

FULL, CONSCIOUS, AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION:
THE LAITY AS ECCLESIAL SUBJECTS IN
AN ECCLESIOLOGY INFORMED BY
BERNARD LONERGAN

by

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ABSTRACT
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Unresolved problems and tensions regarding the status and role of the laity persist nearly a half-century following Vatican II. While the magisterium focuses on issues related to the appropriateness or ability of lay persons to carry out roles in the Church that have traditionally belonged to the ordained, sociological surveys indicate that the experience of lay members of the Church in the United States and in much of the Western world includes inadequate formation, confused Catholic identity, marginalization, low levels of commitment in young Catholics, and the steady exodus of Catholics. These problems of the laity are symptomatic of problems within the Church itself.

This dissertation seeks to understand how the full realization of the laity as ecclesial subjects and the full realization of the Church might be possible. Working within the parameters of the ecclesial vision of Vatican II, it employs the thought of Canadian Jesuit theologian, Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984) to support a framework that both emphasizes the divine initiative in the genesis of the Church as well as the social reality of its existence. Lonergan's interiority analysis provides the means for transposing abstract notions of human nature and grace into existential categories. It thereby provides the tools by which the full becoming of the laity and of the Church can be described in terms of concrete possibilities.

On the basis of Lonergan's work the author suggests that the full realization of the laity and of the Church are directly related to the achievement of authenticity of all its members. Such authenticity requires graced conversion. The author argues that graced conversion is not merely spiritual, but is also a social reality. As such, it flourishes best in an ecclesial atmosphere that provides opportunities for reciprocal sharing and collaboration between and among laity and clergy. The author concludes that graced dialogical collaborations between laity and clergy provide the condition of possibility for the full realization of both the laity and the Church.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The years following the Second Vatican Council witnessed an exponential growth of interest in issues having to do with the laity in the Roman Catholic Church. In part this has been fueled by three concurrent but divergent trends.¹ On the one hand, groups of the laity have expressed the desire to participate more meaningfully in the life of the Church and to have a voice in Church policy. This desire has found partial realization in a burgeoning of lay ministry since the council. A second trend has been that of a measurable decrease in lay Catholic identity and commitment, especially among younger Catholics, as determined by sociological surveys. A third trend has been that of repeated emphases in some papal and magisterial documents during this period on distinctions between the roles of the clergy and laity.

The clergy sexual abuse crisis has served to highlight issues about lay role and identity that underlie these three trends. Most prominently, the clergy abuse crisis highlights the fact that the laity are functionally marginalized in the Church by virtue of the fact that they have no deliberative voice in matters of Church policy nor are Church leaders required to be accountable to them. The clergy abuse crisis also points to tensions between the clerical and paternalistic cultures that prevail within the Church and the secular cultures that inform the everyday lives of the laity. Finally, the crisis highlights problems of confusion, even alienation, among some of the laity regarding their identity and role as members of the Church.

PURPOSE OF PRESENT WORK

The present work recognizes that problems of the laity are also problems of the Church. Thus it seeks to envision what might be possible for the laity and for the Church. It seeks to better understand both how the laity might more fully live their lay vocation and how the Church might better realize its vocation and its mission through the full realization of the laity.

¹ The trends noted in this paragraph will be examined in more detail in Chapter Two.

LONERGAN'S CONTRIBUTION

In seeking to answer the questions of what the full realization of the laity and of the Church consists and how they are interrelated, the present work employs the thought of Canadian Jesuit philosopher and theologian, Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984). Although Lonergan considered himself to be a “Roman Catholic with quite conservative views on religious and church doctrines,”² he nevertheless was critical of the cultural syndrome within Roman Catholicism that he labeled “classicism.”³ In Lonergan’s analysis, classicism is a worldview largely informed by Aristotelian metaphysics.⁴ Such a worldview is characterized by a static concept of normative culture, by an understanding of history that does not take evolution and development into account, and by the notion that knowledge of things is knowledge of their ultimate causes based on normative, universal, and certain principles.⁵

Lonergan attributed the positivistic approach of the manualist and Thomistic traditions that prevailed in Catholic philosophy and theology prior to and even beyond Vatican II to classicism.⁶ He described a positivistic approach as one that emphasizes the merely factual while ignoring the historical and cultural contexts of the facts.⁷ Such an approach treats doctrines as formulas to be memorized and repeated verbatim.⁸ In Lonergan’s opinion a positivistic approach to doctrines is problematic for two reasons: first, in its neglect of critical history it fails to provide

² Bernard F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (1971; repr., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 332. Citations are to the 1994 edition.

³ See *ibid.*, 326–27.

⁴ Lonergan makes this point in many places. One such source is Lonergan, “The Transition from a Classicist World-view to Historical-mindedness,” in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 3.

⁵ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” in *ibid.*, 57–59.

⁶ Lonergan, *Method*, 326–27.

⁷ Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli, rev. and aug. by Frederick E. Crowe with Elizabeth A. Morelli, Mark D. Morelli, Robert M. Doran, and Thomas V. Daly, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 222.

⁸ Lonergan, *Method*, 330–31; See Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, Robert M. Doran, *Collected Words of Bernard Lonergan* 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 222–24.

a contextualized understanding of doctrines;⁹ and, second, in its emphasis on knowing facts it fails to adequately address the understanding of the knower.¹⁰ For these reasons, Lonergan rejected a notion of the unity of Catholic faith based on “everyone subscribing to the correct formulae.”¹¹

Lonergan’s motivation throughout his long career was to move Catholic philosophy and theology away from such a positivistic approach and classicist worldview in order to bring them “to the level of one’s time”¹² so that they could respond to the exigencies raised by modern science, modern historical consciousness, and modern philosophy.¹³ Lonergan’s efforts in this regard focused on the renewal of Catholic philosophy and on the creation of a method of theology as a particular application of his general transcendental method. His two major works, *Insight*,¹⁴ and *Method in Theology*¹⁵ represent the achievements of his efforts.

Lonergan’s reconstructed philosophy is based on his approach to the human subject in interiority analysis, where interiority refers to “one’s subjectivity, one’s operations, their structure, their norms, their potentialities.”¹⁶ Because Lonergan’s interiority analysis focuses on human intending and human acts,¹⁷ it offers an analysis of the human person in his or her dynamic, concrete, historical existence. His interiority analysis considers “mental acts as experienced and as systematically conceived” to be a logical first.¹⁸ Lonergan’s reconstructed

⁹ Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, 222.

¹⁰ Lonergan writes, “No repetition of formulas can take the place of understanding.” Lonergan, *Method*, 351.

¹¹ Ibid., 327. Lonergan associated classicism with its positivistic approach to doctrines with “the shabby shell of Catholicism.” Ibid.

¹² Lonergan, “The Original Preface of *Insight*,” *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 1985): 2.

¹³ Lonergan, “The Scope of Renewal,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran. Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 17 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 283–85.

¹⁴ Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, rev. and aug. repr., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 3 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1957; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990). Citations that follow are to the 1990 edition.

¹⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 366.

¹⁶ Ibid., 83.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 261.

philosophy is informed by answers to the questions, “What are we doing when we are knowing?” “Why is doing that knowing?” and “What do we know when we do it?”¹⁹ Answers to these questions provide not only a cognitional theory based on experience, understanding, and judgment; an epistemology; and a metaphysics; but also provide the means by which the human subject can appropriate his or her own conscious operations. Such appropriation, in turn, provides the subject with a grasp of transcendental method which can be summarized in the precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible.²⁰ The transcendental precepts are foundational to Lonergan’s understanding of human authenticity.²¹

Whereas Lonergan’s reconstructed philosophy begins with a consideration of the human person as a knower, his reconstructed theology begins with a consideration of the human person as a lover, more specifically, with the human person as being unrestrictedly in love as the result of God’s gift of love in grace. Lonergan’s religious interiority analysis is thus concerned with the experience of God’s gift of love.²² Recognizing that the experience of God’s gift of love is received in and leads to community, Lonergan’s religious interiority analysis is also concerned with “the history of the salvation that is rooted in a being-in-love,”²³ with how Christian being-in-love functions to promote the kingdom of God, with authentic or unauthentic appropriations of Christianity, and with development within Christianity.²⁴ Lonergan defines Christian authenticity as “a love of others that does not shrink from self-sacrifice and suffering.”²⁵ His reconstructed philosophy and theology based on interiority have much to offer not only to the study of the laity as knowers and lovers in response to God’s gift of love, but also to a study of the Church considered as the community constituted both by the gift of God’s love and by the communication of the message of God’s love.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 83, 53.

²¹ See Ibid., 265.

²² See Ibid., 290.

²³ Ibid., 291.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Lonergan did not intend that his reconstructed Catholic philosophy and theology should do away with Scholastic metaphysics or relativize Catholic doctrines. Rather, he intended that his reconstructions would meet the critical exigencies brought about by the modern turn to the subject, modern science, and modern historical-critical awareness while remaining in continuity with what is valid in Scholastic metaphysics and Catholic doctrines. Specifically, Lonergan recognized that any revision of Catholic theology had to maintain continuity with the past. He expressed the purpose of his efforts in the phrase, “*vetera novis augere et perficere*” (to add to and perfect the old by means of the new), from the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* of Pope Leo XIII.²⁶

Accordingly, Lonergan’s reconstructed Catholic philosophy and theology are not intended to replace neo-Scholastic philosophy and theology. Rather, they are intended to be “transpositions” of neo-Scholastic philosophy and theology into interiority. As transpositions they provide more a change of structure than of content. Whereas the old structure consists of abstract principles, logical propositions, and immutable objects, the new structure consists of human acts and operations. Whereas the old structure offers explanations of reality in terms of causes, ontology and accident, the new structure explains reality in terms of the operations of the human person in worlds mediated by meaning.

METHODOLOGY

This work seeks to better understand the role and vocation of the laity as ecclesial subjects from the perspective of Lonergan’s interiority analysis. In so doing it also seeks to better understand how the Church might more fully participate in God’s saving plan for all of humanity. It seeks to understand the conditions by which the full realization of the lay vocation both depends on and participates in an authentically-realized Church. Although the principles and conclusions obtained are relevant to all Catholic laity and to the world-wide Church, the

²⁶ See Lonergan, *Verbum*, 222, and *Insight*, 769.

empirical analysis of this work focuses primarily on the experience of laity in the Church of the United States. Following Lonergan's concern to perfect the old by means of the new, the intention of this work is to remain in continuity with the ecclesiological vision of Vatican II while seeking to relate this vision to the conscious, concrete lived experience of lay persons as members of concrete ecclesial communities.

The analysis employed in this work will consist of two fundamental steps that rely on Lonergan's process of transposition into interiority. The first step is that of explicating Lonergan's thought on the authentic human subject and on the individual, communal, and universal manifestations of grace. The second step is that of applying the results of step one to illumine the nature and mission of the Church and of the lay vocation from the perspective of interiority. Both steps require careful, authentic exposition, dialectical analysis, and synthesis. Ultimately, the approach of this work seeks to be grounded in Lonergan's theological method in which the seven functional specialties research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, and systematics are followed by communication:

[R]esearch is concerned to make the data available. Interpretation to determine their meaning. History to proceed from meaning to what was going forward. Dialectic to go to the roots of conflicting histories, interpretations, researches. Foundations to distinguish positions from counter-positions. Doctrines to use foundations as a criterion for deciding between the alternatives offered by dialectic. Systematics to seek an understanding of the realities affirmed in doctrines.²⁷

PRELIMINARY DEFINITIONS

Ecclesiological Vision of Vatican II

Because this work is about laity in the Catholic Church, it will proceed within the parameters set by the ecclesiological vision of Vatican II. Vatican II does not offer a definition of the Church but instead sets out the dimensions of a theological description of the Church in the first two Chapters of *Lumen Gentium* [The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church]. The first

²⁷ Lonergan, *Method*, 349.

chapter of *Lumen Gentium* is titled, “The Mystery of the Church.”²⁸ Although the council never defines what it means by mystery, it compares the mystery of the Church analogously to that of the incarnate Word as follows:

But, the society equipped with hierarchical structures and the mystical body of Christ, the visible society and the spiritual community, the earthly church and the church endowed with heavenly riches, are not to be thought of as two realities. On the contrary, they form one complex reality comprising a human and a divine element. For this reason the church is compared, in no mean analogy, to the mystery of the incarnate Word.²⁹

To identify the Church as a mystery, then, is to acknowledge both the divine and human elements of the Church. The nature of the mystery is such that to remove either the divine or the human or to emphasize one aspect over the other is to destroy it.³⁰

Although the council describes the Church in different ways, it is important, says Joseph Komonchak, to keep in mind that there are not several ecclesiologies of Vatican II, but only one.³¹ He emphasizes that the hermeneutical key by which the ecclesiology of Vatican II should be interpreted is provided by *Lumen Gentium*’s statement above, namely that the Church is “one complex reality comprising a human and a divine element.”³² An understanding of the Church as one reality that is both human and divine serves to avoid two possible errors. It avoids the error of an overemphasis on the human element that would amount to social reductionism. It also avoids the error of an overemphasis on the divine element that loses sight of the human condition. As we shall see, an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan avoids both errors. It emphasizes that the Church results from God’s saving initiative in the missions of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. It

²⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter I, in Austin Flannery, O.P., *The Basic Sixteen Documents: Vatican Council II Constitutions, Decrees, Declarations*, rev. ed. in inc. language (Northport, New York: Costello Publishing Company, 1996), 1.

²⁹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 8, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 9.

³⁰ Joseph A. Komonchak, *Who Are the Church?* The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology 2008 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2008), 22.

³¹ Komonchak, “Ecclesiology of Vatican II” (Speech, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., March 27, 1999), 3, <http://publicaffairs.cua.edu/speeches/ecclesiology99.htm>, accessed May 18, 2010.

³² Ibid.

simultaneously emphasizes that the Church that results from God's saving initiative is a "human social response to God's grace and word."³³

Laity in the Ecclesiological Vision of Vatican II

Vatican II's descriptions of the laity are not without ambiguity. Thus, for example, *Lumen Gentium* describes the laity to be

all the faithful except those in holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the church: all the faithful, that is, who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ, are constituted the people of God, who have been made sharers in their own way in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ and play their part in carrying out the mission of the whole Christian people in the church and in the world.³⁴

Although this passage describes the laity in contradistinction to the clergy and religious, in another passage that emphasizes the Church's hierarchical structure, *Lumen Gentium* includes non-ordained religious among the laity.³⁵ As employed in the present work, the term 'laity' will include non-ordained religious, but will otherwise be consistent with the description of the laity above. Thus, the term 'laity' will denote those non-ordained faithful who are incorporated into the Church through Baptism.

Lumen Gentium characterizes the laity in terms of their "special characteristic" of being secular.³⁶ This characterization has proven to be ambiguous. Recent magisterial documents and some commentators have taken this characteristic to be an ontological and theological definition of the laity,³⁷ while other commentators, interpreting this characterization to be merely

³³ Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology*, ed., Fred Lawrence, supplementary issue of the *Lonergan Workshop Journal* 11 (Boston: Boston College, 1995), 151.

³⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in Austin Flannery, O.P., *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 48.

³⁵ *Lumen Gentium* includes non-ordained religious among the laity when it states, "This [religious] state of life, from the point of view of the divine and hierarchical nature of the church, is not to be seen as a middle way between the clerical and lay states of life. Rather it should be seen as a way of life to which some Christians are called by God, both from the clergy and the laity, . . ." *Lumen Gentium* no. 43, in *ibid.*, 67.

³⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in *ibid.*, 49.

³⁷ Two magisterial documents that treat the secular character of the laity as ontological and theological are Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* [On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World] no.15, Vatican trans. (Boston: St. Paul Books & Media, 1988), 37; and Eight Vatican Offices, "Instruction on Certain Questions

descriptive, take a stand against an ontological and theological interpretation of the secular character of the laity.³⁸ The affirmation in *Gaudium et Spes* [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World] that “the earthly and the heavenly city penetrate one another,”³⁹ calls into question not only a theological and ontological interpretation of the secular character of the laity, but any typological or sociological description of the laity based on a secular-sacred dichotomy.

PROCEDURE OF DISSERTATION

In seeking to address the question of the full realization of the lay vocation within a full realization of the Roman Catholic Church this dissertation begins in Chapter Two with an analysis of the present situation of the laity from the perspective of the experience of laity in the United States. It identifies three problems confronting the Roman Catholic Church that point to related problems for the laity. These problems are the sexual abuse scandal, which highlights the related problem of marginalization of the laity, the priest shortage, which highlights the related problem of confused lay identity, and the steady rate of lapsing and decline in commitment among lay Catholics. In light of Lonergan’s analysis of bias, this chapter argues that these problems are symptomatic of the presence of group and general bias in the Church that have become embedded in Church structures and that continue to reinforce the position of Church leadership vis-à-vis the laity. Following Lonergan, this chapter concludes that a solution to the

Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests” (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1998), 3. Commentators who argue for such an interpretation include Aurelie A. Hagstrom, *The Concepts of the Vocation and the Mission of the Laity* (San Francisco: Catholic Scholars Press, 1994), see 58; and Hagstrom, “The Secular Character of the Vocation and Mission of the Laity: Toward a Theology of Ecclesial Lay Ministry,” in *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood: Theologies of Lay and Ordained Ministry*, ed. Susan K. Wood, S.C.I. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 152–74; Ferdinand Klostermann, “Chapter IV: The Laity,” in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Crossroad, 1989), see 236–38.

³⁸ Richard R. Gaillardetz makes this argument in Richard R. Gaillardetz, “Shifting Meanings in the Lay-Clergy Distinction,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 65 (1999); see also Giovanni Magnani, S.J., “Does the So-Called Theology of the Laity Possess a Theological Status?” in *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives*, vol. 1, ed. Rene Latourelle (New York: Paulist, 1988), 597 ff; see also Zeni Fox, “Laity, Ministry, and Secular Character,” in *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood*, ed. Susan K. Wood, S.C.I. (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2003), 121–51.

³⁹ *Gaudium et Spes* [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World] no. 40, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 207.

present problems of the Church and of the laity will depend on the graced achievement of authentic subjectivity of its members.

Chapter Three begins by offering an account of the lay vocation envisioned by Vatican II. It then proceeds to explicate Lonergan's notion of authentic subjectivity in order to interpret the lay vocation in light of Lonergan's interiority analysis. In light of Lonergan's interiority analysis, human authenticity is understood to be the achievement of self-appropriation and self-transcendence through a commitment to authentically become oneself. Such commitment is realized by following the transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible. Authentic appropriation of the lay vocation is seen to consist in the commitment to authentically become oneself in Christ. This chapter treats the achievement of authentic subjectivity as a development from lower to higher levels of consciousness.

Chapter Four continues the analysis of authentic subjectivity begun in Chapter Three. Whereas the analysis of Chapter Three treats the achievement of authentic subjectivity as a development from below upwards, Chapter Four examines the realization of authentic subjectivity under grace as a development from above downwards. Based on Lonergan's Scholastic teachings and on his own transposition of grace into interiority, the author argues in this chapter that the experience of grace is necessarily dialogical, where dialogue is understood to consist of reciprocal communication. Thus, the author argues that grace is received, experienced, and appropriated in a "dialogue of grace" in which the reciprocal communication consists of God's gift of love and the response of love directed to God and to others of graced persons. The author argues that participation in the dialogue of grace is necessary for the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations, including the lay vocation. This chapter identifies the necessary condition of authenticity to be that of self-sacrificing love as the result of graced conversion. The author further argues that participation in the dialogue of grace is conditioned by participation in dialogical relationships within the Church. This chapter concludes that the full authentic

realization of all ecclesial vocations, including the lay vocation, requires participation in ecclesial dialogues in which both clergy and laity are willing to listen to and to be influenced by others.

Chapter Five broadens the analysis of the lay vocation by focusing on its ecclesial dimension. It seeks to understand the ecclesial dimension of the lay vocation in light of an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan's transposition of grace into interiority. Accordingly, it examines the graced, concrete, existential reality of the Church from the perspectives of Lonergan's worldview, his understanding of God's solution to the problem of evil, his understanding of God's universal offer of grace, his understanding of the Church as community, and his understanding of authority. It argues that all of these perspectives inform an understanding of Church in which the lay vocation necessarily participates mutually and dialogically in the meaning that constitutes the Church.

Chapter Six argues that the full, authentic realization of the lay vocation both requires and supports the authentic realization of the Church. It argues that the fundamental solution to the problems outlined in Chapter Two consists concomitantly in the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations and in an authentic realization of the Church. It reiterates that the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations and the mission of the Church requires the participation of clergy and laity in mutual dialogical collaboration. Chapter Six recognizes that ultimately the solution to the problems of the Church and laity are beyond the ability of human persons to solve, and certainly beyond the ability of any group of laity. These problems can only be solved by God. All any individual or group can do is to prayerfully and responsibly cooperate with God and collaborate with others to the best of their ability to overcome these problems with greater good. Groups of such cooperation and collaboration serve as the condition of possibility by which the Church and its mission will be authentically realized by God.

CHAPTER TWO: CHALLENGED LAITY IN A CHALLENGED CHURCH

In his last public audience, Pope Pius XI is reported to have said, “The Church, the mystical Body of Christ, has become a monstrosity. The head is very large, but the body is shrunken.” He goes on to say, “the only way that you can rebuild it is to mobilize the lay people. You must call upon the lay people to become, along with you, the witnesses of Christ.”⁴⁰

INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was a watershed event for Roman Catholic laity because, in effect, it theologically repositioned them in the Church.⁴¹ It accomplished this through emphasis on the fundamental equality and dignity of all the faithful and on the primacy of the relationship of believers to Christ over hierarchical relationships within the Church. These emphases represent a departure from those of the centuries preceding the Council when the laity, if they were considered at all, were considered to be inferior to and under the direction of the clergy.

Despite the gains in status and role afforded the laity by Vatican II and the subsequent greater participation and collaboration by some of the laity in the life and mission of the Church, unresolved problems and tensions regarding the status and role of the laity persist nearly a half-century following the council. Nor do these problems and tensions belong exclusively to the domain of the laity. Because the laity are by definition members of the Church, problems and tensions associated with the role and status of the laity simultaneously manifest and exacerbate ecclesial problems and tensions and impact, as well, the role and status of the ordained.⁴² The

⁴⁰ W. Alexander Carter, *A Canadian Bishop's Memoirs* (North Bay, ON: Tomiko Publications, 1994), 50–51.

⁴¹ Kenan B. Osborne, O.F.M., *Ministry: Lay Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church; Its History and Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 563–64.

⁴² The necessary relationship between a theology of the laity and ecclesiology was well stated by Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P., “At bottom there can only be one sound and sufficient theology of laity, and that is a ‘total ecclesiology.’” Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P., *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of the Laity*, trans. Donald Attwater (Westminster: Newman Press, 1957), xxxii. Although problems of lay identity and role in the Church correlate with problems of religious and ordained identities and roles, this dissertation will focus almost exclusively on the relationship between ecclesial and lay issues.

analysis of this chapter, accordingly, will seek to correlate presenting ecclesial problems with those of the laity. By ‘presenting’ here is meant that which is immediately apparent. In recognition of the fact that presenting problems usually point to underlying problems, this analysis will proceed by ‘excavating’ beneath presenting problems, all the while looking to see how unearthed ecclesial problems correlate with problems and tensions associated with the laity. While a good part of this excavation will take place under the Church in the United States, many of the findings and much of the analysis will apply as well to the Western Church and to the universal Church.

PRESENTING ECCLESIAL AND LAY PROBLEMS

The analysis of this chapter will begin with three serious problems presently confronting the Roman Catholic Church, namely: the scandal of sexual abuse of minors by clergy together with lax, irresponsible, and sometimes criminal handling of this abuse by some Catholic bishops; the current priest shortage; and what Johann B. Metz has referred to as a “silent exodus” of members of the Church.⁴³

Sexual Abuse Scandal and Powerlessness of Laity

The sexual abuse of children by priests reached the status of a public scandal in the United States in 2002.⁴⁴ In subsequent years the scope of the Catholic sexual abuse scandal,

⁴³ Johann Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society: Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology*, trans. David Smith (New York: The Seabury Press, 1980), 137. Metz was referring to the situation in Germany in the 1970s. That an “exodus” continues in the United States can be seen from an extensive survey by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life conducted from May 8 through August 13, 2007. According to this survey, approximately one-third of respondents who said they were raised Catholic no longer describe themselves as Catholic. It should be noted that the sexual abuse crisis has played at most a minor role in the current exodus and that the rate of defecting from the Church has remained relatively stable since at least the 1980s. See Pew Forum, “U.S. Landscape Survey, February 2008.” <http://pewforum.org/US-Religious-Landscape-Survey-Resources.aspx> (accessed June 24, 2010).

⁴⁴ The scandal was exposed by *The Boston Globe* in an article that described attempts of Church leaders of the Boston archdiocese to shuttle a priest, whose record of pedophilia they were aware of, from parish to parish over 34 years during which time he abused at least 130 children. Michael Rezendes,

which includes not only the sexual abuse of minors by priests but also revelations of mismanagement and cover-ups by Church leaders, enlarged to include the Catholic Church in other countries including Canada, Ireland, England, Australia, as well as countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Among other things, the scandal helped to highlight the powerlessness of the laity within the Church to influence or effect a resolution to the sexual abuse crisis. As early as the 1980s, for example, many Church members in the United States, almost all of them lay, had offered expert advice and assistance to bishops in the handling of pedophile priests.⁴⁵ The continued mishandling of pedophile priests into the early 2000s testifies to the fact that these offers were largely ignored.⁴⁶ The *Report* on the crisis in the United States issued by a 12-member National Review Board (NRB) of prominent lay people commissioned by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2004 expressed the opinion, "Greater involvement of the laity in Church governance might well have lessened both the extent of the current crisis and the magnitude of the laity's negative response to it."⁴⁷ In the words of James E. Post, cofounder of Voice of the Faithful (VOTF),⁴⁸ "The laity remains on the margins of decision

"Church allowed abuse by priest for years," *The Boston Globe*, January 6, 2002, http://www.boston.com/globe/spotlight/abuse/stories/010602_geoghan.htm (accessed June 24, 2010).

⁴⁵ See Gerard Mannion, "A Haze of Fiction," in *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, ed. Francis Oakley and Bruce Russett (New York: Continuum, 2004), 175; Kimberly D. Elsbach, "Looking Good vs. Being Good," in *Church Ethics and Its Organizational Context: Learning From the Sex Abuse Scandal in the Catholic Church*, ed. Jean M. Bartunek, Mary Ann Hinsdale, and James F. Keenan (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), 71.

⁴⁶ Rev. Thomas P. Doyle maintains that the 1985 report he wrote on the problems of clergy sexual abuse while he was a canon lawyer working at the Vatican Embassy in Washington was ignored by the bishops. He is quoted as saying, "The Catholic hierarchy has stonewalled any attempts to do any kind of study on this issue, and they've had offers to do it." Michael Paulson, "All faiths question handling of abuse: Debate over celibacy as factor is rancorous," *The Boston Globe*, March 13, 2002, http://www.boston.com/globe/spotlight/abuse/stories/031302_abuse.htm (accessed June 25, 2010).

⁴⁷ National Review Board for the Protection of Children and Young People (NRB), *A Report on the Crisis in the Catholic Church in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, February 27, 2004), 129. <http://www.usccb.org/nrb/nrbstudy/nrbreport.pdf> (accessed May 22, 2010). The NRB was created by the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and approved by the Catholic bishops of the United States during their meeting in June of 2002. It is charged with advising the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) on policies and practices related to the protection of children and young people in the Church. It is responsible for ongoing analysis of the causes and context of the sexual abuse crisis. The purpose, functions, and current membership of the NRB can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/nrb.shtml> (accessed May 22, 2010).

⁴⁸ "Voice of the Faithful is a lay organization of faithful Catholics, who organized in 2002 as a response to the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. We started in the basement of a church in

making in the Catholic Church, its role in the governance and guidance of the church disproportionately small relative to its education and talents.”⁴⁹

Lay Voice Consultative Only

One of the aims of Vatican II was to promote a fuller participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Church.⁵⁰ The council recognized that the laity as members of the faithful have responsibility and are charismatically endowed for participating in the building-up and mission of the Church.⁵¹ Accordingly, the council specifically encouraged the laity to “disclose their needs and desires to [their] pastors,” and reminded the laity that they “are entitled, and indeed sometimes duty-bound, to express their opinion on matters which concern the good of the church.”⁵²

To help facilitate the exercise by the laity of their responsibilities to disclose their needs and express their opinions on matters concerning the Church, and to assist the laity to participate in the building-up and mission of the Church, Vatican II encouraged the establishment of councils at all levels, but stopped short of mandating their establishment.⁵³ Diocesan and parish councils

Wellesley, Massachusetts, and have since expanded worldwide with more than 30,000 members.” Taken from the web site of Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), <http://www.votf.org/whoweare/who-we-are/100> (accessed 6/23/2010).

⁴⁹ James E. Post, “The Emerging Role of the Catholic Laity,” in *Common Calling: The Laity & Governance of the Catholic Church*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C., Georgetown University Press, 2004), 224.

⁵⁰ Many interpret the call in *Sacrosanctum concilium* [The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy] no. 14 for the “full, conscious, and active participation” of all the faithful in the liturgy as not only one of the first reforms of Vatican II, but as the interpretive principle by which the ecclesial reforms of the council should be read. See Massimo Faggioli, “Quaestio Disputata: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and the Meaning of Vatican II,” *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 437–52.

⁵¹ For example, *Lumen Gentium* says, “Allotting his gifts ‘at will to each individual’ (1 Cor 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts, he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the church . . .” *Lumen Gentium* no. 12, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 17.

⁵² *Lumen Gentium* no. 37, in *ibid.*, 56.

⁵³ For example: *Christus Dominus* [The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church] recommends as “highly desirable” that pastoral councils should be established in every diocese. These should be presided over by diocesan bishops and should include the participation of specially chosen clergy, religious, and laity. Their function will be “to investigate and consider matters relating to pastoral activity and to formulate practical conclusions concerning them.” *Christus Dominus* no. 27, in *ibid.*, 301. *Apostolicam Actuositatem* [The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity] also recommends the establishment

have become well established in the ensuing years in the United States according to a 2004 survey by the USCCB.⁵⁴ While service on diocesan and pastoral councils may provide the opportunity for some lay Catholics to share responsibility for the life and mission of their parish and diocese, their responsibility is limited by the stipulation in the new 1983 Code of Canon Law that parish pastoral councils are consultative only and not genuinely deliberative.⁵⁵ Thus, in practice it is up to the discretion of the bishop (in the case of a diocesan pastoral council) or pastor (in the case of a parish council) to take the opinions and advice offered by the laity through these councils, or via some other means, under advisement. Bishops and pastors remain the final arbiters and policy-setters in all Church-related matters.

Clergy Accountability to Laity Not Required

The laity's voice is muted in the Church not only because it has no deliberative power, but also because neither bishops nor priests are required to be accountable to the laity.⁵⁶ In particular, bishops are not required by the Code of Canon Law to be accountable to the faithful, to the priests beneath them, or to each other, but are answerable only to the Pope.⁵⁷ Rather than requiring a de jure accountability of bishops to those beneath them, the 1983 Code requires only

of diocesan pastoral councils in which clergy, religious, and laity can participate. It further recommends that such councils be established on other levels, including the parish level as well as national and international levels. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, no. 26, in *ibid.*, 434. *Ad Gentes Divinitus* [Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity] recommends that, "For better coordination, the bishop should, as far as possible, establish a pastoral council in which clergy, religious and lay people would have a part through elected delegates." *Ad Gentes Divinitus* no. 30, in *ibid.*, 486.

⁵⁴ This survey reports that by 2004, 60 percent of the dioceses and eparchies (Eparchy is the Eastern Right equivalent of a diocese.) in the United States had established diocesan pastoral councils and about 85percent of parishes had established parish pastoral councils. In addition 70 percent of the responding bishops indicated that other forms of councils and consultative bodies are active in their diocese or eparchy. USCCB Committee on the Laity, "Report on Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils," March 12, 2004, <http://www.usccb.org/laity/summary.shtml> (accessed May 20, 2010).

⁵⁵ See canon 536 § 2, in John P. Beal, James A. Coriden, and Thomas J. Green, eds., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 708.

⁵⁶ The NRB *Report* cited the general lack of accountability of bishops in their response to the crisis as one factor that contributed to the crisis. NRB, *A Report*, 125.

⁵⁷ Canon 381 § 1 teaches that the exercise of power of diocesan bishops is subject only to the control of the Supreme Pontiff. See Beal, Coriden, and Green, *New Commentary on the Code*, 518-19.

that bishops act in accord with “holiness, charity, humility and simplicity of life.”⁵⁸ There is no explicit injunction in the Code for bishops to act with transparency and accountability.

The council offered three primary “checks” on the exercise of authority by clergy: the biblical concept of office as service,⁵⁹ the exhortation that the ordained correct each other,⁶⁰ and the exhortation that pastors consult and listen to those whom they serve.⁶¹ These checks serve as a kind of honor system for the exercise of authority of pastors; their corrective ability depends almost solely on the good will of those to whom they pertain. As the clergy abuse crisis reveals, these checks are insufficient to keep Church leaders accountable. Granted that the laity can and have exercised a de facto check of the authority of their bishops and pastors through public media and by means of financial and legal consequences, clearly it is up to the discretion of diocesan bishops and pastors whether to involve the laity in decisions that they alone are canonically responsible for.

The prospects for increasing the voice of the laity are not likely to improve soon. Rather, the present trend in recent Church documents appears to be towards maintaining the marginalization of the laity through reinforcing the limited role of councils involving lay people, such as parish councils, diocesan councils, and diocesan synods.⁶² John Beal observes, “requirements that church authorities consult before acting have been treated as burdensome formalities to be endured before giving effect to decisions already made.”⁶³ Troubling in this

⁵⁸ Canon 387, in *ibid.*, 524.

⁵⁹ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 24, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 33–34.

⁶⁰ *Presbyterorum Ordinis* [Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests] no. 8, in *ibid.*, 332–33.

⁶¹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 37 in *ibid.*, 56–57.

⁶² For example, the 1997 “Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests”, reiterates the stipulation of Canon 526 §2 that diocesan and parochial pastoral councils and parochial finance councils, all of which include lay members, may only enjoy a consultative vote and not a deliberative vote. Article 5 § 2, 3, in Eight Vatican Offices, “Instruction on Certain Questions,” 21; See also John Beal, “It Shall Not Be So Among You! Crisis in the Church, Crisis in Church Law,” in *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, 213n21.

⁶³ John Beal, *Ibid.*, 92.

regard are findings of recent surveys that show a trend among younger priests to be less and less interested in collaboration with the laity.⁶⁴

Exercise of Lay Charisms Inadequately Provided for

Vatican II affirmed that each of the faithful receives special charisms and has the corresponding “right and duty” of exercising them for the building-up of the Church under the direction and supervision of their pastors.⁶⁵ The council required that pastors determine the authenticity and conditions of use of these gifts, “not certainly with a view to quenching the Spirit but to testing everything and keeping what is good.”⁶⁶ Unfortunately, the 1983 Code makes no provision for the exercise of lay charisms.⁶⁷

Issues Related to Decline in Priestly Vocations

The steady decline in the number of priests in the United States⁶⁸ points to a number of problems within and without the Church that are beyond the scope of the present study to analyze. Of interest for the present study are two issues regarding the lay role in the Church that indirectly result from the declining number of priests and corresponding increased delegation to lay persons of certain pastoral and administrative functions that had been exercised solely by

⁶⁴ William V. D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today: New Realities of Their Faith and Their Church* (Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 110–11.

⁶⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 12, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 17; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 9, in *ibid.*, 416.

⁶⁶ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 406–7.

⁶⁷ See James H. Provost, “Title I: The Obligations and Rights of All the Christian Faithful (cc.208–223),” in James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green, and Donald E. Heintschel, eds., *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, study ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 138–39. There is no primary listing for “charism” in the index of Beal, Coriden, and Green, eds., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*.

⁶⁸ According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), the total number of American diocesan and religious priests fell from 58,632 in 1965 to 39,993 in 2010, a 31.8 percent decrease. Correspondingly, worldwide the total number of diocesan and religious priests fell from 419,728 in 1970 to 409,166 in 2010, only a 2.5 percent decrease. CARA, “Frequently Requested Catholic Church Statistics,” <http://cara.georgetown.edu/bulletin/index.htm> (accessed June 25, 2010).

priests.⁶⁹ These issues, the secular character of the laity and the ability of lay persons to exercise the power of governance, have been raised in connection with questions of the appropriateness or ability of lay persons to carry out roles in the Church that have traditionally belonged to the ordained.

Issue of Lay Secular Character

The laity are described negatively in *Lumen Gentium* as all the faithful who are neither religious nor in holy orders.⁷⁰ In its attempt to provide a positive description of the laity, *Lumen Gentium* turned to what seemed distinctive about the laity, namely, their possession of a ‘secular character.’

To be secular is the special (*propria et peculiaris*) characteristic of the laity. . . . It is the special vocation of the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. They live in the world, in each and every one of the world’s occupations and callings and in the ordinary circumstances of social and family life which, as it were, form the context of their existence.⁷¹

At issue are whether this characterization should be understood in an ontological sense or as a merely sociological description, and whether it restricts ‘legitimate’ lay participation in the life and mission of the Church to the secular arena.⁷² It should be noted in support of a non-delimiting, non-exclusive, and non-ontological interpretation, that the *relatio* for this statement

⁶⁹ In 2004, for example, more than a quarter of the more than 550 parishes in the United States without resident pastors were entrusted to lay persons. Of the remaining 550 parishes in the United States without a resident pastor in 2004, a quarter of them were entrusted to deacons and half were entrusted to a religious sister or brother. D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 118. CARA reports that in 2009 the number of parishes in the United States that were entrusted to the care of a deacon, religious sister or brother or lay person had declined to 517. CARA also reports that worldwide in 2009 there were 51,330 parishes without a resident priest pastor. Of those parishes 3,253 were entrusted by a bishop to the care of a deacon, religious sister or brother, or lay person. See CARA, “Frequently Requested Catholic Church Statistics.”

⁷⁰ *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 48.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁷² A comprehensive discussion of the problem of the specific character of the lay person can be found in Giovanni Magnani, “Does the So-Called Theology of the Laity Possess a Theological Status?” The question of whether it was the intention of the council fathers or of the ‘received text’ to predicate ‘secular character’ to the laity as a distinctive and delimiting feature of their apostolate is not easy to answer on the basis of *Lumen Gentium* no. 31 alone. See *ibid.*, 606; Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Mission of the Church*, trans. N. D. Smith (New York: Seabury Press; A Crossroad Book, 1973), 91–101; Hagstrom, “The Secular Character of the Vocation and Mission of the Laity,” 153.

indicates that the Council's intention was to give a typological description as opposed to an ontological definition.⁷³ An interpretation of the lay secular character is made even more difficult by the fact that the category 'secular' remains ambiguous in the conciliar documents. For example, whereas *Lumen Gentium* appears to make a clear distinction between Church and world, *Gaudium et Spes* situates the Church in the World, refers to the interpenetration of the Church and world, and describes the mission of the Church as secular,⁷⁴ thereby challenging the Church/world dichotomy that had informed earlier conciliar documents.⁷⁵ The ambiguity of the Church / world distinction in conciliar documents, together with the council's acknowledgement that the clergy may legitimately be engaged in "secular activities,"⁷⁶ makes interpretations of both 'lay' and 'secular' in the lay secular character problematic.

