and no ear has heard . . . all that God has prepared for those who love him”. (28 [1 Cor 2.9]) Our brethren in the faith, and unbelievers too, expect us always to be able to show them this perspective, to become real witnesses to it, to be dispensers of grace, to be servants of the word of God. They expect us to be men of prayer.

This passage tries to express how the ordained ought to be engaged in secular and temporal affairs. It is sound so far as it goes. But even the laity should deal with truth and justice in the perspective of eternal salvation. So, the formulation is not yet sufficiently specific for the clergy. However urgently at stake the relevant goods may be, clerics ought to deal with secular and temporal affairs by making present and available Jesus' actions rather than by attempting to contribute directly, at the laity rightly do, to nonreligious social, political, and economic cooperation.

In many respects the Curé de Ars really is a good model. John Paul II, Letter to Priests on the Occasion of Holy Thursday 1986, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 24 March 1986, 1–3, offers St. John Mary Vianney as a model. In doing this, in 10 (p. 3) he gets out the fundamental principle of pastoral charity without using that expression:

The priest always, and in an unchangeable way, finds the source of his identity in Christ the Priest. It is not the world which determines his status, as though it depended on changing needs or ideas about social roles. The priest is marked with the seal of the Priesthood of Christ, in order to share in his function as the one Mediator and Redeemer.

So, because of this fundamental bond, there opens before the priest the immense field of the service of souls, for their salvation in Christ and in the Church. This service must be completely inspired by love of souls in imitation of Christ who gives his life for them. It is God's wish that all people should be saved, and that none of the little ones should be lost (23 [cf. Mt 18.14]). "The priest must always be ready to respond to the needs of souls", said the Curé of Ars (24 [Cf. *Jean-Marie Vianney, curé d'Ars, sa pensée, son coeur, présenté*, par l'Abbé Bernard Nodet, éditions Xavier Mappus, Le Puy, 1958, p. 101]). "He is not for himself, he is for you" (25 [ibid., 102]).

The priest is for the laity: he animates them and supports them in the exercise of the common priesthood of the baptized—so well illustrated by the Second Vatican Council—which consists in their making their lives a spiritual offering, in witnessing to the Christian spirit in the family, in taking charge of the temporal sphere and sharing in the evangelization of their brethren. But the service of the priest belongs to another order. He is ordained to act in the name of Christ the Head, to bring people into the new life made accessible by Christ, to dispense to them the mysteries—the Word, forgiveness, the Bread of Life—to gather them into his Body, to help them to form themselves from within, to live and to act according to the saving plan of God. In a word, our identity as priests is manifested in the "creative" exercise of the love for souls communicated by Christ Jesus.

The priest not only is to make the acts of Jesus present but to animate and support the faithful so that they will appropriate Jesus' gifts and cooperate fully with him, thus exercising fully the priesthood Christians share insofar as they, being bodily united with Jesus, share in his life and priestly action.

John Paul II, Letter to Priests for Holy Thursday 1996, 5, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 27 March 1996, 3–4, speaks about personal vocation in relation to priestly vocation

*The priest attains his fulfillment in a constantly renewed and watchful response*

5. "The Master is here and is calling you" (cf. Jn 11:28). These words can be read with reference to the priestly vocation. God's call is at the origin of the journey which every person must make in life: it is the primary and fundamental aspect of vocation, but it is not the only one. Priestly ordination is in fact the beginning of a journey which continues until death, a journey which is "vocational" at every step. The Lord calls priests to a number of tasks and ministries deriving from this vocation. But there is a still deeper level. Over and above the tasks which are the expression of priestly ministry, there always remains the underlying reality of "being

a priest". The situations and circumstances of life constantly call upon the priest to confirm his original choice, to respond ever anew to God's call. Our priestly life, like every authentic form of Christian existence, is a succession of responses to God who calls.

Emblematic in this regard is the parable of the servants who await their master's return. Because the master delays, they must stay awake in order to be found vigilant at his coming (cf. Lk 12:35–40). Could not this evangelical watchfulness be another way of defining the response to a vocation? For a vocation is lived out thanks to a vigilant sense of responsibility. Christ emphasizes this: "Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. . . . And if he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those servants!" (Lk 12:37–38).

Priests in the Latin Church take on the commitment to live in celibacy. If vocation is watchfulness, certainly a significant aspect of the latter is fidelity to this commitment throughout one's whole life. But celibacy is only one of the dimensions of a vocation—a vocation which is lived out, along the journey of life, as part of an overall commitment to the many different tasks which derive from the priesthood.

A vocation is not something static: it has an inherent dynamism. Dear Brothers in the priesthood, we confirm and constantly fulfill our vocation to the extent that we live faithfully the "mysterium" of God's covenant with mankind, and, in particular, the "mysterium" of the Eucharist. We fulfill it to the extent that we love ever more intensely the priesthood and the priestly ministry which we are called to carry out. We then discover that we find our fulfillment in being priests, and we thus confirm the authenticity of our vocation, in accordance with God's unique and eternal plan for each one of us. This divine plan is realized to the extent that it is acknowledged and accepted by us as the plan and program of our lives.

Vocation is not simply to become a priest. It is to fulfill the commitment faithfully, according to the opportunities that emerge and the developments and limits of one's capacities that also emerge.

John Paul II, Letter to Priests for Holy Thursday 2000, 8, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 5 April 2000. 4, unsoundly argues: "Sacerdos et Hostia! Priest and Victim! This sacrificial aspect is a profound mark of the Eucharist; it is also an essential dimension of the priesthood of Christ and, therefore, of our own priesthood."

What is wrong with this is that self-sacrifice is essential to Jesus' priesthood, but the priesthood of the minister, being only instrumental, does not of itself involve self-sacrifice. Morally speaking, the ministerial priest is called to self-sacrifice, as every Christian is; if he responds as he ought to this call, he does so insofar as his vocation as a Christian is not only to act *in persona Christi* but to cooperate with Jesus, as those in consecrated life also do, by making Jesus' acts not only present but also truly available for others to cooperate with.

John Paul II, General Audience (21 April 1993), 3, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 28 April 1993, 11:

3. The preaching of presbyters is not a mere exercise of the word that answers a personal need to express oneself and to communicate one's own thought, nor can it consist solely in sharing one's personal experience. This psychological element, which can have a didactic-pastoral role, is neither the reason for nor the principal element in preaching. As the Fathers of the 1971 Synod of Bishops said: "The experiences of life, whether of men in general or of priests, which must be kept in mind and always interpreted in the light of the Gospel, cannot be either the sole or the principal norm of preaching" (*Ench. Vat.*, IV, 1186).

The mission of preaching is entrusted by the Church to presbyters as a sharing in Christ's mediation, to be exercised by virtue of and according to the demands of his mandate. Priests, "in their degree of ministry, share in the office of the one Mediator, Christ (1 Tim 2:5), and proclaim to all the divine word" (*Ench. Vat.*, IV, 1186). This expression cannot fail to make us reflect: it is a "divine word," which therefore is not "ours" and cannot be manipulated, changed or adapted at will, but must be proclaimed in its entirety. Since the "divine word" has been entrusted to the apostles and the Church, "Each priest shares in the special responsibility of preaching the whole of the Word of God and of interpreting it according to the faith of the Church," as the Fathers also said at the 1971 Synod (*Ench. Vat.*, IV, 1183).

This passage gets out clearly the essential limit of preaching: the word of God is to be preached, and the preacher has no discretion over that. Thus, it is a good example of the limitation when one is acting *in persona Christi*.

John Paul II, General Audience (26 May 1993), 1, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 2 June 1993, 11, says that the 1971 Synod of Bishops taught that priestly ordination confirms and deepens baptismal consecration, and then explains:

Here the Synod took up again the teaching of Vatican II which, after reminding presbyters of their duty to strive for perfection by virtue of their baptismal "consecration," added: "Priests are bound by a special reason to acquire this perfection. They are consecrated to God in a new way in their ordination and made the living instruments of Christ the eternal priest, and so are enabled to accomplish throughout all time that wonderful work of his which with supernatural efficacy restored the whole human race" (PO 12). Pius XI recommended the same in his encyclical *Ad Catholici sacerdotii* of 20 December 1935 (cf. AAS 28 [1936]: 10).

According to the faith of the Church, priestly ordination not only confers a new mission in the Church, a ministry, but a new "consecration" of the person, one linked to the character imprinted by the sacrament of Orders as a spiritual, indelible sign of a special belonging to Christ in being and, consequently, in acting. The perfection required of the presbyter is thus commensurate with his sharing in the priesthood of Christ as the author of redemption: the minister cannot be

exempted from reproducing in himself the sentiments, the inner tendencies and intentions, and the spirit of sacrifice to the Father and of service to the brethren that is proper to the “principal Agent.”

The Pope (in 2 of the same audience) recalls the example of St. Paul:

He lived as an entirely consecrated apostle, he who was “taken possession of by Christ Jesus,” and left everything to live in union with him (cf. Phil 3:7–12). He felt so filled with Christ’s life that he could say in complete sincerity: “Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20). Nevertheless, after alluding to the extraordinary favors he had received as a “man in Christ” (2 Cor 12:2), he also suffered a thorn in the flesh, a trial from which he was never freed. Despite a triple request made to the Lord, Paul heard him respond: “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9).

In the light of this example, the presbyter can better understand that he must strive to live fully his own consecration by remaining united to Christ and allowing himself to be imbued with his Spirit, despite the experience of his own human limitations. These will not prevent him from carrying out his ministry, because he is favored with a “grace that is sufficient for him.” It is in this grace, then, that the priest must put his trust; it is to this grace that he must have recourse, knowing that he can thus strive for perfection in the hope of continually increasing in holiness.

And later in the same audience, after explaining that priests’ sincere and tireless exercise of their functions tend to make them holy, JP II says:

5. Moreover, it is a source of courage and joy for the presbyter to know that his personal commitment to sanctification helps make his ministry effective. In fact, as the Council recalls: “While it is possible for God’s grace to carry out the work of salvation through unworthy ministers, yet God ordinarily prefers to show his wonders through those men who are more submissive to the impulse and guidance of the Holy Spirit and who, because of their intimate union with Christ and their holiness of life, are able to say with St. Paul: ‘It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me’ (Gal 2:20)” (PO 12).

When the priest recognizes that he is called to serve as the instrument of Christ, he feels the need to live in intimate union with Christ in order to be a valid instrument of the “principal Agent.” Therefore, he seeks to reproduce in himself the “consecrated life” (the sentiments and virtues) of the one, eternal Priest who shares with him not only his power, but also his state of sacrifice for accomplishing the divine plan. *Sacerdos et Hostia*.