Efforts to restrict the participation of the laity by treating their secular character as ontologically constitutive can be seen in several recent magisterial documents. For example, in his apostolic letter, *Christifideles laici* [On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World] (1988), Pope John Paul II cautions that the offices and roles of the laity need to be exercised "in conformity to their specific lay vocation which is different from that of the sacred ministry."⁷⁷ The 1997 "Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests," calls for "a full recovery of the awareness of the secular nature of the mission of the laity," and cautions that in any collaboration

⁷³ Vatican Council II, *Acta synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi*, vol. 3, *Periodus tertia*, pars 1, *Sessio publica* IV (Vatican City: *Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis*, 1973), 282. See also Hagstrom, "The Secular Character of the Vocation and Mission of the Laity," 153; Magnani, "Does the So-Called Theology of the Laity Possess a Theological Status?" 606; and Schillebeeckx, *The Mission of the Church*, 91–101.

⁷⁴ *Gaudium et Spes* no. 40 teaches that the Church as a whole is to be a leaven in the world. See Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 207.

⁷⁵ John Markey has convincingly argued that *Gaudium et Spes*, promulgated at the end of the Council, "offers both a summary and self-interpretation of the more than three years of Council deliberations on a wide variety of issues and topics." John J. Markey, O.P., *Creating Communion: The Theology of the Constitutions of the Church* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2003), 84

⁷⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 49.

⁷⁷ Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, 57; emphasis in the original.

between the ordained and the laity particular care should be taken “to safeguard the nature and mission of sacred ministry and the vocation and secular character of the lay faithful.”⁷⁸

Issue of Lay Participation in Church Governance

A second issue regarding the role of laity in the Church is whether lay persons can participate in the power of governance of the Church. The council underscored the fact that the People of God is a priestly people,⁷⁹ but it also emphasized the essential difference between the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained as follows:

The ministerial priest, by the sacred power that he has, forms and governs the priestly people; in the person of Christ he brings about the Eucharistic sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people. The faithful indeed, by virtue of their royal priesthood, share in the offering of the Eucharist. They exercise that priesthood, too, by the reception of the sacraments, by prayer and thanksgiving, by the witness of a holy life, self-denial and active charity.⁸⁰

This statement relates the sacred power (*sacra potestas*) of the ordained, at least in part, to ecclesial governance. However, the conciliar documents did not attempt to correlate the possession of sacred power with the pre-conciliar doctrines on the distinct powers of orders and jurisdiction.⁸¹ Nor did the conciliar documents indicate whether (or not) lay people could exercise some share in the *sacra potestas*.⁸²

The question of the possibility of lay people sharing in the power of governance in the Church remains unresolved. Some theorists maintain that only the ordained can hold and

⁷⁸ Eight Vatican Offices, “Instruction on Certain Questions,” 3.

⁷⁹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 10, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 14.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁸¹ From the time of the decretists of the twelfth century until Vatican II, the Church’s power was divided into the power of orders and the power of jurisdiction. These two powers were understood to be related, with the power of jurisdiction regulating the exercise of the power of orders. The 1917 Code restricted exercise of the power of jurisdiction to clerics, in part because of the close relationship between the two powers, but also to keep secular authorities from meddling in the freedom of the Church. See John P. Beal, “The Exercise of the Power of Governance by Lay People: State of the Question,” *The Jurist* 55 (1995): 4–10.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 17.

exercise the power of governance,⁸³ while other theorists maintain that the power of governance can exist apart from orders, and that it is possible for lay persons to exercise governance.⁸⁴ The 1983 Code states that “Lay members of the Christian faithful can cooperate (*cooperari*) in the exercise of the power of jurisdiction according to the norm of the law.”⁸⁵ Because of its ambiguity this canon has been variously interpreted as either excluding or as giving rise to the possibility of lay participation in the powers of governance.⁸⁶ It should be noted that it is possible for lay persons to be appointed as ecclesiastical judges,⁸⁷ and to serve as chancellors,⁸⁸ censors,⁸⁹ and defenders of the bond.⁹⁰ Moreover, as James Coriden has pointed out, lay persons engaged in administrative functions in parishes and dioceses often share de facto in the power of governance.⁹¹ Nevertheless, the question of lay participation in the power of governance, a question that has acquired new urgency in the face of the priest shortage and the increase in the number of Catholic parishes, congregations, and institutions directed by lay leaders, remains unresolved.⁹² John Beal observes, “Uncertainty whether the law permits lay people to exercise power of governance or jurisdiction continues to impose a ‘glass ceiling’ on opportunities for lay people in church governance at all levels.”⁹³

⁸³ These theorists include Wilhelm Bertrams, Klaus Mörsdorf, Eugenio Correco and their followers. *Ibid.*, 18–35, 69–76.

⁸⁴ These theorists include Jean Beyer, Javier Hervada, Pedro Lombardía and their followers. *Ibid.*, 35–52, 76–84.

⁸⁵ Canon 129 § 2, in Beal, Corriden, and Green, eds., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 184–85.

⁸⁶ As noted above, the theorists who interpret Canon 129 § 2 to reject the possibility of lay participation in the power of governance include Wilhelm Bertrams, Klaus Mörsdorf, Eugenio Correco and their followers. See Beal, “The Exercise of the Power of Governance by Lay People,” 69–76.

⁸⁷ Canon 1421 § 2, in Beal, Corriden, and Green, eds., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 1624.

⁸⁸ Canons 482 and 483 do not require the chancellor to be a cleric except in cases that involve the reputation of a priest. See *ibid.*, 635–37.

⁸⁹ Canon 830 does not require the censor to be a cleric. See *ibid.*, 983.

⁹⁰ Canon 1435 does not require the promoter of justice and defender of the bond to be a cleric. See *ibid.*, 1630.

⁹¹ James A. Coriden, “Lay Persons and the Power of Governance,” *The Jurist* 59 (1999): 340.

⁹² In 2004 more than a quarter of the more than 550 parishes in the United States without resident pastors were entrusted to lay persons. Many parishes entrusted to non-resident pastors are effectively led by lay persons. D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 118.

⁹³ Beal, “It Shall Not Be So Among You!” 92.

Issue of Lay Ministry

Related to the issue of lay participation in the power of governance is the issue of lay ministry. Ministry is described in *Lumen Gentium* as participation through the Spirit in the priestly, prophetic, and royal *munera* of Jesus Christ.⁹⁴ The Council insisted that an essential difference exists between how the laity and ordained share in the *tria munera* as *Lumen Gentium* no. 10 clearly states: “Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are none the less interrelated; each in its own way shares in the one priesthood of Christ.”⁹⁵

Ecclesiastical ministry is restricted in *Lumen Gentium* to the work of the ordained:

Christ, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world (see Jn 10:36), has, through his apostles, made their successors the bishops sharers in his consecration and mission; and these, in their turn, duly entrusted in varying degrees various members of the church with the office of their ministry. Thus the divinely instituted ecclesiastical ministry is exercised in different degrees by those who even from ancient times have been called bishops, priest and deacons.⁹⁶

In at least five passages conciliar documents link the ministries of sanctifying, teaching, and governing of the ordained to their possession of *sacra potestas*.⁹⁷ Related to these passages is the understanding that participation by the laity in the sanctifying, teaching, and governing ministries of the ordained can only take the form of ‘cooperation.’⁹⁸ Yet, as Elissa Rinere points out, the words “minister” and “ministry” are applied to lay activity nineteen times in the documents of

⁹⁴ Ministry is described in terms of “gifts . . . through which, by [Christ’s] power, we provide each other with the helps needed for salvation . . .” *Lumen gentium* no. 7, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 8. That all baptized members of the Church share in the three *munera* of Jesus Christ is stated in *Lumen gentium* nos. 10, 11, 12, 34, 35, and 36. Nos. 10, 11, and 34 state that all the faithful share in the priestly function of Jesus. Nos. 12 and 35 describe how the faithful share in the prophetic *munera*. Nos. 12 and 36 describe how the faithful share in the kingly *munera*. See *ibid.*, 14–19, 52–56. The Latin words *munus* and *munera* are used through the documents of Vatican II as ministerial words. They do not have precise translations in English. See Elissa Rinere, C.P., “Conciliar and Canonical Applications of ‘Ministry’ to the Laity,” *The Jurist* 47 (1987): 205, n. 7.

⁹⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 10, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 14.

⁹⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 28, in *ibid.*, 39.

⁹⁷ These passages include *Lumen Gentium* nos. 10, 18, 27; *Presbyterorum Ordinis* nos. 2, 6.

⁹⁸ See, for example, *Lumen Gentium* no. 33, in *ibid.*, 51.

Vatican II, including instances of lay cooperation in the hierarchical *munera*⁹⁹ as well as instances where the laity fulfill the *munera* of the People of God, such as in evangelization,¹⁰⁰ in witness of life,¹⁰¹ in full-time service to the Church,¹⁰² in catechetics,¹⁰³ in Catholic Action,¹⁰⁴ in missionary activity,¹⁰⁵ and even in the ordinary activity of human life.¹⁰⁶

The post-conciliar Church in the United States has witnessed a dramatic rise in the number of lay people serving their Catholic communities both in voluntary ministerial service and in what the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States has termed “lay ecclesial ministry.”¹⁰⁷ In part, but only in part, the rise in lay ecclesial ministry can be attributed directly to the priest shortage.¹⁰⁸ For example, the priest shortage has made it necessary in some cases to entrust the pastoral care of parishes without resident pastors to lay persons.¹⁰⁹

Despite, or likely in response to, the rise in numbers of lay ecclesial ministers, official Catholic documents following Vatican II have sought to limit the use of the word “ministry” to refer only to the fulfillment of the *munera* of the hierarchy. For example, the 1983 Code of

⁹⁹ Rinere, “Conciliar and Canonical Applications,” 205. These instances include *Sacrosanctum Concilium* nos. 29, 35, 112, 122; *Christus Dominus* no. 27; *Gravissimum Educationis* [Declaration on Christian Education] nos. 7, 8.

¹⁰⁰ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 6, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 411.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 22, in *ibid.*, 430.

¹⁰³ *Ad Gentes Divinitus* no. 26, in *ibid.*, 481.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ad Gentes Divinitus* nos. 23–26, in *ibid.*, 477–82.

¹⁰⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 33, in *ibid.*, 51; *Gaudium et Spes* nos. 38, 79 (in which service in the armed forces is called a ministry), in *ibid.*, 203–4, 266.

¹⁰⁷ In their 2005 statement on lay ecclesial ministry the USCCB defines lay ecclesial ministers as “those men and women whose ecclesial service is characterized by: *authorization* of the hierarchy to serve publicly in the local church; *leadership* in a particular area of ministry; *close mutual collaboration* with the pastoral ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons; *Preparation and formation* appropriate to the level of responsibilities that are assigned to them. USCCB, Committee on the Laity, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005), 10, emphases in the original.

¹⁰⁸ Although the growth of lay ecclesial ministry in the years following Vatican II coincides with a period of decline in numbers of priests (and religious), such growth cannot be attributed to this decline. Rather than being motivated by the priest shortage, those who serve the Church in lay ecclesial ministry often report that they are motivated by what they describe as a sense of vocation rooted in their baptism to work within the Church. Zeni Fox, *New Ecclesial Ministry: Lay Professionals Serving the Church* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 26; Dennis Beeman and others, *No Turning Back: A Lay Perspective on Ministry in the Catholic Church in the United States*, gen. ed., Graziano Marcheschi (Chicago: National Association for Lay Ministry, 1996), 20.

¹⁰⁹ USCCB, *Co-Workers*, 11.

Canon Law sharply restricts the use of “ministry” as it applies to lay activity. Although the Code recognizes that members of the laity may be invited to cooperate in the hierarchical ministry, it does not refer to any activity of the laity taken on their own initiative to further the mission of the Church in either the religious or secular spheres as ministry.¹¹⁰ The 1997 “Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests,” teaches that, while the laity may “assist”¹¹¹ or “collaborate”¹¹² in the sacred ministry of priests, it is only by ordination that the full, univocal meaning of ministry, understood as the “the work by which the Church’s members continue the mission and ministry of Christ,” obtains.¹¹³ The instruction accordingly stipulates that the lay faithful may not assume titles such as “pastor,” “chaplain,” “coordinator,” “moderator” or other titles that may confuse their role with that of the ordained.¹¹⁴ In its restriction of the meaning of ministry to the work of the ordained in continuing the mission and ministry of Christ, this instruction effectively narrows the scope of lay participation in the sanctifying, teaching, and governing functions of the Church beyond that in the documents of Vatican II.

Confused Identity and “Silent Exodus” of Lay Catholics

Vatican II teaches that to be fully incorporated into the Church a baptized person must possess the Spirit of Christ, accept all the means of salvation given to the Church as well as its organization, and be joined to the visible structure of the Church by the profession of faith, the sacraments, ecclesiastical governance, and communion.¹¹⁵ The 1983 Code of Canon Law defines full communion of the baptized with the Catholic Church in terms of their being “joined with Christ in its visible structure by the bonds of profession of faith, of the sacraments and of

¹¹⁰ Rinere, “Conciliar and Canonical Applications,” 219.

¹¹¹ Eight Vatican Offices, “Instruction,” 3.

¹¹² Ibid., in title and throughout.

¹¹³ Ibid., 14.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 14, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 20.

ecclesiastical governance.”¹¹⁶ This teaching and definition specify the de jure identity of those who are members of the Catholic Church. However, many who consider themselves to be members of the Catholic Church do not meet these criteria. In these cases we can speak of a de facto, social, or subjective Catholic identity.¹¹⁷

Confused De Facto Catholic Identity

A 2005 Gallop survey¹¹⁸ of those in the United States who consider themselves to be Catholic measured Catholic identity in terms of positive responses to the following questions: “Being Catholic is a very important part of who you are,” “It is important to you that younger generations of your family grow up as Catholics,” and “You can’t imagine yourself being anything but Catholic.”¹¹⁹ The researchers found that most (70–85 percent) of those who identify themselves as Catholic attach a quite high importance to their Catholic identity,¹²⁰ with older Catholics as a group feeling their Catholicism more strongly than younger Catholics as a group.¹²¹

The problem of the confused Catholic identity of the laity becomes apparent when we look at survey results about their beliefs and understandings of religious boundaries. Although most who identify themselves as Catholic identified creedal beliefs, such as belief in Jesus’ resurrection from the dead (84 percent), sacraments (76 percent), devotion to Mary the Mother of God (74 percent), and helping the poor (84 percent) with the core of Catholicism, many considered the Church’s moral teachings, requirements regarding the Sunday obligation, having

¹¹⁶ Canon 205, in Beal, Corriden, and Green, eds., *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 248.

¹¹⁷ See D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 15n1.

¹¹⁸ The results of this survey were analyzed and compared with similar surveys dating to 1987 by William V. D’Antonio and Dean R. Hoge, fellows of the Life Cycle Institute of the Catholic University of America, James D. Davidon, professor of sociology at Purdue University, and Mary L. Gautier, senior research associate and research associate professor at CARA, Georgetown University. The results are published in D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*. The 2005 Gallop survey is reproduced in “Appendix C”, in *Ibid.*, 173–83.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 10, 19–20.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

one's marriage blessed, and the priesthood less important.¹²² Only a slight majority of those who identified themselves as Catholics (53 percent) believed that the Catholic Church "contains a greater share of truth than other religions do." In fact, the vast majority of Catholics (86 percent), including most younger Catholics, believe that it doesn't matter which religion you belong to.¹²³ This evidence of what could be termed religious relativism raises the question of why Catholics remain Catholics. Survey results suggest that Catholics remain affiliated with the Church not so much on the basis of beliefs, but on the basis of their "comfort zones." Over half of all Catholics indicate that they would not be comfortable outside of Catholicism.¹²⁴

Silent Exodus of Catholics

Johann Baptist Metz was writing in the mid 1970s when he referred to the "silent exodus" of Catholics from the German Catholic Church.¹²⁵ Sociological surveys show that the phenomenon of silent exodus of Catholics has been an ongoing problem, as well, for the Catholic Church in the United States which has a current retention rate, as estimated by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), of about 77 percent.¹²⁶ The problem of disaffiliation is not, however, a dramatically escalating problem among Catholics in the United States.¹²⁷ Nor is the problem of disaffiliation confined to the Catholic Church. A 2008 report by the Pew Foundation shows that 28 percent of American adults have left the faith in which they

¹²² For example, 76 percent of those who identified themselves as Catholic felt that it was possible to be a good Catholic and still not attend Mass every Sunday. More than half felt that it was not necessary to obey Church teachings on divorce, remarriage, and birth control. D'Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 24, 27, 35.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹²⁴ Fifty-six percent of young Catholics said they could be just as happy in some other church compared to thirty-seven percent of those over age sixty-three. *Ibid.*, 32.

¹²⁵ Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, 137.

¹²⁶ The retention rate measures the percentage of those who were raised Catholic (that is, who were Catholic at age 16) who continue to self-identify as Catholic after age 16. CARA, "The Impact of Religious Switching and Secularization on the Estimated Size of the U. S. Adult Catholic Population," <http://cara.georgetown.edu/Winter%202008.pdf> (accessed 6/3/10), 8.

¹²⁷ The rate by which Catholics leave the Church has remained fairly stable, increasing only incrementally since 1952. CARA, "Impact of Religious Switching," 4–6.

were raised.¹²⁸ This fact points to cultural influence as one factor that contributes to the silent exodus of Catholics, an influence that will be explored below.

When asked why they left, nearly three-fourths of former Catholics said that they just gradually drifted away. Almost two-thirds of those who left also cited dissatisfaction with or disbelief in Catholic teachings, such as teachings about homosexuality, birth control, or the Bible. Two-fifths of fallen-away Catholics said that their spiritual needs were not being met.¹²⁹ Of special concern is the fact that half of the Catholics who leave do so by age twenty-one.¹³⁰

A problem related to and equally as troubling as the silent exodus of Catholics is the observed gradual decline in the strength of Catholic commitment in the United States, especially in young adult Catholics aged twenty to thirty-nine.¹³¹ The low-level commitment of young Catholics is worrisome because research has found that the values and attitudes acquired from ages fifteen to twenty tend to be quite stable throughout life.¹³² Thus, analysts expect a continuing gradual decline in commitment to the Church based on generational differences.¹³³ At the lowest level of commitment are Catholics who, unhappy with the Church and disconnected from parish life, still identify themselves as Catholics.¹³⁴ Andrew Greeley describes those Catholics, who are only minimally affiliated with the institutional Church and have limited

¹²⁸ Pew Forum, "U.S. Religious Landscape Survey" (February 2008), 5.

¹²⁹ These statistics are from Pew Forum, "Faith in Flux: Changes in Religious Affiliation in the U.S." (Poll conducted April 27, 2009), <http://pewforum.org/Faith-in-Flux.aspx> (accessed 6/3/10), 23–26.

¹³⁰ CARA, "Impact of Religious Switching," 6.

¹³¹ A 2005 Gallop pole shows that 21 percent of Catholics overall are strongly committed and active in Church life, while the remainder are moderately- (64 percent) to poorly-committed (15 percent). Pre-Vatican II Catholics reported the highest commitment as a group (43 percent). None of the young Catholics aged twenty to thirty-nine reported that they were strongly-committed. Overall, the percentage of Catholics who report some level of commitment has remained relatively stable from 1987 to 2005, despite the clergy-abuse scandals. However, there has been an overall decline in the *level* of commitment of Catholics, especially in Sunday Mass attendance. D'Antonio, *American Catholics Today*, 39, 41–42, 72–73.

¹³² Dean R. Hoge and others, *Young Adult Catholics: Religion in the Culture of Choice* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 20.

¹³³ D'Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 143.

¹³⁴ Fifteen percent of Catholics reported a low-level of commitment in 2005. D'Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 40–41; See also Hoge and others, *Young Adult Catholics*, 44.

knowledge of Catholic doctrine and teachings, as “communal Catholics.”¹³⁵ Employing Greeley’s term we can say that, although the level of overall commitment of Catholics in the United States appears to be relatively stable, the number of “communal Catholics” is increasing while the number of highly-committed Catholics is decreasing.

In Metz’s opinion, the “silent exodus” of Catholics he observed in Germany was the result “of letting the people become too little the subject of the Church ... of letting the Church become the ‘Church for the people’ rather than the ‘Church of the people.’”¹³⁶ Metz’s opinion appears to apply as well to the experience of American Catholics according to Gallop survey results published in 2005 which revealed that lay persons desire more parish involvement. More than half of the Catholics surveyed felt that Church leaders are out of touch with the laity and that priests don’t expect lay people to be leaders.¹³⁷ In Dean Hoge’s analysis, “If church leadership wants to strengthen Catholic identity, what is done must contribute to the confidence and strength of the individual believer. People who experience empowerment through the Church will become stronger Catholics.”¹³⁸

Poor Commitment of Catholic Young Adults. The weak affiliation and poor participation of many young Catholics aged twenty to thirty-nine is considered by many, including young adult Catholics, to be a serious problem.¹³⁹ For example, only one-fourth of young Catholics attend Mass on a weekly basis. A majority disagrees with the Church’s teachings on sexuality and reproductive issues. Many have learned to be responsible for their own relationship with God. They distinguish between the beliefs and practices they consider central to their faith and ones

¹³⁵ Andrew M. Greeley, *The Communal Catholic: A Personal Manifesto* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), 11.

¹³⁶ Metz, *Faith in History and Society*, 137.

¹³⁷ D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 110.

¹³⁸ Hoge and others, *Young Adult Catholics*, 233.

¹³⁹ D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 77, 81–82.

they consider peripheral. Fewer than half feel that the teaching authority of the Vatican is very important.¹⁴⁰

This is not to deny that a sizeable minority of young adult Catholics, about 20 percent, is very religious and faithful in the practice of their faith through, for example, Sunday Mass attendance.¹⁴¹ Yet, even these faithful young adult Catholics experience a discrepancy in world view from that of older Catholic hierarchy. For example, in addition to disagreeing with the Church on sexual and reproductive issues, many of these committed young adult Catholics tend to disagree with the official Catholic position on the ordination of women. While older members of the hierarchy tend to view morality in terms of sexual orientation and behavior, these committed young adults tend to view morality in terms of social justice and service.¹⁴² Moreover, young adult Catholics who desire to be actively involved in Church life increasingly report encountering priests who do not want to share authority with lay people.¹⁴³

Inadequate Formation of Lay Catholics. Researchers have found that strong faith as a child tends to be the strongest predictor that a person will remain a lifelong Catholic.¹⁴⁴ This leads to the question of the significance of religious education in a person's faith formation. Both a 1997 study by Dean Hoge and associates and a 2009 Pew Study found only a slight positive correlation between attending religious education classes as a child, or participating in Catholic youth groups, or attending a Catholic high school, and whether or not a person remains Catholic.¹⁴⁵ What Hoge and associates did discover was that most of the people they interviewed reported that their overall religious education experience was one of weak content and poor

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 82.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 81–82.

¹⁴⁴ Forty-six percent of lifelong Catholics report having had very strong faith as a child. Pew Forum, "Faith in Flux," 23.

¹⁴⁵ D'Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 81–82; Pew Forum, "Faith in Flux," 22.

pedagogy.¹⁴⁶ Despite having participated in religious education programs, many Catholic young people report feeling vulnerable and insecure because of their inability to articulate their faith tradition when challenged or when asked to give an account of their beliefs in ecumenical encounters.¹⁴⁷ In the words of one young adult Catholic, “In college, I remember being confronted in an elevator by a born-again Christian. I felt very insecure. He knew his faith but I could not articulate mine.”¹⁴⁸

On-going Catholic formation of adults remains a serious need. Overall the Church provides too few opportunities for credible and relevant adult religious education.¹⁴⁹ Except for RCIA, many Catholic adults often have few opportunities for discipleship mentoring, group deliberation, and faith sharing. Too often opportunities for community service provided by parishes or Church groups are not integrated with Catholic faith or spiritual reflection.¹⁵⁰ Apart from liturgical celebrations, the experience of being Catholic for many Catholics in the United States is an individual experience. Answering the question of why faith formation is an “urgent” need for American Catholics, Mary Ann Glendon writes,

The answer is that poor formation presents a special danger in a society like ours where Catholics have lost most of their old support networks, and where education in other areas is relatively advanced. If religious education falls short of the general level of secular education, Christians run into trouble defending their beliefs – even to themselves.¹⁵¹

UNDERLYING ECCLESIAL AND LAY ISSUES

The presenting ecclesial problems described above of the sexual abuse crisis, the decline in priestly vocations, and the confused identity and silent exodus of the laity arguably point to underlying ecclesial and lay problems and issues. Recognizing that different analyses are

¹⁴⁶ Hoge and others, *Young Adult Catholics*, 136–39. See also D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 82–83.

¹⁴⁷ Hoge and others, *Young Adult Catholics*, 143.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 235.

¹⁵⁰ For example, *ibid.*, 140–42.

¹⁵¹ Mary Ann Glendon, “The Hour of the Laity,” *First Things* 127 (November 2002): 27.

possible, this study will identify and analyze underlying ecclesial problems and lay issues under the rubrics of theological differences and cultural clashes. Under the rubric of theological differences it will examine how the failure of Vatican II to achieve a unified ecclesiological synthesis has been used to support ecclesiologies and theologies of the laity that lack the balance intended by the Council. Under the rubric of cultural clashes it will examine how in the Catholic Church of the United States a confluence of cultures informed by vastly different cultural meanings contributes to different ways of understanding the meaning and relevance of the Church and of its discipline, organization, and teachings. As we shall see in Chapter Three, Lonergan's interiority analysis provides an explanation for the ways that meaning functions in cultures, communities, and individual lives. Lonergan's interiority analysis will help us to better understand the dynamics at work in the theological differences and cultural clashes that we will examine below.

Theological Differences

Ecclesiology of Vatican II

Interpretive Issues. Any interpretation of the documents of Vatican II needs to take into consideration the fact that the theological climate and debates of this council were shaped by two ecclesiological tendencies, one that understood the Church primarily as a visible hierarchically-organized perfect society of salvation established by Christ with infallible authority concentrated in the Pope, and one that understood the Church as a communion animated by the Holy Spirit.¹⁵² Because the council's teaching was often worked out through compromise, and presented in a descriptive rather than in a systematized way, the documents of Vatican II do not present a

¹⁵² See, for example, Edward J. Kilmartin, S.J., "Lay Participation in the Apostolate of the Hierarchy," in *Official Ministry in a New Age*, ed. James H. Provost, Permanent Seminar Studies 3 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1981), 94–99; also Hermann Pottmeyer, "The Church as Mysterium and as Institution," in *Synod 1985: An Evaluation*, ed. Guisepe Alberigo and James Provost. *Concilium: Religion in the Eighties*, English Language Editor, Marcus Lefébure (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, LTD, 1986), 107

unified ecclesiological synthesis.¹⁵³ However, while different ecclesiological emphases can be identified in the conciliar documents, theologians are obliged to respect the overall ecclesial vision of Vatican II as expressed in *Lumen Gentium* number 8, according to which “the earthly church and the church endowed with heavenly riches, are not to be thought of as two realities. On the contrary, they form one complex reality comprising a human and a divine element.”¹⁵⁴

Lumen Gentium begins its ecclesiological reflection by describing the Church as a sacrament of communion.¹⁵⁵ In so doing it both affirms that the source of the Church’s life is the communion of the Trinity and that the purpose or mission of the Church is to reveal and express God’s plan to draw humanity into saving communion in Jesus through the action of the Holy Spirit. The final organization of *Lumen Gentium*, in which the Church is first described as sacrament, as mystery, as the Body of Christ, and as the People of God before its hierarchical nature is described, is intended to emphasize the relationships of believers to Christ and with each other within the hierarchically-structured Church. *Lumen Gentium*’s emphasis on the Church as a sacrament of communion together with its emphasis on the relationships of believers with Christ and with each other in Christ illustrate why many post-conciliar theologians concur with the Extraordinary Synod of 1985¹⁵⁶ that the category of communion is the central and fundamental ecclesiological category of *Lumen Gentium*.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Kilmartin, “Lay Participation,” 99.

¹⁵⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 8, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 9. Arguing that the council fathers intended to present a single ecclesiology by setting out its various essential elements, Joseph Komonchak writes, “That it is easy to construct a coherent ecclesiology out of all this I am not saying; but that is the task of theologians; it is enough for the Council to have set out the dimensions that need to be integrated.” Komonchak, “Ecclesiology of Vatican II” (speech, The Catholic University of America, March 27, 1999), 3, <http://publicaffairs.cua.edu/speeches/ecclesiology99.htm> (accessed May 18, 2010).

¹⁵⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 1, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 1.

¹⁵⁶ The 1985 Synod of Bishops was convoked for the purpose of evaluating the impact of Vatican II on the Church. See Synod of Bishops 1985, “The Second Extraordinary General Assembly: Twentieth Anniversary of the Conclusion of the Second Vatican Council; The Final Report,” *Origins* 15, no. 27 (Dec. 19, 1985): 444–50.

¹⁵⁷ See Georgia Masters Keightley, “Vatican II: The Church’s Self-Understanding,” in *Vatican II: The Continuing Agenda*, ed. Anthony J. Cernera (Fairfield, CT: Sacred Heart University Press, 1997), 3; and David McLoughlin, “Authority as Service in Communion,” in *Governance and Authority in the Roman Catholic Church: Beginning a Conversation*, ed. Noel Timms and Kenneth Wilson (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000), 130.

It is important to reiterate that the council intended to present one ecclesiology.¹⁵⁸ The Church, which is a sacrament of communion with God and of unity among humanity, is “one complex reality” which is both human and divine.¹⁵⁹ In speaking of the Church as a sacrament the council affirmed the necessity of the Church’s institutional structure in constituting part of the visible, human reality of the Church which serves as an effective sign of real communion with Christ.¹⁶⁰ Thus, it is a mistake to think that the elements of communion ecclesiology present in the documents of Vatican II serve merely as another structural model alongside that of a hierarchical ecclesiology. Rather, the hierarchical structure of the Church is understood to be at the service of communion so that the Church can be a sacrament, i.e., a sign and instrument, of communion with God and with humanity.¹⁶¹ The interpretive problem is, ultimately, one of balance in which the Church’s hierarchical structure is held not to be an end in itself, but to be necessary in order that the Church can be an effective sign of communion with God and of unity among humanity.¹⁶²

Christomonistic Bias. Several commentators have identified what they refer to as a christomonistic bias in the council’s failure to fully incorporate the role of the Holy Spirit in its ecclesiology.¹⁶³ A christomonistic bias can be seen in conciliar texts that limit the role of the

¹⁵⁸ Komonchak argues, “There is no evidence whatever that the Council fathers thought that they were juggling various images, notions, or models of the Church.” Komonchak, “Ecclesiology of Vatican II,” 3.

¹⁵⁹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 8, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 9.

¹⁶⁰ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making: Lumen Gentium, Christus Dominus, Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, Rediscovering Vatican II (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 44; *Lumen Gentium* emphasizes that the total human reality of the Church consists not only in its institutional structure, but also in the witness of its members. This is evident throughout *Lumen Gentium* but especially in its organization which defines the Church as a People in Chapter 2 before it defines the Church as hierarchical in Chapter 3.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

¹⁶² Gaillardetz, *Church in the Making*, 44.

¹⁶³ In its failure to fully incorporate the role of the Holy Spirit, a christomonist approach to ecclesiology differs from a proper Christological approach. Yves Congar was the first to describe a “christomonistic” bias in Western Trinitarian theology. See Yves Congar, “Pneumatologie et ‘christomonisme’ dans la tradition latine?” in *Ecclesia a Spiritu sancto edocta*, ed. Gérard Phillips (Paris: Gembloux, 1970), 41–63. The impact of a christomonistic bias on Catholic ecclesiology and theology of the ordained has been described in Kilmartin, “Lay Participation,” 98–106; David Coffey, “The Common and the Ordained Priesthood,” *Theological Studies* 58 (June, 1997): 209–36; and Gaillardetz, “Shifting Meanings.”

Holy Spirit to conserving what Christ did for the Church.¹⁶⁴ Although a christomonistic approach to ecclesiology can be identified in both the hierarchical and communion understandings of the council, a more pneumatologically-balanced Trinitarian ecclesiological emphasis can also be found in the documents. This more balanced Trinitarian understanding recognizes that the mission of the Holy Spirit to the Church is a continuation of Christ's mission (see *Lumen Gentium* no. 48) and affirms that the Holy Spirit is the source of all ministry in the Church (*Lumen Gentium* nos. 12, 13).¹⁶⁵

Richard Gaillardetz sees a christomonistic bias in the conciliar teaching on the differences between the common and ordained ministries. He cautions "that an exclusive reliance on the Christological dimensions of ministry ultimately yields a Christomonist framework which cannot take into account the full integrity of non-ordained ministry."¹⁶⁶ A christomonistic approach to the ordained ministry supports an understanding of the priestly office as *repraesentatio Christi*¹⁶⁷ and contributes (albeit inadvertently) to a conception of the ordained that situates them "over against" those who are not ordained, and apart from and facing the Church.¹⁶⁸ A more pneumatologically-balanced Trinitarian approach to ministry affirms the charismatic basis of all ministry and understands the ministries of both the laity and the ordained

¹⁶⁴ For example, *Lumen Gentium* no. 27 says, "the Holy Spirit preserves unfailingly that form of government which was set up by Christ the Lord in his church." *Lumen Gentium* no. 27 in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 38; See Kilmartin, "Lay Participation," 107.

¹⁶⁵ See Kilmartin, "Lay Participation," 108–13. Referring to the imbalance between a christomonistic versus a pneumatological approach in the documents of Vatican II, Kilmartin writes, "[t]he result is not sufficient to justify the conclusion that Vatican II moves beyond a fundamentally christomonistic understanding of ordained ministry." *Ibid.*, 107.

¹⁶⁶ Gaillardetz, "Shifting Meanings," 130.

¹⁶⁷ An understanding of the priestly office as *repraesentatio Christi* can be seen in *Lumen gentium* no. 10, which says, "in the person of Christ [the ministerial priest] brings about the Eucharistic sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people." *Lumen gentium* no. 10, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 14.

¹⁶⁸ Kilmartin, "Lay Participation," 107. John Beal complains that the conciliar over-emphasis on the Christological dimension of ordained ministries has been codified in Canon Law in terms of a "sheer overagainstness" of the relationship between the clergy and the rest of the faithful. See Beal, "It Shall Not Be So," 97. See also, Eamonn Conway, "Operative Theologies of Priesthood," in *The Structural Betrayal of Trust, Concilium* 2004/3, ed. Regina Ammicht-Quinn, Hille Haker and Maureen Junker-Kenny (London: SCM Press, 2004), 76.

to be “ordered to one another without the one simply being under the control of the other.”¹⁶⁹ In this conception the ordained priest is seen as *repraesentatio ecclesiae*, ordained to a ministry of full leadership of the Church in which he represents both the Church and Christ through the Spirit.¹⁷⁰ From the perspective of the council’s more pneumatologically-balanced Trinitarian ecclesiology, the possibility of lay participation in hierarchical tasks cannot be automatically ruled out.¹⁷¹

The failure of the council to achieve a more pneumatologically-informed Trinitarian ecclesiology and to fully integrate its understanding of Church as communion with its understanding of Church as hierarchical institution has contributed to problems of interpretation and of the implementation of conciliar reforms in the post-conciliar period.¹⁷² For example, it is fair to say that the post-conciliar period has witnessed an increasingly juridical-hierarchical emphasis on distinctions between lay and ordained¹⁷³ and a more juridical-hierarchical interpretation of Church authority. A juridical-hierarchical approach to Church authority is apparent, for example, in the increased post-conciliar centralization of Church government through the strengthening of the curia.¹⁷⁴ It is also apparent in various magisterial documents that re-interpret and co-opt the notion of ‘communion’ to serve the interests of the universal institutional Church.¹⁷⁵ The trend to a more juridical-hierarchical interpretation of Vatican II

¹⁶⁹ Kilmartin, “Lay Participation,” 107.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 109–10.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 111.

¹⁷² See Pottmeyer, “The Church as Mysterium and as Institution,” 107.

¹⁷³ See discussion of the issue of lay ministry above.

¹⁷⁴ See, for example, Gottfried Cardinal Daneels, “On Papal Primacy and Decentralization,” *Origins* (October 30, 1997): 339–341; Archbishop John Quinn, “The Exercise of the Primacy,” *Commonweal* (July 12, 1996): 11–20, and Quinn, *The Reform of the Papacy: The Costly Call to Christian Unity* (New York: Crossroad, 1999).

¹⁷⁵ For example, although the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops identified communion as the fundamental ecclesiological category of *Lumen Gentium*, John Markey’s thorough analysis of the Synod’s “Final Report” shows that it identified ‘communion’ almost exclusively with institutional aspects of the Church. John J. Markey, “Community and Communion: An Analysis of the Understanding of Community in Some ‘Communion Ecclesiologies’ in Post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Thought and a Proposal for Clarification and Further Dialogue” (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, 1996), 169–185, esp. 18–25; See also Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Theological Debate,” in *Synod 1985: An*

arguably underlies the problem of the continued marginalization of the laity through their lack of deliberative voice and through the general lack of accountability of bishops to them. This trend can be seen in efforts to restrict the participation of the laity in ministry on the basis that they do not possess the sacred power of the ordained. This trend can also be seen in the silence of the Code of Canon Law on the possibility of a charismatic basis for ministry. Such silence effectively strips the laity of the right to exercise their charisms for the good the Church.

Laity in Teaching of Vatican II

The failure to fully integrate an understanding of Church as communion animated by the Spirit with a juridical-hierarchical ecclesiology made it difficult for the council to address the role of the laity and relate this role to that of the ordained in the life and mission of the Church.¹⁷⁶ Unable to reach a theological consensus on the identity and role of the laity, the council had to be satisfied with compromise statements expressed in terms of parameters that framed the issues while holding the different views in balanced tension. Thus, rather than offering a theological definition of the laity, the council offered both positive and negative descriptions of the laity. Positively, it described the laity to be members of the faithful who possess a secular character. Negatively, it described the laity to be those members of the faithful who are not ordained.¹⁷⁷

These characterizations have proven to be insufficient for adequately determining the role of the laity in the life and mission of the Church. For example, while the council recognized that the laity, as members of the faithful, have responsibility and are charismatically endowed for the

Evaluation, 53–63; Ronaldo Muñoz, “The Ecclesiology of the International Theological Commission,” in *ibid.*, 37–43, esp. 42.

¹⁷⁶ The conciliar teaching on the laity is located principally in three documents, although elements of this teaching are found in other documents as well. The main aspects of the council’s teaching on the laity can be found in Chapter 4 of *Lumen Gentium*, which lays out the closest thing to the Council’s theology of the laity. *Apostolicam Actuositatem* does not introduce any substantial variations from *Lumen Gentium*, but does provide more details. *Gaudium et Spes* sheds important light on the role of the laity both in the world and in the Church.

¹⁷⁷ As was pointed out in Chapter One, *Lumen Gentium* sometimes includes non-ordained religious with the laity (See *Lumen Gentium* no. 43, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 67), while at other times it distinguishes non-ordained religious from the laity and from the ordained (See *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in *ibid.*, 48–49).

building-up and mission of the Church,¹⁷⁸ it also described the sacred power that priests receive as a power “whose purpose is to build up the church.”¹⁷⁹ Because the laity are not ordained and do not receive the sacred power given to priests at ordination, the question arises as to the exact nature and capacity of lay participation in the building-up of the Church, and of how lay participation is related to that of the clergy.

As a consequence of its inability to synthesize an adequate theology of the laity, the council could neither affirm nor deny whether the laity are able to share in the sanctifying, teaching, and governing roles proper to the ordained.¹⁸⁰ Instead it could only emphasize that, although the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained share in the one priesthood of Christ, the two priesthoods differ “essentially and not only in degree.”¹⁸¹ Effectively, the council left the identity and role of the laity in the life and mission of the Church in limbo.

Clashing Cultures

In keeping with the council’s understanding that “the earthly church and the church endowed with heavenly riches are not to be thought of as two realities,” but rather as “one complex reality comprising a human and a divine element,”¹⁸² any analysis of the present situation in the Church must include the human actions and meanings that contribute to the Church in its concrete realization. The survey data presented above is an attempt to get the pulse of the present condition of the concrete realization of the Catholic Church in the United States. It shows that many Catholics in the United States, especially young adult Catholics, have a poor understanding of and are not able to articulate the doctrines of their faith and the distinctiveness

¹⁷⁸ “Allotting his gifts ‘at will to each individual’ (1 Cor 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts, he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the church” *Lumen Gentium* no. 12, in *ibid.*, 17.

¹⁷⁹ *Presbyterorum Ordinis* no. 6, in *ibid.*, 327.

¹⁸⁰ Kilmartin, “Lay Participation,” 89–115, esp. 107, 115.

¹⁸¹ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 10, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 14.

¹⁸² *Lumen Gentium* no. 8, in *ibid.*, 9.

of the Catholic Church, have limited biblical literacy, are becoming more detached from the institutional Church, and want a greater voice in the ecclesial decisions that affect them. The use of surveys and sociological analysis to help understand the present situation in the Church is very much in keeping with Bernard Lonergan's ideal of integrating theology with the human sciences. He stressed that such integration is necessary in order to generate well-informed plans and policies for promoting good and undoing evil both in the Church and in society.¹⁸³

It is widely recognized among social scientists and scholars of the humanities that our understanding of human societies is best approached by studying culture. In Lonergan's analysis a culture carries the meanings and values of the way of life of a society.¹⁸⁴ The culture's meanings and values, in turn, are communicated through customs, rites, symbols, stories, language, and arts, in brief, through all the ways in which persons convey, feel, intuit, interpret, and act out meaning.¹⁸⁵ A culture, for example, shapes the meanings and values that determine what is beautiful or praiseworthy as well as meanings and values that are attributed to certain gestures such as a handshake, a bow, a wink, or direct eye contact. The meanings carried by a given culture are so ingrained that they can be taken for granted or assumed uncritically to be so. The meanings and values embedded in our culture(s) influence not only how we intuit and feel meanings and values, but how we interpret ourselves and our world.¹⁸⁶

As the meanings-values matrix that mediates understanding of self and world, culture serves as an important perspective from which to analyze the presenting problems of the laity and

¹⁸³ Lonergan, *Method*, 366.

¹⁸⁴ Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection*, edited by Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 7; See also, Lonergan, "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," in *A Second Collection*, 102.

¹⁸⁵ Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," in *Collection*, 2nd ed. rev. and aug., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 4 (New York: Herder and Herder, and London: Darton, 1967; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 102. Citations are to the 1993 edition. Lonergan's understanding of culture is very similar to that of Clifford Geertz who says, "The culture concept to which I adhere ... denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life." Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), 89.

¹⁸⁶ Lonergan, "The Absence of God," 102.

of the institutional Church considered above. While space does not permit a comprehensive study of all the various cultures and sub-cultures that influence how different groups of members of the Church experience Church, it is instructive to identify and examine several cultures that impact the relationship between clergy and laity and the relationship between Catholics and the institutional Church in the United States.

American and Western Cultures

Loss of Distinctively Catholic Culture in U.S. Immediately prior to Vatican II, it was possible to identify a distinctive, homogeneous Catholic sub-culture in the United States. Although Catholics had achieved cultural assimilation in terms of education and prosperity by 1960, concern by Catholics over the secular drift of American culture, the ongoing hostility directed to Catholics, especially concerning the compatibility between Catholicism and democracy, and a still strong (but weakening) Catholic devotional life proved sufficient to support an insular and even triumphalistic Catholic identity.¹⁸⁷ Much of that changed after the 1960s as the result of increased social mobility and the cumulative effects of broad social and cultural changes in American society in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.¹⁸⁸ During these decades, which coincide with the first twenty-five post-conciliar years, Catholics in the United States took on more and more the cultural attitudes of the population at large. Sociological analysis shows that in the United States from 1970 through the mid 1990s the level of Catholic commitment towards their religion declined along with, but more quickly than, that of Protestants, so that by the mid-90s both groups reported about 25 – 30 percent regular weekly attendance.¹⁸⁹

Influence of Postmodern Culture. The cultural experience of most people in the United States and Western world today is often described as postmodern. Although postmodernism is

¹⁸⁷ Jay P. Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 168-70; Hoge and others, *Young Adult Catholics*, 6–9.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 9–11.

¹⁸⁹ The proportion of Catholics who considered themselves “strong” declined from 45 percent to 37 percent from 1971–1990. Ibid., 11.

not a uniform and monolithic phenomenon, as a cultural condition it can be characterized in terms of suspicion of totalistic ideologies, emphasis on the relativity of all knowledge and values, emphasis on individual identity, and movement toward religion as a private act rather than a community commitment.¹⁹⁰

Lockean Roots of American Culture. In Robert Bellah's analysis, the present American culture has been shaped to a considerable extent by the thought of John Locke, whose teaching, Bellah says, "is one of the most powerful, if not *the* most powerful, ideologies ever invented."¹⁹¹ Bellah maintains that the influence of Locke's ideology, which promotes the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness through individual appropriation of property from the state of nature, is evident in the founding documents of the United States.¹⁹² Some features of the American Lockean culture of self-interest as described by Bellah include: a rejection of all limits on the freedom and autonomy of individuals, except as freely agreed to in a social contract entered into on the basis of self interest; a corollary negative understanding of freedom as the ability to do whatever we want as long as it doesn't violate a social contract freely entered into; the acceptance of a limited government whose purpose is primarily to protect the property of individuals; and a rejection of everything that is not voluntarily agreed to on the basis of reason.¹⁹³

According to Bellah, several features of America's Lockean culture serve as cultural barriers to a correct understanding the nature and role of the Church and its mission.¹⁹⁴ One such barrier consists of the fact that in American culture all social relations, including family and church, are more or less influenced by Locke's notion of social contract. Thus, for example, "Instead of the individual 'belonging' to the family, it is the family which is coming to be at the

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 14–15. A very good summary of the postmodern turn in religious thought is provided by John Macquarrie, *Twentieth-Century Religious Thought*, new ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), 447–76.

¹⁹¹ Robert N. Bellah, "Cultural Barriers to the Understanding of the Church and Its Public Role," in *Faith and Culture*, ed. James A. Scherer and Stephen B. Bevans, *New Directions in Mission & Evangelization* 3 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 105, emphasis in the original.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 105–6.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 104–16.

service of the individual,” and, instead of seeing membership in a church as formative of one’s identity, Christians become consumers, shopping for the church that best suits their identity.¹⁹⁵

The propensity of a Lockean culture to view authority in terms of power and arbitrary coercion creates another American cultural barrier to correctly understanding the nature and role of the Church and its mission. American culture does not recognize valid authority in any sphere, including that of church. Bellah notes that in American culture, “Even within the family any notion of legitimate authority is remarkably weak.”¹⁹⁶ Because they do not recognize objective religious authority, Americans tend to view religion and morality as purely private matters and to consider all religions as equally valid.

Radical Self-Expressive Individualism. Sociologist and philosopher Charles Taylor argues that the current culture of the North Atlantic countries, including the United States, reflects a shift that began in the 1960s towards what he describes as a pervasive ethic of “authenticity” by which he means:

the understanding of life that emerged with the Romantic expressivism of the last eighteenth century, that each of us has his or her own way of realizing one’s own humanity, and that it is important to find and live out one’s own, as against surrendering to conformity with a model imposed from outside, by society, or the previous generation, or religious or political authority.¹⁹⁷

Characterized by the expression, “Do your own thing,” an ethic of authenticity has given rise, Taylor argues, to a “new expressivist self-awareness” that he terms “mutual display.”¹⁹⁸ In “mutual display” the meaning of one’s actions are in part co-determined by the others in one’s arena of action.¹⁹⁹ Mutual display thus creates a “common mood or tone that will color

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 106.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Charles Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited*, Institute for Human Sciences Vienna Lecture Series (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 83.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 85–86.

¹⁹⁹ As an example: Suppose that my friends and I are having a ‘private’ conversation as we walk down the street. Although the conversation is private, we are simultaneously aware of the presence of others and that our actions and conversation infiltrate and, consequently, help to shape the meaning of the common space which we and the others presently occupy. Nearby others help to shape the meaning of our common space insofar as they form, perhaps unwittingly, an audience for our actions. Similarly we form

everyone's actions."²⁰⁰ Taylor identifies "mutual display" as a new way of being together somewhere "between solitude and togetherness."²⁰¹

The culture of authenticity described by Taylor follows the Lockean trajectory described by Bellah but severs the taken-for-granted boundaries of a Lockean culture such as "the citizen ethic, centered on the good of self-rule," "family values," and "the values of hard work and productivity."²⁰² The result is a radical individualism that considers the self to be the source of all rights and values. Radical individualism interprets principles of mutual respect, individual privacy, nondiscrimination, and freedom of choice to have their basis in *self-fulfillment*.²⁰³ The consequence for religion of radical individualism is not only a rejection of what is perceived to be coercive religious authority, but the promotion of a feel-good, superficial, I'll-do-it-my-way spirituality.²⁰⁴ The pervasiveness of this new 'expressivist,' individualist mindset among young people helps to explain the growing disconnect between young people and the institutional Church as well the futility of any attempt by Church leaders to persuade or require behavior solely on the basis of the Church's authority. Taylor observes, "much of the leadership of the Catholic church, led by the Vatican, is trying to resist the challenge to monolithic authority that is implicit in the new expressivist understanding of spirituality."²⁰⁵

Problems of Identity. Because the radical individualism fostered by an expressivist culture of authenticity is not aware of or engaged with concerns beyond those of the self, it presents a formidable barrier not only to identification with institutionalized religion, but also to self identity. This is understandable if we consider that, "to define ourselves, to determine in

an audience for their actions. The mutual presence of others helps to motivate, shape, and direct our actions. Thus our common space becomes a space of mutual display. Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 86.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 87.

²⁰² Ibid., 90–91.

²⁰³ My statement extrapolates from Taylor's statement, "In fact the need to train character has receded even farther into the background, *as though the morality of mutual respect were embedded in the ideal of authentic self-fulfillment itself*" (My emphasis). Ibid., 92.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 94, 100–1, 113.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 98.

what our originality consists, we ... have to take as background some sense of what is significant.”²⁰⁶ But acquiring some sense of what is significant requires input from and engagement with others. Just as social identity as defined by Berger and Luckmann is dialogically mediated through socialization,²⁰⁷ so the making of self identity is, according to Taylor, dialogical and mediated through others.²⁰⁸ It is on this basis that Alison Benders can write, “the primacy of self-determination has become a crisis of identity about who we are, a crisis of purpose about what to do, and a crisis of ultimacy about what life means.”²⁰⁹

When we examine Lonergan’s authentic existential subject in Chapter Three, we shall see that it is only through self-transcendence achieved through self-appropriation that persons can arrive at truly authentic personal identity, purpose, and meaning.²¹⁰ For the purpose of the present chapter it is important to recognize that self-appropriation takes place in a culture and is shaped, at least in part, by the meanings that inform the culture. The process of arriving at authentic personal identity is made more difficult in the face of conflicting meanings informed by different cultures. One way to interpret the overall weakening of the Catholic identity of American Catholics is to see it as symptomatic of a clash of cultures in which the meanings of self, of religious faith, of church, and of incorporation into the Church receive vastly different interpretations.

Ecclesial Cultures

Many different cultures co-exist within the global and American Catholic Churches. Although the ethnic European immigrant cultures that helped to shape the American Catholic Church of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have largely been assimilated into

²⁰⁶ Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 35.

²⁰⁷ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), 130–31.

²⁰⁸ Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, 34–35.

²⁰⁹ Alison Benders, “Beyond Myspace: Grounding Postmodern Identity in Lonergan’s Interiority Analysis,” *Lonergan Workshop* 21 (2008): 6–7.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

American Culture, their ethos and cultural outlook continue to inform aspects and pockets of American Catholic culture today. African-American cultures and Hispanic cultures, as well as the cultures of more recently-immigrated Catholics from all parts of the world continue to enrich and challenge American Catholic culture. Additionally, there exist within the Church groups of men and women whose experience of being gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered often serves to marginalize them within mainstream and Catholic cultures. We might also consider the experience of American women in the Catholic Church, or cultural gaps between the dominant secular culture of the United States and the Roman Culture of the Vatican which, according to John Allen, does not fully understand or appreciate the conventional wisdom, experience, or secular frame of reference of United States culture.²¹¹ Space does not permit the dialectical analysis that would identify ways in which these various cultures and outlooks both enhance and contribute in some way to tensions and prejudice in the American Catholic Church. Instead, among all of the different cultures and outlooks operative in the American and world-wide Catholic Church, this study will focus on two dominant ecclesial cultures, namely, clerical culture and paternalistic bureaucratic culture. Because these two ecclesial cultures are informed by meanings that are vastly different from those of Western secular Lockean and expressivist cultures, they contribute in a significant way to the clashing of cultures experienced by American and Western Catholics today.

Clerical Culture. That a culture of clericalism exists in the Church is evident to many observers.²¹² In their *Report*, the National Review Board of the USCCB blamed the role of clericalism in contributing to misplaced loyalty, a culture of secrecy, fear of criticism, the

²¹¹ See John J. Allen, Jr., *All the Pope's Men: The Inside Story of How the Vatican Really Thinks* (New York: Doubleday, 2004).

²¹² For example, Andrew M. Greeley, *Priests: A Calling in Crisis* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004); Michael L. Papesh, *Clerical Culture: Contradiction and Transformation: The Culture of the Diocesan Priests of the United States Catholic Church* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004); Donald B. Cozzens, *The Changing Face of the Priesthood: A Reflection on the Priest's Crisis of Soul* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000); Russell Shaw, *To Hunt, To Shoot, To Entertain: Clericalism and the Catholic Laity* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993).

“massive denial” of bishops in the face of credible evidence of abuse, and the haughty attitude of some bishops in dealing with the crisis.²¹³ Clerical culture is so pervasive in the Catholic Church that for clergy and laity alike it is often taken for granted unreflectively.²¹⁴ Michael Papesh describes the social contour of American clerical culture as follows:

Ordination establishes the priest as a new being with esoteric power and community authority. Clothing that sets him apart and identifies him with the universal priestly caste, to which he now belongs, publicly designates his new status. The clerical culture then sends the ordained to a particular community of often thousands of men, women, and children of all ages and walks of life. It authorizes him to lead but requires him to live apart, most often alone. . . .

For all they have in common, priests are a highly varied group. Yet, in the main, they come to leadership with theological education, extensive relationships with bishops and fellow-priests, institutional loyalties, and both personal and institutional administrative aims largely foreign to the experience of those they serve.²¹⁵

Clerical culture is linked to a cultic model of priesthood that emphasizes the sacramental role of priests and an ontological and exclusive separation of ordained from laity.²¹⁶

Paternalistic Bureaucratic Culture. The clerical culture of the Church is supported by the hierarchical and bureaucratic structure of Church governance. In fact, clerical culture resembles bureaucratic culture in many ways. John Beal argues that dioceses in the United States are “administered” like business corporations and makes a connection between the business-model of ecclesiastical organization and clerical culture: “As this business orientation has permeated the ecclesial organization, bishops and their associates in diocesan administration have been shaped by institutional cultures and ethos remarkably similar to those of their counterparts in corporate boardrooms.”²¹⁷

²¹³NRB, *A Report*, 104–5.

²¹⁴ Papesh, *Clerical Culture*, 17.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 74.

²¹⁶ D’Antonio and others, *American Catholics Today*, 111; Conway, “Operative Theologies of Priesthood,” 77.

²¹⁷ Beal, “Weathering ‘The Perfect Storm,’” in *Common Calling*, 169.

As an institution the Church exhibits many of the features of Max Weber's ideal model of a monocratic bureaucracy.²¹⁸ According to Weber, a monocratic bureaucratic institution is most fundamentally characterized by a centralized authority with the different offices arranged hierarchically so that the lower levels are subject to the control and supervision of the ones immediately higher.²¹⁹ The authority structure of a bureaucracy comes about through the assignment of authority to prescribed roles, a process that Weber describes as "formalization."²²⁰ In a monocratic bureaucracy the process of formalization always creates an authority system structured along the lines of dominance and subordination. Because the roles in a bureaucracy are formalized, individuals in bureaucracies are defined by the roles they play and are expected to play only the roles assigned to them. Any refusal to accept an assigned role threatens the institution because the role is part of the very structure of the institution. Recognizing that institutions are actually structured or built around their formalized roles makes it easier to understand that clerical-lay relationships based on dominance and subordination in the Catholic Church are part of its institutional structure. Because these relationships form an integral part of the Church's institutional structure, even well-intentioned efforts to promote collegiality, participation of the laity, and mutuality will encounter institutional resistance.²²¹

Two tendencies of bureaucratic organizations pose problems for the Church. The first is the tendency to become increasingly more bureaucratic, a phenomenon Weber described as

²¹⁸ The Church, of course, cannot be reduced to a bureaucracy. However, I accept Provost's observation that "the dominant mode in church practice is clearly bureaucratic." Provost, "Toward a Renewed Canonical Understanding of Official Ministry," in *Official Ministry in a New Age*, 211.

²¹⁹ Talcott Parsons, "Introduction," in Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. Talcott Parsons, trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 58; see also Provost, "Toward a Renewed Canonical Understanding," 209–10.

²²⁰ Weber, *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, 340.

²²¹ Gotthold Hasenhüttel, "Church and Institution," in *The Church as Institution*, ed. Gregory Baum and Andrew Greeley, *Concilium: Religion in the Seventies* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1974), 17. Robert Merton identifies one source of institutional resistance to the collegial exercise of authority in the phenomenon he terms "sociological ambivalence." According to Merton, sociological ambivalence, which arises as a result of clashes between "opposing normative tendencies in the social definition of a role," is inherent in the very roles and offices of an organization. Merton observes that officials initially committed to democratic values often abandon those values as their attention turns to maintaining the organization and their place within it. Robert K. Merton, *Sociological Ambivalence and Other Essays* (New York: The Free Press, 1976), 12, 8, 82.

‘increasing dominance.’²²² In the U.S. Catholic Church this tendency can be observed in the multiplication of offices, bureaus, committees, and personnel at diocesan and parish levels. Increased bureaucratization compromises ministry because it can lead to impersonalization of Church administration while casting those who receive ministry into the role of clients.²²³ The capital expenditure required to maintain bureaucratic overhead puts the bureaucratic administrators of the Church, most often clerics, in the compelling and sometimes compromising role of having to protect the bureaucratic investment and capital of the Church. This is very likely one factor that motivated some bishops to cover up allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests.²²⁴

The leadership structure of the Church is still very much influenced by its Roman roots where bureaucracy was not a pure type but existed in combination with patrimonialism.²²⁵ The influence of patrimonialism can be seen in the way clerical authorities in the Church as addressed as “father.”²²⁶ It is also apparent in the paternalistic government style of the Church which “requires subjects to be unquestioningly and, often, obsequiously deferential to the wisdom, knowledge, and power of the ruler.”²²⁷ Sociologist Ingo Hermann argues that the Church’s paternalistic bureaucratic structure makes it very difficult for leadership in the Church to

²²² Julien Freund, “German Sociology in the Time of Max Weber,” in *A History of Sociological Analysis*, ed. Tom Bottomore and Robert Nisbet (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 176. Weber’s observation of the tendency of bureaucracies towards increasing dominance corresponds to Bertrand de Jouvenel’s hypothesis that all power, whether legitimate or not, is expansionary by nature. See Bertrand de Jouvenel, *On Power* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), 127.

²²³ James Drane, *Authority and Institution: A Study in Church Crisis* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1969), 58–59.

²²⁴ Peter Phan takes this position. He observes that in the case of the clergy sexual abuse crisis “the office of pastoral governance was exercised as a separate function by itself, for the good of the church as a social and legal institution. . . .” Peter C. Phan, “A New Way of Being Church: Perspectives from Asia,” in *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, 181

²²⁵ Provost, “Toward a Renewed Canonical Understanding,” 210.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Beal, “It Shall Not Be So Among You!” 94. Beal observes, “in a society of unequals, the service of hierarchical authority almost inevitably takes the form of paternalism.” Ibid.

understand and deal rationally with either internal or external conflicts.²²⁸ This is due in large part to the fact that ecclesial conflicts are interpreted by authorities as threats to the Church's authority and structure.²²⁹ Beal observes, "When circumstances or persons challenge the wisdom and power of the ruler, and then these circumstances cannot be easily remedied or critics quickly discredited or coopted, the system itself falls into crisis."²³⁰ The fact is that the paternalistic, hierarchical government of Church has historically tended to resist challenges and calls for reform from below by co-opting, discrediting, or banning critics.²³¹ This kind of response is evident in the banning of meetings on church property of Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) by Cardinal Law in Boston and other bishops.²³²

Classicist Culture. As we saw in Chapter One, Bernard Lonergan describes the worldview and culture that in his opinion remained operative in the Church well into the twentieth century as classicist.²³³ According to Lonergan, a classicist worldview and culture are based on an understanding of reality conceived according to fixed, immutable natures and laws.²³⁴ Describing how a person with a classicist worldview interprets the world Lonergan writes:

[S/He] knows that circumstances alter cases but [s/he] is far more deeply convinced that circumstances are accidental and that, beyond them, there is some substance or kernel or root that fits in with classicist assumptions of stability, immutability, fixity. Things have their specific natures; these natures, at least in principle, are to be known exhaustively through the properties they possess and the laws they obey; and over and above the specific nature there is only individuation by matter, so that knowledge of one instance of a species automatically is knowledge of any instance. What is true of species in general, also is true of the human species, of the one faith coming through Jesus Christ, of the one charity given through the gift of the Holy Spirit. It follows that the diversities of peoples, cultures, social arrangements can involve only a difference in the dress in which church

²²⁸ Ingo Hermann, "Conflicts and Conflict Resolution in the Church," in *Ongoing Reform of the Church*, ed. Alois Müller and Norbert Greinacher, *Concilium: Religion in the Seventies* 73 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 108–9.

²²⁹ Ibid.; Beal, "It Shall Not Be So Among You!" 94.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Post, "Emerging Role," 214, 218.

²³³ Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," in *A Second Collection*, 57.

²³⁴ Lonergan, "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S. J.," ed. Philip McShane, in *A Second Collection*, 210.

doctrine is expressed, but cannot involve any diversity in church doctrine itself. That is *semper idem*.²³⁵

Because classicist culture conceives itself in absolute and normative terms, it fails to appreciate its own particularity and historical contingency,²³⁶ which leads it to interpret events and others in a biased, self-referential way.²³⁷ The theology supported by a classicist worldview views all things theological in terms of a divinely-ordained ontology and arrives at new theological conclusions via deduction from first theological principles. Concerned primarily with the certitudes of faith,²³⁸ such a theology is, says Lonergan, “static, abstract, universal, equally applicable to all places and to all times.”²³⁹ Because classicist theology considers its viewpoint normative and dogmatic, it eliminates, ignores, or sharply curtails, by treating in a positivistic way, categories of development, history, culture, experience, as well as the contributions of human studies.

In viewing the present structure of the Church as normative, a classicist ecclesiology tends to identify what is culturally- or historically-conditioned with what is essential and permanent in the Church. In neglecting the Church’s lived reality and the social theory capable of interpreting it, an ecclesiology informed by classicism is necessarily reduced to dogmatism and, especially in its post-Vatican II realization, becomes, says Komonchak, “a curiously abstract ecclesiology” in which “the ‘essence’ of the Church is said to be ‘Mystery,’ imperceptible except

²³⁵ Lonergan, “Doctrinal Pluralism,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 17 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 73–74.

²³⁶ Lonergan, “Absence of God in Modern Culture,” 101.

²³⁷ In this respect the term “ethnocentrism” can be applied to the classicist cultural syndrome described by Lonergan. Edward Stewart and Milton Bennett describe the phenomenon of ethnocentrism as follows: “When one’s own culture is considered central to all reality, the values, assumptions, and behavioral norms of that culture may be elevated to the position of absolute truth.” Ethnocentrism contributes to a narrow and defensive identity, perception of others in terms of stereotypes, and pejorative evaluations of those from other cultures. See Edward C. Stewart and Milton J. Bennett, *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, rev. ed. (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., 1991), 161.

²³⁸ Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 57.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

by faith in the ‘forms’ of its empirical self-realizations.”²⁴⁰ Such an ecclesiological syndrome is characterized by Komonchak as a “*one-sided ecclesiology of mystery*.”²⁴¹

In Lonergan’s analysis a classicist worldview contributes to a kind of ecclesial “integrism in which problems are solved by laying down principles and deducing conclusions.”²⁴² Lonergan continues,

However true such principles, however accurate such conclusions may be, it remains that they can become relevant to concrete situations only through familiarity with the situation, only through adequate insight into its causes and its potentialities, only through the ingenuity that discovers lines of solution and keeps developing and adapting them in accord with an ongoing process of change.²⁴³

To the extent that a classicist ecclesiology neglects the lived reality of the Church and conceives of its present structures as normative, it subsumes the laity, conceived abstractly, into existing ecclesiastical structures²⁴⁴ and remains incapable of envisioning the kinds of structural changes that might allow for a fuller participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Church.

BIAS AS ROOT PROBLEM FOR CHURCH AND LAITY

It is not difficult to detect similarities between the christomonistic ecclesiological bias described above and the ecclesial cultures of clericalism, paternalistic bureaucracy, and classicism. More than similar, they serve to reinforce each other and together they provide powerful barriers to the full participation of the laity in the life and mission of the Church. In John Beal’s analysis:

The christomonistic communion ecclesiology of the conciliar documents and the revised code provides the ideological superstructure, and centralized bureaucracies at both the universal and local levels of the church provide the practical infrastructure for

²⁴⁰ Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology*, 52–53.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 56, emphasis in the original. In other places Komonchak has linked Lonergan’s understanding of classicist culture with James Gustafson’s notion of “theological reductionism,” by which Gustafson means “the exclusive use of Biblical and doctrinal language in the interpretation of the Church.” See James Gustafson, *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: The Church as a Human Community* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 100.

²⁴² Lonergan, “Absence of God,” 114.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Muñoz, “The Ecclesiology of the International Theological Commission,” 38–40.

delegitimizing, marginalizing, and sometimes demonizing the ‘voice’ of the faithful and blunting its effectiveness as a catalyst for remedial action to arrest decline in and improve mediocrity of the church’s performance as a religious organization.²⁴⁵

In describing how the ideological superstructure of the Church, supported by a christomonistic communion ecclesiology, works together with the practical bureaucratic infrastructure of the Church to marginalize the voice of the laity, Beal points to a phenomenon identified by Lonergan as bias.

Lonergan’s Notion of Bias

Lonergan describes bias fundamentally as “the priority of living over the knowledge needed to guide life and over the good will needed to follow knowledge.”²⁴⁶ At the personal level, bias usually manifests itself as a refusal or inability to understand certain data or aspects of oneself or others because of the self-interest of egoism, an irrational prejudice, or an emotional blind spot.²⁴⁷ Whatever its cause, personal bias can lead to uncritical or inaccurate appropriation of beliefs or of one’s experience. It can also lead to alienation, suspicion, and rationalization.²⁴⁸

Bias as Perversion of Common Sense

Bias is not only operative in individuals. In Lonergan’s analysis individual bias both results from and contributes to bias in groups, societies, and cultures. Lonergan analyzes the role of bias in social groups and cultures in terms of his notion of common sense. He describes

²⁴⁵ Beal, “‘As Idle as a Painted Ship upon a Painted Ocean’,” in *The Structural Betrayal of Trust*, 94. Karl Rahner defines ideology as “a kind of closing off, an absolutizing of a part of reality.” He lists three ways in which a theology can become an ideology: 1) the ideology of immanence makes our experience to be the rule for all reality; 2) the ideology of transmanence absolutizes the purpose or goal of a sphere (such as absolutizing an eschatological vision) in such a way as to overlook or trivialize the present condition; and 3) the ideology of transcendence, while advocating openness to everything in general,” avoids commitment to anything in particular.” Karl Rahner, “Christianity and Ideology,” in *Fundamental Theology: the Church and the World*, ed. Johannes B. Metz, *Concilium* 6 (New York: Paulist Press, 1965), 42, 42–43.

²⁴⁶ Lonergan, *Insight*, 715, 750.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 214–31. Forms of personal bias will be examined in more detail in the Chapter Three.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 220.

common sense as the practical intelligence that informs how we interpret our experiences, interact with others and carry out our day-to-day tasks of living.²⁴⁹ In Lonergan's understanding, common sense functions as a kind of interpretive lens through which we apprehend the world in which we live. As it informs the cultural meanings, mores, and customs needed for navigating our social world, common sense determines our relationships to the objects and others in our world.²⁵⁰ But common sense is not a static given. Rather, it is a dynamic structure that both changes us and is changed by us.²⁵¹ Moreover, it is called "common" because it is acquired, applied, and modified with others to create "common ways, common manners, common undertakings, common commitments."²⁵²

One of the functions of common sense is to provide for the good of order of a social group.²⁵³ A social group in Lonergan's understanding is defined implicitly by its social pattern of relations and constituted by the realization of these relations.²⁵⁴ The good of order of a social group is a pattern of relationships that promotes the best conditions for the protection and fulfillment of the members of the group.²⁵⁵ In Lonergan's analysis, tensions naturally arise in a social group between the practical common sense that regulates the smooth functioning of the group and the individuals and basic intersubjective groups, such as families, who may not want to subsume their feelings and actions to the good of order of the social group.²⁵⁶ Since a group is determined by its pattern of relations, resistance to these patterns by disgruntled individuals or subgroups produces a corresponding change in the group's identity as embodied in its common sense.²⁵⁷ Group bias describes one possible way in which a larger group's practical common

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 201.

²⁵⁰ See Ibid., 204.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 234–37.

²⁵² Ibid., 240.

²⁵³ Ibid., 238.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 247.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 238.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 247–48.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 247.

sense can be modified via challenge to its established patterns of relations by one or more subgroups.

Group Bias

While the practical common sense of a community may be a single whole, each social group that is part of the community tends to interpret the common sense of the community to its advantage.²⁵⁸ Group bias thus refers to the propensity of a group to prefer insights and practical solutions that favor its ends and to have a blind spot for insights and practical solutions that reveal its shortcomings or work against its aims.²⁵⁹ Group bias often leads to the uneven social development of groups and subgroups and to the consequent stratification of the community along lines of power in ways that don't correspond to the good of order.²⁶⁰ Groups in the lower strata of the community may be denied a voice or opportunities for success while those in the upper strata enjoy success and privilege.²⁶¹ In seeking to preserve their status quo the powerful groups of a community determine whose insights are worthy of consideration or implementation.

Ultimately, group bias represents the failure of the common sense of a group to grasp the larger issues and long-term consequences of its actions. In dynamic reciprocal fashion, group bias also serves to further distort the group's common sense.²⁶² Arguably, group bias explains the haughty attitudes, misplaced loyalty to the institutional Church and to priests, and the outright denial with which some bishops responded to evidence of clergy abuse early in the unfolding of the clergy abuse scandal.²⁶³ Group bias also explains a cultic understanding of priesthood, whether embraced by clerics or laity, that emphasizes the superiority of priests over against the laity.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 248.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 248–49.

²⁶¹ See Ibid.

²⁶² See Ibid., 251.

²⁶³ The list of attitudes attributed to some bishops in this sentence are taken from NRB, *Report*, 104–5.

General Bias

Group bias operates to preserve the status of privilege of groups over what Lonergan refers to as the shorter cycle of history.²⁶⁴ Because the tendency of group bias is to preserve privilege, it tends to exclude any development that may threaten existing privilege structures. Over time the distortions of common sense arising from group bias of a subgroup can become ossified in the codes and traditions of the larger group so that further evolution of the larger group's common sense is influenced by, accommodates, and contributes to the group bias that is already present.

General bias is the net result of the evolution of group bias over what Lonergan refers to as the longer cycle of history.²⁶⁵ Over successive generations general bias fosters a residue, a poisoning of the social environment and common sense that Lonergan refers to as “social surd.”²⁶⁶ The cumulative effect of general bias produces what Lonergan refers to as the longer cycle of decline, which remains impervious to reform because “for every reform, every revolution, every lower viewpoint overstates both the case in its own favor and the case against those it would supersede.”²⁶⁷

General bias does more than distort the practical intelligence of common sense. It serves to reduce the domain of practical intelligence as a consequence of the cumulative elimination of insights and possible courses of action over a long period of time by which it is constituted. General bias thus restricts available insights and narrows the viewpoints available to common sense.²⁶⁸ Under general bias the practical intelligence resources available to individuals and groups are constrained by current practice and by theories formulated to rationalize this

²⁶⁴ Lonergan, *Insight*, 252.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 251–57.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 255, 711–12.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 258.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 254.

practice.²⁶⁹ General bias thus leaves individuals, groups, and societies unable to fully comprehend or to provide coherent solutions to their problems.²⁷⁰ A limited domain of analytical options due to general bias is very likely to blame in analyses of the clergy abuse crisis that focus the blame on homosexuality,²⁷¹ on a “culture of dissent,”²⁷² or on media hype.²⁷³

General Bias in Marginalization of Laity

Every culture, including the ecclesial culture of the Roman Catholic Church, is subject to the distortions of common sense and the social surd associated with the historical accumulation of general bias. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that the Church’s present self-understanding includes various forms of general bias that arose in tandem with the evolution of its present structure. Of special interest for this study are the consequences of general bias that continue to marginalize the identity and role of the laity and, as a result, to narrow the Church’s self-understanding and impede its mission.²⁷⁴ What follows is a brief attempt to highlight several historical developments that helped to shape the present form of ecclesial culture with its accompanying general bias.

Historical Evolution of Ecclesial General Bias

Evidence shows that from the period of the early Church until the beginning of the fourth century the major focus of Christians was on their relationship with Christ and on their mutual

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 254–56.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ See Eileen McNamara, “For church, a false issue,” *The Boston Globe* (4/24/2002), http://www.boston.com/globe/spotlight/abuse/stories/042402_mcnamara.htm (accessed 6/24/10).

²⁷² See Peter Steinfels, “Sexual Abuse & the Church,” *Commonweal* (March 26, 2004): 15.

²⁷³ See Howard Kurtz, “Vatican’s blame-the-media mode,” *The Washington Post* (4/6/2010), http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/guestvoices/2010/04/vaticans_blame-the-media_mode.html (accessed 6/24/2010).

²⁷⁴ For an excellent, thorough analysis of how the evolution of the institutional Church led to the marginalization of the laity see Osborne, *Ministry*, 48–511. My analysis below is largely based on this work. Briefer analyses can be found in Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology*, 6–12; and Congar, *Lay People*, 22–52.

relationship to the world.²⁷⁵ Although role distinctions during this period were not absent, they were more tangential than central.²⁷⁶ By the end of the second century, however, the process of clericalization, influenced by the socio-political context of the Greco-Roman world, was already under way as Church leaders became increasingly associated with the notion of *ordo* or rank while ordinary Christians began to be considered as subordinate.²⁷⁷ Kenan Osborne observes, “Once the church leaders took on the identity of an *ordo*, and once the Christians generally perceived their leaders in terms of an *ordo*, the theological justification of this status began.”²⁷⁸

From the time of Constantine in the fourth century to the twelfth century, Western Church leadership became associated with both moral and governing powers, an association that theological and philosophical reasoning eventually linked with the ontological nature of ordination.²⁷⁹ During this period the power and prestige of ecclesial leaders grew so that the power of the bishops eclipsed even that of royal authority. As clerics came to enjoy a privileged status of leadership both in society and in the Church, ordinary lay persons (those who did not have status in the social-political order) became increasingly dependent on clerical power.²⁸⁰

From the time of Constantine through the fifteenth century, Church and society mutually co-existed as Christendom; there was no empire without Church and no Church without empire.²⁸¹ The issue of the balance of power between kingship and papacy played a dominant role during this period. Until the second half of the first millennium, it was commonplace to hold that both kingship and papacy were of divine origin.²⁸² However, by the end of the first millennium the view arose that only the pope’s power came directly from God.²⁸³ In Osborne’s interpretation, the consequent reduction of the king to the lay state “canonically sealed the fate of

²⁷⁵ Osborne, *Ministry*, 115–42.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 115, 160.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 143.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 164–74.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 218–19.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 377.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 312–13.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

the repositioning and depositioning of the lay person in the church for almost all of the second millennium of Christian existence,” because it essentially divided society into two groups, lay and clerical, with only the clerical having the status of divine origin, while the lay state was considered to be inferior.²⁸⁴ Moreover, this division was justified as divinely willed.²⁸⁵ In the twelfth-century the two-fold division of Christians was codified into Church law by Gratian (d. 1179).²⁸⁶

By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries medieval society had changed in ways that both increased the prominence of lay people in society and undermined the papal monarchy. A powerful change factor during this time was the increase in lay literacy and the growth of lay professional elite and intellectuals.²⁸⁷ The thirteenth century saw the rise of national monarchies whose governments were entirely lay.²⁸⁸ The willingness of these governments to criticize papal power and to take a controlling role in local Church governance helped to persuade Church leaders that the world and its lay inhabitants were hostile to the clergy. In his bull *Clericis laicos*, February 24, 1296, issued in response to French King Philip IV’s taxation on the clergy, Pope Boniface VIII expressed a view of the laity that might very well resonate favorably with some in today’s Roman Catholic Church hierarchy: “Antiquity teaches us, and the experience of the present time makes clear, that the laity are hostile to the clergy; inasmuch as, and not content with their own bounds, they aim at what is forbidden them.”²⁸⁹

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 314.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ In his *Decretum*, Gratian wrote, “*Duo sunt genera christianorum*” (there are two kinds of Christians). About the lay condition Gratian wrote, “*His licet .. his concessum est*,” in other words, the lay condition as a concession to human weakness. Gratianus, *Decretum Gratiani: Concordia Discordantium Canonum*, Causa XII, Quaestio I, C. VII, in Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 187, in *Patrologia Latina Database*, an electronic version of the first ed. of J. P. Migne’s *Patrologia Latina*, published between 1862 and 1865 (Chadwyck-Healey, Inc.: 1996).

²⁸⁷ Joseph H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (London: Longman, 1992), 319.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 319–20; Collin Morris, “Christian Civilization (1050-1400),” in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, ed. John McManners (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 228–29.