Given that consecrated life centers on Jesus and on imitating his very style of life as closely as possible, the Synod of Bishops and JP II have clearly taught that all priests are called to consecrated life and ought to commit themselves fully to it. Nevertheless, someone who does not make that commitment can be ordained validly and can validly act *in persona Christi*, and thus to be a valid instrument (*pace* the Pope’s expression)—though such priests are likely to be pastorally ineffective and may well be disastrous.

Thus, consecrated life is not required of the ordained precisely so that they can act *in persona Christi*~ but insofar as, doing so, they need also to cooperate with Jesus by acting in propria persona~ to make Jesus' acts, now present, fully available to others and fruitful for them as Jesus wills.

John Paul II, General Audience (21 July 1993), 5, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 28 July 1993, 11, deals with clerical poverty:

5. We shall conclude this catechesis by turning once again to the figure of Jesus Christ, the High Priest, the Good Shepherd and supreme model for priests. He is the presbyter's example of being stripped of one's earthly goods, if he wants to be conformed to the demand of evangelical poverty. Jesus was indeed born in poverty and he lived in it. St. Paul admonished: "He made himself poor though he was rich" (2 Cor 8:9). To someone who wanted to follow him, Jesus said of himself: "The foxes have lairs, the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head" (Lk 9:58). These words show a complete detachment from all earthly comforts. However, one should not conclude that Jesus lived in destitution. Other Gospel passages state that he received and accepted invitations to the homes of rich people (cf. Mt 9:10–11; Mk 2:15–16; Lk 5:29; 7:36; 19:5–6), he had women who helped support him in his financial needs (Lk 8:2–3; cf. Mt 27:55; Mk 15:40; Lk 23:55–56), and he was able to give alms to the poor (cf. Jn 13:29). Nevertheless, there is no doubt about the spirit and life of poverty that distinguished him.

The same spirit of poverty should inspire the priest's behavior, characterizing his attitude, life and very image as a pastor and man of God. It is expressed in disinterest and detachment toward money, in renunciation of all greed for possessing earthly goods, in a simple lifestyle, in the choice of a modest dwelling accessible to all, and in rejecting everything that is or appears to be luxurious, while striving to give himself more and more freely to the service of God and the faithful.

6. Finally, let us add that, having been called by Jesus to "preach the Good News to the poor" and in accordance with his example, "priests and Bishops alike are to avoid everything that might in any way antagonize the poor" (PO 17). Instead, by fostering in themselves the Gospel spirit of poverty, they will be in a position to show their own preferential option for the poor, translating it into sharing, into personal and community works of assistance, including material aid, to the needy. It is a witness to the Poor Christ, which is given today by so many priests, poor themselves and the friends of the poor. It is a great flame of love enkindled in the life of the clergy and the Church. If occasionally in the past the clergy could in some places appear among the ranks of the wealthy, today they feel honored, with the whole Church, in being found in the first row among the "new poor." This is great progress in following Christ on the path of the Gospel.

Here JP II makes clear the need for clerical poverty precisely for the sake of pastoral credibility and effectiveness. The good pastor manifests pastoral charity, frees himself up for service, and avoids antagonizing the poor.

John Paul II, General Audience (28 July 1993), 3–4, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 4/11 August 1993, 7:

The lay Christian is called to be directly involved in this activity [political action and social organization] to make his contribution so that Gospel principles may hold ever greater sway in society. Following Christ, the priest is more directly concerned with the growth of God's kingdom. Like Jesus, he must renounce involvement in political activity, particularly by not taking sides (which almost inevitably happens), in order to remain a man for all in terms of brotherhood and, to the extent that he is accepted as such, of spiritual fatherhood.

Naturally in regard to individuals, groups and situations there can be exceptional cases in which it may seem opportune or even necessary to help or supplement public institutions that are lacking or in disarray, in order to support the cause of justice and peace. Ecclesiastical institutions themselves, even at the highest level, have provided this service in the past, with all the advantages, but also with all the burdens and difficulties that this entails. Providentially, modern political, constitutional and doctrinal development tends in another direction. Civil society has been progressively given institutions and resources to fulfill its own tasks autonomously (cf. GS 40, 76).

Thus the Church still has her own task: proclaiming the Gospel, limiting herself to cooperating in her own way in the common good, without aiming at or accepting a political role.

4. In this light one can better understand what was decided by the 1971 Synod of Bishops regarding the priest's conduct in political life. He certainly retains the right to have personal political opinions and to exercise his right to vote according to his conscience. As the Synod said: "In circumstances in which there legitimately exist different political, social and economic options, priests like all citizens have a right to make their own personal choices. But since political options are by nature contingent and never in an entirely adequate and perennial way interpret the Gospel, the priest, who is the witness of things to come, must keep a certain distance from any political office or involvement" (*Enchiridion Vaticanum*, IV, 1195). In particular, he will keep in mind that a political party can never be identified with the truth of the Gospel, and therefore, unlike the Gospel, it can never become an object of absolute loyalty. Thus the presbyter will take this relativity into account, even when citizens of the Christian faith laudably form parties explicitly inspired by the Gospel. He must strive to shed the light of Christ on other parties and social groups too.

It should be added that the presbyter's right to express his own personal choices is limited by the requirements of his priestly ministry. This limitation too can be an aspect of the poverty he is called to practice following Christ's example. In fact, he can sometimes be obliged to abstain from exercising his own right so that he can be a strong sign of unity, and thus proclaim the Gospel in its fullness. Even more, he must avoid presenting his own choice as the only legitimate one, and within

the Christian community, he should respect the maturity of the laity (cf. *ibid.*, IV, 1196), and even work to help them achieve that maturity by forming their consciences (cf. *ibid.*, IV, 1194). He will do what is possible to avoid making enemies by taking political stands that cause distrust and drive away the faithful entrusted to his pastoral mission.

This lays out the need to avoid partisanship in political-economic-social matters quite clearly and also states the reasons for it. It is the province of the laity, and the priest should leave it to them. If he gets involved, that is likely to damage his service in his proper role.

John Paul II, General Audience (22 Sept. 1993), 2, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 29 Sept. 1993, 11:

2. According to Jesus' teaching, presiding over the community means serving it, not domineering over it. He himself gave us the example of a Shepherd who cares for and serves his flock, and he proclaimed that he came not to be served but to serve (cf. Mk 10:45; Mt 20:28). In the light of Jesus, the Good Shepherd and the one Teacher and Lord (cf. Mt 23:8), the priest understands that he cannot seek his own honor nor his own interests. He must seek only what Jesus Christ wanted, putting himself at the service of his kingdom in the world. Thus, he knows—and the Council reminds him—[in PO 9] that he must act as the servant of all, with sincere and generous self-giving, accepting all the sacrifices required by this service. He must always remember that Jesus Christ, the one Teacher and Lord, came to serve and did so to the point of giving “his own life as a ransom for the many” (Mt 20:28).

The priest must serve, but that does not mean giving the laity what they want. It means seeking only what Jesus wants rather than having any sort of agenda of his own.

Subsidiarity applies to the Church. She is one body with many members, each with proper gifts and functions. And various groups in the Church—dioceses, religious orders, parishes, particular communities, families—also have their proper gifts and functions. In each case, the larger community should help those within it to fulfill their proper functions, not take them over.

The huge difference between the Church and political society is not in the meaning, relevance, and or application of subsidiarity. Rather, it is in the common good of the whole, the proper functions of each group and individual, and the ways in which help can be supplied.

In the Church, the realization of the common good primarily depends on God's activity—grace. The whole point of life in the Church is to receive, enjoy, cherish, and pass along to others the gift of divine-human *communio* and other divine gifts that contribute to the development of that *communio* and eventual fulfillment in it: the kingdom of God. Jesus as man has already done what is essential to secure and make available these gifts. His disciples' activities must be in cooperation with his.

In political society, the realization of the common good depends on the leaders' and citizens' actions. The society's common good itself is not ultimately fulfilling for its members, but instrumental to their fulfillment, which they must pursue in and by other associations, beginning with the Church. So, leaders' and members' functions are different.



People who talk about subsidiarity in the Church often confuse matters by assuming mistakenly that the leaderships' roles are the same in both cases. But they really are very different. Church leaders do not decide anything of great importance. Among Church members, there really is nothing to conflict about. All the leaders can do is identify what has been given, safeguard it, and preside over cooperation in receiving, enjoying, cherishing, and making it available to others. Political societies' leaders should mediate conflicts of interests so that people can live together in peace and justice. They must decide who gets how much of what they want. So, it is extremely important that leaders not be meddle in many matters that are precisely the proper concern of Church leaders.

Mk 9.30–50 is a powerful text against clericalism. They have been to Caesarea Philippi and beyond the transfiguration. The passage begins with Jesus instructing the apostles about his coming death and resurrection. When they arrive at Capernaum, they have been discussing “who was the greatest”—among them. A typical clericalist concern. He tells them that the greatest must be the servant of all, takes a child and puts him in their midst, takes him in his arms, and says: “Whoever receives one such child receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.” In effect, he is telling them that in dealing with the seemingly least significant, they will really be dealing with God; serving the least significant will be ennobling.

There is then an exchange (Mk 9.38–41) about someone casting out demons in Jesus' name “and we forbade him.” Again, a clericalist tendency to control, to want to be in charge of everything. They probably are especially miffed because they've recently (Mk 9.28) failed to cast out a demon due to their lack of prayerfulness. Jesus tells them to accept help from everybody: who is not against us is with us. He adds that anyone who gives them a cup of cold water because they bear his name will not lose his reward: any sort of contribution to the cause is a good thing and should be accepted as such.

When one looks at Paul, one sees that he recognizes the work of the Holy Spirit giving gifts to every member of the Church, all of which are to be used in upbuilding. What one does not see is anything like a plan to try to manage all that. Acts makes it clear that the Spirit knows what he is doing, and the apostles have to follow his lead. So, the usual need to manage and administer—as in government and business—is not the right model for Church leadership. George Montague, *Maturing in Christ*, 205, in the context of exegeting Ephesians 4.7–16, about how the Church builds herself up with the input of all the members, says in italics: “The role of the official ministers in building the Church is to release and direct the Church-building power latent by divine gift in every Christian!” The point is that the Spirit's giving those gifts is not random, but already well organized. If leaders simply release and direct that power—help everyone find his/her personal vocation and encourage them to live it fully—the upbuilding of the Church will go on in a perfectly orderly way. (Jesus' way of talking about the Spirit in Jn 3.7–8—”[7] Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born anew.’ [8] The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit.”—can be misleading, because wind is random and does not carry out any sort of intelligent plan. On the meaning of those two verses, see Ray Brown, AB 29:141.)

Jesus then gets back to the child: “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.” He then goes on to tell them that one must give up whatever is necessary to avoid sin. He ends by telling them: “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” In other words, do the job you are supposed to do and don’t be competitive, don’t worry about status.

In the sex abuse cases, plenty of priests as well as bishops knew what was going on but did not do what was necessary to put a stop to it. They knew kids were being hurt, being led into sin. But the kids were off to the margin of their screen. The clerics involved were the important people.

Should you prefer the best interests of the Church or of the people, when the two conflict? Neither. Figure out what Jesus wants you to do, and do that. One can be confident that will be in the true best interests of the Church and the people. The Church is to serve Jesus and his people, and he has his people’s best interests at heart. Perhaps the question arises from someone’s having a false view of the Church or of her interests. The Church is not the clergy as a class. The interests of the Church are not always in avoiding schism. Perhaps the misunderstanding is of the people’s interests. That is not always in hearing what they want to hear, getting what they want out of the Church.

What is the relationship between acting *in persona Christi capitis*, on the one hand, and, on the other, the intimacy with our Lord Jesus that pertains to personal holiness and the imitation of his style of life by celibacy, simplicity of life, and clerical obedience?

The documents of the twentieth-century magisterium make it absolutely clear that the relationship is close. But it plainly is not ontologically necessary, since a duly ordained person who means to do what the Church does can act validly *in persona Christi* despite being faithless and wicked, and following a lifestyle anything but Christlike. The relationship is one of moral necessity. Personal holiness and Christlikeness in lifestyle are fitting for those acting *in persona Christi*—though by no means only to them, since nonclerical religious and simple lay people also can have these characteristics. Those ordained to act *in persona Christi*, however, have both an additional ground for the obligation to meet the common requirements of Christian life and special obligations to imitate our Lord Jesus in some respects that are not obligatory for the faithful in general.

Why? I think the answer follows from the conjunction of two prior principles:

1) Jesus’ saving human acts, centering in but not limited to the new-covenant-forming act of laying down his life, were not done by him as a private individual, but as the human leader of the new human family of God (for family of God, see UR 2, LG 28, 32)—as the “new Adam.” Other people benefit from those acts by cooperating in them (though not only by doing so; e.g., babies benefit by being baptized). To clarify the meaning of cooperating here: just listening receptively to Jesus is cooperating with his teaching; just accepting his leadership in organizing his followers is cooperating with his shepherding; just seeking his saving help is cooperating with his sanctifying.

2) Jesus enabled and authorized the apostles and their successors (which includes priests and deacons within the limits of their share in sacred order) to act in his person. They do so not only as ministers of the Eucharist and other sacraments but as proclaimers of saving truths and pastoral leaders of the Church. (See John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 15; Congregation for the Clergy, *Directory for the Life and Ministry of Priests*, 7; regarding bishops, see LG 21; *The Rites*, II, 90.) Moreover, they do so not only by proxying for Jesus (a moral and juridical relationship) but by being ontologically joined to Jesus (sacramental character) so that they really are his bodily organs (living instruments) able to provide behaviors that carry out Jesus' acts by really being his performances.

Conclusion: Jesus instituted this arrangement (the sacrament of order) so that his acts would be available for the cooperation of people around the world until the end of time. So, those acting *in persona Christi* must not only act but even be, so far as they can, in all aspects of their personality and character suited to make Jesus' acts available. The ordained ought to fulfill not only the minimum requirements for doing Jesus' saving human acts but the whole set of conditions for making them available—that is, easily recognizable as sacred acts and readily identifiable as our Lord Jesus' acts—and for facilitating people's cooperation by making cooperating attractive and by avoiding doing anything likely to impede it.

In other words, those who act *in persona Christi* precisely as such also must be and act *in propria persona* so as to provide an appropriate context or setting for our Lord Jesus' acts. If his acts are pearls, their persons and actions must be crystal settings that lead all eyes to the pearls, conceal nothing of their beauty, and call no attention to themselves. So, the ordained should be as much like our Lord Jesus as they can be, and, insofar as they cannot be he, they should be transparent to him, as clean windows are transparent to those seen through them, and they should be clear media to him, as good, noise-free phone lines are clear media to those heard and spoken to through them. That calls for not only the personal holiness to which all Christians are called but a Christlike lifestyle including celibacy, simplicity of life, and the obedience of completely subordinating their self-interests to the requirements of their mission articulated by lawful superiors within their proper spheres of authority.

If the preceding explains why the ordained as such have a special reason to be holy and a reason to imitate Christ even more closely than Christian holiness itself requires, the personal responsibilities the ordained have in common with lay people super-determine these responsibilities.

Like other Christians, priests in virtue of their baptism must strive to integrate their whole minds, hearts, souls, and strength with the gift of charity; but they do this mainly in and through being the best priests they can be. Like other Christians, priests in virtue of their confirmation must bear witness by their lives and words; but their main opportunities for doing this are in their priestly service. Like other Christians, priests as participants in the Eucharist must prepare their own spiritual sacrifice to offer with Christ, but they do this mainly by giving themselves completely to alleviating others' spiritual poverty.

So, when priests fall short in their ministry, they also fall short as Christians. From those to whom more is given, more will be required.

Note that Mt 25.1–13, the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins, tells of the bridegroom who goes to the bride's house to fetch her and bring her back to his own home where the marriage feast is held and the marriage consummated. Jesus comes into the world, the home of his bride to be (fallen humankind), to fetch her and take her to heaven.

The ordained are not bridegrooms alongside Jesus; he alone is the bridegroom. But bishops represent him, are a symbol of him, *vis-à-vis* their particular churches and, by analogy, are pastors for their parishes. Essentially, though, clerics' role is that of friends of the groom: they are more like the virgins who are to be prepared to serve when called upon.

1 Tm 4.15–16: "Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." The ministry requires one to be exemplary, to show others how to live a good Christian life. Bearing effective witness by both example and word, the close collaborator sanctifies himself/herself and also contributes to others' salvation.

St. Paul speaks of himself as a father to his people: see 1 Cor 4.15, and says he acted like a father 1 Thes 2.11.

In Von Balthasar's *Christian State of Life*, 260–66, are some points about the distinction between the noble office of clerics and the always-shortfalling persons holding it. These remarks need not be quoted or cited, but could inspire a clarification. Clericalism is partly due to a wrongful appropriation as personal of the excellence and holiness of the office. It amounts to a forgetting of what VB is saying Jesus was at pains to teach Peter.

The individual never is worthy of the nobility of the office he holds. He needs to be aware of that at all times, be aware that it is inevitable, and be honest about it. At the same time, this does not provide any excuses for or ground for condoning gross abuses of office: using clerical power to dominate and use people, to enrich oneself, to get sexual partners, and so on. What it does is to require clerics to recognize their own venial sinfulness in an especially clear and sharp way, and in recognizing it, to see their unworthiness of the office without exaggerating the significance of their own sinfulness in a way that would lead to morbid lack of or loss of decent self-esteem.

The intrinsic requirements of sound ministry plus relevant norms of canon law provide the analogue for diocesan priests to the rule or a religious institute (and provide a supplement for clerics regular to their rule). Like the rule, norms of canon law are subject to *epikeia*, but the intrinsic requirements of sound ministry are not. The cleric who violates these things though is like the disobedient religious, a man betraying his commitment and treating his office as if it were at his personal disposal.

Diocesan priests sometimes receive substantial gifts due to their ministry. While they may use such gifts to meet their own genuine needs and those of any they are responsible for—e.g., aged and impoverished parents—beyond this such income should be used to meet needs of the Church; CD 28.3 suggests that they contribute generously to the material needs of the diocese.

Sometimes a gift should be refused, because it does not meet any genuine need of the cleric himself and cannot be converted to benefits for others. An example would be a luxurious vacation, an invitation to attend expensive entertainment, gourmet foods that cannot be distributed to the hungry, first class airplane seats.

CIC, c. 387, recalls the diocesan bishop's responsibility to show an example of holiness in charity, humility, and simplicity of life.

CIC, c. 282, §1: "Clerics are to foster simplicity of life and are to refrain from all things that have a semblance of vanity." §2: Money that comes from exercising an ecclesiastical office should be used to meet genuine needs and do the job. Clerics should be willing to use any excess for the good of the Church and works of charity.

It seems to me that ecclesiastical office here ought not to be taken narrowly. (See CCOE, 385, §1, which seems to broaden it out.) It should include their whole service as clerics, whether all of it is required to fulfill their formal assignments or not. And it certainly should include gifts they receive for having performed pastoral services. For clerics are consecrated by ordination for pastoral service. So, except for part-time permanent deacons, clerics should not be engaged in secular activities that bring in money. If they write or teach or lecture or the like, their doing so should be pastoral. So, the only income not covered here would be inherited wealth or gifts from family and friends that have nothing to do with the cleric's providing any pastoral service.

Louis John Cameli, *Ministerial Consciousness: A Biblical-Spiritual Study*, *Analecta Gregoriana*, 198 (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1975), 233–35, makes the point that priests' service to all members of the Church is reflexive—they meet priests' needs as well as others. The same acts of Jesus conveyed by their preaching and sacraments and shepherding that save others also save them. So, they are radically in solidarity with other members of the Church.

Priests must not treat laity as immature—they also have service of witness by life and word to perform for others. They also are sustained by similar witness on the part of other lay people—few would long stand without it. Moreover, in trying to benefit others they work out their own salvation.

See Basil Cole, O.P., "The Desire for the Episcopate and the Sin of Ambition according to St. Thomas," *Angelicum*, 78 (2001): 3–21. This article is in accord with a wider consideration that concerns me: many who become novices or seminarians and later become religious or priests, superiors or bishops, and so forth are from the beginning and right along fixated more on what they want to be and do than on what God wants of them. First, they want to make it in—to get professed and/or ordained. Then they want the assignment or parish they prefer, and so forth. I think that people should come in with the attitude:

I am here because I think God may want me to be a religious or priest. If he does, I need to do my best to cooperate with him in getting ready for that. But if he does not, he has something else in mind that will be more suitable for me. Yet, for some reason I don't now understand and perhaps never will understand, he wants me to do what I can now to prepare as best I can to be the religious or priest I will never be. So, I must do

my best with this program, regardless of what God wants of me. And so long as I can please him, it makes absolutely no difference to me what becomes of me.

If novices and seminarians began with that attitude, they would need only to preserve it, and they would not become career minded.