²⁸⁹ Pope Boniface VIII, “*Clericis laicos*, Eng. Trans., in Oliver J. Thatcher and Edgar H. McNeal, *A Source Book for Mediaeval History: Selected Documents Illustrating the History of Europe in the Middle Age* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1905), 311.

The Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation can be interpreted from many political, geographic, and religious perspectives. Interpreted as an episode of renewal, the Reformation arguably expressed, among other things, an urge to place limits on the privileged position of the clergy to rule the laity.²⁹⁰ The polemical circumstances of the early counter-reformation period motivated apologists to stress papal leadership, Church uniformity under clerical control, and, consequently, to place emphasis on clerical rule in the universal Church. Catholic apologists argued that Christ founded the Church with infallible authority as a perfect monarchic society with a divinely-willed hierarchical structure.²⁹¹ Writing about this development Congar says, “Whilst Protestantism was making the Church a people without a priesthood and Catholic apologists were replying by establishing the rightfulness of priesthood and institution, the Church in more than one place was finding herself reduced to the state of a priestly system without a Christian people.”²⁹²

Evidence that a clerical-hierarchical approach to ecclesiology continued into the twentieth century can be found in the encyclical letter *Vehementer Nos* (February 11, 1906) in which Pius X states:

It follows that the Church is essentially an *unequal* society, that is, a society comprising two categories of persons, the Pastors and the flock, those who occupy a rank in the different degrees of the hierarchy and the multitude of the faithful. So distinct are these categories that with the pastoral body only rests the necessary right and authority for promoting the end of the society and directing all its members towards that end; the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led, and, like a docile flock, to follow the Pastors.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ See Patrick Collinson, “The Late Medieval Church and its Reformation (1400–1600),” in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity*, 237–39; Osborne, *Ministry*, 117, 392.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 442–46; See also Michael A. Fahey, “Church,” in *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, ed. Francis Schüssler Fiorenza and John P. Galvin (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 2:32.

²⁹² Congar, *Lay People*, 41.

²⁹³ Pope Pius X, “*Vehementer Nos*: Encyclical on the French Law of Separation, Feb. 11, 1906,” no.8, emphasis in the original, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_x/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-x_enc_11021906_vehementer-nos_en.html (accessed June 29, 2010).

Although Vatican II corrected this view by stressing the equality and dignity of all the baptized, it was not successful in eradicating the general bias underlying this view as the post-conciliar developments already alluded to in this chapter indicate.

Present Operation of Ecclesial Group and General Bias

The point of this brief historical sketch that describes how a clerical-institutional model came to dominate the Church's self-understanding is to show that group and general bias have been operative historically in securing, ratifying, and reinforcing the position of Church hierarchy vis-à-vis the laity. Arguably, group and general bias are embedded and preserved in the clerical, paternalistic bureaucratic, and classicist cultures of the Church and find theoretical support in a christomonistic interpretation of ecclesiology. One way in which group and general bias operate in the Church is to support the ecclesial conditions and theory that legitimate the insufficient development and actuation of the laity. In depriving the entire Church in its life and mission of the benefits of the insights and potential contributions of the laity, group and general bias prevent the Church from fully realizing its call and mission to be a sacrament "of communion with God and of unity of the entire human race."²⁹⁴ Thus, in a way analogous to Lonergan's definition of bias as "the priority of living over knowledge," we see that to the extent the Church, influenced by group and general bias, makes the preservation of its institutional integrity foremost, it is engaged in trying to live its mission without sufficient contribution of knowledge by the laity.

CONCLUSION: THE PATH FORWARD

Is there a way out of the present ecclesial conditions of group and general bias? In light of Lonergan's observation that the influence of bias remains impervious to reform because "for every reform, every revolution, every lower viewpoint overstates both the case in its own favor

²⁹⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 1, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 1.

and the case against those it would supersede,”²⁹⁵ arguments for reform are apt to, and indeed do, fall on deaf ears. Because group and general bias result in a deformation of common sense, their reversal requires what Lonergan refers to as “a higher viewpoint” capable of rising above and critiquing the imbedded prejudices and the rationalizations that support them.²⁹⁶ This higher viewpoint, says Lonergan, will be “a heightened grasp of historical origins, a discovery of historical responsibilities.”²⁹⁷ He refers to the higher viewpoint needed to overcome the effects of group and general bias in the longer cycle of decline as “cosmopolis.”²⁹⁸ Unfortunately, cosmopolis is not a likely achievement in the presence of group and general bias, which by their very nature resist reversal.²⁹⁹

Lonergan argues that ultimately the only possible solution to the longer cycle of decline is the graced achievement of human authentic subjectivity of which cosmopolis is a fruit.³⁰⁰ Chapters Three and Four of this dissertation will examine Lonergan’s understanding of human authentic subjectivity which reaches its fullness in the dynamic state of being in love with God. We have seen in this chapter that group and general bias are at the root of current ecclesial problems that include the marginalization of the laity in the Roman Catholic Church. Lonergan argues that the evil of bias can only be overcome through cooperation of human beings with God and collaboration with each other. But to be fully able to cooperate with God and to collaborate with others, human beings must be authentic subjects.³⁰¹ Of the necessary human development in love required for overcoming the problem of bias and its accompanying social surd Lonergan writes,

For it is only inasmuch as [people] are willing to meet evil with good, to love their enemies, to pray for those that persecute and calumniate them, that the social surd is a

²⁹⁵ Lonergan, *Insight*, 258.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 266.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 263–67.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 712–15.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 719.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 713–14, 720–21, 745, 750–51.

potential good. It follows that love of God above all and in all so embraces the order of the universe as to love all [people] with a self-sacrificing love.³⁰²

Only authentic subjects are fully capable of the self-sacrificing love needed to meet evil with good and to reverse the evil of social surd. We shall see in subsequent chapters that self-sacrificing love of authentic ecclesial subjects is necessary for the realization of authentic ecclesial communities.

³⁰² Ibid., 720–21.

CHAPTER THREE: LAY VOCATION AS ACHIEVEMENT OF AUTHENTIC SUBJECTIVITY

If now we turn our attention to the Catholic Church as a historical datum, it is clear that it is largely composed of members who have not yet effectively become subjects.¹

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two examined several presenting and underlying problems of the Roman Catholic Church and its lay faithful. The presenting problems were treated as related pairs and included the sexual abuse scandal and powerlessness of the laity; the decline in priestly vocations and unresolved issues surrounding the exercise of lay ecclesial ministry; and the confused identity and lapsing of Catholics. The underlying problems included differences in ecclesiologies and in theologies of the laity arising from different interpretations of Vatican II, and confused Catholic identity arising in part from conflicts between and among secular and ecclesial cultures. Chapter Two argued that general bias, defined by Lonergan as a distortion of common sense that becomes institutionalized over time, persists as a root problem in the Church. It argued that both general and group bias have become institutionalized in the Church so that they both support and are supported by christomonistic theology of the ordained priesthood, a clerical culture, and a clerical-institutional model that does not envision or foster the full development of the laity as Christian ecclesial subjects. Maintaining that the Church is unable to fully realize its mission to the extent that the laity remain underdeveloped as ecclesial subjects, and following Lonergan, Chapter Two proposed that the solution to the ecclesial problems it highlighted must include the graced achievement of authentic ecclesial subjects.

¹ Basil Christopher Butler, O.S.B., "Lonergan and Ecclesiology," in *Foundations of Theology: Papers from the International Lonergan Congress, 1970*, ed. Philip McShane, S.J. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971), 14. Basil Christopher Butler (d. 1986) was a Council Father. His last assignment was as Auxiliary Bishop in Westminster. See <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bbutlerb.html> (accessed July 6, 2010).

The present chapter is the first of two chapters that will examine the realization of the lay vocation in light of Lonergan's notion of authentic subjectivity. The present chapter will begin by examining how the lay vocation is envisioned in the documents of Vatican II. It will then examine aspects of Lonergan's notion of the authentic subjectivity. It will argue that Lonergan's authentic subject realizes the lay vocation, in part, through a commitment to become him or herself in Christ. It will examine ways in which the authentic becoming of the laity can be encouraged in formation. This chapter lays the groundwork for Chapter Four which will examine more fully the religious dimension of authentic subjectivity and will argue that the full realization of the lay vocation in authentic becoming requires grace received as love and expressed in committed loving.

LAY VOCATION ENVISIONED BY VATICAN II

The laity cannot be understood apart from the Church because they exist as such precisely as members of the Church. Thus, to correctly interpret the lay identity and role envisioned by Vatican II we must take into consideration how the Vatican II understands the Church's nature, source, membership, and purpose. *Lumen Gentium* describes the nature of the Church as that of a sacrament of communion with God and of unity among all people.² It describes the Church as "a people made one by the unity of the Father, the Son, and the holy Spirit,"³ indicating thereby that the source of the Church's life is that of the Trinity. It identifies as members of the Church those who are incorporated or joined to Christ's ecclesial body through baptism.⁴ It specifies that to be fully incorporated into the Church a baptized person must possess

² *Lumen Gentium* no. 1, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 1. In Komonchak's analysis, *Lumen Gentium*'s description of the Church as communion refers to the common participation of all members of the Church in the Trinitarian mystery of God, "which grounds the new People of God as a 'communion of life, love, and truth,' (LG 9) which all differentiations of Church members, including the hierarchical and ministerial, must presuppose and respect." Komonchak, "Concepts of Communion: Past and Present," *Cristianesimo nella storia* 16, no. 2 (1995): 331.

³ *Lumen Gentium* no. 4, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 3.

⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 11, in *ibid.*, 15.

the Spirit of Christ, must accept all the means of salvation given to the Church as well as its organization, and must be joined to the visible structure of the Church by the profession of faith, the sacraments, ecclesiastical governance, and communion.⁵ As members of the Church the laity are understood by Vatican II to be incorporated into and therefore to participate in the Church as sacrament of communion with God and among all people; to be joined to Christ and therefore into participation in the triune life of God with all the members of the Church in the Holy Spirit; and to be both called and sent to participate the mission of the Church, which *Lumen Gentium* describes as that of proclaiming and establishing the kingdom of Christ and of God on earth so that all of humanity might partake in redemption and salvation.⁶

Lay Vocation as God's Call to Ecclesial Christian Discipleship

Vatican II does not refer to the ecclesial activity of the laity in terms of function or role, but in terms of their vocation received through baptism and confirmation.⁷ Situating the reception of the lay vocation within the People of God,⁸ the Council describes this vocation as a call “by the Lord himself”⁹ to be dedicated to Christ,¹⁰ in order to “bear witness to Christ all the world over,”¹¹ and to help in building up the Church.¹² Thus, the lay vocation is fundamentally a call to ecclesial Christian discipleship, that is, to following Christ in unity with the Church.¹³

To be called to ecclesial Christian discipleship is equivalently to be called to holiness. The Council describes Christian discipleship in terms of witness to Christ in Christian holiness.¹⁴ Just as Christian discipleship has an ecclesial dimension, so too does Christian holiness. The

⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 14, in *ibid.*, 20.

⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 5, in *ibid.*, 4.

⁷ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 33, in *ibid.*, 51–52; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 2, in *ibid.*, 405–6.

⁸ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 33, in *ibid.*, 51–52.

⁹ See *ibid.*; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 406.

¹⁰ *Lumen Gentium* no. 34, in *ibid.*, 52.

¹¹ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 406.

¹² *Lumen Gentium* no. 33, in *ibid.*, 51–52.

¹³ See *ibid.*; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 406–7.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Council teaches that the holiness of its members is a participation in and expression of the one holiness of the Church. The Church's one holiness "is expressed in many ways by the individuals who, each in their own state of life, tend to the perfection of charity."¹⁵ As the Christian faithful grow in holiness they help others to grow in holiness.¹⁶ Because holiness is realized in the perfection of love, "the true disciples of Christ are noted both for love of God and love of their neighbor."¹⁷ Thus, holiness "is conducive to a more human way of living even in society here on earth."¹⁸

Lay Vocation As Participation in One Vocation of Church

The lay vocation is an ecclesial call; it originates within the Church, it is received and lived in union with the Church, and it is directed to the Church's life and mission.¹⁹ Given the fact that the Church is *one* people,²⁰ with *one* mission "of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God,"²¹ called to *one* holiness in following Christ,²² it makes sense to speak of the *one* vocation of the Church in which all participate. Referring to Chapter 5 of *Lumen Gentium*, Gaillardetz argues:

The chapter on the universal call to holiness suggests that at the most basic level of Christian life there is only one primordial vocation for all Christians, the vocation to be a baptized disciple of Jesus. All other ways of Christian living become simply particular embodiments of this one vocation.²³

If indeed all the faithful participate in one vocation, it follows that the faithful participate in some way in the particular vocations of all other Christians. Further, since "all of us are made

¹⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 39, in *ibid.*, 58–59.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Lumen Gentium* no. 42, in *ibid.*, 63.

¹⁸ *Lumen Gentium* no. 40, in *ibid.*, 60.

¹⁹ See *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 406–7.

²⁰ *Lumen Gentium* nos. 9–13, 32 in *ibid.*, 12–19, 49.

²¹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 5, in *ibid.*, 4.

²² *Lumen Gentium* no. 41, in *ibid.*, 60.

²³ Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent*, Theology in Global Perspective Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 196.

members of his body (see 1 Cor. 12:27), ‘individually members one of another’ (Rom.12:5),”²⁴ it makes sense that the vocations of all member of the Church are enhanced or diminished to the extent that each member of the Church is faithful or not faithful to his or her particular Christian vocation. Specifically, it follows that the full realization of the vocation of the ordained depends on the full realization of the vocation of the laity and vice versa, while the full realization of the one vocation of the Church, expressed in its mission, depends on the full realization of both lay and clerical vocations.

Lay Vocation as Call to Communion

Because baptism incorporates the faithful into the Church which is a sign and instrument of “communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race,”²⁵ it simultaneously joins each of the faithful into a bond of communion. The lay vocation is thus a participation in communion. The communal nature of the lay vocation derives essentially from baptism, for through baptism the faithful are drawn into the life of the Trinity, have Christ for their brother and are, therefore, related to each other in the Holy Spirit as sisters and brothers.²⁶ Vatican II teaches that by virtue of the bond of communion which the members of the Church share, what is given to one is shared by all.²⁷ Thus, the lay vocation is not the possession of an individual, but is received by individuals for the sake of others. Specifically, the charisms lay persons receive are not for themselves alone, but are intended to be shared “for the good of humanity and the development of the church.”²⁸

As supernatural gifts, the virtues of faith, hope, and charity have a communal as well as a personal dimension. This means that the individual reception and appropriation of these supernatural virtues is intrinsically and constitutively connected to that of a people and

²⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 7, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 7.

²⁵ *Lumen Gentium* no. 1, in *ibid.*, 1.

²⁶ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 32, in *ibid.*, 49–50.

²⁷ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 13, in *ibid.*, 19.

²⁸ *Apostolicam actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 407.

participates in their bond of communion. About the communal dimension of faith *Lumen Gentium* says, “The *people* unfailingly adheres to this faith, penetrates it more deeply through right judgment, and applies it more fully in daily life.”²⁹ The *sensus fidei*, or sense of the faith by which the faithful “cannot err in matters of belief,” is an attribute of the *whole* body of the faithful.³⁰ Similarly, hope has a communal dimension; the laity, both individually and collectively, “become powerful heralds of the faith in things to be hoped for” insofar as their lives reveal their profession of faith.³¹ The Council highlights the communal dimension of charity in its teaching that the laity, as members of “the entire assembly of charity,”³² are called to show forth in their lives and in their “ordinary work the love with which God has loved the world.”³³

Lay Vocation Simultaneously Ecclesial and Secular

Lumen Gentium identifies secularity as “the special characteristic” of the laity.³⁴ Accordingly, *Lumen Gentium* identifies ‘the world’ as the primary arena in which the laity live their vocation, stating, “[i]t is the special vocation of the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will.”³⁵ *Lumen Gentium* does not, however, exclusively consign the domain in which lay vocation is lived to the world. For example, it notes that, “the laity, whoever they are, are called as living members to apply to the building up of the church and to its continual sanctification all the powers which they have received” from God.³⁶ For this reason among others, it is difficult to support a definition of the laity that understands the lay secular character in an ontological sense and thereby restricts the domain of the lay vocation to the secular arena of the world. Such a restrictive understanding is

²⁹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 12, in *ibid.*, 17, emphasis added.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, emphasis added.

³¹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 35, in *ibid.*, 53.

³² *Lumen Gentium* no. 13, in *ibid.*, 19.

³³ *Lumen Gentium* no. 41, in *ibid.*, 63.

³⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in *ibid.*, 49.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 33, in *ibid.*, 51.

especially problematic in light of the fact that *Gaudium et Spes* describes the relationship between Church and world in terms of their mutual penetration.³⁷ Recognizing that the Church is *in* the world, *Gaudium et Spes* teaches that the lay vocation is a call to Christian discipleship in all of the circumstances of one's life.³⁸ Informed by both *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*, the lay vocation can be described as being simultaneously ecclesial and secular.

Laity Exhorted to Knowledge

Vatican II teaches that the ability to “see all things in the light of faith” is foundational knowledge for the lay vocation.³⁹ Beyond the knowledge they have in faith and beyond their general education and practical and technical training, the Council exhorts lay people to be formed and educated for their apostolate. Lay persons should be formed spiritually and receive “solid grounding in doctrine . . . : in theology, ethics, and philosophy, at least, proportioned to the age, condition and abilities of each one.”⁴⁰ Moreover, their education should be “steadily perfected.”⁴¹ It is by virtue of their knowledge that the laity “are entitled, and indeed sometimes duty-bound, to express their opinion on matters which concern the good of the church.”⁴² The Council further teaches that in addition to theoretical knowledge, the laity should cultivate “good human relations” and “genuine human values.”⁴³

Lonergan's Contribution: Linking Lived to Ideal Lay Vocation

The vocation of the laity described in the documents of Vatican II is rich and beautiful but is presented at times in idealized and theoretical ways that seem oblivious to many of the

³⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 40, in *ibid.*, 207.

³⁸ “The laity are called to participate actively in the entire life of the church; not only are they to animate the world with the spirit of Christianity, they are to be witnesses to Christ in all circumstances and at the very heart of the human community.” *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 43, in *ibid.*, 212–13.

³⁹ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 29, in *ibid.*, 437.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Lumen Gentium* no. 37, in *ibid.*, 56.

⁴³ *Apostolicam actuositatem* no. 29, in *ibid.*, 437.

barriers described in Chapter Two to actualizing this vocation. The more idealized aspects of the vocation of the laity described by Vatican II, such as the call to holiness, are presented abstractly and stand in need of application to the concrete situation of the lay faithful. Some of the theoretical aspects of the lay vocation, such as the lay secular character, create restrictions to the realization of the lay vocation that do not square with the concrete practices of lay ecclesial ministry or with the existential unity of the ecclesial subject who lives his or her Christian and secular life as one life. Lonergan's contribution in this regard will be to provide the means, through his understanding of the existential subject, for linking the concrete and specific to the ideal and theoretical. Lonergan's notion of the subject will provide a means for overcoming the problem of whether the secular character of the laity should be considered as ontological or as merely descriptive. It will also provide a means for understanding how the lay vocation might best be fostered and appropriated by taking into consideration the conscious and concrete realities of the laity as ecclesial subjects. Considered from the perspective of Lonergan's notion of the human subject, the uniqueness of the lay vocation will be seen to reside in the lay ecclesial subject and in the specific and concrete intersection of the ecclesial and other contexts and relationships in which each lay person lives and becomes him or herself.

THE SUBJECT APPREHENDED IN INTERIORITY ANALYSIS

Lonergan describes his analytic approach to the subject as interiority analysis, where by interiority he means "one's subjectivity, one's operations, their structure, their norms, their potentialities."⁴⁴ By operations here Lonergan includes "seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, inquiring, imagining, understanding, conceiving, formulating, reflecting, marshalling and weighing the evidence, judging, deliberating, evaluating, deciding, speaking, writing."⁴⁵ These operations provide the data for Lonergan's theory of consciousness that we will explore below.

⁴⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 83.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

Because all of these operations are transitive and therefore have and intend objects, Lonergan refers to his theory of consciousness as “intentionality analysis.”⁴⁶ Thus, intentionality analysis is part of Lonergan’s interiority analysis.

Key to Lonergan’s intentionality analysis is the fact that the operations it studies not only make objects present to the subject, but also make the operating subject present to him or herself.⁴⁷ The goal of interiority analysis is not merely to obtain a theoretical understanding of intentionality analysis, but, primarily, to assist persons to attend to themselves by objectifying their subjective experiences of consciously operating.⁴⁸ In other words, the goal of interiority analysis is self-appropriation.⁴⁹ As we shall see, self-appropriation is foundational to the achievement of authenticity.

Existenz of Concrete Subject

The first thing to note about Lonergan’s interiority analysis is that it is concerned with the human person as utterly concrete. Lonergan is critical of any approach to the study of human persons that begins with a standardized notion of human nature abstractly conceived and defined in terms of static ontological essence and faculty psychology.⁵⁰ He argues that a correct understanding of the human person has to be informed by, although certainly not limited to, the concrete, existential, and specific. Lonergan’s human subject is an actual person living and operating at a given time in a certain place in concrete material, relational, institutional, social, and cultural circumstances. To express the concrete, existential, total reality of the human person Lonergan uses the word “*Existenz*,” which includes the “psychological, sociological, historical,

⁴⁶ Ibid., 7–8.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ About faculty psychology Lonergan writes, “There is nothing wrong with faculty psychology, but it is not enough for our present purposes, because it does not take us near enough to the concrete. You have to be in the concrete if you wish to study development. Abstractions do not move, do not develop, do not change.” Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, rev. and aug. ed of unpublished text by James Quinn and John Quinn, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 83.

philosophic, theological, religious, ascetic, perhaps for some even mystical; but it is all of them because the person is all and involved in all.”⁵¹

Precisely because Lonergan’s subject is apprehended in concreteness, it is apprehended on the move.⁵² Lonergan likens the dynamic, interactive, and intersubjective human existence of the subject to a drama.⁵³ Human persons are thinkers, creators, and actors whose thoughts, works, and actions are motivated and directed by purpose. Moreover, the thinking, working, and acting of human persons are collaborative enterprises, both informed by and performed with, or at least in the shadow of, others. Thus, in the course of the drama of human living, self, others, and the world are changed through the insights, works, and actions of self and others which help to shape future possibilities for thinking, creating, and acting.⁵⁴

Subject as Conscious

Lonergan’s interiority analysis employs a very different framework and approach from that of the neo-scholastic metaphysics he had learned as a student. Whereas neo-scholastic metaphysics treats the human person in terms of ontological substance and principles, interiority analysis treats the human person as truly a psychological subject who consciously acts.⁵⁵ In Lonergan’s analysis, consciousness is the key to the distinction between substance and subject.⁵⁶ “Substance prescind,” Lonergan writes, “from the difference between the opaque being that is

⁵¹ Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” in *Collection*, 2nd ed. rev. and aug., ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 4 (New York: Herder and Herder, and London: Darton, 1967; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 222. Citations are to the 1993 edition; see also Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 33.

⁵² Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” 223.

⁵³ See Lonergan, *Insight*, 210–12.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Lonergan’s discovery of the centrality of acts of understanding in Aquinas’s rational psychology helped to pave the way for his understanding of consciousness and his cognitional theory as developed in *Insight*. Recalling in 1971 his transition from faculty psychology to what he later called intentionality analysis in the process of writing *Insight* Lonergan said, “The basic inquiry was cognitional theory and, while I still spoke in terms of a faculty psychology, in reality I had moved out of its influence and was conducting an intentionality analysis The starting point is not facts, but data.” Lonergan, “*Insight Revisited*,” in *A Second Collection*, 276.

⁵⁶ See Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 83.

merely substance and the luminous being that is conscious. Subject denotes the luminous being.”⁵⁷ Thus to understand Lonergan’s position on the subject it is necessary to begin with consciousness and its role in constituting the “luminous being” of the conscious human subject.

Consciousness Defined

Lonergan’s understanding of consciousness is not that of Husserl, Marcel, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Kant, or other empiricist modern thinkers who, Lonergan argues, are all guilty in some way of conceiving knowledge in terms of “taking a look” and of understanding consciousness in terms of inward perception or self-apprehension.⁵⁸ In Lonergan’s analysis consciousness is simply the self-presence or self-awareness that accompanies the activities and experiences of an awake person.⁵⁹ Consciousness as self-presence is not a reflective look into oneself, nor is it an objective representation or knowledge of oneself.⁶⁰ Rather, consciousness is the unreflective, but concrete, self-presence of the acting subject.⁶¹ To say, “I am,” is to allude to the self-awareness that is one’s consciousness. Although consciousness is not the same as self-knowledge, it is the condition of possibility for self-knowledge as we shall see below.

⁵⁷ Lonergan, “*Existentz and Aggiornamento*,” 223.

⁵⁸ For example, see Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 180–86, at 185. See also *Insight*, 437–41.

⁵⁹ Lonergan’s notion of consciousness is so foundational to his position on the subject that many references by Lonergan could be cited that describe it. It is well explained in Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 81–82. See also *Insight*, 345–47; and *Method*, 8–9. Robert Doran points out that much of what depth psychologists mean by “the unconscious” corresponds to what Lonergan would call consciousness that is not objectified. Robert M. Doran, *Theology and Culture*, Theological Foundations 2 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995), 139.

⁶⁰ Lonergan, *Insight*, 350.

⁶¹ Ibid. Fred Lawrence makes the helpful clarification: “Modern thinkers tended to misconceive consciousness, which is the range of awareness, with a type of operation which, while it is conscious, is not synonymous with consciousness as a whole, but only a part of its structure and operation: perception. By perception I mean the act of explicit awareness, or of express advertence to whatever it may be. Consciousness however as an internal self-presence or awareness has to itself not only a dimension of explicit, foreground awareness, but a tacit or background dimension – namely, the most radical presence of ourselves to ourselves – that can never be made explicit exhaustively.” Fred Lawrence, “The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other,” *Theological Studies* 54 (1993): 59.

Levels of Consciousness

A constitutive feature of consciousness for Lonergan is its dynamism or flow.⁶² The dynamism of consciousness is propelled by a process of questioning and answering that moves the subject from perception to wonder, to understanding, to marshalling evidence and judging, to deciding, and to communicating. Lonergan uses the metaphor of levels to describe the qualitatively different ways in which consciousness and its operations change through the action of this dynamism. He describes at least four levels of consciousness in the awake subject.⁶³ The first three levels provide the structure for his cognitional theory, while the fourth level is foundational for his notion of the existential subject. We will begin with Lonergan's cognitional theory.

Lonergan's Cognitional Theory

Lonergan's cognitional theory, in which he describes the process of coming to know in terms of operations on the first three levels of consciousness, is foundational to his position on the subject.⁶⁴ Lonergan refers to the first level of consciousness as the empirical level because it has

⁶² Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 83; Lonergan, "Horizons and Transpositions," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 413.

⁶³ In a paper written sometime in late 1977 or early 1978 and discovered posthumously Lonergan says that the structure of his four levels of consciousness is open at both ends to the possibility of admitting additional levels for a total of six levels. See Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965–1980*, 400. Lonergan made other occasional references to a fifth level. See, for example, Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), 38. Whether Lonergan intended these fifth and sixth 'levels' in the same sense as the first four levels remains a disputed question. For a discussion of the possibility of a fifth level of consciousness see Doran, "Consciousness and Grace," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11, no. 1 (1998): 51–75; Michael Vertin, "Lonergan on Consciousness: Is There a Fifth Level?" *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12, no. 1 (1994): 1–36; Patrick H. Byrne, "Consciousness: Levels, Sublations, and the Subject as Subject," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12, no. 1 (1994): 131–50; Doran, "Revisiting 'Consciousness and Grace,'" *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13, no. 2 (1995): 151–59; Tad Dunne, "Being in Love," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13, no. 2 (1995): 161–76; Vertin, "Lonergan's Metaphysics of Value and Love," *Lonergan Workshop* 13 (1997): 189–219.

⁶⁴ For a concise exposition of Lonergan's cognitional theory see Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure," in *Collection*, 205–21. I draw primarily from this article in the brief discussion that follows. However, the points of this discussion can be found in many of Lonergan's writings, most completely in the first ten chapters of *Insight* which examine insight as activity.

to do with the conscious operations of experiencing, such as sensing, perceiving, imagining, feeling, speaking, and moving.⁶⁵ On this level we experience in rudimentary fashion things that either originate from within or from outside of ourselves. On the empirical level of consciousness we simply become aware of data into which we can inquire.

Movement to the second level of consciousness, the level of intelligent consciousness, is propelled by questions such as, what is it? why? and, how often? The second level is that on which insight occurs and where we come to some understanding of what we have experienced.⁶⁶ Operations on the second level include inquiring, imagining, understanding, conceiving, formulating, and reflecting.⁶⁷

The third level is that of rational consciousness. Movement to this level is propelled by some form of the reflective question, is it so? Operations on the third level include marshaling and weighing evidence and judging. Operations on the third level help us to determine the truth or falsity and the certainty or probability of the concepts and conjectures we formulate on level two.⁶⁸

In Lonergan's cognitional theory, the levels of empirical, intelligent, and rational consciousness are dynamically interrelated. This means not only that the operations on each level call forth operations on the other levels, but that knowing cannot be reduced to anything less than the dynamic working-together of experience, understanding, and judgment. In particular, human knowing cannot be uncritically reduced to simply perceiving, or simply understanding, or simply conceiving, as these operations are only part of the unified, dynamic process of coming to know.⁶⁹

The role of judgment is a crucial piece of Lonergan's cognitional theory. While insight forms an object in thought on the basis of what is experienced, judgment determines which

⁶⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 9.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., Lonergan, *Insight*, 298.

⁶⁹ Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure," 207, 211–12.

objects of thought are truly objects of knowledge.⁷⁰ Judgment does this through the “virtually unconditioned.” As Lonergan explains, a conditioned is something proposed to our intelligence from within or without that needs to be verified before we can judge that it is so. Once the conditions necessary for our verification have been marshaled and we have sufficient evidence to judge that our understanding is correct, the conditioned becomes a virtually unconditioned.⁷¹ Thus, the process of arriving at the virtually unconditioned is essentially that of marshalling and weighing the evidence and then verifying through judgment that what we think we understand through insight truly is so. Until judgment occurs a subject is merely thinking. It is only once judgment occurs that the subject can be said to know.⁷² When people confuse unverified insights with knowledge they are guilty of uncritically thinking.

The virtually conditioned explains the provisional way in which we come to know. Often our first concepts await verification. And just as often we may be confronted with new evidence or new questions that compel us to reevaluate our original judgments. To the extent that our present understandings admit of further evidence or questions, they are provisional. While our knowledge of facts (“Today is Monday.”) is not provisional, most of our theoretic knowledge and beliefs are held in provisional way, subject to revision as new answers to new questions become available.

Belief

The experience of any one individual is limited. Consequently, most of what we know is appropriated from a common fund from which we draw by believing. One such fund of knowledge from which we draw, often uncritically, is common sense. The commonly-held meanings of common sense partially inform even the knowledge we acquire through our direct

⁷⁰ Lonergan, *Insight*, 364.

⁷¹ See *ibid.*, 305–6.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 364.

experience. Other funds of common knowledge from which we appropriate beliefs include the vast bodies of knowledge associated with theoretic specialties and religion.⁷³

Just as it is possible for people to uncritically confuse unverified insights with knowledge, it is similarly possible to appropriate beliefs uncritically. We have seen that for Lonergan the critical step in the process of coming to know is that of verifying or judging that an insight, which itself is not knowledge but merely an attempt to conceptualize what has been experienced, is correct. The verification of insight occurs in the process of establishing that the insight is a virtually unconditioned. Similarly, a critical appropriation of beliefs involves a judgment or verification that establishes the reliability of the source of belief as a virtually unconditioned.⁷⁴ The conditions that need to be fulfilled in establishing the reliability of the source of belief include 1) that the proposition to be believed has been accurately communicated from its remote source, and 2) that the remote source promoted the proposition truthfully and without mistake.⁷⁵ It is possible for people operating uncritically at the level of common sense to confuse an immediate source of the propositions to be believed (for example, a parent, a teacher or a priest) with the remote source (for example, policy, law, theoretical knowledge, Tradition) of those propositions and, consequently, to accept or reject those propositions on an incorrect basis. This possibility points to the importance of the exemplary credibility of immediate sources of beliefs, especially of the beliefs of religious faith. Even for critical thinkers the credibility of the faith tradition of the Church resides to some extent in the witness of its believers, its pastors, and its institutional self-understanding and expression.

⁷³ Ibid., 727–28.

⁷⁴ Lonergan describes the process of critically coming to believe in five steps: 1) A preliminary judgment of the value of the belief based on the reliability of the source for the belief; 2) A reflective act of understanding that grasps the value of deciding to believe as a virtually unconditioned; 3) The judgment or verification that indeed the belief has value based on the reliability of the source; 4) The decision to believe; 5) The assent to the belief. See *ibid.*, 729–35, esp. 729–30.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 732.

Application: Religious Formation

The fact that knowing is a dynamically interrelated process of operations on the empirical, intelligent, and rational levels of consciousness has important implications for the formation of Catholic Christians. It suggests that an indoctrination approach to religious education is insufficient by itself to help Catholic Christians to ‘know’ their faith. Lonergan writes, “If at the present time among Catholics there is discerned a widespread alienation from the dogmas of faith, this is not unconnected with a previous one-sidedness that so insisted on the objectivity of truth as to leave subjects and their needs out of account.”⁷⁶

In light of Lonergan’s cognitional theory, which sees coming to know as a dynamic process of experiencing, understanding, and judging, Christian formation will be more effective to the extent it augments instruction with reflection on experience and includes sharing of insights. Experience here is broadly defined to include one’s prayer, especially liturgical prayer, one’s day-to-day living, and one’s past. An important source of reflection is the experience of serving others. In light of the importance Lonergan’s cognitional theory attaches to reflection and judgment, it makes sense that opportunities for collaboration in serving others, combined with reflection on such service, should be part of the structured formation experience for Christian discipleship. Recognizing the importance of questioning in coming to know, Christian formation will be well served if motivated and challenged by questions from all who participate in the formation process.⁷⁷ Finally, Christian formation must take into consideration the importance of the credible and faithful Christian witness of mentors, facilitators, teachers, and pastors, as well as of all the ways in which the Church manifests itself.

⁷⁶ Lonergan, “The Subject,” in *A Second Collection*, 71.

⁷⁷ This suggestion is based on the fact that movement from one level of consciousness to the next is motivated by questions. Lonergan was asked in an interview how to go about getting a person unstuck in the process of coming to know. Lonergan replied, “By asking further questions.” Lonergan, “An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S. J.,” 215.

Meaning

The concrete and particular lives of subjects are informed, interpreted, and, indeed, constituted by meaning.⁷⁸ Because Lonergan's theory of the subject is concerned with concrete existential subjects, his approach to meaning is phenomenological rather than abstract, that is, it is based on the roles that meaning plays in the drama of human living.⁷⁹ In Lonergan's analysis meaning is either immediately or mediately acquired. The meaning of objects we see, hear, or touch can be immediate as, for example, when we touch something hot. At the same time, the meaning of objects we see, hear, or touch can be mediate because our acquired language and common sense, both culturally mediated, help to inform how we interpret objects. Meaning is also mediated when we use our imagination, memory, language, or logic to, for example, recall something from the past, describe something not present, read literature, formulate theory, state doctrines, or anticipate something in the future.⁸⁰

Mediated meanings can be embodied and carried in a number of ways, including in language, images, art, song, and ritual action, and in the lives and deeds of others.⁸¹ What all of these ways in which meaning is mediated have in common is the fact that they are forms of communication and depend, even if only indirectly, on human intersubjectivity.⁸² Although meanings are communicable, we should not assume uncritically that they are univocal. Rather, they vary from culture to culture, from place to place, from one epoch to another, from person to person, and from one circumstance to another in the life of the same person. Lonergan's interiority analysis recognizes that just as the human subject is concrete and dynamically on the move, so too is the meaning that informs human living. As concrete and dynamic, the meaning

⁷⁸ Lonergan describes the functions of meaning as cognitive, effective, constitutive, and communicative. Lonergan, "The World Mediated by Meaning," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 108–10. See also Lonergan, *Method*, 76–79.

⁷⁹ Lonergan, "The World Mediated by Meaning," 107.

⁸⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 29.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 57; Lonergan, "The World Mediated by Meaning," 110.

⁸² Lonergan, *Method*, 57; Lonergan, "The World Mediated by Meaning," 110–12.

that informs human living is both affected by and simultaneously affects the interpersonal, social, cultural, historical, situational, and personal contexts in which it is communicated and appropriated.

Horizons

We have seen that conscious human subjects operate dynamically to know reality. However, people are selective in the meanings they apprehend and intend. What enters a person's consciousness is restricted to a large extent by what he or she is interested in. Not even all of the data we experience with our senses makes it into our consciousness, but only that which concerns us.⁸³ Following Edmund Husserl,⁸⁴ Lonergan uses the term 'horizon' to refer to the bounded range of interests and scope of knowledge of a person.⁸⁵ The things in my horizon have some meaning to me. What is beyond my horizon is that part of the universe that is of no concern to, and is, therefore, meaningless to me.

It can happen that part of a person's own subjective reality is beyond that person's horizon. When this is the case

the reality of the subject or part of the reality of the subject lies beyond the horizon; he [or she] does not really know himself [or herself]. It is insofar as the subject does not

⁸³ Lonergan's notion of what concerns us is related to Heidegger's notion of *Sorge*. See Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 84, 88.

⁸⁴ Lonergan refers to Husserl's notions of *Abschattung* (profiles) and *Horizont* (horizon) in defining his own notion of horizon. Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 84; see also Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, ed. Philip J. Mc Shane, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan 18 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 257–58. Lonergan's relationship to Husserl is complicated. Although Lonergan employs phenomenological description to support his analysis of consciousness and finds certain Husserlian concepts such as intentionality, *Abschattung* and *Horizont* helpful, he rejects the totality of Husserl's phenomenological approach because it doesn't move from description to explanation. See Lonergan, *Insight*, 440; Lonergan, *Method*, 212.

⁸⁵ Lonergan, "Horizons," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965–1980*, 11. Lonergan describes the range of a person's horizon more precisely using the terms, "known known," "known unknown," and "unknown unknown." The "known known" refers to those things in the universe about which I can ask and answer questions. The "known unknown" consists of those things I don't presently know but am aware of and can ask questions about. The "unknown unknown" consists of those things about which I am not aware at all. A person's horizon consists of the known known and the known unknown, but does not include the unknown unknown. Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, 89; *Phenomenology and Logic*, 283.

really know himself [or herself] that we have . . . the fundamental problem of incommunicability. Insofar as the subjects are beyond their own horizon, you cannot get at them; they have not got at themselves, and it is through their getting hold of themselves that you can get at them.⁸⁶

To the extent that the reality of the subject lies beyond his or her horizon the subject is unable to comprehend certain aspects of his or her reality on personal, interpersonal, theoretical, philosophical, theological, and other levels. For example, a person with limited self-knowledge might be able to recite a catalogue of sins but might not be able to recognize his or her own sinfulness. Such a person can say, "I love you," without fully understanding the self-gift and commitment that such a statement should entail. Similarly, such a person might be able to repeat the words of the Apostles' Creed but not fully understand the meaning of the words because his or her horizon does not include sufficient requisite knowledge.⁸⁷

Worlds

Lonergan refers to the universe of all there is to be known as "the world."⁸⁸ Within the horizon of a subject lie smaller worlds, or spheres, of objects and persons to which the subject attends and pay more or less attention.⁸⁹ The worlds of a subject are thus subsets of "the world." Lonergan distinguishes two kinds of worlds that form the context in which a subject apprehends meaning: worlds of immediacy and worlds mediated by meaning.⁹⁰ We experience the meanings of a world of immediacy through our senses and physical bodies. The world of an infant is one of immediacy. But adults, too, can retreat into a world of immediacy, for example, when they take time to enjoy nature. In worlds of immediacy meaning is carried by objects and persons immediately present.⁹¹ As infants learn to communicate they are gradually exposed to the world interpreted by language, culture, and custom. This is the world mediated by meaning. As infants

⁸⁶ Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, 282.

⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, 282–83.

⁸⁸ Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 224.

⁸⁹ Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, 288.

⁹⁰ Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 224–25.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

develop, their world mediated by meaning gradually enlarges in the directions of what is past, possible, real, theoretical, and imaginary. As their world enlarges it differentiates to accommodate various exigencies and needs related to personal development and practicality.⁹²

Realms of Meaning

The horizon of each subject often includes many different worlds mediated by meaning. Lonergan uses the terms “realms of meaning” and “differentiations of consciousness” to help characterize the different worlds that lie within the horizon of any given subject.⁹³ In brief, a realm of meaning describes a set of objects and their relations considered from a certain perspective which is limited by the horizon in which we seek to know and determined by a certain exigency of knowledge based on what we need to or want to know.⁹⁴ Accordingly, the realm of common sense is concerned with practical exigency. It considers persons and things in their relation to us and helps us to negotiate the situations of our day-to-day lives.⁹⁵ The realm of theory is motivated by the systematic exigency, that is, by our need to know how things are related to each other. While the realms of common sense and of theory may regard the same persons and things, the realm of theory is concerned with theoretical or systematic knowledge of those persons and things while common sense is interested in how those persons and things are related to me. The realm of theory typically uses a specialized language developed and understood by a community of people with the same theoretical interest.⁹⁶

⁹² Ibid., 225; Lonergan, *Method*, 28.

⁹³ The notion “differentiations of consciousness” has a long and complex history in the development of Lonergan’s position on the subject. Although the notion was anticipated in earlier works, Lonergan first applied the term “differentiations of consciousness” in the 1960s. Influenced in part by the work of Piaget, Lonergan worked out a theory of differentiations of consciousness to explain the evolution of stages of meaning and their role in historical development of individuals and cultures by the time he finished *Method* in 1971. See *Method*, 27–29, 85, 256–62, 303–19. For a history of the genetic development of differentiations of consciousness in Lonergan’s thought see Frederick E. Crowe, *Developing the Lonergan Legacy: Historical, Theoretical, and Existential Themes*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 80n7, 90–91, 94–104, 106–8, 109.

⁹⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 81–83.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 81.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 82–83.

But theory alone is not sufficient knowledge of persons and things and of how they are related to each other. How do we know that our knowledge and theory are objective and reliable? This question expresses the critical exigency. To fully meet the critical exigency we have to look at our own process of coming to know in order to examine whether we have, for example, overlooked aspects of verification in our theorizing or in our appropriation of theory. Ultimately, Lonergan says, the critical exigency is not satisfied until we turn our attention to the knowing subject in asking the three questions, “What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it?”⁹⁷ To ask these questions is to turn our attention to intentional consciousness and in so doing to enter the realm of interiority.⁹⁸ As we turn our attention to intentional consciousness we begin the process of self-appropriation which will be examined in more detail below.

Finally, there is what Lonergan describes as the transcendent exigency. The transcendent exigency refers to the human reality that persons are never fully satisfied with what they know, with the good they have achieved, and with the persons they have become. The transcendent exigency motivates our desires to know more and to do and become more than we are. This exigency is only satisfied in what Lonergan refers to as the realm of transcendence, the realm in which God is known and loved.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid., 83.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 83–84. Lonergan is careful to point out that while God may be known and loved in the transcendent realm, it is not always the case that a subject apprehends God as the God of Scripture. Instead God might be apprehended as a mystery of love and awe and objectified “as a clouded revelation of absolute intelligence and intelligibility, absolute truth and reality, absolute goodness and holiness.” Ibid., 115–16.

Undifferentiated Versus Differentiated Consciousness

Lonergan uses the concept of differentiations of consciousness to describe and distinguish abilities of subjects to negotiate meaning in realms beyond that of common sense.¹⁰⁰ As a child begins to understand language and symbols, and thereby moves from the world of immediacy to the world mediated by common-sense meaning, he or she first operates with “undifferentiated consciousness,” a mode of apprehending reality prior to theory, systematization, and critical analysis.¹⁰¹ At the level of undifferentiated consciousness, common-sense meanings are appropriated and problems are solved practically in terms of action.¹⁰² Undifferentiated consciousness doesn’t understand nuance, but rather “insists on homogeneity,” expecting that what works for one problem will work for all.¹⁰³

But as a person matures through education and experience, it is not unusual for that person to acquire differentiations or specializations of consciousness in realms beyond common sense, including those that Lonergan names scientific,¹⁰⁴ religious,¹⁰⁵ scholarly,¹⁰⁶ and interior.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰ In addition to using the notion of differentiations of consciousness to describe the different ways in which an individual subject is capable of apprehending meaning in the world mediated by meaning, Lonergan also uses the notion of differentiations of consciousness to distinguish among cultures and between individuals in their approaches to and apprehensions of reality. See, for example, *ibid.*, 305; also Lonergan, “Theology and Praxis,” in *A Third Collection*, 186. Crowe explains how differentiations of consciousness function as a key factor in Lonergan’s understanding of the development of doctrine. Frederick E. Crowe, “All my life has been introducing history into Catholic theology,” in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy*, 99–104.

¹⁰¹ Lonergan, *Method*, 303; Lonergan, “Doctrinal Pluralism,” 77.

¹⁰² See Lonergan, *Method*, 328; Lonergan, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,” in *A Third Collection*, 181.

¹⁰³ Lonergan, *Method*, 84.

¹⁰⁴ The scientific differentiation of consciousness is able to appropriate reality by using definitions, logic, reflexive and controlled procedures, systematic relationships, and technical language. Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality,” 241; Lonergan, “Doctrinal Pluralism,” 79. Lonergan also refers to the scientific differentiation of consciousness as theoretical in Lonergan, “An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.,” 226–27, and as systematic in Lonergan, *Method*, 305.

¹⁰⁵ Religiously differentiated consciousness is a consequence of the gift of God’s love. It creates an “orientation to what is transcendent in lovableness” that touches all worlds mediated by meaning. Lonergan, *Method*, 303; see also Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality,” 244.

¹⁰⁶ The scholarly differentiation of consciousness is the ability to acquire an understanding of the common sense of another place and era through research and to translate it in terms of one’s own common sense. Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality,” 242.

¹⁰⁷ One achieves interiorly differentiated consciousness when one becomes aware of the operations of one’s consciousness as well as their interrelationships through objectifying them. Lonergan uses the

Lonerger claims that he has argued “for the possibility of some thirty-one distinct differentiations of consciousness.”¹⁰⁸ He intends his descriptions of differentiations of consciousness to be pure types and adverts to the possibility that a person may acquire multiple differentiation of consciousness.¹⁰⁹

What Lonergan means by “differentiated consciousness” is the critical ability of the person who has moved into the realm of interiority.¹¹⁰ Differentiated consciousness is the ability not only to apprehend meaning in realms beyond that of common sense, but also to distinguish among the realms so as to relate them to one another and to appropriately use the procedures and approaches to reality called for by the different realms.¹¹¹ The achievement of differentiated consciousness is not a matter of accumulating more and more theoretical knowledge. Rather, it requires an arduous and long process of “introspective attention, inquiry and understanding, reflection and judgment.”¹¹²

Application: Communicating the Christian Message

It is beyond the scope of the present study to fully explicate Lonergan’s theory of meaning and the ways in which meaning informs his theories of personal and historical development.¹¹³ Nevertheless, our examination of Lonergan’s notions of horizons and worlds, of realms of meaning, and of differentiations of consciousness provides us with tools for understanding why a one-size-fits-all approach to communicating the Christian message doesn’t

term ‘modern philosophic differentiation’ to describe interiorly differentiated consciousness in Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality,” 242, while in *Method* he uses the term ‘interiority.’ Lonergan, *Method*, 305.

¹⁰⁸ Lonergan, “Theology and Praxis,” 186. Lonergan lists four differentiations of consciousness in the 1982 lecture, “Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth,” in *A Third Collection*, 241. He lists seven differentiations in the 1972 lecture “The World Mediated by Meaning,” 112–16.

¹⁰⁹ Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality,” 242.

¹¹⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 84.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., 166–67.

¹¹³ Ways in which meaning is mediated will be considered more fully in the discussion of feelings below and in Chapter Three. For more on Lonergan’s theory of meaning see Chapter 3 of Lonergan, *Method*, 57–100. For a genetic study of how Lonergan came to understand history in terms of meaning see Crowe, “All my work has been introducing history into Catholic theology,” 78–110.

work. Lonergan's theory of horizons and worlds helps us to understand that, because interest and concern are important factors in the apprehension of meaning, we should address interests and concerns of people in communicating the Christian message. Lonergan's notion of differentiations of consciousness helps us to understand that meaning is not univocally apprehended, and that to reach people we have to take into consideration the levels of differentiation of consciousness on which they may be able to apprehend meaning.

Lonergan's theory of differentiations of consciousness helps us to understand sources of confusion that Catholics and other believers may experience. People with poorly differentiated consciousness may not be able to distinguish between the meanings of common sense and the meanings of theory, or between theoretical meanings and ethical or religious meanings. Confusion may arise, for example, when biblical passages or statements of doctrine are interpreted literally in terms of common sense. Similar confusion can arise when insufficiently differentiated consciousness applies biblical texts or doctrinal statements deductively and a-historically in proof-text fashion to exhort behavior or to justify current practice, or when psychological theory is confused with doctrine, or when one's cultural mores are applied uncritically to the cultures of others or to biblical cultures.¹¹⁴

On the basis of survey results examined in Chapter Two, it is probably correct to assume that many lay Catholics understand and appropriate the teachings and disciplines of the Church from the standpoint of common sense with undifferentiated consciousness, despite the fact that they may have achieved higher differentiations of consciousness in other areas of their lives. To the extent that this assumption is true, Lonergan's interiority analysis suggests that the best way to communicate to these Catholics is by means of ritual prayer, action, and example, including the

¹¹⁴ Lonergan examines the problems associated with trying to ascertain and communicate the meaning of doctrine or Scripture across different cultural epochs and to different differentiations of consciousness in Lonergan, "Exegesis and Dogma," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1958–1964*, 142–59.

example of care for others.¹¹⁵ Once again Lonergan's theory of interiority points to the importance of the credible witness of pastors, the faithful, and of the institutional Church in communicating the beliefs of faith.

Lonergan's Existential Subject

So far we have considered the subject as a knower, as someone who experiences, understands, and judges. We turn now to examine the subject in his or her capacity to decide and to act on the basis of decision, which are operations on the fourth level of consciousness. Lonergan refers to a subject acting on the fourth level of consciousness, whose actions are free and responsible expressions of him or herself, as an existential subject.¹¹⁶

Fourth Level of Consciousness

The subject operating on the fourth level of consciousness is able to deliberate about possible courses of action on the basis of what is known, then freely choose and act. The subject reaches this responsible level of consciousness in response to the so what? or what am I going to do about it? question.¹¹⁷ Action on the fourth level of consciousness is characterized by freedom,¹¹⁸ responsibility, self-direction, and self-control.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, the fourth level of consciousness is that on which moral action is possible.¹²⁰

Although the different levels of consciousness are distinct, they are also joined in forming the unified consciousness of the subject. Lonergan borrows Hegel's notion of sublation,

¹¹⁵ Lonergan writes, "By far the most common type of consciousness is undifferentiated. . . . To teach it or preach to it, one must use its own language, its own procedures, its own resources. . . . What is common to common sense is not what it knows but the untaught spontaneity of its manner in coming to know." Lonergan, "Unity and Plurality," 243; see also Lonergan, *Method*, 305.

¹¹⁶ Lonergan, "The Subject," in *A Second Collection*, 79.

¹¹⁷ Lonergan, *Method*, 9.

¹¹⁸ The type of freedom referred to here is what Lonergan describes as effective freedom. A person is effectively free to the extent that he or she is open to reflection and to rational persuasion. See Lonergan, *Insight*, 646–47.

¹¹⁹ Lonergan, *Method*, 121.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

but uses it in Karl Rahner's sense, to describe how the operations of the different levels are related.¹²¹ In Lonergan's use of the term, sublation refers to an instance in which "a lower being [is] retained, preserved, yet transcended and completed by a higher."¹²² Accordingly, operations on higher levels of consciousness sublate those of lower levels. For example, operations on the level of intelligent consciousness sublate those of the empirical level in that understanding goes beyond but also depends on data from experience. Similarly, the operations of the rational level of consciousness sublate those of both the empirical and intelligent levels because judging goes beyond but also depends on both experiencing and understanding. Finally, operations on the fourth or responsible level of consciousness sublate those of the first three levels because deciding goes beyond but also depends on experiencing, understanding, and judging. The fourth level of consciousness is also responsible for the proper functioning of the first three levels.¹²³ This is so because the responsible subject, having attained the fourth level, can choose to act attentively, intelligently, and rationally on the first three levels.

Existential Subject

I have already noted that Lonergan refers to subjects capable of operating with responsibility and self-control on the fourth level of consciousness as "existential subjects."¹²⁴ In Lonergan's analysis the emergence of the fourth level of responsible consciousness usually occurs between the ages of three and six.¹²⁵ However, development to the point of consistently

¹²¹ In *Method*, Lonergan says that his use of the notion of sublation corresponds to Karl Rahner's use rather than to Hegel's. In Lonergan's usage, "what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context." Lonergan, *Method*, 241. In his 1968 lecture, "The Subject," Lonergan attributes his use of sublation to Hegel, but says that it "omits, however, the Hegelian view that the higher reconciles a contradiction in the lower." Lonergan, "The Subject," 80n12.

¹²² Ibid., 80.

¹²³ Lonergan, *Method*, 121.

¹²⁴ Lonergan, "The Subject," 79.

¹²⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 121

acting with responsibility doesn't usually occur until adulthood and may not occur at all.¹²⁶ To the extent that a person exhibits some measure of consistent self-control and responsibility and is capable of setting goals and choosing courses of action to meet those goals, he or she is an existential subject.¹²⁷ Thus, to the extent one is an existential subject one is responsible for one's own becoming.¹²⁸ Moreover, by virtue of one's achievement of self-control and responsibility, one is able to exert some control over one's world. Thus, beyond simply being able to name and navigate his or her world mediated by meaning, an existential subject is able to determine and construct his or her own world of meaning. Lonergan refers to the self-determined, self-constructed world of meaning of an existential subject as the world of the subject constituted by meaning.¹²⁹

Existential Decision. Eventually an existential subject reaches the point of existential decision, the point at which the subject realizes that it is up to oneself to determine the kind of person one is to become.¹³⁰ At the moment of existential decision, says Lonergan, "autonomy decides what autonomy is to be."¹³¹ To decide what one is to become is the beginning of human authenticity. Thus, a moment of existential decision is a moment in which the subject decides either for or against personal authenticity.¹³² But to decide to become oneself is only the beginning of authenticity. Typically a subject is confronted with many such existential decisions throughout the course of his or her life. To become an authentic person, "one has to have proved oneself equal to that moment of existential decision; and one has to have kept on proving it in all subsequent decisions."¹³³

¹²⁶ Ibid.; Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 224; and Lonergan, "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy," in *A Third Collection*, 208.

¹²⁷ See Lonergan, *Method*, 9.

¹²⁸ See Lonergan, "The Subject," 79–84, esp. at 84; and Lonergan, *Method*, 38–39.

¹²⁹ Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 225–26.

¹³⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 121; also Lonergan, "The Subject," 79.

¹³¹ Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 224.

¹³² Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," 398.

¹³³ Lonergan, *Method*, 121.

Drifters. The opposite of the decision to responsibly become oneself is to drift. As

Lonergan describes:

The drifter has not yet found himself [or herself]; [s/he] has not yet discovered his [or her] own deed, and so is content to do what everyone else is doing; [s/he] has not yet discovered his [or her] own will, and so [s/he] is content to choose what everyone else is choosing; [s/he] has not yet discovered a mind of his [or her] own, and so [s/he] is content to think and to say what everyone else is thinking and saying; and the others too are apt to be drifters, each of them doing and choosing and thinking and saying what others happen to be doing, choosing, thinking, saying.¹³⁴

Even for those who have decided what to make of themselves, there is no guarantee that the resolution of today will stand up to the difficulties of tomorrow. Lonergan cautions that the achievement of subjects is always precarious, because it is possible for subjects to both regress and grow.¹³⁵

Moral Becoming of Subjects

Insofar as an existential subject is capable of acting with self-control and responsibility on the fourth level of consciousness, he or she is capable of acting freely and morally in choosing what is good. A moral choice is a response to the question, is it worthwhile? or, is it good? Essentially, this is a question of value motivated by a desire for good that transcends particular goods.¹³⁶

We do not evaluate values on a strictly cognitional level. Rather, we are drawn to values by our feelings. We have seen that what a subject is interested in is limited by his or her horizon consisting of those things that have some meaning to him or her. When we say that a person is interested in something, we are simultaneously referring to how that person feels about and values that something. Feelings and values play a large role in the meanings we attribute to persons, events, and things. Accordingly, feelings and values play a large role in the becoming of subjects.

¹³⁴ Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” 224.

¹³⁵ Ibid.; and Lonergan, *Method*, 51–52.

¹³⁶ Lonergan, “The Subject,” 81.

*Feelings.*¹³⁷ Following Dietrich von Hildebrand, Lonergan classifies feelings according to whether they are nonintentional states or intentional responses.¹³⁸ Whereas nonintentional feelings describe states such as feeling tired, hungry, or sick, and thus relate us to whatever is the cause or end of a given state, intentional feelings, as intentional, relate us to objects.¹³⁹ There are two classes of objects that intentional feelings respond to: objects that are regarded as agreeable or disagreeable, and objects that are regarded as values, such as the value of persons, truth, virtues, and beauty.¹⁴⁰ Intentional feelings can thus range from desire, fear, hope, despair, joy, sorrow, veneration, and terror, to love and hatred.¹⁴¹ Our feelings, especially our intentional feelings, serve to orient us in and relate us to the world mediated by meaning.¹⁴²

Values. Values are largely informed by intentional feelings in response to what a person perceives to be good or bad, beautiful or ugly, authentic or not.¹⁴³ But this perception rests on the level of development of moral sensitivity the person has acquired.¹⁴⁴ Thus, a person is apt to respond to or prefer certain values over others, depending not only on the contingency of a given situation, but also on his or her level of moral development.

Lonergan identifies a scale of values that correlates with the different exigencies and preferences of subjects. He distinguishes vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values in an ascending order.¹⁴⁵ Vital values include health and personal well-being. Social values are concerned with the good of order. Cultural values inform meanings and values within a culture. A personal value is a person who originates and embodies values. Such a person serves “as an

¹³⁷ Lonergan acknowledged the influence of Dietrich von Hildebrand in Lonergan, “What are Judgments of Value?” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 140; and Lonergan, *Method*, 30. Lonergan acknowledged being influenced also by Piaget, by Susanne Langer’s *Feeling and Form*, and by Max Scheler’s *The Forms of Sympathy*, in Lonergan, “An Interview With Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.,” 222.

¹³⁸ Lonergan, *Method*, 30; Lonergan, “What are Judgments of Value?” 140.

¹³⁹ Lonergan, *Method*, 30.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.; Lonergan, “What are Judgments of Value?” 141.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 31.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Lonergan, *Method*, 38.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 31.

inspiration and invitation to others to do likewise.”¹⁴⁶ At the summit of Lonergan’s scale of values are religious values which illumine and ground the deepest meaning of all other values.¹⁴⁷ The role of values in the becoming of authentic subjects will be examined more fully in Chapter Four.

Judgments of Value. Decisions on the fourth level of consciousness require judgments of value in response to the questions, is it worthwhile? or, is it good? The operations involved in judgments of value are similar to those involved in judgments of fact. That is, they involve experience, require some understanding of what has been experienced, and culminate in the judgment that one’s understanding is correct or not. The data attended to in judgments of value includes knowledge of human reality and of the situation to which the judgment applies. The understanding required for a judgment of value is informed by intentional responses to values on the basis of moral feelings.¹⁴⁸ By virtue of a judgment of value a person moves beyond pure and simple knowing to the moral order because, once a person acknowledges value, that person is faced with the choice of acting in consonance with the value or not.¹⁴⁹

The accuracy of one’s judgment of value depends both on knowledge and on the level of refinement of one’s moral feelings.¹⁵⁰ It also depends on one’s ability to correctly interpret the specific human situation that informs the judgment and decision to act. When knowledge of human living is deficient or when the situation is not correctly apprehended, “then fine feelings are apt to be expressed in what is called moral idealism, i.e. lovely proposals that don’t work out and often do more harm than good.”¹⁵¹ The subjective criterion of a good moral decision is the

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 32.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 32, 112.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 38.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 37.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 38.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

resulting ease or unease of one's conscience. However, the accuracy of this criterion depends on one's level of moral development.¹⁵²

Finally, context or environment plays a role in making sound moral judgments in at least three ways.¹⁵³ First, context highlights the reciprocal and dialectical nature of moral judgments. Lonergan notes that as subjects are confronted with others they are simultaneously confronted with themselves.¹⁵⁴ The others in a subject's context thus play a role in the subject's ability to make moral decisions. They do this by encouraging or discouraging, by inviting or rejecting either directly or indirectly, and by inspiring through exhortation or example for better or worse.¹⁵⁵ Moral idealism illustrates a second way in which context is important in moral judgments. Moral idealism is a risk when the context of concrete human living is overlooked or incorrectly apprehended. This is apt to happen when moral prescriptions are derived through the application of abstract moral principles to human nature abstractly conceived. Third, not only one's immediate moral judgment, but one's moral development can be enhanced or stunted by one's social and cultural milieu.¹⁵⁶ An environment that invites, models, and supports moral development and responsible freedom helps to facilitate moral development.¹⁵⁷

Application: Ecclesial Subjects

Living the lay vocation as envisioned by Vatican II essentially requires an existential decision. The question asked by Bishop Basil Butler in 1970, "of those [members of the Catholic Church] who are adults in age, how many are covered by Lonergan's description of 'the drifter'?"¹⁵⁸ remains appropriate today. Many of the features that Lonergan attributes to the

¹⁵² Ibid.; Lonergan, "Horizons," 25.

¹⁵³ See Lonergan, *Method*, 38; Lonergan, "Horizons," 24.

¹⁵⁴ Lonergan, "Cognitive Structure," 220.

¹⁵⁵ See Lonergan, "The Subject," 83; Lonergan, "Horizons," 24.

¹⁵⁶ See Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 179.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Butler, "Lonergan and Ecclesiology," 14.

drifter correspond to the condition of people who identify themselves as Catholics, but who remain either uncommitted or poorly committed to the Church.

Only existential subjects operating on the fourth level of consciousness are capable of the commitment required to live the lay vocation. Lonergan's intentionality analysis suggests that ecclesial existential subjects will develop and thrive best in an ecclesial environment that provides opportunities for exercise of responsibility and participation on all four levels of consciousness. We have already seen that participation on the first three levels can be fostered through opportunities for shared experiences, instruction, reflection, and questioning. Because existential subjects function on the fourth level of consciousness, which is the level on which responsible decisions are possible, it makes sense that to foster development of existential subjects the Church should encourage, invite, and provide opportunities for responsible participation in its life and mission. Not to do so is to risk thwarting the full development of the laity as existential Christian subjects capable of living the lay vocation. Lonergan alludes to just such a risk when he warns of "the truncation [of the subject] that we experience today not only without but within the Church, when we find that the conditions of the possibility of significant dialogue are not grasped,"¹⁵⁹ Opportunities for collaboration in dialogue and decision-making will help to encourage and foster the development of ecclesial existential subjects capable of responsible, moral, and committed participation in the Church.¹⁶⁰

The role that feelings play in the apprehension of value points to the power of invitation, affirmation, and example in the development of moral feelings. Our knowledge of what is true or good or worthwhile comes to us first through experience; in the satisfaction we experience when we act with truth, integrity, and goodness, and through the attraction we feel when others

¹⁵⁹ Lonergan, "The Subject," 86.

¹⁶⁰ This is by no means to argue for democratic practice in the Church. Rather it is to recognize, as Bradford Hinze argues, that "People at every level of the church have authority and gain credibility, by baptism and among those ordained, by being receptive and responsive to the gift of the truth that is recognized and received in and through a dialogical process." Bradford Hinze, *Practices of Dialogue in the Roman Catholic Church: Aims and Obstacles, Lessons and Laments* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 264.

act with truth, integrity, and goodness.¹⁶¹ Because these kinds of experience inform our moral understanding and feelings as to what is true, good, and worthwhile, they are more effective than praise, blame, and exhortations to good moral living which may simply be processed on cognitive levels.

It makes sense, therefore, that to foster the development of moral feelings an ecclesial environment should provide opportunities, perhaps through outreach service projects, for persons to experience themselves acting for the good of others. Such opportunities will be strengthened through guided reflections that examine one's acting and one's moral feeling in light of Scripture and Church teaching.¹⁶² The example of good people, through stories and especially through encounter, is of paramount importance in fostering moral development. Here Lonergan's notion of personal value, of authentic subjects, who through their embodiment of values serve as inspiration and invitation to others, offers just one of many reasons to support the development of authentic ecclesial subjects.

Finally, Lonergan's understanding of the importance of knowledge of human living in making sound moral decisions has implications for how the moral teaching of the Church is best communicated and appropriated. To the extent that the moral teaching of the Church is based on natural law and deductively applied to concrete situations, it tends to moral idealism which, arguably, can frustrate the sound moral development of ecclesial subjects. For example, moral idealism conceivably played a role in the refusal by Church leaders to take seriously the possibility of recidivism of sexually abusive behavior of priests. It also possibly contributed to the shame that motivated the cover up of abuse. Moral idealism also conceivably plays a role in the frustration and even despair of persons who have undergone divorce, who have had abortions,

¹⁶¹ See Lonergan, "The Subject," 82–84.

¹⁶² In this regard, the Ignatian practice of examen of consciousness provides a valuable tool. The examen of conscience is an ancient practice that St. Ignatius includes as one of the spiritual exercises. See, for example, Herbert Alphonso, *The Personal Vocation: Transformation in Depth Through the Spiritual Exercises* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Universita Gregoriana, 2002). The examen of consciousness is an adaptation which pays special attention to felt experience. See Dennis Hamm, "Rummaging for God: Praying Backward Through Your Day," *America* (May 14, 1994): 22–23.

who are homosexual, who suffer from addictions, or who, for a host of other reasons feel they cannot measure up to the moral standards of the Church because of situations they are in. The problem of moral idealism suggests that a good approach to communicating and appropriating the moral teachings of the Church might be through guided, informed reflection in which teachings based on natural law are brought into dialogue with human sciences and the day-to-day experiences of people trying to live good Christian lives.

Lonergan's Authentic Existential Subject

We have seen that appropriation of the lay vocation requires commitment, and that commitment is an existential decision. We have also seen that every existential decision is a decision to be or not to be authentically oneself. In this section we will examine the achievement of human authenticity in terms of the self-possession that results from the commitment to become oneself. We shall see below in the present chapter and more fully in Chapter Four that insofar as human authenticity results in self-possession it also results in openness to others.

Authenticity and Passionateness of Being

What is it that I possess in possessing myself? To ask and to answer this question, not just in general, but for oneself in light of Lonergan's interiority analysis, is to objectify the self that experiences, understands, judges, decides, and acts. By virtue of this objectification one becomes aware of one's own conscious interiority. As part of this objectification one discovers oneself as a knower and simultaneously discovers not only that knowledge consists of experiencing, understanding, and judging, but that the process of coming to know is intentional and dynamic, propelled from one level of consciousness to the next via questions for

understanding, reflection, and deliberation.¹⁶³ When one discovers oneself as a knower one discovers that the process of coming to know is not only discursive (proceeding via questions and answers), but that it is never complete because there is always more to know. When one discovers that the process of coming to know is the manifestation of an innate quest to know, one has put one's finger on an innate dynamism that has roots in the subject's unconscious and that "underpins and accompanies and reaches beyond the subject as experientially, intelligently, rationally, morally conscious."¹⁶⁴

Lonergan refers to this innate dynamism as the passionateness of being.¹⁶⁵ He describes it as "a principle of movement and of rest, a tidal movement that begins before consciousness, unfolds through sensitivity, intelligence, rational reflection, responsible deliberation." only to find its ultimate rest in love.¹⁶⁶ On the levels of intentionality, passionateness of being manifests itself in questions for intelligence, for reflection, and for deliberation. Each type of question is a principle of movement that finds its rest with a satisfactory answer.¹⁶⁷ Because passionateness of being is dynamically directed to love, Lonergan describes its overall thrust as "an ongoing process of self-transcendence."¹⁶⁸ Thus, passionateness of being opens the subject ever more fully to his or her own becoming.

Passionateness of being also opens the subject to the universe of being and to others. This is because the questioning that opens subjects to the universe of being is not only about being, according to Lonergan, it *is* being.¹⁶⁹ Lonergan writes, "We should learn that questioning not only is about being but is being, being in its *Gelichtetheit*, being in its openness to being,

¹⁶³ Lonergan, "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*," 223, 229.

¹⁶⁴ Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," in *A Third Collection*, 29.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 175.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 172–74.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ The notion of being, Lonergan says, "is our ability and drive to ask questions for intelligence (What? Why? How? What for? How often?) and for reflection (Is that so? Are you certain?). That ability and drive is prior to all acts of understanding and also prior to all concepts and judgments. As there is no limit to the questions we can ask, the notion of being is unrestricted." Lonergan, "Insight Revisited," 274; Lonergan, *Insight*, 375–81. The universe of being, or simply, being, is all that is known and can be known (Ibid., 387, 398) and loved (Lonergan, "Metaphysics as Horizon," in *Collection*, 192).

being that is realizing itself through inquiry to knowing that, through knowing, it may come to loving.”¹⁷⁰ Accordingly, Lonergan says, “The being of the subject is becoming.”¹⁷¹

Passionateness of being, then, is a dynamism, a principle of movement and rest, that not only opens the subject to more fully becoming self, but that in so doing opens the subject to others and to the universe of being.

Authenticity and Self-transcendence

Intentional Self-transcendence. Any time we reach beyond ourselves we transcend ourselves.¹⁷² Therefore, as long as we are awake we are self-transcendent to some degree because the operations of our consciousness, as intentional, are concerned with things distinct from ourselves. Our inherent intending of being, manifested in questions for intelligence, reflection, judgment and moral decision, ever beckons us to reach beyond who we presently are and what we presently know. “Self-transcendence,” Lonergan writes, “is the achievement of conscious intentionality.”¹⁷³

Transcendental Method. The dynamism of the passionateness of being constitutes, says Lonergan, the “built-in law of the human spirit.”¹⁷⁴ We become ourselves in the measure that we follow this law which guides the operations of our conscious intending. As Lonergan puts it, “Because we can experience, we should attend. Because we can understand, we should inquire. Because we can reach the truth, we should reflect and check. Because we can realize values in ourselves and promote them in others, we should deliberate.”¹⁷⁵ Accordingly, “In the measure

¹⁷⁰ Lonergan, “Metaphysics as Horizon,” 192. *Gelichtetheit* can be translated as luminousness.

¹⁷¹ Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” 223; Lonergan, “Self-transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 314.

¹⁷² Lonergan, “The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World,” in *A Second Collection*, 166.

¹⁷³ Lonergan, *Method*, 35.

¹⁷⁴ Lonergan, “The Responses of the Jesuit,” 169.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 169–70.

that we follow these precepts, in the measure we fulfil these conditions of being human persons, we also achieve self-transcendence both in the field of knowledge and in the field of action.”¹⁷⁶

Becoming ourselves in self-transcendence thus requires that we conscientiously attend, inquire, reflect, check, deliberate, and act.¹⁷⁷ To conscientiously perform these operations is to act in accordance with what Lonergan calls his generalized transcendental method.¹⁷⁸ Lonergan formulates his generalized transcendental method in terms of the transcendental precepts: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible.¹⁷⁹ By following these precepts we essentially become agents of our own development in self-transcendence. To some extent everyone observes transcendental method. But to be at home in transcendental method requires a “heightening of one’s consciousness by objectifying it,”¹⁸⁰ which is the first step of self-appropriation.

Transcendental Method and Self-appropriation

Because transcendental method objectifies the operations involved in human knowing, deciding, and acting,¹⁸¹ it can assist a person to appropriate his or her own conscious reality as an existential subject.¹⁸² Lonergan explains, “Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject’s operations without taking into account the corresponding objects.”¹⁸³ Through attentiveness to and objectification of the operations of his or her consciousness, a person enters

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 170.

¹⁷⁷ See Lonergan, *Method*, 18.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 13–14.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 20, 53; and Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” 230. In his response as part of a 1977 symposium Lonergan added a fifth transcendental precept, “Acknowledge your historicity.” Lonergan, “Questionnaire on Philosophy: Response,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 378.

¹⁸⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 14.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Lonergan, “The Scope of Renewal,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 294.

¹⁸³ Lonergan, “Second Lecture: Religious Knowledge,” in *A Third Collection*, 141.

the realm of interiority and subjectivity.¹⁸⁴ To attain and affirm objective knowledge of oneself as an operating subject is to achieve self-appropriation.¹⁸⁵ Lonergan cautions that self-appropriation is not simply the result of introspection:

On the other hand, not a little forethought and ingenuity are needed when one is out to heighten one's consciousness of inquiry, insight, formulation, critical reflection, weighing the evidence, judging, deliberating, deciding. One has to know the precise meaning of each of these words. One has to produce in oneself the corresponding operation. One has to keep producing it until one gets beyond the object intended to the consciously operating subject. One has to do all this within the appropriate context, which is a matter not of inward inspection but of inquiry, enlarged interest, discernment, comparison, distinction, identification, naming.¹⁸⁶

Self-appropriation requires not only that the conscious operations be objectified, but that they be understood as part of the conscious, dynamic, unified process in which they are related.¹⁸⁷ This is simultaneously to become aware of our innate dynamic thrust to being, our innate passionateness of being that propels us to self-transcendence. Thomas Naickamparambil explains, "In essence, self-appropriation involves a self-discovery and a self-transcendence. One discovers one's true self, one consciously possesses one's dynamic self to the extent that such a conscious self-possession transforms one's very life and effects a self-transcendence."¹⁸⁸

It is not difficult to appreciate that the transcendental precepts, and therefore generalized transcendental method, must form the basis of a disciplined approach to any field of study.¹⁸⁹ But beyond informing specialized methods, the transcendental precepts provide the basis for critically applying any method. This is the case because, insofar as the transcendental precepts move us to self-appropriation and to an understanding of how the different conscious operations are related

¹⁸⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 83, 305.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 14–15, 95. For an excellent, thorough study of Lonergan's notion of intellectual self-appropriation see Thomas Naickamparambil, *Through Self-Discovery to Self-Transcendence: A Study of Cognitional Self-Appropriation in B. Lonergan* (Rome, Italy: Gregorian University Press, 1997). An excellent study that examines Lonergan's notion of moral self-appropriation in addition to intellectual self-appropriation is Ian Bell, *The Relevance of Bernard Lonergan's Notion of Self-Appropriation to a Mystical-Political Theology*, American University Studies, Series 7, Theology and Religion 284 (New York: Peter Lang, 2008).

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 15, 85.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 15.

¹⁸⁸ Naickamparambil, *Through Self-Discovery to Self-Transcendence*, 45.

¹⁸⁹ See Lonergan, *Method*, 20; Lonergan, "The Scope of Renewal," 294.

in the process of our subjective becoming, they provide the foundation for understanding the unity and relatedness of the procedures of any method. Thus, transcendental method forms the basis for critical thinking and for differentiated consciousness.¹⁹⁰ Only someone who has achieved self-possession through self-appropriation is truly capable of critical analysis.¹⁹¹

Authenticity and Transcendental Method

“Authenticity,” Lonergan says, “is a matter of following the built-in law of the human spirit.”¹⁹² But, as we have seen, to follow the built-in law of the human spirit is to achieve self-appropriation through following the transcendental precepts of transcendental method.

Authenticity, therefore, is a matter of being true to oneself and achieving self-possession through following the transcendental precepts. It is a matter of achieving self-transcendence through self-appropriation.¹⁹³ Conversely, to the extent we live attentively, intelligently, reasonably, and responsibly we live authentically. Because the being of the subject is becoming, authenticity is never fully or permanently achieved. “[H]uman authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession,” says Lonergan. “It is ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals.”¹⁹⁴

Every existential decision is ultimately a decision to be authentic or unauthentic.¹⁹⁵ This is the case because every existential decision is a decision to act responsibly or not. A decision to act responsibly is a decision to become oneself by following the law of the human spirit as expressed in the transcendental precepts, which is to become authentic. Conversely, to

¹⁹⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 84.

¹⁹¹ See *ibid.*, 83.

¹⁹² Lonergan, “Self-transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious,” 319.

¹⁹³ Lonergan, “The Response of the Jesuit,” 170.

¹⁹⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 110.

¹⁹⁵ Lonergan, “Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,” 398.

become authentic requires following the transcendental precepts which requires the commitment of an existential decision to act responsibly.¹⁹⁶ Not to act responsibly is to act unauthentically.

Barriers to Authenticity

While it is possible to generalize what it means to be an authentic person in terms of achieving self-transcendence and following the transcendental precepts, the achievement and manifestation of authenticity in any given person at any given time is utterly concrete and specific. Every choice we make is limited by available options and determined to some extent by our milieu and by choices we have already made.¹⁹⁷ Following Joseph de Finance, Lonergan refers to the environmental and personal constraints that limit our ability to act authentically as our determinate horizon.¹⁹⁸ Lonergan describes some of the internal factors that may contribute to our determinate horizon:

There are the deviations occasioned by neurotic need. There are the refusals to keep on taking the plunge from settled routines to an as yet unexperienced but richer mode of living. There are the mistaken endeavors to quieten an uneasy conscience by ignoring, belittling, denying, rejecting higher values. Preference scales become distorted. Feelings soured. Bias creeps into one's outlook, rationalization into one's morals, ideology into one's thought. So one may come to hate the truly good, and love the really evil.¹⁹⁹

The types of personal bias that can cloud one's outlook include what Lonergan identifies in *Insight* as dramatic bias and individual or egoistic bias. Dramatic bias is an unconscious process that refers to the inability of a troubled mind to fully apprehend and understand as the result of

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ See Lonergan, "*Existentia* and *Aggiornamento*," 223.