Another point. I have been told by people who ought to know that many of the most promising candidates for bishop have been declining the appointment because they think the job “impossible” in the present state of the Church. My impression is that seldom if ever is anyone formally commanded to accept. I think that if a really faithful and clearheaded priest is asked to become an auxiliary in a diocese where there are many abuses or bishop is asked to become an ordinary in a diocese where there are many dissenters, the man ought to ask to see the pope, and absolutely refuse appointment if that request is not granted. If it is, he should tell the pope that he won’t accept the appointment without a guarantee that he will be backed up when he refuses to violate his conscience with the moral compromises that the present state of the Church seems to require of bishops in such dioceses.

Papal Address to Indian Bishops of Bangalore, Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam

Vatican City, July 3, 2003 (Zenit.org).- Here is the address John Paul II delivered today to bishops of the Indian episcopal conference of the ecclesiastical provinces of Bangalore, Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam, whom he received at the end of their five-yearly visit to the Holy See.

Dear Brother Bishops,

1. In the grace and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ I cordially welcome you, the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Bangalore, Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam, and make my own the greeting of Saint Paul: “I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed in all the world” (Rom 1:8). In particular I thank Archbishop Pinto for his good wishes and kind sentiments offered on your behalf, which I warmly reciprocate, and I assure you and those entrusted to your care of my prayers. Your visit *ad Limina Apostolorum* expresses the profound communion of love and truth which unites the particular Churches in India with the Successor of Peter and his collaborators in the service of the universal Church. In “coming to see Peter” (Gal 1:18) you thus confirm your “unity in the same faith, hope and charity, and more and more recognize and treasure that immense heritage of spiritual and moral wealth that the whole Church, joined with the Bishop of Rome ... has spread throughout the world” (*Pastor Bonus*, Appendix I, 3).

2. To bear witness to Jesus Christ is “the supreme service which the Church offers to the peoples of Asia” (*Ecclesia in Asia*, 20). Living with many people who do not know Christ convinces us ever more of the need for the missionary apostolate. The radical newness of life brought by Christ and lived by his followers awakens in us the urgency of missionary activity (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, 7). This demands an explicit proclamation of Jesus as Lord: a bold testimony founded on his command —

“go and make disciples of all nations” (Mt 28:19) and sustained by his promise — “I am with you always” (Mt 28:20). Indeed it is in fidelity to the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King that all Christians, in keeping with their baptismal dignity, have a right and duty to participate actively in the missionary endeavors of the Church (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, 71).

The call for a new evangelization and renewed missionary commitment which I have addressed to the whole Church resounds just as clearly for your ancient Christian communities as it does for your newest. While the initial evangelization of non-Christians and the continuing proclamation of Jesus to the baptized will highlight differing aspects of the same Good News, both stem from a firm commitment to make Christ ever more known and loved. Such an obligation has its sublime origin in the “fountain-like love” of the Father made present in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit (cf. *Ad Gentes*, 2). All Christians are thus drawn up into Christ’s impelling love, of which “we cannot but speak” (Acts 4:20), as the source of the hope and joy that marks us.

3. A correct understanding of the relationship between culture and Christian faith is vital for effective evangelization. On your own Indian subcontinent you are faced with cultures rich in religious and philosophical traditions. Within this context, we see how absolutely essential is the proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Son of God. It is in this understanding of Christ’s uniqueness as the second person of the Blessed Trinity, fully God and fully man, that our faith must be preached and embraced. Any theology of mission that omits the call to a radical conversion to Christ and denies the cultural transformation which such conversion will entail necessarily misrepresents the reality of our faith, which is always a new beginning in the life of him who alone is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn 14:6).

In this regard, we reaffirm that interreligious dialogue does not replace the *missio ad gentes* but rather forms a part of it (cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration *Dominus Iesus*, 2). Similarly, it must be noted that relativist explanations of religious pluralism, which state that the Christian faith is of no different value than any other belief, in fact empty Christianity of its defining Christological heart: faith alienated from our Lord Jesus, as the only Savior, is no longer Christian, no longer theological faith. An even greater misrepresentation of our faith occurs when relativism leads to syncretism: an artificial “spiritual construct” that manipulates and consequently distorts the essential, objective, revelatory nature of Christianity. That which renders the Church missionary by her very nature is precisely the definitive and complete character of the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God (cf. “*Dei Verbum*,” 2). This is the foundation of our faith. It is this which makes Christian witness credible. With joy and humility we must welcome the duty that “we, who have received the grace of believing in Christ, the revealer of the Father and the Savior of the world, have to show to what depths the relationship with Christ can lead” (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 33).

4. Dear Brothers, your quinquennial reports give ample evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit vivifying the missionary dimension of the Church's life in your Dioceses. Notwithstanding the obstacles encountered by people—especially the poor—who wish to embrace the Christian faith, adult baptisms are numerous in much of your region. Equally encouraging is the high percentage of Catholics who attend Sunday Mass, and the increasing numbers of laity properly participating in the liturgy. Such examples of the ready acceptance of God's gift of faith also indicate the need for the diligent pastoral care of our people. Responding to the aspiration for a new impetus in Christian living, I have stated that we must remain firmly focused on the plan already found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition which has its center in Christ himself (cf. *ibid.*, 29).

The reason to develop pastoral initiatives adapted to the social and cultural circumstances of your communities, yet firmly rooted in the uniqueness of Christ, is clear: "What we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord with ourselves as servants" (2 Cor 4:5). Far from being a matter of power or control, the Church's programs of evangelization and formation are conducted in the belief that "every person has a right to hear the Good News of God who reveals and gives himself in Christ" (*Ecclesia in Asia*, 20). While there are many signs of dynamic ecclesial life in your provinces it is also the case that challenges remain. A deeper appreciation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will help to ready your people spiritually for the task of "doing everything possible to witness to reconciliation and to bring it about in the world" (*Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, 8). Similarly, our teaching of marriage as a sacred sign of the unfailing fidelity and selfless love of Christ for his Church points to the invaluable worth of a comprehensive marriage preparation program for those readying themselves for the sacrament and, through them, for society as a whole. Further, the festivities and devotions associated with the many shrines dedicated to Our Lady in your areas, while attracting thousands of followers from other religions, must be soundly incorporated within the liturgical life of the Church if they are to become a gateway to authentic Christian experience.

5. In a world disfigured by fragmentation the Church—as the sign and instrument of the communion of God with humanity (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 1)—is a powerful bearer of unity and the reconciliation which it entails. As Bishops called to manifest and preserve the apostolic tradition you are joined in a communion of truth and love. Individually you are the visible source and foundation of unity in your own particular Churches which are constituted after the model of the universal Church. So, while it is true to say that a Bishop represents his own Church it is also necessary to recall that together with the Pope all Bishops represent the whole Church in the bond of peace, love and unity (cf. *ibid.*, 23).

In this regard, a Bishop must never be considered a mere delegate of a particular social or language grouping but must always be recognized as a successor of the Apostles, whose mission comes from the Lord. The repudiation of a Bishop, whether by an individual or a group, is always a transgression of ecclesial communion and



thus a scandal for the faithful and a counter-witness to the followers of other religions. Any spirit of antagonism or conflict—always wounding the Body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:12–13)—must be put aside and replaced with that practical and concrete love for every person which arises from the contemplation of Christ.

6. I give thanks to God for the many indications of growth and maturity in your Dioceses. In addition to the often selfless dedication of your priests, Religious and catechists, and the generosity of your own people, this development has also depended upon the ministry of missionaries and the financial generosity of overseas donors. The “pooling of resources and aspirations in order to promote both the common good and the good of individual churches” (*Christus Dominus*, 36), which has been practiced from Apostolic times, is an eloquent manifestation of the Church’s nature as communion. Yet it is also true to say that particular Churches, including those in countries of the developing world, should seek to build up their own resources to promote local evangelization, and build pastoral centers and institutions of educational and charitable works. To this end, I encourage you to further the considerable advances which you have already achieved with the laity and in collaboration with Religious Institutes (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 222). For your own part I urge you to set an unquestionable example by your impartiality in the stewardship of the communal resources of the Church (cf. *ibid.*, can. 1276; 1284). You must ensure that the administration of “goods ... meant for all” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 42) is never sullied by temptations to materialism or favoritism but is wisely undertaken in response to the needs of the spiritually or materially poor.

7. Dear Brothers, it is a particular joy for me to share these reflections with you on this feast of the glorious Apostle Saint Thomas, so venerated by your people. I again assure you of my prayers and support as you continue to shepherd in love the flocks entrusted to your care. United in our proclamation of the saving Good News of Jesus Christ, renewed in the zeal of the first Christians, and inspired by the steadfast example of the Saints, let us go forward in hope! In this Year of the Rosary, may Mary, model of all disciples and bright Star of Evangelization, be your sure guide as you “seek to do what Jesus tells you” (cf. Jn 2:5). Commending you to her maternal protection, I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing to you and to the priests, Religious, and lay faithful of your Dioceses.

This perhaps will be most relevant in later sections of the book. When the hierarchy try to take over the role of the laity, it interferes in various ways with their doing what they should be doing (5–B) to make Jesus saving acts available; it also is an abuse of teaching office (6–A and 7–B).

The apostolate of the Church was not expanded by Vatican II, since it comes from Jesus and cannot be changed by the Church. But the Council clarified the apostolate’s breadth. It is not only to save souls, but to do what humans can to save the whole of creation, all of which relates to persons and communities of persons by bodying them out, providing necessary

environment, and so forth. Christ came to save the whole created reality that had been damaged by sin, and so the Church's apostolate—which carried on his mission—includes saving the whole sociocultural environment. Thus, ordering all secular (i.e., nonreligious) realities to the kingdom pertains to the Church's apostolate, and is the specific focus of lay apostolate.

In the Church, the one body, are people with different gifts and responsibilities. Acting *in persona Christi*, the clergy make Jesus' central and organizing acts available for all his disciples to cooperate with. The laity are to order secular realities to the kingdom, The proper concern of the clergy for the secular is to provide the laity with principles of judgment based on the Gospel (whether drawn from it alone or from natural law in its light), to catechize and pastorally support the laity for their apostolate, and to evaluate morally and call to repentance where necessary the apostolic work and sins of the laity as well as those of religious and the clergy themselves. The laity must participate actively in the liturgy and must help the clergy, where necessary, in their proper apostolate—here is the place for lay ministries as distinct from lay apostolate.

The apostolate of the Church always has been and will be as described. It is God-given, part of revelation and the appropriate response to it. It is not a new idea, a sort of program or strategy, dreamed up by Vatican II.