¹⁹⁸ It is possible for persons to rise above their determinate horizon through the exercise of vertical liberty in which they determine "what it would be worth while for one to make of oneself, and what it would be worth while for one to do for one's fellow [persons]." To do so, however, is difficult. Lonergan, *Method*, 40. Determinate horizon corresponds to the notion of effective freedom in *Insight*. Lonergan lists four conditions of effective freedom: external circumstance, limitations that arise from one's psychoneural state, limitations of intellectual development, and a person's antecedent "openness to reflection and to rational persuasion." Lonergan, *Insight*, 645–47, at 647. Vertical liberty corresponds to Lonergan's notion of essential freedom which corresponds to free will in *Insight*. Ibid., 639–47. "The difference between essential and effective freedom," says Lonergan, "is the difference between a dynamic structure and its operational range." Ibid., 643.

¹⁹⁹ Lonergan, *Method*, 39–40.

adverse psychological conditioning.²⁰⁰ Individual or egoistic bias, on the other hand, is a conscious form of self-deception in which correct understanding is excluded by one's desires and fears.²⁰¹

Even when a person seeks to be authentic he or she may, through bias, misunderstanding, oversight, or inattention, misappropriate the tradition to which he or she strives to be authentic.²⁰² In this form of unauthenticity the individual may use the language of the tradition in ways that distort the values and meanings of the tradition.²⁰³ Such unauthentic appropriation of one's tradition can spread beyond personal unauthenticity to infect groups, institutions, nations and epochs.²⁰⁴

In addition to being restricted by internal factors, a person's determinate horizon can be restricted as the result of an unauthentic milieu. We saw in Chapter Two that group and general bias can have negative, constraining effects on one's social environment. The unauthenticity of a tradition (or culture or institution or environment) can limit our options and poison our ability to apprehend value and achieve authenticity. When one's environment is unauthentic, the best authenticity a person may be able to achieve is to "authentically realize unauthenticity."²⁰⁵ Thus the infection of unauthenticity can flow not only from individuals to groups, but from groups to individuals.

LAY VOCATION AS ACHIEVEMENT OF AUTHENTIC SUBJECTIVITY

The first part of this chapter identified key features of the lay vocation envisioned by Vatican II. We saw that Vatican II describes the lay vocation as a baptismal vocation to ecclesial

²⁰⁰ Lonergan, *Insight*, 214–31.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 244–46.

²⁰² Lonergan, *Method*, 80; Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 227.

²⁰³ Lonergan, *Method*, 80; Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 227.

²⁰⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 40.

²⁰⁵ Lonergan refers to the authenticity of a person with respect to a tradition as "minor authenticity," and to the authenticity of the tradition itself as "major authenticity." While the failure to achieve minor authenticity may be apparent to others, the failure of a tradition to achieve major authenticity is a historical judgment. *Ibid.*, 80; Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 227.

discipleship, holiness, and mission, all of which are expressed and realized in love. The second part of this chapter examined what it means to be an authentic existential subject in light of Lonergan's interiority analysis. In Lonergan's analysis, the authenticity of a subject is achieved through the subject's on-going decision and commitment to faithfully become him or herself, a commitment that is realized through practice of the transcendental precepts. The question remains, in what way does Lonergan's notion of authentic subjectivity, which requires the commitment to become oneself, satisfy the lay vocation as envisioned by Vatican II?

Lay Vocation as God's Call to Become Oneself

Vatican II recognizes that the lay vocation is a call by God, assigned by the Lord himself and uniquely empowered through charisms given by the Holy Spirit. Lonergan's interiority analysis can help us to better understand the concrete and dynamical ways in which the lay vocation is received as God's call. For example, Lonergan's notion of passionateness of being helps us to recognize that God's call is an integral part of the subject's very self. Lonergan's emphasis on the concrete, existential reality, the *Existenz*, of the human person helps us to better understand how the lay vocation is manifested and realized in the day-to-day living of lay ecclesial subjects. We turn now to look more closely at how passionateness of being and the *Existenz* of the subjects help to inform God's call.

God's Call Located in Passionateness of Being

We have seen that passionateness of being, which includes the dynamism of the subject's conscious intending, impels the subject beyond him or herself in self-transcendence. In impelling the subject to self-transcendence and in opening the subject to being, passionateness of being also opens the subject to God. Lonergan writes, "Implicit in human inquiry is a natural desire to know God by his essence; implicit in human judgment about contingent things there is the formally

unconditioned that is God; implicit in human choice of values is the absolute good that is God.”²⁰⁶

It seems plausible to suggest that, because passionateness of being opens the subject to God and finds its fulfillment in God, God’s call must be rooted in the passionateness of being of the subject. Moreover, as rooted in the subject’s passionateness of being, God’s call guides the becoming of the subject in self-transcendence to human authenticity.

God’s Call Manifested in Concrete *Existenz*

Since the becoming of subjects takes place with others in concrete situations, we can conclude that God’s call to each subject is fundamentally a call to authentically become oneself with others in the concrete situations of one’s life. Thus, just as passionateness of being is a dynamic reality directing the becoming of subjects, so God’s call is a dynamic reality that can only be recognized and discerned with others in light of the subject’s *Existenz*, that is, in light of the contexts, horizons, level of development, and particular unfolding of a subject’s life. The lay vocation can only be recognized, discerned, and manifested through one’s Christian living and becoming as an ecclesial subject. As an ecclesial vocation, the lay vocation makes no sense apart from Christ or from the Church and its disciplines and teachings, nor can it be fully discerned apart from others both within and without the Church.

Lay Vocation Authentically Realized in Christ

Lonergan recognizes that the Christian vocation is fundamentally a vocation to be an authentic human being as an authentic follower of Christ.²⁰⁷ It is, in other words, a vocation to become oneself in Christ. “Being in Christ Jesus,” says Lonergan, “is the being of subject It is catholic with the catholicity of the Spirit of the Lord. . . . It is identical with personal living,

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 230.

²⁰⁷ See Crowe, “Lonergan’s Vocation as a Christian Thinker,” in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy*, 3.

and personal living is always here and now.”²⁰⁸ The Christian vocation is thus a call to become authentically oneself in living one’s day-to-day life in Christ.

By extension, the lay vocation is a call to become authentically oneself in Christ in every aspect of one’s life, including that of being a member of the Church. Church and world are united in our being-in-Christ because every aspect of our Christian living is living in Christ. The unity of Church and world in the unity of the subject’s being-in-Christ effectively does away with the worldly/spiritual and secular/religious dichotomies of a classicist worldview. In Christ the subject’s contribution to the up-building of the Church and the subject’s participation in Christ’s renewal of the world (the Church’s mission) are not distinct, but are simultaneous and mutual because the subject’s concrete being-in-Christ is simultaneously the subject’s being in the Church and in the world.²⁰⁹ Similarly, because every aspect of the subject’s Christian living is living in Christ, the subject’s growth in holiness is simultaneously and mutually the subject’s becoming authentically him or herself in Christ. In brief, the lay vocation requires the subject’s commitment to become authentically him or herself in Christ. It is expressed as holiness in every aspect of the subject’s life.

Committed Knowing in Christ

To the extent that the authentic subject is committed to becoming him or herself, he or she is simultaneously committed to living the transcendental precepts and, in particular, is committed to responsible knowing, that is, to being attentive, to being intelligent, and to being reasonable. While responsible knowing is not the same as authenticity, one cannot live

²⁰⁸ Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” 231.

²⁰⁹ This is also consistent with the understanding of *Gaudium et Spes* that “the earthly and the heavenly city penetrate one another.” *Gaudium et Spes* no. 40, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 207.

authentically without responsible knowing.²¹⁰ Thus, to live one's lay vocation authentically in Christ one must be committed to responsible knowing in Christ. What does this entail?

Enlarging Horizons. Responsible knowing in Christ includes much more than knowledge of facts. It requires, first of all, a commitment to knowing Christ through prayerful study of Scripture. But knowing Christ has important consequences. Lonergan recognizes that in our knowing and caring for persons our horizons enlarge to include the concerns of those we know and care for.²¹¹ Accordingly, to the extent that we come to know Christ we will come to know and care for those whom Christ loves, especially those who are poor and marginalized. Also, to the extent that we come to know Christ we will come to know and love Christ's Church which *Lumen Gentium* describes as his Bride.²¹² As we come to know and love Christ's Church we will also come to know, love, and embrace the Church's mission of being "the seed and the beginning," of the kingdom of God,²¹³ and the "seed of unity, hope and salvation for the whole human race."²¹⁴ Thus, as we come to know Christ our horizons enlarge to include all those whom Christ loves, his Church, and its mission.

Commitment to Self-knowledge. Because being-in-Christ is the very being of the Christian subject, authentic becoming and knowing in Christ must include a commitment to knowing oneself both through attentiveness to the others and situations of one's life and through attentiveness to one's interiority. Self-knowledge requires attentiveness to others because, as

²¹⁰ See Lonergan, "Cognitive Structure," 211–14, 220, where he develops the meaning of objective knowing and uses the term objective knowing in a fuller, but fundamentally the same, sense that I use the term responsible knowing.

²¹¹ Lonergan, "Pope John's Intention," in *A Third Collection*, 234.

²¹² *Lumen Gentium* no. 4, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 3.

²¹³ *Lumen Gentium* no. 5, in *ibid.*, 4.

²¹⁴ *Lumen Gentium* no. 9, in *ibid.*, 13. While the mission of the Church is captured in its being a seed of the kingdom and the seed of unity, hope, and salvation of the whole human race, these descriptions of the Church's mission do not provide the full picture of the Church's mission as described in the documents of Vatican II. Essentially and fundamentally, the Church's mission is a continuation of Christ's mission. Thus, the Church's mission consists in revealing Christ (see *Lumen Gentium* no. 8, in *ibid.*, 8), in proclaiming the kingdom of Christ (*Lumen Gentium* no. 5, in *ibid.*, 4), and in sanctifying all of humanity in Christ (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 10, in *ibid.*, 122–23). For a thorough discussion of the mission of the Church as found in the documents of Vatican II see Bonaventure Kloppenburg, O.F.M., *Ecclesiology of Vatican II*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974), 97–123.

Lonergan points out, “it is not by introspection but by reflecting on our living in common with others that we come to know ourselves.”²¹⁵ In addition to being attentive to others, self-knowledge requires that we be attentive to the human situations in which we find ourselves with others. Further, adequate knowledge of our human situations requires ongoing commitment to the kind of learning and knowing that will help us to address, understand, and find solutions to the problems of our worlds. As Lonergan writes,

[A]uthentic living . . . , though it must start at home, cannot remain confined within the horizons of the home, the workshop, the village. We are citizens of our countries, [people] of the twentieth century, members of a universal church. If any authenticity we achieve is to radiate out into our troubled world, we need much more objective knowing than [people] commonly feel ready to absorb.²¹⁶

The commitment to self-knowledge must include a commitment to know oneself through the self-appropriation of one’s interiority. It is through self appropriation that we gain insight into the principles and dynamics of our becoming. It is, therefore, through self-appropriation that we are able to take possession of and direct our becoming in fidelity to God’s call expressed through our passionateness of being, through Scripture and Church teachings, and through the others and circumstances of our daily lives.²¹⁷

Required for Full Realization of Church’s Mission. Learning is always a collaborative enterprise.²¹⁸ Thus, knowing Christ, knowing ourselves in Christ, and knowing others in Christ is a collaborative enterprise. As we acquire knowledge of Christ, self-knowledge, and knowledge of others and of our human situation, we simultaneously become better able to cooperate with God and collaborate with others in critically attending to, understanding, judging, and acting to solve the problems of our times and places in Christ Jesus.²¹⁹

It is through committed, responsible knowing that subjects become capable of collaborating to achieve the higher viewpoint of “cosmopolis” that Lonergan speaks of as “a

²¹⁵ Lonergan, “Cognitive Structure,” 220.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 221.

²¹⁷ See Lonergan, *Method*, 119.

²¹⁸ Lonergan, *Insight*, 726.

²¹⁹ See Lonergan, “*Existenz and Aggiornamento*,” 231.

heightened grasp of historical origins, a discovery of historical responsibilities”²²⁰ needed to “break the vicious cycle of [the] illusion” of bias in themselves, in groups, in communities, in institutions, and in cultures. It follows that only through committed responsible knowing in Christ will ecclesial subjects be capable of recognizing general bias and the longer cycle of decline both in the Church and in the world.²²¹ We can conclude that the full realization of the lay vocation through the authentic becoming of lay persons in Christ and, in particular, through their commitment to knowing in Christ, is necessary for the full realization of the Church’s mission.

Committed Becoming in Christ

We have seen that commitment to authentic becoming in Christ is a sufficient condition for realizing the lay vocation. But is it necessary? Is it the only way to realize the lay vocation? To answer this question we have to consider the alternative, which is not to be fully committed to our becoming in Christ. In light of the fact that authenticity consists “in a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never a permanent achievement,”²²² lack of full commitment to authenticity is, in essence, unauthenticity. Thus, to realize the lay vocation it is necessary that we fully commit to authentic becoming in Christ. Not to do so is to fail to fully realize being-in-Christ and in his Church, to fail to fully recognize and embrace those whom Christ loves including ourselves, and to remain blinded to the ideologies and biases that prevent us, others, and the Church from seeking and cooperating with God and from collaboration with others in realizing God’s kingdom. It is only through our full commitment to authentically becoming ourselves in Christ that we can be fully open to others. It is only through our full commitment to authentically becoming ourselves in Christ that we become originating values in Christ, credible bearers of the good news, and living invitations to others to receive and embrace

²²⁰ Ibid., 266.

²²¹ Ibid., 263–67, at 264.

²²² Lonergan, *Method*, 252.

it. It is only through our commitment to authentically becoming ourselves in Christ that we can collaborate in building up the Church and in bringing about the God's kingdom.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present chapter has been to explore how the lay vocation envisioned by Vatican II might be appropriated in light of Lonergan's understanding of the existential subject. The lay vocation envisioned by Vatican II is often stated in an idealized way so that usually its appropriation requires that it be applied deductively to the real-life situations of the laity. Lonergan's interiority analysis, which apprehends the existential subject in terms of conscious, concrete *Existenz*, that is, as concretely, consciously, dramatically, and dynamically becoming him or herself in a specific cultural, social, personal, and historical context, provides a way to understand the lay vocation as part of each lay person's baptismal *Existenz* which includes his or her being-in-Christ as a member of the Church.

We have seen in this chapter that to appropriate the lay vocation in light of Lonergan's existential subject is much more than simply to use an inductive approach. It requires, first, an understanding of how the subject consciously operates in the process of becoming. But beyond such understanding, appropriating the lay vocation in light of Lonergan's notion of the existential subject requires, as we have seen, living authentically in Christ, in self-transcendence, and in self-appropriation. In Lonergan's terminology, appropriating the lay vocation requires moving not simply into a theoretical realm, but into the realm of interiority.

Nevertheless, on the theoretical level the present chapter provided several important conclusions about appropriating the lay vocation in light of Lonergan's interiority analysis. On the basis of Lonergan's intentionality analysis, which understands the becoming of subjects in terms of dynamically-interrelated intentional operations on empirical, intelligent, rational, and responsible levels of consciousness, it suggested that the formation of lay ecclesial subjects should be structured as an interrelated process that includes experience, instruction, sharing,

reflection, as well as opportunities for questioning and responsible participation. On the basis of Lonergan's theory of meaning it emphasized the importance of recognizing that subjects apprehend meaning in different ways as well as the importance of example and witness in communicating and teaching the Christian faith. And finally, on the basis of Lonergan's understanding of authentic subjectivity in terms of commitment to self-possession and self-becoming, it argued that the lay vocation can only be fully appropriated through on-going commitment to fully becoming in Christ.

To the extent that the present chapter has bracketed the role of grace given and received as the gift of God's love, it has presented only one way, the way of creative achievement,²²³ in which the lay vocation is appropriated and lived by lay ecclesial subjects. Thus, the present chapter remains incomplete. To fully understand the lay vocation we must recognize that the lay vocation is given, received, and lived in graced love. It is to the graced reality of the lay vocation and to its full realization in commitment to loving in Christ that we turn in Chapter Four.

²²³ Lonergan considers human development under the aspects of creating and healing in "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection*, 100–9. By 'creating' Lonergan means development as creative achievement in the direction from below upwards, while by 'healing' Lonergan refers to the role of love in fostering and sustaining development from above downwards.

CHAPTER FOUR: GRACED BECOMING OF AUTHENTIC ECCLESIAL SUBJECTS

“God has poured out his love in our hearts through the holy Spirit who has been given to us (see Rom 5:5); therefore the first and most necessary gift is charity, by which we love God above all things and our neighbor because of him.”¹

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three examined the lay vocation envisioned by Vatican II in light of Lonergan’s apprehension of the existential subject in interiority analysis. I argued in Chapter Three that Lonergan’s interiority analysis, informed by the concrete, existential, and contextual reality of human persons, provides a means for linking the abstract and ideal understanding of the lay vocation found in the documents of Vatican II to the concrete lives and needs of the lay faithful. We saw that from the perspective of interiority analysis, authentic living has its basis in the subject’s ongoing commitment to fully and responsibly become him or herself. Such commitment requires self-appropriation and leads to ever-increasing self-transcendence.

Because each lay person is joined to Christ in baptism, I argued in Chapter Three that the full appropriation of the lay vocation requires an on-going commitment to fully and authentically become oneself in Christ. This commitment necessarily includes a commitment to know those whom Christ loves, a commitment to the Church, and a commitment to the Church’s mission of bringing about the kingdom of God on earth. By virtue of such a commitment, lay ecclesial subjects become credible bearers of the good news able to cooperate with God and to collaborate with others in building up the Church and in accomplishing God’s saving plan for the world.

I described the achievement of authentic subjectivity in Chapter Three as a development from lower to higher levels of consciousness and from undifferentiated to differentiated consciousness. In so doing, I presented an account of what Lonergan refers to as development

¹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 42, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 63 .

“from below upwards.”² Development towards authentic subjectivity from below upwards is a creative achievement in which the self takes the initiative through self-appropriation in on-going existential commitment to become fully oneself. Such development, however, is always precarious due to the pervasiveness of bias at personal, group, and cultural levels.³ Lonergan recognizes that sustained achievement of authenticity via development from below is impossible without a concomitant development “from above downwards,” under the influence of God’s gift of grace.⁴

Insofar as I bracketed in Chapter Three the role of God’s grace and love in the becoming of authentic subjects, I did not provide a complete account of Lonergan’s notion of authentic subjectivity, nor of the lay vocation. It is the purpose of the present chapter to complete the analysis begun in Chapter Three of what is entailed in the authentic full realization of the lay vocation. The present chapter will consist of two parts. The first and largest part will examine the role of grace in human authentic becoming in light of Lonergan’s transposition of sanctifying grace into a methodical theology based on interiority. The second part will examine the role that grace plays in the authentic realization of the lay vocation.

TRANSPOSITION OF GRACE INTO METHODICAL THEOLOGY

Process of Transposition to Methodical Theology

In Lonergan’s opinion the Scholastic theology that prevailed in the Catholic Church until Vatican II was inadequate because it relied on an Aristotelian theoretical metaphysics that did not take into consideration the concrete historical reality and development of human persons.⁵

² Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” 106.

³ Ibid., 106–7.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See, for example, Lonergan, *Method*, 279; Lonergan refers to Scholastic theology as “the old style dogmatic theology” in Lonergan, “Revolution in Catholic Theology,” in *A Second Collection*, 237. See also Lonergan, “Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation,” in *A Third Collection*, 41–47 in which he describes the basic features and shortcomings of Scholastic theology.

Scholastic theology was a theoretical achievement based on an understanding of the human person in terms of a metaphysical faculty psychology that divides the human mind into separate faculties, such as intellect and will,⁶ and on a theoretical metaphysics that interprets reality in terms of matter and form, potency and act, substance and accident.⁷ In contrast, a methodical theology considers the human person from the perspective of Lonergan's interiority analysis and recognizes that the apprehension of reality is mediated and possible only to the extent that the apprehending subject is authentic.⁸ Thus, whereas a theoretical Scholastic theology considers doctrinal propositions as foundational, a methodical theology considers religiously-converted human subjects as foundational,⁹ and whereas Scholastic theology is based on a theoretical metaphysics, a methodical theology is based on a critical metaphysics founded on interiority.¹⁰ Therefore, a key component of the process of transposition from theoretical theology into a methodical theology involves the transposition from the theoretical metaphysics that provides the basic terms of theoretical theology, to a critically-based metaphysics founded on interiority that provides the basic terms of a methodical theology.

The process of transposition from theoretical theology into methodical theology must begin, says Lonergan, "not from a metaphysical psychology, but from intentionality analysis and, indeed, from transcendental method."¹¹ The transposition strives to provide critical control by establishing and making explicit the critical grounds of propositions stated in theoretical terms. The goal is to arrive at a critically-grounded metaphysics and corresponding theology in which "for every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness."¹² In shifting focus from abstract propositions to the concrete existential reality of

⁶ See Lonergan, "The Subject," 79.

⁷ Lonergan, "Revolution in Catholic Theology," 235.

⁸ See Lonergan, *Method*, 265.

⁹ Ibid., 267–71, 343; Lonergan, "Revolution in Catholic Theology," 235–37; Lonergan, "Aquinas Today," 46.

¹⁰ See Lonergan, *Method*, 343.

¹¹ Ibid., 289.

¹² Ibid., 343.

subjects, a methodical theology reveals and is concerned with the personal, social, historical, and cosmic dimensions of theology. When compared to a theoretical theology, a methodical theology is more a change of structure than of content.¹³

The argument of the present chapter relies on the transposition of sanctifying grace, understood in theoretical metaphysical terms as an entitative habit rooted in the essence of the soul,¹⁴ into a methodical theology founded on interiority. The transposition consists in first describing the gift of God's love given in grace as the experience of being in love with God unrestrictedly,¹⁵ and then objectifying the experience in theoretical categories.¹⁶ As transposed into interiority, sanctifying grace is described by Lonergan as the gift of "God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us (Rom. 5, 5)."¹⁷

Difficulties of Transposition

The transposition of grace into interiority is difficult for a number of reasons. First, Lonergan's own attempt to achieve this transposition, while seminal, remains incomplete and ambiguous. For example, while Lonergan regards experience as a primary datum of the transposition, he fails to provide very much by way of a phenomenology of religious experience. He describes religious experience as the experience of being in love in an unrestricted manner¹⁸ and says it is conscious without necessarily being known.¹⁹ But what exactly is the experience of being unrestrictedly in love? When queried in a 1969 question-and-answer session about

¹³ Lonergan, "Aquinas Today," 52.

¹⁴ J. Michael Stebbins explains that "Scholastic authors refer to sanctifying grace as an 'entitative habit' in order to distinguish it from a habit that modifies an accidental potency." J. Michael Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative: Grace, World-Order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 313n49.

¹⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 107. In making the transposition from a metaphysical theoretical understanding of grace to interiority, Lonergan identifies the gift of God's love flooding our hearts with the notion of sanctifying grace, correlates the dynamic state considered of itself with operative grace, and correlates the same state when considered as principle of acts of love, hope, faith, and other supernatural virtues with cooperative grace. Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 105.

¹⁸ Ibid., 105–6.

¹⁹ Ibid., 106.

religious experience Lonergan admitted that “to identify it psychologically is not easy. However, it is not important either: by their fruits you shall know them.”²⁰

Second, certain theoretical distinctions have been difficult to maintain in the transposition from theoretical to methodical theology. Referring specifically to the difficulty of transposing Aquinas’s metaphysical distinction between sanctifying grace and the habit of charity into interiority, Doran writes, “something seems to have been lost in Lonergan’s own transposition of these issues from metaphysics to interiority (or, perhaps better, in his grounding of the metaphysics in religious interiority).”²¹ In a 1974 Lonergan Workshop question-and-answer session, Lonergan admitted that a conception of sanctifying grace “as state of being in love with God . . . is an amalgam of sanctifying grace and charity.”²²

Third, Lonergan locates the experience of grace on the fourth level of consciousness, the level of responsibility.²³ The problem this presents is that Lonergan’s explication of fourth level consciousness remains largely descriptive, having never attained the sophisticated level of theoretical development of his cognitional theory.²⁴ This problem is compounded by Lonergan’s allusions to a possible fifth level in consciousness, which, until recently, a number of Lonergan scholars felt was key to the transposition of grace into interiority.²⁵

²⁰ Lonergan, Discussion Session (Institute on Method in Theology, Regis College, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, 1969), www.bernardlonergan.com as 542R0A0E060 (audio) and as 542R0DTE060 (transcription).

²¹ Doran, “‘Complacency and Concern’ and a Basic Thesis on Grace,” *Lonergan Workshop* 13 (1997): 62.

²² Lonergan, Question and Answer Session (Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, Boston, June 21, 1974), 8, www.bernardlonergan.com, as 815A0DTE070 / TC 815 A&B (transcription by Doran).

²³ Lonergan, *Method*, 106–7.

²⁴ For the explication of this difficulty I am indebted to Stebbins, “The Divine Initiative,” 297–98.

²⁵ Doran proposed the fifth level as a key to the transposition of sanctifying grace into a methodical theology in Doran, “Consciousness and Grace,” 51–75. Other participants in the initial discussion included Tad Dunne, “Being in Love,” Michael Vertin, “Lonergan on Consciousness: Is There a Fifth Level?” and Patrick Byrne, “Consciousness: Levels, Sublations, and the Subject and Subject.” One issue in the on-going discussion has been Doran’s interpretation of and insistence on the foundational importance of what has come to be called the four-point hypothesis in the development of Lonergan’s theology of grace. A second issue centers on the existence of a fifth level of consciousness and whether or not it is exclusively connected with the supernatural. Space does not allow treatment of these issues here. The reader is referred to Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology,” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 750–76 for a clear presentation of Doran’s position. A summary of the positions of Doran, Michael Vertin, Tad

These difficulties point to the value of adverting to Lonergan's earlier systematic theoretical achievements to better ensure the accuracy of the transposition of grace into interiority. Michael Stebbins is of the opinion that, despite the fact that interiority gives priority to conscious operations and conscious relations between operations, "a fully methodical theology of grace will incorporate and establish more clearly the experiential basis for the synthesis found in Lonergan's early writings on grace."²⁶ He argues that such an approach "can serve as a standard against which to test the metaphysical implications of any proposed account of religious interiority."²⁷ This has been the consistent approach of Doran who writes, "I have made a general decision that, whenever possible, I will begin my own treatment of systematic issues by attempting to transpose Lonergan's systematic achievements into categories derived from religiously and interiorly differentiated consciousness."²⁸

Although the argument of the present chapter relies on the transposition of grace from theoretical metaphysical categories to interiority, its main focus is to more fully explicate, in light of Lonergan's interiority analysis, the graced lay vocation described by Vatican II. In describing the graced nature of the lay vocation and in examining the transformative effect of grace in the lives of ecclesial subjects, the present chapter will rely not only on Lonergan's own transposition, but also on work done by Robert Doran and others in transposing grace into a methodical theology.

Dunne, and Patrick Byrne is offered in Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer, "Sanctifying Grace in a 'Methodical Theology,'" *Theological Studies* 68 (2007): 52–76, esp. 63–70. Jacobs-Vandegeer suggests that the elevation of central form that takes place in sanctifying grace pertains to the whole subject and therefore cannot be identified exclusively with any particular level of consciousness. Jacobs-Vandegeer, "Sanctifying Grace," 75. In light of Jacobs-Vandegeer's suggestion, the role of a possible fifth level of consciousness in the transposition of grace has become less critical. Finally, in an unpublished paper Jeremy Blackwood offers an excellent summary of the state of the question of a fifth level of consciousness, demonstrates that Lonergan did maintain a fifth level connected with both natural and supernatural love, and offers suggestions as to what is entailed experientially and existentially in the elevation of central form brought about in sanctifying grace. Jeremy W. Blackwood, "Sanctifying Grace, Elevation, and the Fifth Level of Consciousness: Further Developments within Lonergan Scholarship" (paper presented at West Coast Methods Institute, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, April 2009). I am deeply grateful to Jeremy Blackwood for sharing this paper with me.

²⁶ Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 298–99.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 299.

²⁸ Doran, "Consciousness and Grace," 51.

GRACE IN AUTHENTIC BECOMING OF SUBJECTS

We have seen that experience is a primary datum of interiority analysis. Arguably, one fundamental experience of almost all existential subjects is that of the angst that accompanies the recognition of unauthenticity and impotence in oneself and in one's situation in the face of sin and evil. Lonergan refers to the fact of sin and evil as the reign of sin which he describes in terms of the cumulative effects of personal, group, and general bias and the resulting impotence of common sense. He points to two ways in which the reign of sin impedes personal human development.²⁹ On the level of daily living, the reign of sin makes it impossible for subjects to consistently live and act responsibly and lovingly.³⁰ On the level of self-awareness, the reign of sin leads to a capitulation or self-surrender to the moral impotence in oneself and in one's environment.³¹ Thus, the reign of sin poisons the spirits and psyches³² of individual subjects. It results in a feeling of angst accompanied by the deadening of motivation to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible. As it serves to restrict the determinate horizons of subjects, the reign of sin closes subjects to insights, to others, and to God. Mired in the reign of sin, subjects are unable to fully and habitually become themselves in authenticity.

Personal sinfulness and bias are not the only causes and consequences of the reign of sin. The reign of sin is also the cause and consequence of group biases and general bias that, as we saw in Chapters Two and Three, poison the social and cultural environments in which subjects become. Lonergan explains how the reign of sin acts to thwart social progress:

²⁹ Lonergan, *Insight*, 712–15.

³⁰ Ibid., 715.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Lonergan describes the psyche as the source of the underlying organization that controls the direction of one's stream of consciousness. See *ibid.*, 229–30. The stream of consciousness that we experience is our sensitive movement of life that includes what Doran describes as “the polyphony or, as the case may be, the cacophony, of our sensations, memories, images, emotions, conations, associations, bodily movements, and spontaneous intersubjective responses, and of the symbolic integrations of these that occur in, indeed are, our dreams.” These data of the sensitive movement of life are what Doran, informed by Freud and Jung in his expansion of Lonergan, means by psyche. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, 46.

Growth, progress, is a matter of situations yielding insights, insights yielding policies and projects, policies and projects transforming the initial situation, and the transformed situation giving rise to further insights that correct and complement the deficiencies of previous insights. . . . But this wheel of progress becomes a wheel of decline when the process is distorted by bias. Increasingly the situation becomes, not the cumulative product of coherent and complementary insights, but the dump in which are heaped up the amorphous and incompatible products of self-centered and shortsighted individuals and groups.³³

Neither fruitful insight nor cumulative development can thrive in the social dump resulting from the reign of sin.³⁴ Ultimately the reign of sin heads towards the cumulative decline, breakdown, and disintegration of civilizations.³⁵ In its pervasive entrenchment and in the cumulative effects of decline it causes, the reign of sin is a mortally unhealthy situation beyond the ability of human persons, either individually or in groups, to heal.³⁶

Grace and Healing Vector of Development

Lonergan recognizes that the healing required to overcome the reign of sin must entail reform. He cautions, however, that the reform needed for healing cannot be manipulated or coerced and should not be confused with the kind of reform advocated by behaviorists or Marxists.³⁷ He insists that when healing comes, “it comes as the charity that dissolves the hostility and the divisions of past injustice and present hatred; it comes as the hope that withstands psychological, economic, political, social, cultural determinisms; it comes with the faith that can liberate reason from the rationalizations that blinded it.”³⁸ In other words, the healing that is required to overcome the reign of sin must be a consequence of grace. In Lonergan’s analysis only grace can overcome the reign of sin in individuals, societies, cultures, and history.

³³ Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” 105.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 105–6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

³⁶ Lonergan describes the health of individuals and of environments to be that of a “generalized equilibrium,” which exists as “a combination of defensive circles [such] that any change within a limited range is offset by opposite changes that tend to restore the initial situation.” Lonergan, *Insight*, 141.

³⁷ Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” 107.

³⁸ Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit,” 31–32.

Grace as the gift of divine love operates to effect development “from above downwards,” a mode of development that Lonergan refers to as the healing vector.³⁹ Lonergan explains the crucial role of love in the overcoming of bias required for graced reform:

There is the transformation of falling in love: the domestic love of the family; the human love of one’s tribe, one’s city, one’s country, mankind; the divine love that orientates [the human person] in his [or her] cosmos and expresses itself in his [or her] worship. Where hatred only sees evil, love reveals values. At once it commands commitment and joyfully carries it out, no matter what the sacrifice involved. Where hatred reinforces bias, love dissolves it, whether it be the bias of unconscious motivation, the bias of individual or group egoism, or the bias of omniscient, shortsighted common sense. Where hatred plods around in ever narrow vicious circles, love breaks the bonds of psychological and social determinisms with the conviction of faith and the power of hope.⁴⁰

Lonergan emphasizes that both healing and creating modes of development are necessary and complementary aspects of the single development of subjects, societies, cultures, and history.⁴¹ Just as development from below is subject to the distortion of bias in the absence of the healing vector, development from above “when unaccompanied by creating, is a soul without a body.”⁴²

Religious Experience

Religious experience of grace, Lonergan says, is the consequence of the gift of God’s love flooding our hearts (Romans 5:5) that brings about in us “the dynamic state of being in love with God.”⁴³ While this experience is that of “being in love in an unrestricted fashion,”⁴⁴ it can also be described as an experience of mystery, of the holy, as awe-evoking and fascinating, or as

³⁹ Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” 106; Lonergan, “The Human Good,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 340. Although the idea of a development from above that depends on the transmission of past achievement by means of acculturation, socialization, and education is not absent in his earlier writings, Lonergan’s first mention of a healing vector of development from above under the influence of love appears in the paper “Healing and Creating in History,” which he delivered in 1975. See Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Lonergan* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992), 110.

⁴⁰ Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” 106.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ The dynamic state, Lonergan says, “may be preceded by similar transient dispositions that also are both operative and cooperative,” and once it has been established, “it is filled out and developed by still further additional graces.” Lonergan, *Method*, 107.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.

what Saint Ignatius describes as consolation without cause.⁴⁵ Although conscious, the experience of grace is not known immediately. This is because human knowing requires understanding and judgment in addition to experience. Thus, until the experience of being in love with God becomes objectified and named, its presence is that of a mystery that “remains within subjectivity as a dynamic vector, a mysterious undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness.”⁴⁶

The experience of grace becomes known through objectification and reflection. It can be objectified in terms of outward occasions, such as persons, places, or events associated with the experience.⁴⁷ The experience of grace can also be discerned from the ways in which it affects and is expressed by those who receive it. Expressions or descriptions of the experience of God’s love received in grace will naturally vary according to the levels of development of recipients and the worlds in which they live. Manifestations of the experience of grace, however, will usually include, says Lonergan, “acts of kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22),” and will show forth the fruits of grace, which are love, joy, and peace.⁴⁸ These manifestations and fruits point to the transformative power of God’s love in subjects and in the world.

Faith

We have seen that, until it is objectified, the gift of God’s love is likely to be experienced in a vague, mysterious way. Even while it remains unknown, however, the gift of God’s love creates in us the state of being unrestrictedly in love which affects the way in which we value ourselves, others, and creation. Thus, associated with God’s gift of love is the gift of knowing

⁴⁵ Ibid., 106.

⁴⁶ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs,” 39; see also Lonergan, *Method*, 113.

⁴⁷ Lonergan refers to the outward occasions associated with the experience of grace as hierophanies. Lonergan says that it is “by associating religious experience with its outward occasion that the experience becomes expressed and thereby something determinate and distinct for human consciousness.” Lonergan, *Method*, 108.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 106.

values in a graced way that Lonergan describes as a “transvaluation” of values.⁴⁹ As a consequence of this transvaluation of values, one’s heart is drawn to love that which is good and to reject that which is evil.⁵⁰ Lonergan associates the gift of graced transvaluation of values with faith.

Faith Versus Religious Beliefs

Faith, says Lonergan, is “knowledge born of religious love.”⁵¹ This knowledge is not immediately that of religious beliefs, nor does faith consist of the appropriation of religious beliefs. Instead, the knowledge of faith is a new way of valuing informed by the gift of God’s love.⁵² In faith, the eyes of graced persons are opened to divine love and light while their hearts are opened to value all that is consistent with divine love and light.⁵³

Religious beliefs, on the other hand, are religious propositions appropriated as true from a common fund of religious knowledge. We saw in Chapter Three that beliefs are critically appropriated on the basis of a judgment that their remote and proximate sources are reliable.⁵⁴ Essentially the judgment that remote and proximate sources of religious beliefs are reliable is a judgment of value. It is a judgment that the appropriated religious beliefs, the religion that promotes them, the representatives of that religion, and the value of accepting the beliefs are all consistent with God’s light and love.⁵⁵ If we recall that values are apprehended in intentional feelings, it seems plausible that the value of appropriating the beliefs of an organized religion will be informed by feelings accompanying one’s encounters with representatives of that religion.

⁴⁹ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs,” 43.

⁵⁰ Ibid. See also Lonergan, Question and Answer Session (Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, Boston, June 20, 1977), www.bernardlonergan.com, as 91600A0E070 (Lonergan’s typed notes).

⁵¹ Lonergan, *Method*, 115.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., 116.

⁵⁴ The five steps involved in the process of coming to believe consist of: 1) A preliminary judgment of the value of the belief based on the reliability of the source for the belief; 2) A reflective act of understanding that grasps the value of deciding to believe as a virtually unconditioned; 3) The judgment or verification that indeed the belief has value based on the reliability of the source; 4) The decision to believe; 5) The assent to the belief. Lonergan, *Insight*, 729–35, esp. 729–30.

⁵⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 118.

Laity Called to Fullness of Authenticity in Faith

In their apprehension of God as light and love, graced persons are led through faith to recognize that God calls human persons to the fullness of human authenticity in self-transcending love.⁵⁶ The authenticity of subjects achieved fully in religious becoming consists, says Lonergan, in true self-sacrificing love and in the charity of the suffering servant.⁵⁷ It is no wonder that the call to this kind of authenticity may be felt at times as “a fateful call to a dreaded holiness.”⁵⁸

Because the lay vocation is a graced vocation received in baptism, it includes the call of faith to the fullness of human authenticity in self-transcending love. Often enough, however, such a call is difficult to receive, not only because it is a call to dreaded holiness, but because of competition from conflicting messages swirling about in one’s person and in one’s social and cultural milieus. Even in the best of circumstances the call to authentically become oneself creates a dialectical tension within the subject between the self that is transcended and the self that transcends.⁵⁹ For this reason, the authentic realization of the lay vocation is difficult and should never be taken for granted. It is worth repeating Lonergan’s observation, first stated in Chapter Three, that the achievement of authenticity remains “ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity.”⁶⁰ Recognizing the difficulties involved in appropriating and living the lay vocation, lay formation programs are well advised to strive not only to help the lay faithful to understand their baptismal call, but also to provide opportunities for support and growth in discipleship through mentoring and small formation groups.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 117.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 113.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 111; Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs,” 44.

⁶⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 110.