Why, then, has it not always been taught and carried out? In some ways it has been. In obedience to God, faithful lay people engaged in secular occupations and had children and raised them for heaven—thus they engaged in and were sanctified by lay apostolate without ever conceptualizing what they were doing in that way. Perhaps they made a morning offering or otherwise recognized that what they did, they did for God. The clergy were men of God who served the Word and administered the sacraments.

For most of the history of the Church, however, few of the laity could fulfill the secular part of the Church's apostolate with respect to learned professions and public affairs. So, the clergy "pitched in" with respect to these matters. Their doing that was not ideal, but in many cases was necessary or appropriate under the circumstances. But even when so, it often led to the clergy's deep entanglement in temporal affairs to the detriment or neglect of more centrally clerical responsibilities, detracted from the credibility of evangelization, and occasioned widespread corruption.

In modern times, with urbanization and industrialization, the situation changed. Lay people became educated and had many more choices with respect to the shaping of their lives. In democratic societies, anyone can take part very significantly in large affairs, including politics. Gradually, the clergy have been pushed out of effective involvement in most of the secular affairs they had been involved in, and they fortunately stayed out of many other new, large scale matters, such as large commercial and industrial enterprises. But for the most part, due both to the clergy's neglect of timely catechesis and the laity's own irresponsibility, lay people who became involved in nontraditional affairs did not regard them as a field of apostolate. Rather, these affairs developed and became integrated as part of a counter-Christian (so-called post-Christian) culture. This is the cultural reality of secularism in the modern world.

Trying to counter secularism and make up for the laity's lack of apostolic action in their proper sphere, the clergy tried to continue influencing large secular affairs not only by teaching principles and forming lay people to play their proper part but by direct intervention, particularly by inappropriate efforts to catechize nonbelievers and to extend ecclesial "teaching" beyond its proper limits, to provide moral norms more specific than the clergy can be sure are true and even to discern among morally acceptable options.

This pattern of clerical action in the secular and neglect of catechesis of the laity blocked the laity from recognizing and carrying out their proper responsibility. Papal action (and neglect, though not total) along these lines was widely imitated by bishops, as is to be expected, and many bishops went further in secular involvement and did less in appropriate catechesis. Thus, everyone tended to suppose that for the Church to be properly involved in big matters meant that the pope or bishops had to make a statement about them, and the laity seldom even thought of organizing themselves to act on behalf of the Church in secular affairs. For the most part, then, clerics and clerically organized, though partly lay-staffed, Church bureaus and committees preempt lay apostolate in politics and other large affairs. The result is that people involved on behalf of the Church in large secular affairs seldom are the competent laity directly involved in them (most of whom separate these matters from their faith) but are clerics and clerical employees who are not really competent, and so are hardly credible, in these matters. The absurd result is the magisterium of the Church putting out documents "teaching" in ways beyond its competence, where the content has been determined by staff on the advice of supposed experts who have drawn from nonbelievers not only their positions but all the evidence and arguments for them.

So, what is to be done?

Clerics, beginning with the popes, must stop venturing into areas in which the laity properly operate, and should begin to devote themselves almost entirely to what they alone can do. They must stop organizing and using staffs including lay people to do in a quasi-clerical way what lay people in various fields should organize themselves to do. Clerics need to instruct lay people about their apostolic responsibilities, making clear how different these are from lay ministries. Clerics also need to teach relevant moral principles and remind errant laity of them, while abstaining from trying to catechize nonbelievers and from venturing beyond their competence into specific norms that can be articulated only by people competent in a field, much less into trying to discern on the laity's behalf among their morally acceptable options.

The laity need to get themselves together, organize, and act. In doing this, they should proceed autonomously, yet should strive to maintain harmony with the clergy. When the laity become involved in their own apostolates, the Church's facilities should be made available for them as they sometimes are for religious communities.

Objection: This will leave a great many important matters untended to. True, but don't have illusions that publishing Church documents on all sorts of secular matters is bearing significant fruit. No matter what policy the clergy follows, much will remain undone: in this world there will never be a civilization of love, a culture of life. But reforming the present situation will end the waste of clerical time, increase the credibility of preaching and teaching,

and save other resources while raising the laity's consciousness, catechizing them as to their responsibilities, and leaving a void for them to fill.

Notes on *Pastores dabo vobis*,

Note that the idea that pastoral charity means sharing Jesus' intention of saving souls does not mean barely saving them; Jesus intends people's positive fulfillment in the kingdom, which means that he wants their holiness.

His whole life is a continual manifestation of his "pastoral charity", or rather, a daily enactment of it. #22

By virtue of their consecration, priests are configured to Jesus the Good Shepherd and are called to imitate and to live out his own pastoral charity. #22

23. The internal principle, the force which animates and guides the spiritual life of the priest inasmuch as he is configured to Christ the Head and Shepherd, is pastoral charity, as a participation in Jesus Christ's own pastoral charity, a gift freely bestowed by the Holy Spirit and likewise a task and a call which demand a free and committed response on the part of the priest.

The essential content of this pastoral charity is the gift of self, the total gift of self to the Church, following the example of Christ. "Pastoral charity is the virtue by which we imitate Christ in his self-giving and service. It is not just what we do, but our gift of self, which manifests Christ's love for his flock. Pastoral charity determines our way of thinking and acting, our way of relating to people. It makes special demands on us." [fn. 51; a quotation from JP II]

The gift of self, which is the source and synthesis of pastoral charity, is directed towards the Church. This was true of Christ who "loved the Church and gave himself up for her" (Eph 5:25) and the same must be true for the priest. With pastoral charity, which distinguishes the exercise of the priestly ministry as an *amoris officium* [fn. 52: St. Augustine] "the priest, who welcomes the call to ministry, is in a position to make this a loving choice, as a result of which the Church and souls become his first interest, and with this concrete spirituality he becomes capable of loving the universal Church and that part of it entrusted to him with the deep love of a husband for his wife". [fn53: JP II] The gift of self has no limits, marked as it is by the same apostolic and missionary zeal of Christ, the Good Shepherd, who said: "And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (Jn 10:16).

Within the Church community the priest's pastoral charity impels and demands in a particular and specific way his personal relationship with the presbyterate, united in and with the Bishop, as the Council explicitly states: "Pastoral charity requires that a priest always work in the bond of communion with the bishop and with his brother priests, lest his efforts be in vain". [fn. 54: PO 14]

The gift of self to the Church concerns her insofar as she is the Body and the Bride of Jesus Christ. In this way the primary point of reference of the priest's charity is Jesus Christ himself. Only in loving and serving Christ the Head and Spouse will charity become a source, criterion, measure and impetus for the priest's love and service to the Church, the Body and Spouse of Christ. The Apostle Paul had a clear and sure understanding of this point. Writing to the Christians of the Church in Corinth, he refers to "ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor 4:5). Above all, this was the explicit and programmatic teaching of Jesus when he entrusted to Peter the ministry of shepherding the flock only after his threefold affirmation of love, indeed only after he had expressed a preferential love: "He said to him the third time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' Peter . . . said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep'" (Jn 21: 17).

Pastoral charity, which has its specific source in the Sacrament of Holy Orders, finds its full expression and its supreme nourishment in the Eucharist. As the Council states: "This pastoral charity flows mainly from the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is thus the center and root of the whole priestly life. The priestly soul strives thereby to apply to itself the action which takes place on the altar of sacrifice". [fn. 55: PO 14] Indeed, the Eucharist represents, makes once again present, the sacrifice of the Cross, the full gift of Christ to the Church, the gift of his Body given and his Blood shed, as the supreme witness of the fact that he is Head and Shepherd, Servant and Spouse of the Church. Precisely because of this, the priest's pastoral charity not only flows from the Eucharist but finds in the celebration of the Eucharist its highest realization, just as it is from the Eucharist that he receives the grace and obligation to give his whole life a "sacrificial" dimension.

This same pastoral charity is the dynamic inner principle capable of unifying the many different activities of the priest. In virtue of this pastoral charity the essential and permanent demand for unity between the priest's interior life and all his external actions and the obligations of the ministry can be properly fulfilled, a demand particularly urgent in a socio-cultural and ecclesial context strongly marked by complexity, fragmentation and dispersion. Only by directing every moment and every one of his acts towards the fundamental choice to "give his life for the flock" can the priest guarantee this unity which is vital and indispensable for his harmony and spiritual balance. The Council reminds us that "priests attain to the unity of their lives by uniting themselves with Christ whose food was to fulfill the will of him who sent him to do his work... In this way, by assuming the role of the Good Shepherd they will find in the very exercise of pastoral charity the bond of priestly perfection which will unify their lives and activities". [fn. 56: PO 14]

*Pastores dabo vobis: 30:*

Jesus Christ, who brought his pastoral charity to perfection on the Cross with a complete exterior and interior emptying of self, is both the model and source of the

virtues of obedience, chastity and poverty which the priest is called to live out as an expression of his pastoral charity for his brothers and sisters. In accordance with Saint Paul's words to the Christians at Philippi, the priest should have "the mind which was in Christ Jesus", emptying himself of his own "self", so as to discover, in a charity which is obedient, chaste and poor, the royal road of union with God and unity with his brothers and sisters (cf. Phil 2:5).

*Pastores dabō vobis: 57 (end):*

Pastoral study and action direct one to an inner source, which the work of formation will take care to guard and make good use of: this is the ever deeper communion with the pastoral charity of Jesus, which, just as it was the principle and driving force of his salvific action, likewise, thanks to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Orders, should constitute the principle and driving force of the priestly ministry. It is a question of a type of formation meant not only to ensure scientific, pastoral competence and practical skill, but also and especially a way of being in communion with the very sentiments and behavior of Christ the Good Shepherd: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5).

*Pastores dabō vobis: 72:*

The pastoral aspect of ongoing formation is well expressed by the words of the Apostle Peter: "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Pt 4:10). If he is to live daily according to the graces he has received, the priest must be ever more open to accepting the pastoral charity of Jesus Christ granted him by Christ's Spirit in the Sacrament he has received. Just as all the Lord's activity was the fruit and sign of pastoral charity, so should the priest's ministerial activity be. Pastoral charity is a gift, but it is likewise a task, a grace and a responsibility to which we must be faithful. We have, therefore, to welcome it and live out its dynamism even to its most radical demands. This pastoral charity, as has been said, impels the priest and stimulates him to become ever better acquainted with the real situation of the men and women to whom he is sent, to discern the call of the Spirit in the historical circumstances in which he finds himself, and to seek the most suitable methods and the most useful forms for carrying out his ministry today. Thus pastoral charity encourages and sustains the priest's human efforts for pastoral activity that is relevant, credible and effective. But this demands some kind of permanent pastoral formation.

The path towards maturity does not simply demand that the priest deepen the different aspects of his formation. It also demands above all that he be able to combine ever more harmoniously all these aspects, gradually achieving their inner unity. This will be made possible by pastoral charity. Indeed, pastoral charity not only coordinates and unifies the diverse aspects, but it makes them more specific, marking them out as aspects of the formation of the priest as such, that is of the priest as a dear and living image, a minister of Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Collegiality is treated in *Pastores gregis*, 8. In that section, JP II refers several times to his *Motu proprio*, *Apostolos suos*, which deals with episcopal conferences, and in doing so with collegiality, especially in section 12.

### 5–C: On Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons

Some thoughts on deacons: All clerics were ordained deacons, and those ordained presbyters and bishops always remain deacons. So, the servant role of the deacon is the matrix for all clerical life and action. But the present notes concern those whose only order is the diaconate, and especially those who, having been married when ordained, are called to a lifestyle different from that of most clerics, especially in the Roman rite.

While the faithful generally cannot articulate the significance of the deacon's ordination, they do realize that he is not simply an authorized agent of the bishop and of priests whom he assists. Being ordained, he blesses them rather than just praying with them for God's blessing. They realize that the sacred acts which the Church authorizes him to perform really are different. The faithful need to be instructed to recognize those acts as Jesus' own, and to respect them in the same way they do the sacred acts of bishops and presbyters.

By the same token, deacons must recognize that, when doing what they are authorized to do *in persona Christi*, they must be very careful to do exactly and only what Jesus wants done. In preparing a homily, for instance, the main question the deacon, like the presbyter and bishop, should ask himself is: What do this particular group of Jesus' people need to hear from him here and now? What does he wish to say to them in order to guide and motivate and strengthen them along the way of salvation? If the homilist does all he can to find the true answer to that question, he can be confident that he at least makes the central point of his homily *in persona Christi*.

Of course, like other clerics, deacons' ministerial responsibility extends to many more actions than those they do *in persona Christi*. They should do all those other actions because they share Jesus' reason for doing what he does: he is acting to carry out God's plan for the heavenly kingdom and to help people be part of it—to save them. So, deacons should want what Jesus wants: that his actions be fruitful and effective. Everything they do beyond what they do *in persona Christi* should therefore be directed toward helping people recognize Jesus' acts, removing obstacles to their acceptance, and so on.

Ordination presupposes a man's existing faith and union with Jesus due to the Eucharist. Orders transforms the bodily union he has with Jesus in such a way that he not only lives in Christ but becomes a conscious and willingly cooperating organ, so that his utterances and gestures *in persona Christi* constitutes Jesus' own acts, not merely the ordained's acts authorized by Jesus. Precisely because the ordained is a conscious and willing instrument, his whole being as a person is transformed, not merely his tongue and his hands.

When a Christian man and woman marry, their doing so also affects their personal being and their union with Jesus. Marriage makes them two in one flesh; but since they already are bodily united with Jesus, and live in him, their one-flesh union also makes them one in Jesus in a way not shared by pairs of Christians who are not married.

So, when a married man is ordained, the couple's one-flesh union in Jesus is affected by his capacitation to act *in persona Christi*. While his wife is not personally ordained and cannot by herself act *in persona Christi*, she participates in her husband's diaconate insofar as his whole



being is consecrated to service and she is really involved in his very being and their marital unity is oneness in Christ.

That fundamental reality should be played out in the life of the diaconal married couple. So, the Church rightly makes the wife's consent a necessary condition for a married man to be ordained a deacon (CIC, c. 1032, §2). Their common vocation includes the cooperation required for him to exercise his order. With respect to what the deacon does *in persona Christi*, his wife's cooperation involves helping him prepare, encouraging and facilitating his service, and avoiding insofar as she can doing anything that would impede it.

The deacon's wife cooperates even more fully with his service by acts other than those he does *in persona Christi*—that is, with all he does to promote the acceptance and fruitfulness of what he does do *in persona Christi*. That cooperation is twofold.

First, since Christian marriage is a sacrament of the communion of Christ with the Church, the deacon and his wife must make their married life a model for the relationship between Jesus and the faithful established and nurtured by the very acts that the deacon himself, together with his fellow clerics, does *in persona Christi*. The diaconal couple's married life thus is one of the most important elements of his ministry.

Second, although we do not call a deacon "Father," his pastoral service, like that of a presbyter, realizes and fulfills his capacity for fatherhood. Thus, for the diaconal couple who happen to be childless, their cooperation in his ministry is a substitute for natural parenthood or, if they also are natural parents, an extension of it.

Thus it is clear that the integration of marriage and its responsibilities with the permanent diaconate and its service must not be viewed simply as a practical problem to be solved—a matter of juggling schedules and so on. The couple's life together in Christ is the principle of unity. More than merely being the solution to a problem, their harmonious living out of their very special vocation both fulfills them and makes an irreplaceable contribution to the fullness of Christ and of his Church.

LG 19–27 deals mainly with bishops, LG 28 with presbyters, and LG 29 with deacons. Bishops enjoy the fullness of the sacrament of orders (21); presbyters and deacons are bishops' "helpers" (20). Bishops are successors of the apostles. The bishops "have legitimately handed on to different individuals in the Church various degrees of participation in this ministry" (28). Presbyters are united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity (28) but do not have supreme pontificate and depend on bishops in exercising their power. Still, they constitute one presbyterium (an analogue of the collegium) with their bishop, represent him in a way, and, if in a parish, make the universal Church visible in their locality. They are to serve the whole Church—the common good is their object, as it is that of the bishops. Deacons are ordained "not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service" (29). It is a ministry of the word, or the liturgy, and of charity.

The bishop as a member of the collegium unites his particular Church with the universal Church; analogously, the presbyter in his parish, as the bishop's helper and member of his presbyterium, unites this worshiping assembly with the whole particular Church and so with

the Church universal. The ordained are signs of unity, but not only signs; by holy orders they are united with one another and with Jesus, who with the Father and the Spirit, is the real principle of the unity of the Church.

PO title, shows that Vatican II wished to deal with the ministry and life of presbyters—ministry first because it shapes life, and presbyters rather than priests because the function rather than cultic status was the focus.

PO 1 (Preface): “For, by holy ordination and the mission they receive from bishops, presbyters are promoted to the service of Christ—the teacher, priest, and king. They share in his ministry, by which the Church here on earth is unceasingly built up into the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit.” Thus, while ordination and mission are said—unfortunately, since “capacitated” would be better—to “promote” a man, they have only one purpose: the service of Christ who serves others in a way that builds up the Church on earth.

Benedict Ashley, O.P., *Justice in the Church*, 159–61, has some interesting remarks on deacons. He is inclined, as I am, to take the Acts passage as relevant, and discusses the contrary exegetical opinion. He mentions in note 67 that the relevance of Acts 6.1–6 was held by St. Irenaeus and that the passage is used in the ordination liturgy. He also discusses women deacons, and thinks they were not ordained—see Mortimort on that. Galot, *Theology of the Priesthood*, 160–63, thinks that the seven were ordained as presbyters to celebrate the Eucharist—the table service is in the churches that meet in various Hellenists homes.

One thing important about the passage in Acts 6.1–6: whether or not the seven were the origin of the diaconate, they were chosen by the community under the apostles’ guidance and ordained by them to free the apostles up from dealing with temporalities.

NT basis for clerical ranks: Galot, *Theology of the Priesthood*, 160–72.

*Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, 14–20, articulates many characteristics of the ministry of bishops, drawing heavily on Vatican II.

Some offer accounts of the historical development of the Christian clergy that call into question or flatly deny various propositions in the teachings of Vatican II and in papal and other Church documents since that Council. Those offering such accounts often make a generally unreasonable assumption that features of the clerical reality did not significantly antedate the earliest documentation of them that happens to have survived so that it remains available today. In his very influential treatments of the New Testament evidence, Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P., *Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1981); *The Church with a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), belittles or simply ignores many texts that falsify his interpretations: see Patrick J. Dunn, *Priesthood: A Re-examination of the Roman Catholic Theology of the Presbyterate* (New York: Alba House, 1990), 45–61, 70–72.

Vanhoye, *Old Testament Priests and the New Priest*, 51–52, explains that in the NT, the leaders were never called priests:

None of the functions exercised in the Christian community corresponded to the specific activities of the Jewish priests. Therefore the leaders of the Christians did not take the title of *kohen* or *hiereus*. They were given names which expressed the notion of mission, or of service, or of a position of responsibility and authority, such as *apostolos*, apostle, which means “one who has been sent”; *diakonos*, “one who serves”; *episkopos*, from which the word “bishop” comes and which means “overseer”; *presbyteros*, [note omitted] which gives us the word “priest” and which means an “elder”; *hegoumenos*, which means “a leader.”

In the note, he refers to a passage later in the book (264–67) where he explains the meaning of *presbyteros*. In the first century it was not a priestly title. Its first meaning was “older person.” In Jewish circles, it was used to translate the Hebrew *zeqenim* and to designate the members of the council that directed the community. The elders the Great Sanhedrin were the lay element, as distinct from the high priests and scribes. “Presbyteros in this way became an authority title which could be rendered ‘elder.’” (264–65) So, it was picked up by Jewish Christian communities, then spread to all Christian communities, where it became the name of an ordained ministry. In the NT, elders are among the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem; Paul appoints elders in recently established communities; and in 1 Pt 5.1–4 the author addresses the presbyters and refers to himself as a fellow presbyter. Still, Vanhoye points out (266): “. . . the absence of all reference to presbyters in 1 Peter 2:4–5 shows that the priesthood of the Church is not based on their ministry; its basis is elsewhere and the text indicates this: it is Christ, in the mystery of his Passion and Resurrection.” In other words, the Church as a whole is priestly not because it includes ordained ministers who are priests, but because it is united to Jesus and shares in his priesthood directly. In fact—though Vanhoye does not say this—the priestly character of what the ordained do derives from the fact that it enables the Church as a whole to exercise its priesthood in union with Jesus, the one priest.

The Council of Trent in Canon 1 on extreme unction (DS 1719/929), defines the “elders” (presbyterous) to whom Jas 5.14 refers “esse sacerdotes ab episcopo ordinatos,” not just “aetate seniores in quavis communitate.” Thus, there is a definition that the New Testament teaches that there are ordained clerics.

John Paul II, General Audience (6 October 1993), 1–3, *L’Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 13 Oct. 1993, 11, deals with the history of the diaconate:

1. . . .

The Acts of the Apostles (6:1–6) speaks of seven “ministers” for service at table. Although the question of a sacramental ordination of deacons is not clear from the text, a long tradition has interpreted the episode as the first evidence of the institution of deacons. By the end of the first century or the beginning of the second, the deacon’s place, at least in some Churches, was already well established as a rank in the ministerial hierarchy.