Conversion

Lonergan describes healing development from above in terms of graced transformation brought about in and through love.⁶¹ Such transformation can be explained in terms of conversions. Lonergan understands conversion to be a radical transformation of a subject that results in an about-face repudiation of an old horizon, movement into a new horizon, and a change of course or direction in the subject's life.⁶² While such transformation may occur suddenly and spontaneously, normally the actual process of conversion is prolonged.⁶³

Conversion should not be confused with merely incremental changes in development.⁶⁴ Rather, Lonergan emphasizes, conversion changes every aspect of the subject's existence. By its very nature conversion is a radical transformation from unauthenticity to authenticity that results in interlocking changes and developments on all levels of a person's living.⁶⁵ "Conversion," says Lonergan, "involves a new understanding of oneself because, more fundamentally, it brings about a new self to be understood."⁶⁶ Because he or she has become different, the converted subject "apprehends differently, values differently, relates differently."⁶⁷ Insofar as conversions result in the transformation of subjects from unauthenticity to authenticity, they are fundamental to religious living.⁶⁸ Lonergan argues that the notion of conversion supplies theology not only with its foundation, but "with a foundation that is concrete, dynamic, personal, communal, and historical."⁶⁹

⁶¹ Lonergan, "Healing and Creating," 106.

⁶² Lonergan, *Method*, 130, 237–38.

⁶³ Ibid., 130; Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," 66.

⁶⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 130.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 130–31; Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," 65–66.

⁶⁶ Lonergan, "Unity and Plurality," 247; Lonergan, "Doctrinal Pluralism," 86.

⁶⁷ Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," 66.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 65.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 67; Lonergan, *Method*, 130.

Although every experience of conversion affects the total person on every level of consciousness, it is helpful to consider conversions insofar as they correspond to and occur on the different levels of consciousness.

Intellectual Conversion

Intellectual conversion, says Lonergan, is a radical break from habitually and uncritically conceiving reality as that which can be known by looking, conceiving objectivity as that which can be seen, and conceiving knowing as taking a good look.⁷⁰ Through intellectual conversion and its accompanying intellectual self-appropriation, the subject recognizes that the process of coming to know involves not only looking or experiencing, but also understanding, judging, and believing.⁷¹ Through becoming aware of and appropriating what one is doing when one comes to know, the intellectually-converted subject becomes the master of his or her thinking, able to think reflectively and critically.⁷² Intellectual conversion functions as a radical clarification that opens the converted subject to even further clarifications.⁷³ Although intellectual conversion has to do with intellectual self-appropriation and is, therefore, properly identified with the first three levels of consciousness, it has ramifications on all levels of consciousness.

Moral Conversion

Moral conversion changes the basic criterion by which a person makes decisions and choices from what is satisfying in the short run to what is good in the long run. As a consequence of moral conversion a person opts for the truly good, that is, for values over satisfactions.⁷⁴ Moral conversion is not merely a matter of choosing higher values over lower values. Rather, the role of moral conversion is to effect in the subject a moral self-transcendence that opens the

⁷⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 238.

⁷¹ Ibid., 239–40.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 238–40.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 240.

subject's mind and heart and directs the subject's desires into a morally-converted horizon. Thus, moral conversion results in a change in the horizon from which values are apprehended. In the morally-converted horizon, choosing is informed by the transcendental notion of value revealed by the questions, is it good? or is it worthwhile?⁷⁵

In setting up a new horizon in which evaluating, deciding, and acting are motivated by the transcendental notion of value, moral conversion helps the subject to recognize, confront, and overcome the different forms of bias that distort growth and progress in one's person and in one's social milieu. Choosing the truly good requires, among other things, critical attentiveness to situations in order to distinguish elements of progress from elements of decline. It requires critical self-attentiveness in order to discern one's motives, biases, and values. It also requires a critical willingness to listen to and learn from others.⁷⁶ Such moral self-development is generally a slow process and not inevitable, as subjects can refuse to learn and can resist self-transcendence.⁷⁷ To the extent that a subject is able to recognize, confront, and overcome the biases that restrict his or her authentic becoming, to that extent moral conversion heals the subject and potentially results in healing consequences for his or her social environment.

Religious Conversion

We have seen that Lonergan describes grace as the gift of God's love flooding our hearts. Because God respects human freedom, each person is free to respond to God's gift of grace in his or her own way. As the result of sin and bias some find it difficult to surrender to this gift. When this gift is received through self-surrender one succumbs to an "other-worldly falling in love" that Lonergan describes as religious conversion.⁷⁸ Religious conversion is, says Lonergan, "the replacement of the heart of stone by a heart of flesh, a replacement beyond the horizon of the

⁷⁵ Michael L. Rende, *Lonergan on Conversion: The Development of a Notion* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 134–35.

⁷⁶ Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 240.

heart of stone.”⁷⁹ Thus, religious conversion opens in the subject a new horizon in which persons, events, values, and symbols are apprehended from the perspective of being in love with God.

The initial self-surrender required for religious conversion is not an act, but is rather an attitude of receptivity and openness to the gift of God’s love. Lonergan uses the Augustinian and Thomistic language of operative and cooperative grace to distinguish between the initial self-surrender of religious conversion and its subsequent effectiveness. Lonergan defines the initial religious conversion as operative grace.⁸⁰

However, living consistently in the new horizon opened by religious conversion requires a commitment to love and to an ongoing transformation of the way one thinks and lives. It requires commitment because the experience of falling in love in an unrestricted manner brings a person to the point of decision and response. It compels the person to answer the questions: “Will I love him in return, or will I refuse? Will I live out the gift of his love, or will I hold back, turn away, withdraw?”⁸¹ To decide to love God in return is tantamount to the decision to love others with the self-sacrificing love given in grace as the gift of charity.⁸² Such a decision requires “religious effort towards authenticity through prayer and penance and religious love of all [people] shown in good deeds.”⁸³ Religious conversion demands that the subject commit to loving God and others in return. Thus, we can distinguish between religious conversion, which is the gift given and received through surrender, and its appropriation in one’s living which requires commitment. Commitment, in turn, requires cooperative grace which, Lonergan defines as, “the heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human freedom.”⁸⁴

⁷⁹ Ibid., 241.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 116.

⁸² Ibid., 117. Robert Doran has done extensive work to clarify the relationship between sanctifying grace and charity when transposed into a methodical theology. He argues that charity is a created change in us that proceeds, analogous to the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son, from sanctifying grace. Thus, “[c]harity is our created participation in the Holy Spirit.” Doran, “Sanctifying Grace, Charity, and the Divine Indwelling: A Key to the *Nexus Mysteriorum Fidei*,” *Lonergan Workshop* 22 (forthcoming). I am deeply grateful to Father Doran for sharing this paper with me prior to its publication.

⁸³ Lonergan, *Method*, 119.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 241.

Lonergan distinguishes between religious conversion as defined and religious conversion as achieved. As defined it is being in love in an unrestricted manner, with “all one’s heart and all one’s soul, and all one’s mind, and all one’s strength.”⁸⁵ Lonergan cautions, however, that just as the unrestricted character of our intending all that is intelligible, real, and true never attains the full knowledge of being in this life, so being completely and unrestrictedly in love does not apply to what is possible in this world, but expresses the limit case of religious conversion as fulfilled in the next world.⁸⁶ Thus, religious conversion as achieved in any person is incomplete and can wax and wane.

Lonergan also distinguishes between the inner core of religious conversion and its outward manifestation.⁸⁷ The inner core refers to those transcultural features of religious conversion that are common to all religious traditions, cultures, and times. Citing the work of Friedrich Heiler,⁸⁸ Lonergan lists seven common features of world religions that he says are implicit in religious conversion.⁸⁹ These features include:

[the recognition and affirmation] that there is a transcendent reality; that he is immanent in human hearts; that he is supreme beauty; truth, righteousness, goodness; that he is love, mercy, compassion; that the way to him is repentance, self-denial, prayer; that the way is love of one’s neighbor, even of one’s enemies; that the way is love of God, so that bliss is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him.⁹⁰

The outward manifestation of religious conversion, on the other hand, is subject to developmental, cultural, historical, and religious traditional variations.⁹¹ Lonergan describes the outward expression of religious meaning or value as an outward word.⁹² Through its outward word, religious conversion enters the world mediated by meaning and regulated by value.⁹³ As an

⁸⁵ Ibid., 242.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 284.

⁸⁸ Specifically, Lonergan cites Friederich Heiler, “The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Cooperation of Religions,” in *The History of Religions*, edited by Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 142–53. Lonergan, *Method*, 109n8.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 109.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 284.

⁹² Ibid., 112.

⁹³ Ibid., 114.

expression of religious meaning or values, the outward word may be confined to the realm of common sense where it relies on symbols, figures, stories, or liturgical rites. Or it may be described in theoretical terms as, for example, in doctrinal propositions. In whatever realm the outward word of religious conversion is expressed or interpreted, this word is much more than simply the objectification of the gift of God's love; "in a privileged area," Lonergan says, "it also is specific meaning, the word of God himself."⁹⁴

Lay Vocation Realized in Conversion

We saw in Chapter Three that authenticity is achieved in self-transcendence. It follows that, because all forms of conversion are modalities of self-transcendence, all forms of conversion are necessary for the authentic realization of the lay vocation. Through intellectual conversion lay ecclesial subjects become aware that critical knowing involves more than just learning 'facts,' but also includes weighing evidence, including historical evidence, and judging facts on the basis of evidence. They become aware that there are different ways to interpret the same 'facts' depending on the realms from within which the facts are apprehended. For example, religious truths will likely be interpreted differently in the realm of common sense than in, say, the realm of religious knowing informed by faith. Through intellectual conversion lay persons will be both more understanding of religious pluralism and more confident of their own appropriation of Catholic beliefs.

As the result of moral conversion, lay subjects will find transcendental values of truth and the worthwhile and the good more desirable than the immediate goods of self-gratification or group benefit. Morally converted lay subjects are able to consistently make decisions based on transcendental values and thereby become "principles of benevolence and beneficence, capable of

⁹⁴ Ibid., 119.

genuine collaboration and of true love.”⁹⁵ It is only when lay persons reach the sustained self-transcendence of moral conversion that they are capable of accurately judging human goodness.⁹⁶

Finally, the authenticity of lay ecclesial subjects requires religious conversion. It is through religious conversion that a person arrives at the fullness of self-transcendence, and therefore of becoming oneself in love.⁹⁷ The appropriation of religious conversion, as both surrender to the gift of God’s love and as commitment to love God and others in return, is the condition by which ecclesial subjects are able to be for others in self-sacrificing love.

Barriers to Religious Conversion

While the gift of grace is totally the result of God’s initiative, it is a gift that, as we have seen, respects human freedom. Persons in a state warped by sin may refuse such a gift.⁹⁸ Sin is thus fundamentally a refusal of God’s love and, consequently, the refusal to love God and others in return.⁹⁹ As distinct from moral evil, sinfulness says Lonergan, “is the privation of total loving; it is a radical dimension of lovelessness.”¹⁰⁰ Thus sin can serve to block a person’s response to the gift of God’s love.

The presence of sin in ourselves or in our environment is complicated by the presence of bias which may further limit our ability to appropriate the gift of God’s love or to fully realize religious conversion through moral and intellectual conversions.¹⁰¹ The presence of any sort of personal, group, and general bias contributes to the unauthenticity of the environment and makes religious and other conversions difficult. For example, the presence of cultural biases that include

⁹⁵ Ibid., 35.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ See Ibid., 105.

⁹⁸ Lonergan, “Lecture 2: The Functional Specialty ‘Systematics,’” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 192–93.

⁹⁹ Lonergan, *Method*, 242–43.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ In a 1981 Lonergan Workshop question and answer session, Lonergan includes biases in his description of sin. About biases he says, “If one is aware of them and makes no effort to correct them, one’s conduct becomes sinful; in general they are sins against the social order.” Lonergan, Question and Answer Session (Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, Boston, June 16, 1981), www.bernardlonergan.com as 36090DTE080 (Lonergan’s typed notes).

individualism, materialism, relativism, and secularism may make it difficult for persons to accept religious values perceived to be in conflict with the attainment of wealth, personal success, or personal pleasure. As another example, persons influenced by group and general bias may unquestioningly adopt prevalent ideological stances on issues, such as immigration, race, segregation, war, social welfare policy, or capital punishment. As a third example, we have seen that group and general bias within the Church contribute to a blind acceptance and canonization of the present status of laity, making it difficult for the laity to fully appropriate their lay vocation.

Environmental unauthenticity resulting from bias not only makes it difficult for subjects to avoid faulty assumptions, faulty beliefs, and uncritical thinking, but actually sanctions inattentiveness, irrationality, and irresponsibility.¹⁰² Lonergan describes the problem of appropriating religious conversion in the context of unauthenticity as follows:

Unauthenticity may be open-eyed and thoroughgoing, and then it heads for a loss of faith. But the unconverted may have no real apprehension of what it is to be converted. Sociologically they are Catholics, but on a number of points they deviate from the norm. Moreover, they commonly will not have an appropriate language for expressing what they really are, and so they will use the language of the group with which they identify socially. There will result an inflation of language and so of doctrine. Terms that denote what one is not will be stretched to denote what one is. Doctrines that are embarrassing will not be mentioned. Unacceptable conclusions will not be drawn. So unauthenticity can spread and become a tradition, and, for those born into such a tradition, becoming authentic human beings will be a matter of purifying the tradition in which they were brought up.¹⁰³

Finally, it is possible for converted subjects to regress or relapse under the influence of bias and sin. This is because, even though conversion is a radical change, it is not necessarily a permanent achievement, nor is it necessarily total.¹⁰⁴ Just as persons develop greater self-transcendence through conversion, they can also regress and become less self-transcendent through breakdown. “Once a process of dissolution has begun, says Lonergan, “it is screened by self-deception and it is perpetuated by consistency.”¹⁰⁵ Regression and dissolution can take

¹⁰² See Lonergan, *Method*, 242–43.

¹⁰³ Lonergan, “Doctrinal Pluralism,” 87.

¹⁰⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 131.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 244.

different forms. In the presence of strong cultural moral and religious skepticism, for example, religious believers may be influenced to see religion and God as nothing more than illusory myths.¹⁰⁶ Other believers in the same environment may embrace a stance of close-minded fundamentalism or sectarianism, or may reject organized religion in favor of a personal religion.

Psychic Conversion

Lonergan understands the psyche to be the source of personal operation and organization that controls the underlying biological “manifolds” of a person.¹⁰⁷ As it controls the underlying biological manifolds of a person, the psyche also controls a person’s world of affect and symbol and thus plays a critical role in controlling the content and direction of a person’s stream of consciousness.¹⁰⁸ Thus, although the psyche is involved with sensory integration, it is directed towards participation in the conscious acts of the human person and, ultimately, to acts of meaning and love.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, Lonergan distinguishes between two spheres or dimensions of the subject: the sphere of the psyche, and that of a subject’s conscious self. The psychic sphere is that of the “ulterior unknown” of affect and symbol, while the conscious sphere is that of “reality that is domesticated, familiar, common.”¹¹⁰

According to Lonergan, the dynamic relationship between these two spheres is controlled by the censor, which is “neither an agent nor an activity but simply a law or rule of the interrelations between successive levels of integration.”¹¹¹ Constructive censorship allows certain elements of higher integration into consciousness, while repressive censorship excludes elements from consciousness “that the higher integration cannot assimilate.”¹¹² In the case of psychic

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 243, 283.

¹⁰⁷ Lonergan, *Insight*, 230.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ See Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 115–16.

¹¹⁰ Lonergan, *Insight*, 556.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 482.

¹¹² Ibid.

aberration, which can be interpreted in terms of an overly-repressive censor,¹¹³ Lonergan sees “analytic treatment” as helpful in reorienting the aberrant stream of consciousness so as “to effect a release from unconscious obstructions with a psychic origin.”¹¹⁴ In *Method*, Lonergan affirms the value of psychotherapy in discovering, identifying, and accepting one’s submerged feelings.¹¹⁵

While Lonergan is clear about the critical role of the psyche in the harmonious development of the subject and about the potential benefits of psychoanalysis in the case of psychic aberrations, he does not develop a theory of psychic integration or conversion. The task of developing and extending Lonergan’s seminal references to the role of the psyche in the flourishing of human subjects has been undertaken by Robert Doran in his work on psychic conversion.¹¹⁶ Doran’s notion of psychic conversion seeks to integrate depth psychology into interiority analysis with the intent to “illuminate dimensions of consciousness in which there is experienced the very movement of life, the passionateness of being.”¹¹⁷

According to Doran, there are two types of data of consciousness, the intentional and the psychic, corresponding to the two dimensions of consciousness that he refers to as the spirit, by which he means intentionality, and the psyche.¹¹⁸ The data of intentionality are intentional operations of question and answer by which consciousness unfolds on the levels of understanding, judgment, and decision. The data of the psyche contribute to the sensitive flow of

¹¹³ This is my interpretation based on *ibid.*, 230, 482, 555. Lonergan describes psychic aberration as “an orientation of the stream of consciousness in conflict with its function of systematizing underlying manifolds.” *Ibid.*, 230.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* Lonergan interprets analytic treatment by a psychoanalyst to be one of a retrospective education of the patient so as to enlarge the patient’s potentialities for integrating elements repressed by the censor into consciousness. About the censor Lonergan writes, “The censor is neither an agent nor an activity but simply a law or rule of the interrelations between successive levels of integration; the repressive censorship is the exclusion from consciousness of elements that the higher integration cannot assimilate.” *Ibid.*, 482.

¹¹⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 77.

¹¹⁶ Doran introduced his notion of psychic conversion in his doctoral dissertation, published as Robert M. Doran, *Subject and Psyche* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994). Expansions of his notion of psychic conversion can be found in *Theology and the Dialectics of History* and *What is Systematic Theology?*

¹¹⁷ Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, 42–43.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

consciousness by means of “sensations, memories, images, emotions, conations, associations, bodily movements, and spontaneous intersubjective responses, and of the symbolic integrations of these that occur in, indeed are, our dreams.”¹¹⁹

Doran describes how, although the two sets of data of consciousness are distinct, they influence each other. For example, the influence of intentional operations on the psyche can be seen in the change brought about in a person’s feelings as clarity is obtained through insight, understanding, and judgment in the process coming to know. Conversely, the psyche plays a role in intentional operations both in providing the empirical data from the sensitive movement of life and as a participant in “the clarity of insight, the assurance of judgment, the peace of a good conscience, the joy of love.”¹²⁰ The unity of the subject thus consists in a mutual interrelationship of communication between the spirit and the psyche. About the interrelationship between spirit and psyche Doran writes, “As the psyche is orientated to participation in the life of the intentional spirit, so intentionality is oriented to embodiment through the mass and momentum of feeling.”¹²¹

The interrelationship of communication between the psyche and spirit suggests, Doran argues, that self-appropriation must consist of more than simply advertence to and appropriation of one’s conscious operations. Self-appropriation must also advert to and appropriate the dimension of sensitive experience that is the psyche.¹²² Such advertence and appropriation, which can be accomplished through psychotherapy involving the analysis of dreams,¹²³ is what Doran refers to as psychic conversion. Psychic conversion allows a person to get in touch with his or her own symbol system and the underlying values that motivate one’s behavior.¹²⁴ In the case where psychic disorder interferes with the operations of intelligence, understanding, judging,

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 47.

¹²¹ Ibid., 62.

¹²² Ibid., 47.

¹²³ Ibid., 60. Doran is careful to qualify that the context of psychic conversion is not necessarily limited to therapy and analysis. He insists, however, that psychic conversion requires, “a re-formulation of [one’s] mentality.” Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* 115.

¹²⁴ Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, 59.

deliberating, deciding, and loving through blockage by the censor that prevents certain insights or the sustained performance of certain operations, psychic conversion serves to transform the censor “from a repressive to a constructive agency in a person’s development.”¹²⁵

Interrelationships Among Different Conversions

Because each conversion is a modality of self-transcendence that affects the whole person, each type of conversion is interconnected with the others. When religious, moral, and intellectual conversions occur in the same individual, Lonergan describes the interrelationships among them in terms of sublation.¹²⁶ For example, because the change of horizon in moral conversion makes the subject more aware of bias and sin that prevent knowing in truth, the truth sought and apprehended from the standpoint of moral conversion is a richer, more meaningful, and more significant truth than the purely intellectual truth sought in intellectual self-transcendence.¹²⁷ In this sense we can say with Lonergan that moral conversion sublates, or goes beyond while simultaneously augmenting, intellectual conversion.

In a similar way, religious conversion sublates moral and intellectual conversion. Once a person has experienced religious conversion, his or her understanding of the good and of truth is expanded. He or she now looks at others and at the world through the eyes of unrestricted love. Thus religious conversion subsumes, preserves, and broadens the motivations to seek intellectual truth and transcendental value that characterize intellectual and moral conversion. At the same time, religious conversion should not be thought of as merely an extension of intellectual and moral conversion. Although religious conversion is concerned with truth and moral goodness, it

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Recall that for Lonergan “what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.” Lonergan, *Method*, 241.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 241–42.

has, says Lonergan, a dimension all its own as a totally different, other-worldly, level of conversion.¹²⁸

Although spiritual conversion sublates moral conversion which, in turn, sublates intellectual conversion, it is not correct to conclude that intellectual conversion necessarily occurs before moral conversion and that moral conversion necessarily occurs before spiritual conversion. On the contrary, in the usual course of development religious conversion occurs first. Lonergan explains that, from a causal point of view, first there is the gift of God's love.¹²⁹ The experience of God's love reveals religious values through faith and thus motivates the subject to live morally. One of the values apprehended by the religious and moral subject is that of believing the truths taught by the religious tradition. "In such tradition and belief," says Lonergan, "are the seeds of intellectual conversion."¹³⁰ Accordingly, intellectual conversion may be preceded by religious and moral conversion.¹³¹

Because of the necessary role that psychic conversion plays in the full integration and appropriation of human subjects, it plays an important role in religious and other conversions. Psychic conversion is especially important for religious conversion in two ways. First, in effecting the transformation of censorship from repressive to constructive, psychic conversion frees and re-orientes the dynamism of the psyche towards acts of meaning and love, thus helping to open the subject to God's gift of love. Second, as a symbolic operator the psyche is, Lonergan says, "highly relevant to an account of religious symbolism."¹³² The way in which affect-laden images are apprehended and interpreted on the psychic level will have repercussions for the way in which religious symbols are apprehended and interpreted. The effect of an unhealthy psyche

¹²⁸ Ibid., 242.

¹²⁹ See Ibid., 122, 243.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 243.

¹³¹ Ibid. Therefore, Lonergan maintains that in religious matters the Latin tag, "*Nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*, Knowledge precedes love," is reversed. See Ibid., 122. In a related observation Lonergan notes that intellectual conversion is more apt to be resisted than religious and moral conversion. See Lonergan, "Doctrinal Pluralism," 86.

¹³² Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," 400.

on the misappropriation of religious symbols is well-stated by Vernon Gregson: “If symbols, archetypal and personal, and their concomitant affects are misperceived and distorted by the subject, then the Transcendent intentionality of religious symbol will likewise be misperceived and distorted, and the fuller development of spiritual conversion will be truncated.”¹³³ Thus the full development of religious conversion requires psychic conversion.¹³⁴

Conversion and Healing

We have examined Lonergan’s notion of conversion within a larger discussion of healing. Healing is necessary because of the thwarting, distorting, and paralyzing effects of the reign of sin, bias, and psychic disturbance in human lives, individually and socially. Insofar as sin, bias, and psychic disturbance act to prevent sustained authentic development in individuals and societies, they manifest the problem of evil, a problem that, because it directly affects the ability of human persons to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, is beyond the ability of human persons to solve.¹³⁵ In Lonergan’s analysis, only a higher integration brought about by the healing vector of God’s grace, received as the gift of God’s love and appropriated through conversions on every level, is able to transform the impotence of human creativity into possibility.

The healing of human subjects is thus the result of God’s grace which bears fruit through religious and other conversions. Reception of the gift of God’s love in religious conversion radically transforms the heart and horizon of a person so that in the dynamic state of being in love without restriction the person becomes open to new insights, to new values, to others, and to God. Such transformation has a unifying and integrating effect on the person so that in love the person receives a new desire for wholeness, a new desire to live a morally good life, and a new thirst for

¹³³ Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions*, College Theology Society Studies in “Religion 2 (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), 80.

¹³⁴ Gregson himself draws this conclusion. *Ibid.*, 81.

¹³⁵ See Lonergan, *Insight*, 710–15.

true knowledge of being. Thus religious conversion opens a person to psychic, moral, and intellectual conversion. These conversions not only make creative achievement possible; they will only bear fruit to the extent that the creative task is undertaken. To bear fruit, conversions require the commitment to self-discovery, self-appropriation, and self-transcendence that, as we saw in Chapter Three, are foundational for authentic becoming.

Lay Formation for Conversion on All Levels

Through their very incorporation into the Church and self-identification as Christians, lay persons testify to the work of grace in their lives. It is important to recognize that, because the authentic becoming of Christians is the result of God's grace, the religious conversion and development of Catholic lay persons cannot be manipulated, coerced, decreed, or instilled. However, the graced authentic becoming of Catholic lay persons can be encouraged through formation experiences that help them to objectify, understand, and respond to the gift they have been given.

Because of the interrelationships among all levels of conversion, those involved with the formation of Catholic lay persons should encourage all levels of conversion. To focus solely on the religious becoming of lay Catholics through liturgies, devotional practices, and doctrinal instruction, can lead to a warped sense of self, Church, and world. In order for conversions to become effective they must contribute, Lonergan says, to "a full and complete transformation of the whole of one's living and feeling, one's thoughts, words, deed, and omissions."¹³⁶ Accordingly, formation activities should help to enlarge the horizons of lay Catholics by, for example, making them more aware of the needs of peoples in their own and in other communities, helping them to better understand the ramifications of wasteful use of resources and of social injustices, and helping them to understand and appreciate ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. It is important to challenge lay Catholics to become aware of how the presence of

¹³⁶ Lonergan, *Method*, 241.

bias in selves, groups, and culture that run counter to the gospel act to prevent their own full becoming as well as the full becoming of others.

In order to foster the full development of the lay vocation realized through religious and other conversions, Church leaders themselves have to have undergone religious, moral, and intellectual conversions. This is necessary, first of all, so that Church leaders can model religious development and invite it among the laity. When we recall that the eye of faith reveals values consistent with God's love and light, it is not difficult to see that the authenticity, genuineness, and self-sacrificing love of those who represent the Catholic Church will testify to the values and doctrines they represent. Conversions are also necessary in Church leaders so that they can recognize biases operative in themselves and in the various ecclesial and secular cultures that inform their lives and the lives of lay Catholics. Among the biases that need to be recognized and addressed are the ideologies that may be operative within a given church community and in the larger Church. Prejudice of any sort and blindness to the injustices suffered by persons within and without church community operate to prevent the full realization of the lay vocation.

Finally, it is important to recognize the role that church community plays in the authentic becoming of all Catholics. The ability of a church community to manifest and express graced love is a function of the authentic becoming of its lay and clerical members. As we have seen, Lonergan emphasizes that psychological and social barriers to conversion can be overcome through charity.¹³⁷ However, Lonergan stresses, "being-in-love is properly itself, not in the isolated individual, but only in a plurality of persons that disclose their love to one another."¹³⁸ Thus, love, received in grace and expressed in charity among and by the community of faith, is foundational for the authentic becoming of all of its members.

¹³⁷ See Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 31–32.

¹³⁸ Lonergan, *Method*, 283.

DIALOGUE OF GRACE

The word dialogue can have a variety of meanings and applications in various personal and social contexts. In his work on dialogue in the Roman Catholic Church, Bradford Hinze describes the common parameters of the various meanings of dialogue as follows:

The distinctive dynamic feature of dialogue, common among the many specific meanings given to the word, is the back-and-forth movement in communication between individuals in which people are acting both as speakers and as listeners and there is an exchange of messages that provide the condition for possible common understandings, judgments, decisions, and actions. Through this exchange people can gain insight into their personal and communal identity and into the world; horizons expand, minds and hearts change, conversions occur. Such a dynamic supplies the necessary ingredients in the formation of bonds of relationship, bonds . . . that also provide the condition for the possibility of the deepest forms of sociality, friendship, and love.¹³⁹

Hinze thus describes dialogue to be a form of dynamic reciprocal communication directed ultimately to love. Lonergan suggests that the converse is also true, namely, that love is directed to dialogue, in his assertion God's gift of love forms the basis of dialogue between all representatives of religion.¹⁴⁰ In this section I will argue that not only does God's gift of love form the basis of dialogue between all representatives of religion, taken in the most general sense to include all religiously-converted persons, but that the experience, appropriation, and manifestation of grace by subjects necessarily include a reciprocal exchange of communication motivated by and directed to love. I will argue, in other words, that the experience, appropriation, and manifestation of grace are necessarily dialogical. In what follows, 'communication' and 'word' are not limited to spoken language, but are understood to be any means by which meaning is conveyed. Indeed, as Lonergan points out, "the principal communication is not saying what we know but showing what we are."¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Hinze, *Practices of Dialogue in the Roman Catholic Church*, 8.

¹⁴⁰ See Lonergan, *Method*, 360.

¹⁴¹ Lonergan, "Cognitive Structure," 220.

Dialogical Experience of Grace

While Lonergan does affirm that grace supports dialogue, dialogue is not a category that he uses to describe the experience of grace.¹⁴² And yet, the experience of grace as Lonergan describes it is arguably inherently dialogical. In what follows I will use Lonergan's own categories to argue that the experience of grace is necessarily dialogical.

Lonergan maintains that through grace persons receive the gift of God's love as an inner word that not only speaks love to their hearts, but calls them through the gift of charity to speak outward words of love in return.¹⁴³ The outward words of love that graced individuals are called to speak in charity are not superfluous or incidental, but play a constitutive role in their graced development.¹⁴⁴ To illustrate how this is the case, Lonergan points to the analogous reinforcing and constitutive role that expressions of love play in the relationship of love between a man and a woman. He argues, "It is the love that each freely and fully reveals to the other that brings about the radically new situation of being in love and that begins the unfolding of its life-long implications."¹⁴⁵ When directed to God, the outward word of love is prayer which further opens a subject to, and reinforces in that subject, the experience of God's love.¹⁴⁶

But God's love also calls persons to express the charity they have received in grace through outward words of love directed to others and manifested through words, actions, and lives. We have already seen that the appropriation of God's gift of love in religious conversion

¹⁴² I was able to find only two places in *Method* where Lonergan asserts that grace supports dialogue. The first assertion is, "Finally, it is in such grace [that God offers to all people] that can be found the theological justification of Catholic dialogue with all Christians, with non-Christians, and even with atheists . . ." Ibid., 278. The second assertion is, "The moral principle . . . is the basis of universal dialogue. The religious principle . . . is the basis of dialogue between all representatives of religion." Ibid., 360.

¹⁴³ Lonergan, *Method*, 113, 119. Lonergan develops the notion of inner word in *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*. There he describes the inner word to be "a medium between the meaning of outer words and the realities meant" and to be "a medium between the intellect and the things that are understood." Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, 21.

¹⁴⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 112.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 113.

¹⁴⁶ Lonergan writes, "perhaps after years of sustained prayerfulness and self-denial, immersion in the world mediated by meaning will become less total and experience of the mystery become clear and distinct enough to awaken attention, wonder, inquiry." Ibid., 113.

demands the response of loving God and others in return. Another way to understand the need for graced persons to speak outward words of love is to recognize that God's inner word of love spoken in grace, and the resulting gifts of faith and charity, are the fulfillment of each person's thrust to self-transcendence. Thus, by its very nature the gift of grace is directed to God and others. While religious experience is intensely personal, it is, says Lonergan, never solitary.¹⁴⁷

The dialogue between the inner word of God's love and the graced-person's response through outward words of graced love¹⁴⁸ is not the only dialogue that forms the experience of grace. The dialogue of grace also includes a dialogue between the inner word of God's love and what collectively can be referred to as the outer word of God's love. God's outer word refers to all the 'words' that help subjects to identify, clarify, and appropriate the gift they have received in grace.¹⁴⁹

Christians recognize that the outer word of God is revealed in the Word made flesh. For Catholics the outer word of God's love speaks in a privileged way through the Scriptures, through the sacraments, in liturgy, in fellowship, and in the accumulated religious wisdom of our religious tradition. But this list is far from exhaustive. Lonergan notes that God's outer word of love speaks through any expression of religious meaning or religious value.¹⁵⁰ Since to the eye of faith all meaning and value is religious, we can conclude that the outer word of God's love can speak to persons through the loves, relationships, encounters, events, and contexts of their every-day lives. God's outer word may also be carried by "art, or symbol, or language, or by the remembered and portrayed lives or deeds or achievements of individuals or classes or groups."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 115.

¹⁴⁸ Here I am using 'graced love' as a synonym for the charity received in grace to avoid the popular narrow identification of charity solely with generosity toward the needy.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 112–13.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 112.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

Lonergan is thus able to affirm that “the experience of grace is as large as the Christian experience of life.”¹⁵²

Any word of God’s love, received as God’s inner word or outer word, or participated in via one’s outward words of graced love, penetrates to all four levels of one’s intentional consciousness.¹⁵³ Arguably this penetration includes one’s very passionateness of being and thus not only includes the psyche, but serves to unify and direct one’s person in line with what Lonergan refers to as the vertical finality of the passionateness of being which heads for self-transcendence.¹⁵⁴ Accordingly, it can be argued that inner, outer, and outward words of God’s love play a role in healing through the integrating and unifying that takes place in subjects who receive and express these words of graced love.

Lonergan notes that in the measure religious experience is genuine, “it remains the bond that unites the religious community, that directs their common judgments, that purifies their beliefs.”¹⁵⁵ Thus, the expression of genuine religious experience in the dialogue of grace can be understood to play a role in the healing of Church communities. This has obvious implications not only within communities of Catholic faith, but also within the larger religious community informed by ecumenical and interfaith relationships and dialogues in which Catholics participate.

Grace as Gift of Openness

The gift of God’s love produces in subjects a dynamic state of being in love without restriction. Arguably, grace thus enlarges a person’s capacity to both receive love and to love in return. Lonergan refers to this enlarged capacity, brought about in subjects through grace, as the gift of openness.¹⁵⁶ Lonergan describes two ways in which a subject’s capacity to give and

¹⁵² Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit,” 32.

¹⁵³ Lonergan, *Method*, 243.

¹⁵⁴ See Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit,” 30. Doran associates the psyche with “the very movement of life, the passionateness of being.” See Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, 43.

¹⁵⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 119.

¹⁵⁶ Lonergan, “Openness and Religious Experience,” in *Collection*, 187.

receive love is enlarged as the result of grace. On the one hand there is an enlargement “implicit in the very structure of human consciousness,” which is an enlargement of natural human abilities.¹⁵⁷ The enlargement of a person’s natural ability to love is the result, Lonergan says, of grace taken as *gratia sanans*, or healing grace.¹⁵⁸ But grace also effects in subjects “an ultimate enlargement, beyond the resources of every finite consciousness, where there enters into clear view God as unknown.”¹⁵⁹ This gift is the effect of grace, “not as merely *sanans* but as *elevans*, as *lumen gloriae*.”¹⁶⁰ We can conclude that grace as healing and as elevating simultaneously opens subjects to God’s love and to human love. Grace thereby produces in persons the capacity not only to participate in the love of the Trinity, but also to love others unselfishly and unrestrictedly beyond their natural inclinations.¹⁶¹ Thus grace both heals and elevates subjects to participate in the dialogue of grace.

The question naturally arises, to what extent do human desires and natural human loves participate in the dialogue of grace? Put another way, can human desires and loves condition or invite us to receive God’s gift of love? Lonergan seems to answer in the affirmative in his 1941 article, “Finality, Love, Marriage,”¹⁶² where he describes three levels in which human love expresses itself in “a field of natural spontaneity and infused virtue.”¹⁶³ The lowest level is that of our natural drives and appetites, which are, Lonergan says, fashioned by and oriented to God.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Here I follow Jeremy Blackwood’s suggestion that the observed effect of elevation brought about by grace (as *gratia elevans*) is that of “*an act, the content of which is not fully accounted for by the act itself*.” Blackwood, “Sanctifying Grace, Elevation, and the Fifth Level of Consciousness,” 6, emphasis in the original. This is consistent with Lonergan’s thesis, “Acts, not only of the theological virtues but of other virtues as well, inasmuch as they are elicited in the rational part of a person and in accordance with one’s Christian duty, are specified by a supernatural formal object, and therefore are absolutely supernatural as to their substance and are so by reason of their formal object.” Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum*, trans. Michael Shields (unpublished version, graciously provided by Robert Doran, forthcoming in Vol. 19 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*), 65–66.

¹⁶² Lonergan, “Finality, Love, Marriage,” in *Collection*, 17–52. This article was originally published in *Theological Studies* 4 (1943): 477–510.

¹⁶³ Lonergan, “Finality, Love, Marriage,” 30.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Our orientation to God is further realized on the second level in the truth and good that appeal to our reason.¹⁶⁵ Finally, on the level of infused charity, grace reveals truth and goodness beyond the reaches of our reason.¹⁶⁶ Lonergan elaborates on the reciprocity of these three levels:

Finally, these three levels are realized in one subject; as the higher perfects the lower, so the lower disposes to the higher; and it is in this disposition of natural spontaneity to reinforce reason, of reason to reinforce grace – for all three come from and return to God – that is to be found the ascent of love that gives human marriage a finality on the level of Christian charity and perfection.¹⁶⁷

Lonergan describes the movement of ascent from sensory appetite to human love, a movement he refers to as “the ascent of love,” as “a dispositive upward tendency from *erôs* to friendship, and from friendship to a special order of charity.”¹⁶⁸ The higher levels, in turn, perfect and elevate the lower through sublation. In his response to a question posed during the 1977 Boston College Lonergan Workshop, Lonergan reiterates, “being in love is the consummation of unconscious desire, and God’s gift of his love is the agape that sublates eros.”¹⁶⁹

Not only are natural loves directed to God, but the draw of God’s love is at work in human attractions and loves.¹⁷⁰ It is in this sense that Lonergan can write, “underpinning both love of one’s family and love of one’s fellow [persons], there is the love of God.”¹⁷¹ I argue, therefore, that all human love participates in the capacity of human persons to receive God’s love. In the dialogue of grace which constitutes, conditions, and expresses the dynamic state of being in love with God unrestrictedly, God speaks through the inner word of God’s love flooding our hearts and through the outer word of God’s love spoken through religious tradition, through the

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 32.

¹⁶⁹ Lonergan, Question and Answer Session (Response to Question 1, Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, Boston, June 20, 1977), Lonergan’s typed notes, 3. Agape and eros are neither accented nor italicized in the original. Doran’s transcription of this Question and Answer Session is available at www.bernardlonergan.com as file 91600DTE070 / TC916 A&B transcript.

¹⁷⁰ In metaphysical theological terms, the relation between human attractions and loves and the attraction of God’s love is one of obediential potency. Obediential potency describes the potential of human nature to receive divine communication and to act in a graced way. See Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 142–49.

¹⁷¹ Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity,” in *A Second Collection*, 153.

Church, through human loves, and through the contexts, persons, events, and symbols of our everyday lives. In this graced dialogue graced subjects are called to respond in outward words of graced love through which they express their love for God and others as a participation in God's own love.