2. Important witness is given particularly by St. Ignatius of Antioch, according to whom the Christian community lives under the authority of a Bishop, surrounded

by presbyters and deacons: “There is only one Eucharist, one body of the Lord, one chalice, one altar, just as there is only one Bishop with the college of presbyters and deacons, fellow servants” (*Ad Philad.*, 4, 1). In Ignatius’ letters, deacons are always mentioned as a lower rank in the ministerial hierarchy. A deacon is praised for “being subject to the Bishop as to the grace of God, and to the presbyter as to the law of Jesus Christ” (*Ad Magnes.*, 6, 1). However, Ignatius underscores the greatness of the deacon’s ministry, because he is “the minister of Jesus Christ who was in the Father’s presence before all ages and was revealed at the end times” (*Ad Magnes.*, 6, 1). As “ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ,” deacons must “in every way be pleasing to all” (*Ad Trall.*, 2, 3). When Ignatius urges Christians to obey the Bishop and the priests, he adds: “Respect the deacons as God’s commandment” (*Ad Smyrn.*, 8, 1).

We find other witnesses in St. Polycarp of Smyrna (*Ad Phil.*, 5,2), St. Justin (*Apol.*, I, 67, 5; 67, 5), Tertullian (*De Bapt.*, 17, 1), St. Cyprian (*Epist.* 15 and 16), and later in St. Augustine (*De cat. rud.*, I, c. 1, 1).

In the early centuries the deacon carried out liturgical functions. In the Eucharistic celebration he read or chanted the Epistle and the Gospel; he brought the offerings of the faithful to the celebrant; he distributed Communion and brought it to those absent; he was responsible for the orderliness of the ceremonies and at the end dismissed the assembly. In addition, he prepared catechumens for Baptism, instructed them and assisted the priest in administering this sacrament. In certain circumstances he himself baptized and preached. He also shared in the administration of ecclesiastical property and cared for the poor, widows, orphans and helped prisoners.

In Tradition there are witnesses to the distinction between the deacon’s functions and those of the priest. For example, St. Hippolytus states (second to third century) that the deacon is ordained “not to the priesthood, but for service to the Bishop, to do what he commands” (*SCh*, 11, p. 39; cf. *Constitutiones Aegypt.*, III, 2: ed. Funk, *Didascalia*, p. 103; *Statuta Ecclesiae Ant.*, 37–41: *Mansi* 3, 954). Actually, according to the Church’s mind and practice, the diaconate belongs to the sacrament of Orders, but is not part of the priesthood and does not entail functions proper to priests.

This gives a good idea of what the diaconate used to be. But he does not deal with the important point: what the deacon does *in persona Christi*.

LG 29 provided for the restoration of the diaconate “as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy.” In doing so, the Council said: “With the consent of the Roman Pontiff, the diaconate will be able to be conferred upon men of more mature age, even upon those living in the married state. It may also be conferred upon suitable young men. For them, however, the law of celibacy must remain intact.” Thus the Council envisioned a permanent diaconate made up of some celibate (and presumably full-time and Church supported) men and some married (and presumably part-time and volunteer) men.

John Paul II, General Audience (20 Oct. 1993), 1–2, *L'Osservatore Romano* (Eng.), 27 Oct. 1993, 11, deals with the diaconate's servant character:

1. Among the catechetical topics on the diaconate the one about the spirit of the diaconate is especially important and attractive, for it concerns and involves all who receive this sacrament in order to carry out its functions in a Gospel perspective. This is the way that leads its ministers to Christian perfection and allows them to give truly effective service (*diaconia*) in the Church, so as “to build up the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12).

Here is the source of diaconal spirituality, which is rooted in what the Second Vatican Council calls the “sacramental grace of the diaconate” (AG 16).

The Council here was making the point that the restoration of the diaconate would be appropriate where catechists and other men already were carrying out some of deacons' responsibilities, such as preaching, administering scattered Christian communities, and carrying on the Church's charitable activities. By ordaining such men deacons, they would have the benefit for doing their work of the grace of the sacrament.

In addition to being a valuable help in carrying out various tasks, it deeply affects the deacon's heart, spurring him to offer his whole self to serving the kingdom of God in the Church. As the very word “diaconate” indicates, what characterizes the interior mind and will of the one who receives the sacrament is the spirit of service. In the diaconate an effort is made to carry out what Jesus stated about his mission: “The Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve—to give his life in ransom for many” (Mk 10:45; Mt 20:28).

Doubtless Jesus addressed these words to the Twelve whom he chose for the priesthood, to make them understand that, although endowed with authority conferred by him, they should act as he did, as servants. The advice applies to all ministers of Christ; however, it has particular meaning for deacons. For them, the aspect of service is stressed by virtue of their ordination. Although they do not exercise the pastoral authority of priests, in carrying out all their functions their particular aim is to show an intention to serve. If their ministry is consistent with this spirit, they shed greater light on that identifying feature of Christ's face—service. They are not only “servants of God,” but also of their brothers and sisters.

2. This teaching of the spiritual life is of Gospel origin and entered the earliest Christian tradition, as that ancient third-century text called the *Didascalia Apostolorum* confirms. In it deacons are encouraged to take their inspiration from the Gospel incident of the washing of feet: “If the Lord did this,” it says, “then you deacons should not hesitate to do it for the sick and infirm, since you are workers of the truth, who have put on Christ” (XVI, 36; Connolly ed., 1904, p. 151). The diaconate commits one to following Jesus with this attitude of humble service, which is expressed not only in works of charity, but shapes and embraces one's whole way of thinking and acting.

The servant-role is highlighted in the diaconate, partly because it is the lowest office in the hierarchy. Strictly speaking, nobody is a transitional deacon; the order remains in those who later are ordained presbyters, just as the ordination to the presbyterate remains in those eventually ordained bishops.

With respect to the differentiation of the orders, CCC:

1585 The grace of the Holy Spirit proper to this sacrament is configuration to Christ as Priest, Teacher, and Pastor, of whom the ordained is made a minister.

1586 For the bishop, this is first of all a grace of strength (“the governing spirit”:  
Prayer of Episcopal Consecration in the Latin rite):<sup>78</sup> the grace to guide and defend his Church with strength and prudence as a father and pastor, with gratuitous love for all and a preferential love for the poor, the sick, and the needy. This grace impels him to proclaim the Gospel to all, to be the model for his flock, to go before it on the way of sanctification by identifying himself in the Eucharist with Christ the priest and victim, not fearing to give his life for his sheep:

Father, you know all hearts.

You have chosen your servant for the office of bishop.

May he be a shepherd to your holy flock,

and a high priest blameless in your sight,

ministering to you night and day;

may he always gain the blessing of your favor

and offer the gifts of your holy Church.

Through the Spirit who gives the grace of high priesthood

grant him the power

to forgive sins as you have commanded,

to assign ministries as you have decreed,

and too loose from every bond by the authority which you gave to your apostles.

May he be pleasing to you by his gentleness and purity of heart,

presenting a fragrant offering to you,

through Jesus Christ, your Son. . . .<sup>79</sup>

1587 The spiritual gift conferred by presbyteral ordination is expressed by this prayer of the Byzantine Rite. The bishop, while laying on his hand, says among other things:

Lord, fill with the gift of the Holy Spirit

him whom you have deigned to raise to the rank of the priesthood,

that he may be worthy to stand without reproach before your altar

to proclaim the Gospel of your kingdom,

to fulfill the ministry of your word of truth,

to offer you spiritual gifts and sacrifices,

to renew your people by the bath of rebirth;

so that he may go out to meet

our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, your only Son,  
 on the day of his second coming,  
 and may receive from your vast goodness  
 the recompense for a faithful administration of his order.<sup>80</sup>

1588 With regard to deacons, “strengthened by sacramental grace they are dedicated to the People of God, in conjunction with the bishop and his body of priests, in the service (diakonia) of the liturgy, of the Gospel, and of works of charity.”<sup>81</sup>

78 Cf. *Roman Pontifical*, Ordination of Bishops 26, Prayer of Consecration;  
 cf. CD 13; 16.

79 *Roman Pontifical*, Ordination of Bishops 26, Prayer of Consecration;  
 cf. St. Hippolytus, *Trad. ap.* 3: SCh II, 44–46.

80 Byzantine Liturgy, *Euchologion*.

81 LG 29.

Actually, the distinction of the orders might better be made by describing what bishops do, and then treating presbyters as assistant bishops, whose powers are therefore limited, and deacons as assistants who provide various specialized services.

The nature and purpose of the Church, and the role of the bishops and the pope are dealt with more briefly in UR 2 than elsewhere. The Council makes it clear that the Church is not a society formed by its members but a *communio* brought about by God. It is, in reality, formed by God’s adopting or re-generating human persons into the *communio* of his own Trinity-family. Notice that the role of the Holy Spirit in bringing about the communion of the Church and governing it is stated before the role of Peter and the other apostles is dealt with; the Spirit is the real primate in the Church, for his work has primacy over all human ministry—as always, grace before works.

On 22 Feb. 1998, the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy published *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons* and *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*. These documents must be examined thoroughly to tell the story about permanent deacons. They seem to avoid deliberately saying that deacons act in the person of Christ. That expression never appears in them. The two documents with an introduction common to both are published on the Vatican website and in the USCC booklet, whose pages are referenced.

#### General Intro

p. 11: quotes the CCC for the effect of orders in general: By ordination, the ordained “is enabled to act as a representative (= *legatus*) of Christ, Head of the Church, in his triple office of priest, prophet, and king.”

p. 12: the ordained acts “by virtue of Christ’s authority” and speaks not as a member of the community “but speaking to it in the name of Christ.” This quotes CCC 875, which deals with ecclesial ministry in general; the same 875 goes on at once to say that from Christ “they

receive the mission and faculty (‘the sacred power’) to act *in persona Christi Capitis*.” But the diaconal documents cut just before that sentence.

p. 13: quotes CCC 879: “sacramental ministry in the Church . . . is at once a collegial and personal service, exercised in the name of Christ.”

#### Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons

p. 24: The identity of every ordained minister “consists in being a specific representation of the ministry of Christ.” This is accompanied by a fn reference to PDV 12.

p. 24: The deacon’s identity: “as a participation in the one ecclesiastical ministry, he is a specific sacramental sign, in the Church, of Christ the servant.”

p. 28: “In fact, with sacred ordination, he is constituted a living icon of Christ the servant within the Church.”

p. 67: the various aspects of formation are to be integrated “within the unitary perspective of the diaconal vocation, which consists in being a sacrament of Christ, servant of the Father.”

#### Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons

p. 88: refers to LG 29 of service in the liturgy, word, and charity: “In this way diaconal participation through the ordained ministry in the one and triple *munus* of Christ is expressed.”

p. 94: in the Eucharist, the deacon, on the one hand, “effectively represents” the people of God and “helps them to unite their lives to the offering of Christ; while on the other, in the name of Christ himself, he helps the Church to participate in the fruits of that sacrifice.”

p. 101: deacons participate in the same pastoral functions as bishops and presbyters but exercise them differently: “Since this participation is brought about by the sacrament, they serve God’s people in the name of Christ.”

p. 104: Following LG 27, bishops are said to have charge of particular churches “as Vicars and legates of Christ.”

In these same two documents there are several sections that deal with the servant orientation of the deacon: 24–25, 28, 41–42, 62, 67, 70, 101–3, 109–13, 132 (Basic Norms, 5, 11, 30, 72, 85, 89; Directory, 37–38, 43–47, 67). That remains relevant for men ordained presbyters and bishops—who always remain deacons.

In the book, *Priesthood and Celibacy*, pp. 251–304, deals with the nature and mission of the priests, and seeks to unpack Vatican II on the difference between bishops and presbyters.

#### From Basic Norms for the Formation of Deacons

In 27 (38): As far as married aspirants and candidates are concerned, their commitment must be such that their married communion might contribute in a real way to inspiring their formation journey towards the goal of the diaconate.



In 35 (43): Regarding the minimum age, the Code of Canon Law prescribes that: “the candidate for the permanent diaconate who is not married may be admitted to the diaconate only when he has completed at least his twenty-fifth year; if he is married, not until he has completed at least his thirty-fifth year.”(CIC 1031, §2; §3 prescribes that bishops’ conferences may set a later age.)

37 (44–45): “In the case of married men, care should be taken that only those are promoted to the diaconate who have lived as married men for a number of years and have shown themselves to be capable of running their own homes, and whose wives and children lead a truly Christian life and have good reputations”.(41)

Moreover. In addition to stability of family life, married candidates cannot be admitted unless “their wives not only consent, but also have the Christian moral character and attributes which will neither hinder their husbands’ ministry nor be out of keeping with it”.(42) [The references are to Paul VI’s *Sacrum diaconatus ordinem* (18 June 1967; the celibacy encyclical was dated 24 June 1967).

In 42 (58): The director of formation will ensure that each aspirant is accompanied by an approved spiritual director and will make contact with the pastor of each one (or another priest) in order to program the pastoral placement. In addition, he will make contact with the families of married aspirants to make sure of their openness to accepting, sharing and accompanying the vocation of their relative.

56 (53): The wives and children of married candidates and the communities to which they belong should also be involved in appropriate ways. In particular, there should be also a specific program of formation for the wives of candidates, to prepare them for their future mission of accompanying and supporting their husband’s ministry.

61 (55): With this request the candidate must enclose the certificate of baptism, of confirmation and of the ministries mentioned in can. 1035, and the certificate of studies duly completed in accordance with can. 1032.(64) If the ordinand to be promoted is married, he must present his marriage certificate and the written consent of his wife.(65 CIC 1050, 3; 1031, §2)

In 68 (60): For married candidates, to live love means offering themselves to their spouses in a reciprocal belonging, in a total, faithful and indissoluble union, in the likeness of Christ’s love for his Church; at the same time it means welcoming children, loving them, educating them and showing forth to the whole Church and society the communion of the family. Today, this vocation is being hard tested by the worrying degradation of certain fundamental values and the exaltation of hedonism and a false conception of liberty. To be lived out in all its fullness, the vocation to family must be nourished by prayer, the liturgy and a daily offering of self.(83)

78 (64): Moreover, provision should be made that wives of married candidates may grow in awareness of their husbands’ vocation and their own mission at his side. They are to be invited, therefore, to participate regularly in the spiritual formation meetings.

Appropriate efforts should also be directed towards educating children about the ministry of the deacon.

From Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons

In 16 (85): With regard to married deacons the Code of Canon Law provides that: “married deacons who dedicate themselves full-time to the ecclesiastical ministry deserve remuneration sufficient to provide for themselves and their families. Those, however, who receive remuneration by reason of a secular profession which they exercise or have exercised are to see to their own and to their families’ needs from that income”.(71) In prescribing “adequate” remuneration, parameters of evaluation are also: personal condition, the nature of the office exercised, circumstances of time and place, material needs of the minister (including those of the families of married deacons), just recompense of those in his service—the same general criteria, in fact, which apply to all clerics.

18 (86): Married deacons who minister full-time and who do not receive income from any other source are to be remunerated, in accordance with the aforementioned general principle, so that they may be able to provide for themselves and for their families.(75)

19 (86): Married deacons who minister full-time or part-time and who receive income from a secular profession which they exercise or have exercised are obliged to provide for themselves and for their families from such income.(76)

27 (93): The deacon will be aware that the Church is missionary (103) by her very nature, both because her origin is in the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit, according to the eternal plan of the Father and because she has received an explicit mandate from the risen Lord to preach the Gospel to all creation and to baptize those who believe (cf. Mk 16, 15–16; Mt 28:19). Deacons are ministers of the Church and thus, although incardinated into a particular Church, they are not exempt from the missionary obligation of the universal Church. Hence they should always remain open to the *missio ad gentes* to the extent that their professional or—if married—family obligations permit. (104)

33 (98–99): The pastoral care of families, for which the bishop is primarily responsible, may be entrusted to deacons. In supporting families in their difficulties and sufferings, (130) this responsibility will extend from moral and liturgical questions to difficulties of a social and personal nature, and can be exercised at diocesan or, subject to the authority of the parish priest, local level in promoting the catechesis of Christian marriage, the personal preparation of future spouses, the fruitful celebration of marriage and help offered to couples after marriage. (131)

Married deacons can be of much assistance in promoting the Gospel value of conjugal love, the virtues which protect it and the practice of parenthood which can truly be regarded as responsible, from a human and Christian point of view.

50 (115–16): Following Christ in the diaconate is an attractive but difficult undertaking. While it brings satisfaction and rewards, it can also be open to the difficulties and trials experienced by the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to live this ministry to the full, deacons must know Christ intimately so that He may shoulder the burdens of their ministry.

They must give priority to the spiritual life and live their diaconia with generosity. They should organize their ministry and their professional and, when married, family obligations, so as to grow in their commitment to the person and mission of Christ the Servant.

61 (123–25): The Sacrament of Matrimony sanctifies conjugal love and constitutes it a sign of the love with which Christ gives himself to the Church (cf. Eph. 5:25). It is a gift from God and should be a source of nourishment for the spiritual life of those deacons who are married. Since family life and professional responsibilities must necessarily reduce the amount of time which married deacons can dedicate to the ministry, it will be necessary to integrate these various elements in a unitary fashion, especially by means of shared prayer. In marriage, love becomes an interpersonal giving of self, a mutual fidelity, a source of new life, a support in times of joy and sorrow: in short, love becomes service. When lived in faith, this family service is for the rest of the faithful an example of the love of Christ. The married deacon must use it as a stimulus of his diaconia in the Church.

Married deacons should feel especially obliged to give clear witness to the sanctity of marriage and the family. The more they grow in mutual love, the greater their dedication to their children and the more significant their example for the Christian community. “The nurturing and deepening of mutual, sacrificial love between husband and wife constitutes perhaps the most significant involvement of a deacon’s wife in her husband’s public ministry in the Church”. (222) This love grows thanks to chastity which flourishes, even in the exercise of paternal responsibilities, by respect for spouses and the practice of a certain continence. This virtue fosters a mutual self-giving which soon becomes evident in ministry. It eschews possessive behavior, undue pursuit of professional success and the incapacity to program time. Instead, it promotes authentic interpersonal relationships, OIC, and the capacity to see everything in its proper perspective.

Special care should be taken to ensure that the families of deacons be made aware of the demands of the diaconal ministry. The spouses of married deacons, who must give their consent to their husband’s decision to seek ordination to the diaconate, (223) should be assisted to play their role with joy and discretion. They should esteem all that concerns the Church, especially the duties assigned to their husbands. For this reason it is opportune that they should be kept duly informed of their husbands’ activities in order to arrive at a harmonious balance between family, professional and ecclesial responsibilities. In the children of married deacons, where such is possible, an appreciation of their father’s ministry can also be fostered. They in turn should be involved in the apostolate and give coherent witness in their lives.

In conclusion, the families of married deacons, as with all Christian families, are called to participate actively and responsibly in the Church’s mission in the contemporary world. “In particular the deacon and his wife must be a living example of fidelity and indissolubility in Christian marriage before a world which is in dire need of such signs. By facing in a spirit of faith the challenges of married life and the demands of daily living, they strengthen the family life not only of the Church community but of the whole of society. They also show how the obligations of family life, work and ministry can be harmonized in the service of the Church’s

mission. Deacons and their wives and children can be a great encouragement to others who are working to promote family life". (224)

62 (125–26): 62. It is necessary to reflect on the situation of the deacon following the death of his wife. This is a particular moment in life which calls for faith and Christian hope. The loss of a spouse should not destroy dedication to the rearing of children nor lead to hopelessness. While this period of life is difficult, it is also an opportunity for interior purification and an impetus for growth in charity and service to one's children and to all the members of the Church. It is a call to grow in hope since faithful discharge of the ministry is a way of reaching Christ and those in the Father's glory who are dear to us.

It must be recognized, however, that the loss of a spouse gives rise to a new situation in a family which profoundly influences personal relationships and in many instances can give rise to economic difficulties. With great charity, therefore, widowed deacons should be helped to discern and accept their new personal circumstances and to persevere in providing for their children and the new needs of their families.

In particular, the widowed deacon should be supported in living perfect and perpetual continence. (225) He should be helped to understand the profound ecclesial reasons which preclude his remarriage (cf. 1 Tim 3:12), in accordance with the constant discipline of the Church in the East and West. (226) This can be achieved through an intensification of one's dedication to others for the love of God in the ministry. In such cases the fraternal assistance of other ministers, of the faithful and of the bishop can be most comforting to widowed deacons.

With regard to the widows of deacons, care should be taken, where possible, by the clergy and the faithful to ensure that they are never neglected and that their needs are provided for.

81 (140): In addition to the usual permanent formation offered to deacons, special courses and initiatives should be arranged for those deacons who are married. These courses should involve, where opportune, their wives and families. However, they must always be careful to maintain the essential distinction of roles and the clear independence of the ministry.