Dialogue of Grace Informed by Fifth-level Cooperations

To fully appreciate the dialogical nature of grace it is helpful to examine a development in Lonergan's thinking that took place in his post-Method years in which he affirms the existence of a fifth level in consciousness as the level of the complete self-transcendence of falling in love.¹⁷² Lonergan interpreters have suggested a number of ways in which the fifth level differs from the first four intentional levels of consciousness. Tad Dunne, for example, suggests that because the fifth level constitutes the subject "as a term of an interpersonal relation," on this level "our consciousness becomes also a common consciousness with friend, family, country, or God."¹⁷³ Dunne further suggests that operations on the fifth level "are intrinsically *cooperations* – acts we share with one another and acts we share with God."¹⁷⁴ He supports his suggestion by interpreting cooperations to be an expression of passionateness of being insofar as passionateness of being functions as "the topmost quasi-operator that by intersubjectivity prepares, by solidarity entices, by falling in love establishes us as members of community."¹⁷⁵

We saw in Chapter Three that questions, such as, Why? How? Is it so? and What do I do? serve as the operators that move a subject from one level of intentional consciousness to another. In light of Dunne's suggestion that operations on the fifth level are cooperations, we can ask what

¹⁷² This development is well chronicled by Blackwood in his paper, "Sanctifying Grace, Elevation, and the Fifth Level of Consciousness." Lonergan refers to the development in his thinking about a fifth level in the question and answer session of the 1980 Boston College Lonergan Workshop. Lonergan, Question and Answer Session (Response to Question 3, Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, Boston, June 18, 1980), 3, www.bernardlonergan.com as file 97500DTE080 / TC977 A&B (Doran's transcription).

¹⁷³ Dunne, "Being in Love," 164–65.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 166, emphasis in the original.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 164. The quotation is from Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 23, 30.

sort of question or questions would function as cooperations on the fifth level? Lonergan himself has provided two possible answers. The first is the question, “Who is going to save us?”¹⁷⁶ This question requires, says Lonergan, enough experience of the world and of ourselves to recognize that “We are in a terrible mess: we cannot save ourselves.”¹⁷⁷ A second question suggested by Lonergan is the religious question that arises from our experience of unconditioned, unrestricted love, “with whom, then, are we in love?”¹⁷⁸ A third possible fifth-level ‘cooperation’ is offered by Blackwood as the question, “What would you have me do?”¹⁷⁹ This question, Blackwood says, seeks to specify the content of the world of values of the beloved.¹⁸⁰ Blackwood’s suggested fifth-level question is consistent with the observation made in Chapter Three that in our love and care for others our horizons extend to include their concerns, interests, values, and loves.¹⁸¹

Lonergan’s and Blackwood’s proposed fifth-level questions suggest that, consistent with Lonergan’s interpretation of the experience of grace as being in love with God unrestrictedly, grace changes a subject’s desires so that they are oriented to the benefit of others rather than to the benefit of self. Such a change in desires reflects the elevation that takes place in graced persons. It coincides with their reception of openness as gift and consequent change of horizon as the result of grace. Blackwood speculates that signs of this elevation can be discerned when the knowing, deciding, and loving of graced persons go beyond what can be explained on a purely

¹⁷⁶ Pierre Robert, “Theology and Spiritual Life: Encounter with Bernard Lonergan,” *Lonergan Workshop* 10 (1994): 342. While Lonergan does not explicitly link this question with the fifth level, he does say that it requires more development than the *a priori* questions that serve as operators on the four levels of intentional consciousness. Robert’s article describes and provides notes from an interview with Bernard Lonergan conducted by Robert in May 1982. The topic of the interview, which was conducted partly in French and partly in English, was theology and the spiritual life. Although the interview was not recorded, Robert maintains that he took notes which he completed immediately after the interview. Robert’s intention at the time of the interview was not to publish it. However, following Lonergan’s death in 1984, the interview was published in French in *Science et Esprit* (1986): 331–341. It was later published as “Theology and Spiritual Life: Encounter with Bernard Lonergan,” *Lonergan Workshop* 10 (1994): 333–43. Robert refers to this interview in his later article, “Questions on the Fifth Level and the Processes of the Spiritual Subject,” *Lonergan Workshop* 11 (1995): 145–63 at 146–47.

¹⁷⁷ Robert, “Theology and Spiritual Life,” 342.

¹⁷⁸ Lonergan, “Lecture 3: Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty ‘Systematics,’” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 206.

¹⁷⁹ Blackwood, “Sanctifying Grace, Elevation, and the Fifth Level of Consciousness,” 14.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Lonergan, “Pope John’s Intention,” 234.

human level.¹⁸² Because persons elevated in grace know good and evil with the light of faith, they value all those who are loved by God, especially the poor, rejected, and unloving, and they are willing to give themselves away in love despite the cost to themselves. Looking at the dialogue of grace from the perspective of the fifth level on which the ‘operations’ are ‘cooperations,’ we can see that participation of graced subjects in the dialogue of grace consists not merely in performing isolated acts or in offering tokens of love, but finds its full expression in cooperations in which we give ourselves and receive others as gift in self-sacrificing love.

Role of Charisms in Dialogue of Grace

Although Lonergan does not refer directly to charisms in his teachings on grace, charisms can be interpreted in light of his interiority analysis to be the unique way in which individual subjects participate in the dialogue of grace. The notion of charisms has scriptural roots. In addition to 1 Peter 4:10 they are mentioned in the writings of Paul where they refer to gifts (1Corinthians 7:7; 1 Corinthians 12:4) given according to grace (*charis*) (Romans 12:6) for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7) or for the building up of the community (1 Corinthians 12:12–30).¹⁸³ Vatican II takes up the scriptural notion of charisms in its recognition that charisms are given to each graced individual by the Holy Spirit for the needs of the Church¹⁸⁴ and for the good of society.¹⁸⁵

As gifts given to individual graced persons, charisms are uniquely determined by and concretely manifested according to the talents and development of each individual. Using

¹⁸² Blackwood, “Sanctifying Grace, Elevation, and the Fifth Level of Consciousness,” 14–15.

¹⁸³ See Rom 12:6, “We have gifts (*charismata*) that differ according to the grace (*charin*) given to us.” See also 1 Cor 1:4, 7; 7:7; 12:1, 4–6, 7, 11; 14:1. Translation according to the New Revised Standard Version in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). Charisms should not be identified solely with what Paul refers to as *pneumatika*, which refer to the more spectacular gifts of tongues, healings, miracles, and prophecy (See 1 Cor 12:1; 15:1).

¹⁸⁴ See *Lumen Gentium* no. 12 in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 17.

¹⁸⁵ “From the reception of these charisms, even the most ordinary ones, there follow for all Christian believers the right and duty to use them in the church and in the world for the good of humanity and the development of the church.” *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3 in *ibid.*, 407.

Lonergan's notion of sublation, John Haughey argues that the unique talents a person naturally possesses are sublated by the Spirit into charisms.¹⁸⁶ Haughey prefers to describe a charismed person as "a matrix of gifts, with virtues mixed with graces, with character traits, with genes, with talents – all sublated by the Spirit, which bundles these together into a giftedness that is *sui generis* [of its own kind]."¹⁸⁷ He explains that although the Spirit enacts the sublation, the manifestation and use of charisms for the good of the Church and of society requires the cooperation of faith, hope, and love on the part of the one whose talent is being sublated.¹⁸⁸ Thus, while charisms are given for the upbuilding of the Church and for the good of society, they also provide a means, Haughey says, for each religiously-converted person to differentiate the way that God calls him or her to love.¹⁸⁹ Charisms thus inform the unique vocation of each graced person and also the unique way in which each graced person participates in the dialogue of grace.¹⁹⁰

Dialogue of Grace as Mediation

Lonergan's notion of mediation can help us to better understand the personal, interpersonal, and communal dynamics of the dialogue of grace. In Lonergan's thought, mediation plays a key role in how we apprehend the world "mediated by meaning."¹⁹¹ The notion of mediation explains how our world is apprehended not only through our immediate experience, but through various carriers of meaning, such as intersubjectivity, art, symbols, language, and lives and deeds of persons.¹⁹² In Lonergan's usage, mediation is broader than the notion of

¹⁸⁶ John C. Haughey, S.J., "Three Conversions Embedded in Personal Calling," in *Revisiting the Idea of Vocation: Theological Explorations*, ed. John C. Haughey, S.J. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 12–13.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁹⁰ This is consistent with my point in Chapter Three that God's call can only be recognized and discerned in light of the contexts, horizons, level of development, and particular unfolding of a person's life.

¹⁹¹ Lonergan, *Method*, 77.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 57.

causality.¹⁹³ Admitting that mediation is “an extremely general and tenuous notion,” Lonergan contrasts mediation with immediacy as follows: “anything is immediate insofar as it is a source, basis, ground; anything is mediated insofar as it is a result, consequence, outcome, insofar as it arises in a field of radiation, expansion, influence, insofar as it manifests, expresses, reveals, the basis.”¹⁹⁴ One example Lonergan provides to illustrate the notion of mediation is that of the respiratory center of an animal in which oxygen breathed in by the lungs is immediate in the respiratory system but is mediated to the rest of the body.¹⁹⁵ The lungs in this example function as a center of immediacy. From his notion of mediation Lonergan develops the notions of mutual mediation, self-mediation, and mutual self-mediation.

Mutual Mediation

By mutual mediation Lonergan means the mutual working together of different centers of immediacy to mediate a functional whole.¹⁹⁶ Mutual mediation can be illustrated by extending the example of the respiratory system to include all the physiological systems that together keep a body alive. Thus, the respiratory, digestive, circulatory, nervous, skeletal, muscular, endocrine, renal, and reproductive systems collaborate together, as different centers of immediacy, to mutually mediate the whole living of a body.

Self-mediation

There is something more going on in living organisms than simply mutual mediation. The process of growth and development of organisms involves specialization and differentiation, resulting in what Lonergan refers to as a “displacement upwards” to a higher level of

¹⁹³ Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1956–1964*, 162–63, 176n24. Lonergan is careful to distinguish his notion of mediation from that of Hegel “with its idealist presuppositions.” Instead, Lonergan maintains that his notion of mediation is a generalization of Aristotle’s notion of mediation. *Ibid.*, 176.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 164.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 165.

functioning.¹⁹⁷ In development, the self of a living organism mediates its own becoming in what Lonergan terms self-mediation.¹⁹⁸ The notion of self-mediation can also be applied to a species to describe how it mediates itself through the reproduction of its individuals.¹⁹⁹

When applied to human subjects, another aspect of self-mediation has to be taken into consideration in addition to displacement upwards, namely the intentional.²⁰⁰ Lonergan analyzes the role of intentionality in the development of subjects in terms of what he refers to as “summations” of intentional elements.²⁰¹ An intentional element describes the totality of an act of intending. It consists of three aspects: the act of intending, the intended object, and the intending subject.²⁰² As we saw in Chapter Three, through intentional acts subjects not only become aware of their intended objects, but also become present to themselves in consciousness.²⁰³

The summation of all the intentional acts of a human subject comprise three realities of the subject: 1) the summation of the acts themselves are, says Lonergan, the subject’s living; 2) the summation of the objects of these acts form the world or horizon of the subject; and 3) the summation of subjects into “the intersubjectivity of community, into ‘we,’” constitutes the relational or communal reality of the subject.²⁰⁴ Although the summation of subjects into ‘we’ refers to the others in a subject’s living, it actually occurs as a displacement inwards to the subject of consciousness because this summation is the consequence of acts of intending. In other words, because the self-mediation of a human subject is intentional, it is not only a displacement upwards in development, but it involves, as well, a displacement inwards to the subject of

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 168.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 168–69.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 169.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 170.

²⁰² Ibid., 169.

²⁰³ As we saw in Chapter Three, the self-presence that results from an intentional act is that of consciousness. The self-presence of consciousness is not the consequence of introspection or reflection. It is concomitant with, but distinct from, the presence of objects to the subject. Ibid., 170.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

consciousness which concomitantly gives rise to the group, “to the ‘we.’”²⁰⁵ The intentional self-mediation of subjects also gives rise to an “extension outwards” which describes the growth of the capacity of a subject to respond to all he or she is capable of apprehending in intentionality.²⁰⁶

The awareness of the ‘we,’ that comes about through a subject’s self-mediation is, says Lonergan, that of a “‘we’ who live together and perform all the operations of life, not singly as so many isolated monads but as a ‘we.’”²⁰⁷ Within this awareness of ‘we,’ self-mediation mediates autonomy which reaches its climax in the self-possession achieved via existential decision.²⁰⁸ An existential decision thus amounts to a disposal of oneself for the sake of others, since it is only by virtue of the self-possession achieved in an existential decision that a subject is able to give him or herself away.²⁰⁹ Authenticity is fidelity to that decision.

The achievement of autonomy in the existential decision occurs in community insofar as it arises concomitantly with an awareness of ‘we.’²¹⁰ Thus, we should not think of the autonomy of the existential subject in terms of separation from others or as doing his or her own thing. Rather, the communities in which autonomy is achieved serve to condition autonomy by providing both the concrete possibilities for, as well as the constraints that hamper, a subject’s autonomous becoming. Within the concrete situations of each community, which are open to some opportunities and closed to others, the working out of the subject’s autonomy is directed not only to making him or herself, but to doing so in community in order to dispose him or herself for the sake of others.²¹¹

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 170–71.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 171. Lonergan mentions three fundamental commitments to community that inform the disposing of oneself in existential decision. These include “the mutual self-commitment of marriage, . . . the overarching commitment to the state, and . . . the eschatological commitment to the church.” Ibid., 172.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid., 171.

Mutual Self-Mediation

So far self-mediation has been described as mediation by oneself *of* oneself with the role of others in community serving to condition one's self-mediation. Equivalently, self-mediation can be described as a one-way communication of self to self. The others in the life of a subject, however, do not merely serve to constrain the parameters of the subject's becoming, but exert an influence on who the subject becomes. Lonergan uses the term mutual self-mediation to describe the way in which subjects mutually influence and are opened to being influenced by each other.²¹² Thus mutual self-mediation involves a simultaneous two-way self-mediation or communication from self to other and from other to self. Doran explains, "[m]utual self-mediation occurs between two human beings when one reveals one's own self-discovery and commitment to another and receives the self-revelation of the other; one opens oneself to be influenced at the depth of one's being, and others open themselves to be influenced by us."²¹³

Mutual self-mediation is communication through self-disclosure and through openness to the self-disclosure of others. Revealing one's self-discovery and self-commitment through self-disclosure, says Lonergan, "is an act of confidence, of intimacy, of letting down one's defenses, of entrusting oneself to another."²¹⁴ Just as self-disclosure is a form of self-donation, so openness and vulnerability to receive the self-disclosure of another is a form of self-donation. As forms of self-donation, self-disclosure and the openness of receptivity are only possible to the extent a subject is in possession of him or herself in authenticity. Dialogue can thus be described as a mutual self-mediation in which each dialogue partner is committed in authenticity to communicate his or her self-possession and to receive that of the others.

The possibility of mutual self-mediation is conditioned not only by the authenticity of the subjects involved, but also by the relationships and contexts in which it occurs. As relationships

²¹² Ibid., 175.

²¹³ Doran, "Reflections on Method in Systematic Theology," *Lonergan Workshop* 17 (2002): 45.

²¹⁴ Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer," 174.

can vary from chance encounters to the love shared between husband and wife, mutual self-mediation can involve lesser or greater degrees of self-disclosure and openness. Certainly, relationships of love can be understood both in terms of self-mediation and of mutual self-mediation.

Loving and being loved are self-mediations in the sense that they mediate the transformation of self into a new whole.²¹⁵ Any act of loving results in self-transformation because as a form of self-transcendence it is also a form of self-objectification in which we come to know ourselves as loving. Loving is thus a self-mediation. Andrew Tallon's metaphysics of connaturality, in which he integrates Lonergan's notion of affective consciousness with cognition and volition,²¹⁶ provides a theoretical basis by which we can understand how being loved is also a self-mediation. Tallon explains that being loved results in the transformation of the recipient. "Being loved," he says, "is a from-above gift; human love is the prime analogue for such a gift: one person's self-donation changes the life, heart and soul, of another. Out of such an affirming, confirming 'Yes' to one's being by another comes faith and trust in that someone, and also hope for one's life to come."²¹⁷ The love of another is a gift which, when received, invites love in return. Andrew Tallon affirms: "Love perfects both lover and beloved; human nature is raised by gifts, and gifts become virtues, each one a *virtus* as ability to act."²¹⁸ Thus, a relationship of love is a mutual self-mediation in which each lover is not only transformed (self-mediation) in giving him or herself away, but is also transformed (mutual self-mediation) in receiving the return gift of love from the other.

²¹⁵ That the whole person is changed in love can be seen in Lonergan's description of love as a dynamic state "that prompts and molds all our thoughts and feelings, all our judgments and decisions." Lonergan, "Future of Christianity," 153.

²¹⁶ Andrew Tallon, *Head and Heart: Affection, Cognition, Volition as Triune Consciousness* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 26n1.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 273.

²¹⁸ Tallon, *Head and Heart*, 272.

Dialogue of Grace as Mutual Self-mediation

The dialogue of grace can be described in terms of mediation, self-mediation, and mutual self-mediation. It is mediation in the sense that one's outward words of graced love serve to reveal and interpret the inner word of God's love received in grace.²¹⁹ Thus, a subject's outward words of love mediate the gift of grace to self and others. Outward words of graced love also function as a means of self-mediation of the subject.²²⁰ They do this by revealing to a graced subject who he or she is as healed, charismed, and elevated by grace. In making objective the transformation brought about in oneself through grace, outward words of graced love serve to affirm and confirm the gift received, thus enabling the subject to appropriate the gift in his or her living. Finally, the dialogue of grace is a mutual self-mediation of graced love in the sense that it transforms both self and others in a dynamic that Lonergan describes using the expression, "*Cor ad cor loquitor*: love speaks to love, and its speech is powerful."²²¹

Mutual Self-mediation in Christ. For Christians the dialogue of grace can be described as a mutual self-mediation in Christ. This can be understood from several perspectives. First, it is a mutual self-mediation between Christ and the Christian. While the mutual self-mediation between Christ and the Christian is not a mutual self-mediation between equals, it is, nevertheless, a mutual self-mediation in which both Christ and the Christian are affected in self-mediation. Christ is affected because his life was spent for us and others. Insofar as the Christian lives for God and others because of and in Christ, the Christian becomes him or herself as a self-mediation in Christ.²²² In fact, as we saw in Chapter Three, being-in-Christ affects every aspect of a Christian's living.²²³ Lonergan explains that in Christ, "One is becoming oneself, not just by experiences, insights, judgments, by choices, decisions, conversion, not just freely and

²¹⁹ Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ in Prayer," 179–80.

²²⁰ See *ibid.*, 180.

²²¹ Lonergan, *Method*, 113; see also *ibid.*, 73.

²²² Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ in Prayer," 180–81.

²²³ See *ibid.*, 180.

deliberately, not just deeply and strongly, but as one who is carried along.”²²⁴ Thus, the participation of Christians in the dialogue of grace is a mutual self-mediation between the subject and Christ.

Mutual Self-Mediation of Graced Love. Participation in the dialogue of grace in Christ is also a mutual self-mediation among Christians in Christ. Lonergan affirms that those who believe in Christ the man, and love him and keep his commandments by loving one another as Christ has loved us, are brought into unity with the Father through being united with Christ as members of Christ’s body.²²⁵ Citing John 17:21 and Matthew 25:31–45 Lonergan explains that the divine persons, the blessed in heaven, and all of those who, in Doran’s interpretation, “have said ‘Yes,’ either explicitly or implicitly, to God’s offer of God’s own love,”²²⁶ are united through a “mutual ‘being in’” through grace.²²⁷ Such a love “overflows into a love of all that God has made and especially of all persons whom God wishes to love.”²²⁸ This is a mutual self-mediation in which those who believe in Christ and keep his commandments are led into a communion with God and one another directed to the good of order and to the Church.²²⁹ Lonergan explains,

From all of this we conclude that the divine persons themselves and the blessed in heaven and the just on this earth are in one another as those who are known are in those who know them and those who are loved are in those who love them. This knowing and loving is directed both to the ultimate end, which is the good itself by essence, and to the proximate end, which is the general good of order, the kingdom of God, the body of Christ, the Church.²³⁰

What is true in grace must also find expression in concrete reality. Just as the inner word of God’s love demands to be spoken in outward words of graced love, so ‘being-in’ God and one another must be expressed in the concrete prayer, relationships, and cooperations of all the

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, trans. Michael G. Shields from *De Deo Trino: Pars systematica* (1964), ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 511.

²²⁶ Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* 188.

²²⁷ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 511.

²²⁸ Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity,” 154.

²²⁹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 511.

²³⁰ Ibid. Lonergan wrote this prior to Vatican II. After Vatican II he explicitly states that the kingdom of God and the Church are not to be identified. My source for this information is a communication from Robert Doran of March 6, 2011.

baptized, laity and clergy. These concrete expressions of graced love help to transform all members of the Church in mutual self-mediation. They also enable the Church to self-mediate in itself the gift of ‘being-in’ God and one another in Christ. The gift of ‘being-in’ God and one another in Christ, understood as a mutual-self mediation among the baptized and as a self-mediation of the Church, helps to explain how concretely the sacrifice of the Eucharist “is supremely effective in enabling the faithful to express in their lives and portray to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true church.”²³¹

As Christians participate in the dialogue of grace, the outward words of love they speak express God’s love with transformative effects that can be understood in terms of mutual self-mediation. Lonergan explains that those who are conformed to Christ as adopted sons and daughters, “are in the divine Word in which God the Father utters himself and all other things.”²³² Lonergan further explains that those who are conformed to Christ are in a special way “in the divine proceeding Love in which God the Father and God the Son love both themselves and all other things as well.”²³³ The graced love of Christians is, therefore, a participation in God’s very word of love. We can thus argue that participation in the dialogue of grace is a mutual self-mediation of graced love in which those who participate in God’s love through receiving God’s word of love and through speaking outward words of graced love are mutually transformed as they drawn into communion with God and with one another.²³⁴

Conclusion

Several conclusions can be drawn about the dialogue of grace based on the analysis above. First, the dialogue of grace is utterly concrete. This follows from the fact that, although the inner word of God’s love is immediate, it is nevertheless a word received by concrete human

²³¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* no. 2, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 117.

²³² Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 509.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ See Lonergan, *Method*, 118–19.

persons, responded to and objectified through concrete outward words, and interpreted by concrete human persons in concrete contexts. Each graced person is uniquely gifted and participates uniquely and concretely in the dialogue of grace by virtue of his or her charisms. Because the dialogue of grace is concrete, it has personal, social, and historical manifestations and consequences.

Second, participation in the dialogue of grace is necessary for the full appropriation of grace. Because God's gift of love includes the command to love in return, God's love must be appropriated and responded to through outward words of love. Moreover, until the inner word of God's love is expressed and objectified in outward words of graced love and illumined and interpreted via God's outer word, it is conscious only as a vague, mysterious undertow.²³⁵ Not only are the graced subject's outward words of love a necessary response to God's command to love, they are necessary in objectifying, and therefore in mediating to the subject, both the gift he or she has received and the person he or she is called to be in grace. Lonergan emphasizes that the outward word plays "a constitutive role" in revealing to us what we have received via the inner word.²³⁶ Alternately, without the inner word of God's love, the outer word of God's love that serves to interpret it will be devoid of meaning.

Third, the dialogue of grace is a mutual self-mediation. Because the dialogue of grace is a dialogue that participates in God's own love, it is a mutual self-mediation that transforms the capacity of the participants to both speak words of graced love and to receive them. Understood as mutual self-mediation, the dialogue of grace can help us to better understand how the healing and elevating communicated through the inner and outer words of God's love are directed to the self-donation required to both give oneself away and to receive the gift of others in love. Understanding the dialogue of grace as a mutual self-mediation helps to inform how the gift of authenticity received in grace, and therefore the holiness that depends on it, are communal events.

²³⁵ See *ibid.*, 112.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 112–13.

The outward words of graced love spoken in the dialogue of grace are intentional acts which result in both a displacement inwards to the intersubjectivity of 'we' and in a displacement outward to community. While these outward words serve to transform individuals, they are spoken within and are therefore also transformative of a community of graced subjects who together participate in the dialogue of grace through mutual self-mediation.

Finally, because outward words of graced love are not merely the objectification of God's love, but participate in God's love itself, we can see that the dialogue of grace serves, ultimately, to bring people into communion with one another as a participation in God's love.²³⁷ In healing persons of various forms of dramatic and personal biases which function to block insights and feelings, the love received in grace renders them more capable of self-donation and more open to receive the self-donation of others. The dialogue of grace thus provides the condition by which, through the mutual self-mediation of graced love, intersubjective relationships are healed and elevated through God's word of love. In this way the dialogue of grace also serves to heal divisions between and among peoples.

Yet, because God respects human freedom, the dialogue of grace depends on the ability and willingness of persons to receive the inner and outer words of God's love and to speak outward words graced love in religious conversion. Because the dialogue of grace manifests itself concretely in human dialogue, any refusal to dialogue on the human level is also a refusal to participate in the dialogue of God's grace. The dialogue of grace is further conditioned to the extent its human participants are converted on every level. This is the case because the ability to dialogue on the human level is facilitated by conversions on all levels in which persons become attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and able to love, and because conversions on all levels both condition and are sublated by religious conversion, which is the condition of possibility of participation in the dialogue of grace.

²³⁷ See *ibid.*, 119.

LAY VOCATION REALIZED AUTHENTICALLY IN DIALOGUE OF GRACE

So far, this chapter has examined the realities of grace and conversion from the perspective of Lonergan's interiority analysis in which the experience of grace is described as the dynamic state of being in love with God unrestrictedly. I have argued that grace operates in a three-way dialogue consisting of the inner and outer words of God's love and the outward words of graced love spoken by graced subjects. In this dialogue the inner word of God's love is the word of grace that enables and calls the graced subject to speak outward words of love. The inner word of God's love requires both the subject's outward words of love and God's outer word of love for its objectification and interpretation. As grace involves subjects in the dialogue of graced love, it serves to both elevate and to heal them individually and together. It does this by transforming the desires and horizons of individuals, thereby bringing them in line with God's light and love through faith and conversion. Through the dialogue of grace, God's gift of love heals and elevates individuals to bring them into communion with God and one another.

We have seen that from the perspective of interiority analysis, religious conversion can be described as a radical change of the whole person as the consequence of the appropriation of grace through commitment to loving God and others. Religious conversion results in a radical change in horizon in which the converted person is opened not only to giving him or herself away and to receiving others in love, but also to recognizing sin and bias in his or her life and environment. Specifically, through religious conversion each lay ecclesial subject is enabled to cooperate with God and to collaborate with others in overcoming sin and bias with greater good.

The task remains to apply the results of the analysis and argument above to the lay vocation as envisioned by Vatican II. Specifically, the remainder of this chapter will look at how participation in the dialogue of grace is necessary for the full appropriation of the lay vocation. Given the communal nature of the dialogue of grace, I will conclude that participation in the

dialogue of grace is necessary not only for the lay vocation, but is mutually necessary for all ecclesial vocations.

Lay Vocation Realized in Dialogue

We saw in Chapter Three that Lonergan's interiority analysis regards the human subject as dynamically becoming within his or her concrete, existential, total reality. Accordingly, the lay vocation must be understood and interpreted within the totality of the concrete existential, social, and ecclesial realities that inform the experience and context of lay ecclesial subjects. Because the ecclesial reality of the laity is both a social and graced reality, the need for dialogue in realizing, that is in nurturing and forming, the lay vocation can be examined from both sociological and theological perspectives.

The sociological data presented in Chapter Two supports the fact that the lay vocation is nurtured and formed through participation in ecclesial community. The social reality of lay members of the Church, precisely as members of the Church, is usually that of being affiliated with a parish. Within their parish community lay members share some common identity (Roman Catholic, this diocese, this parish, this committee, etc.) and common meaning (Catholic faith, common prayer, common practice, etc.) with each other and with the pastoral staff. The sense of belonging and commitment of lay members to the Church is expressed primarily through their participation in the prayer and life of their parish community. To the extent that they participate at all, the becoming of lay ecclesial subjects within their parish is not the achievement of isolated individuals, but is fostered and informed by their experience of parish relationships.

From a sociological perspective, therefore, the ecclesial reality of lay ecclesial subjects is a relational and communal reality and, as such, can also be regarded as a dialogical reality. The meaning of dialogue intended here is informed both by Hinze's description of dialogue as a dynamic reciprocal communication directed to love, and by Lonergan's notion of mutual self-mediation in which the participants are open to the influence of others and are willing to dispose

themselves in love for others. It makes sense that dialogue so conceived must include some form of reciprocal listening and sharing. Arguably, as a relational and communal reality, the lay vocation is invited, encouraged, supported, and formed through participation in ecclesial community in which dialogue plays a role.

The theological reality of lay ecclesial subjects is that of being joined to Christ's ecclesial body in grace. I have already argued that grace is experienced as a dialogical reality and that the lay vocation is received, expressed, and realized in the dialogue of grace. It is at this point that the theological reality of lay ecclesial subjects joins with their sociological reality. Considered from the perspective of interiority, the dialogue of grace is a concrete, existential reality. As such it is expressed and realized in concrete dialogues between real people and is informed by real relationships and contexts in which God's word of love is spoken and received. Arguably, because the lay vocation participates in the dialogue of grace, it must also simultaneously participate in ecclesial dialogues in which the dialogue partners are willing to share their concerns and are willing to listen to the concerns of others.

Another point at which the theological reality of lay ecclesial subjects joins with their sociological reality is that of the religious and other conversions required for the full realization of the lay vocation. While religious conversion and the conversions that flow from it require grace, they are also conditioned by social support. We have seen how any kind of environmental unauthenticity resulting from group biases and general bias can make it difficult for lay ecclesial subjects to appropriate religious and other conversions. We have also seen that members of Church communities can help to encourage and support conversions. Arguably, the effectiveness of such support depends on the willingness of members of ecclesial communities to participate in reciprocal communication that includes a willingness to share and to listen to each other in dialogue. The dialogical social support that conditions the appropriation of religious and other conversions represents another way in which the lay vocation depends on dialogue in ecclesial community for its full realization.

Lay Vocation Expressed in Dialogue

The lay vocation is not only realized or formed in dialogue, it is directed to dialogue and requires expression in dialogue. One way in which this can be argued is on the basis of the necessity of participation of the lay vocation in the dialogue of grace. In receiving the inner word of God's love, through which their eyes are opened in faith to the reality of God's love, lay members of the Church are drawn into the dialogue of grace. But the experience of grace does not stop there. The experience of God's grace, which is the experience of being in love with God unrestrictedly, demands to be expressed and shared as love. As we have seen, the expression and sharing of the love received in grace consists of more than merely human love; it is an expression and sharing of God's very love through which God heals the graced subject and others into wholeness and invites them to become themselves in love. The sharing of graced love is not the sharing of a general feeling of benevolence. Rather, the sharing of graced love must find concrete expression in all of the encounters of a person's life. It must be expressed in mutual self-mediation through which the graced person is willing to give of him or herself and to receive the gift of others in self-sacrificing love. Through grace the lay vocation is thus directed to and must be expressed in self-sacrificing love, which by its very nature is a dialogical reality.

The lay vocation is also directed to dialogue through religious conversion and all of the other forms of conversion through which it is realized. Through religious conversion, which requires participation in the dialogue of grace, the lay vocation is also enabled to participate more fully in all of the dialogues of human living, including those that constitute the Church's life and mission. This follows from the fact that the healing and elevating brought about in grace enable subjects to better receive and express love. Further, as we have seen, religious conversion enables lay persons to become more aware of their own biases as well as the biases operative in their social environments within the Church and in larger society. In these ways, religious

conversion equips lay persons to participate with greater attentiveness, intelligence, rationality, responsibility, and love in social dialogues.

Other conversions also serve to direct the lay vocation to dialogue. Through moral conversion, for example, lay persons value reaching out to and receiving others in love as something worthwhile and good. Through moral conversion lay persons also recognize the value of knowing the truth about themselves, other persons, social contexts, histories, communities, cultures, and their Catholic tradition and teachings. In recognizing the value of truth, which arguably can only be discerned in and through dialogue, lay persons are motivated to ask difficult questions and to participate with integrity in all the social dialogues that inform their lives, including ecclesial dialogues.

Through intellectual conversion lay persons become able to both critically assess the correctness of their thinking and that of others, and to recognize that meaning is culturally, socially, developmentally, and historically conditioned. Thus, through intellectual conversion lay persons are better able to understand issues and situations and to negotiate with people who apprehend meanings in different ways. Finally, through psychic conversion lay persons are able to get in touch with suppressed feelings and to get rid of psychic obstructions so that they can be more fully and integrally engaged in all the relationships of their lives. In these ways and others, all conversions prepare the lay vocation for dialogue.

The lay vocation is not only directed to dialogue; it also requires expression in dialogue. As we have seen, to be effective conversions cannot merely result in a change of one's horizon and thoughts, but need to be appropriated and expressed in the whole of one's living in order to become objectified and self-transformative. Religious conversion, in particular, demands that the recipient of God's love express love in return. Arguably, for religious conversion to be effectively realized in the lay vocation it must be expressed and lived both in up-building the Church and in contributing to the good of society. Both of these ways of expressing and living the lay vocation require participation in dialogue. It follows that, as a graced reality realized

through the dialogue of grace and as a converted reality formed and informed in grace through social relationships, the lay vocation must be both realized and expressed in concrete ecclesial dialogues.

Lay Vocation Appropriated in Commitment to Dialogue

Chapter Three argued that appropriation of the lay vocation requires the commitment to authentically become oneself in Christ. In the present chapter we have seen that the lay vocation requires the appropriation of grace in religious conversion which requires, in turn, a commitment to love God and others that is expressed through participation in the dialogue of grace. The two commitments are essentially one and the same. The commitment to authentically become oneself in Christ required for appropriating the lay vocation necessarily and simultaneously entails the commitment to become authentically the gift of oneself through participation in the dialogue of grace. Both commitments demand to be expressed in all the dialogues of one's life. Thus, authentic appropriation of the lay vocation requires the commitment to become oneself in Christ which is simultaneously the commitment to be open in love to participate in all of the dialogues that inform one's life, both within and without the Church.

Ecclesial Vocations Diminished Through Lack of Dialogue

Through religious conversion all ecclesial vocations participate in the dialogue of grace and therefore are called to play a role in the dialogues that constitute the life and mission of the Church. We have seen that the dialogue of grace is expressed concretely in all the dialogues of one's life. It makes sense, therefore, that the dialogue of grace should find concrete expression in ecclesial dialogues. Joined as members of Christ's body by the Holy Spirit, laity and clergy alike are called to participate mutually and necessarily not only in the dialogue of grace in which all ecclesial vocations are realized, but in all ecclesial dialogues in which ecclesial subjects express the love they have received and through which the life and mission of the Church are constituted.

Accordingly, anything that thwarts or distorts participation in dialogue within the Church can act to diminish not only the lay vocation, but all ecclesial vocations as well as, arguably, the ability of the Church to manifest its nature as a sacrament of communion with God and of unity among all people. Specifically, lack of authentic religious conversion in any member of the Church, lay or clerical, can serve to distort dialogue within the Church. As we saw earlier in this chapter, unauthentic religious conversion can be a consequence of the reign of sin caused by the effects of sin and bias in individuals, groups, institutions, and cultures. Bias and sin can result in exclusion, unloving acts, and misrepresentations of self, tradition, and others, all of which serve as barriers to authentic religious conversion and to dialogue. To the extent that religious conversion is absent or unauthentically appropriated in any member or group of the Church, lacunae exist that diminish not only the dialogue of grace, but also, in so doing, diminish the full realization of all ecclesial vocations. Only God's grace appropriated in conversion by all ecclesial members can create and sustain the ecclesial environment in which the dialogue of grace, expressed and mediated through dialogue among all members, can flourish.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the necessary role of grace in the full realization of the authentic lay vocation. Lonergan's transposition of grace into interiority as the gift of God's love flooding our hearts provides a rich basis from which to understand religious experience, faith, conversion, and the self-sacrificing love that constitute the authentic appropriation of the lay vocation. I have argued that, transposed into interiority as the dynamic state of being-in-love unrestrictedly, grace is experienced and appropriated as a dialogical reality, where dialogue is understood to be a reciprocal communication. As explicated in the present chapter, this dialogue is initiated by the inner word of God's love. In order to be identified, interpreted, and appropriated, the inner word of God's love requires the outer word of God's love. God's outer word is manifested in the Word made flesh and is spoken in all the ways in which the message of

Christ and of God's love are conveyed through the Church, through others, and through the circumstances of one's life. The inner word demands that an outward word be spoken in charity by the graced recipient. This outward word is directed both to God and to others and participates in the outer word of God's love. Thus, the dialogue of grace is a three-way dialogue between the inner and outer words of God's love and the outward words of love spoken in charity by graced recipients. While all graced individuals participate to a greater or lesser extent in the dialogue of grace, one's ability to be fully open and fully transformed in the dialogue of grace is a function of one's authenticity. Authenticity, in turn, is the consequence of conversions on all levels of consciousness.

As a graced ecclesial vocation received in baptism to authentically become oneself in Christ, the lay vocation requires a committed participation in the dialogue of grace. We have seen that such participation, in turn, depends on and must be expressed in dialogical relationships within the Church. But participation in the dialogue of grace and in the ecclesial dialogues that support it is not limited to the lay vocation. Every ecclesial vocation, in fact every graced individual, is called through religious conversion to participate in the dialogue of grace and in all the concrete dialogues that support it. To the extent that this participation is refused by any person, to that extent lacunae exist in both the dialogue of grace and in the social dialogues on which it depends. Thus, any failure of religious conversion within or without the Church serves to thwart the dialogue of grace and acts as a barrier to the full realization of ecclesial community.

Within the Church any failure of religious conversion acts as a barrier to ecclesial dialogue in which the concerns of all, including laity and clergy, are spoken and heard. To the extent that ecclesial dialogue is thwarted, ecclesial vocations cannot fully participate in the dialogue of grace and are accordingly diminished. It follows that the full realization of all ecclesial vocations depends on participation by both clergy and laity in dialogical communication. Because the dialogue of grace extends beyond Church boundaries, dialogical

communication with all people of good will is necessary for the full realization of all ecclesial vocations and of the Church's mission.

This chapter has focused on the personal and intersubjective experiences of grace. On the level of the personal and intersubjective, the experience of grace is seen to be a dialogical reality in which, through mutual self-mediation, participants are open to being transformed in graced love by God and by one another. The dialogue of grace is thus ordered to cooperation with God and to collaboration with others in communion. As a concrete existential reality, the dialogue of grace requires and is expressed in actual relationships of presence, openness, and communication with others. All of this points to a relationship between grace and community. Chapter Five will further explore this relationship as it situates the lay vocation in the larger context of the cosmic and social dimensions of grace that inform the reality of the Church.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE LAITY IN AN ECCLESIOLOGY INFORMED BY LONERGAN

“What exactly is meant by the word ‘Church’? In scholastic Latin one would ask: ‘*Pro quo supponit ecclesia?*’ The word ‘Church’ in the Fathers and in the liturgy means the community of Christians, the We of the baptized.”¹

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four examined the graced nature of the lay vocation in light of Lonergan’s transposition of grace into interiority. In this transposition, sanctifying grace is identified to be the gift of God’s love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us. The gift of God’s love produces in subjects the conscious religious experience of being unrestrictedly in love. Although this experience may or may not be objectified in one’s self-consciousness, it nevertheless serves to heal and elevate the subject while transforming his or her horizon to include God’s purpose and desire for others and for the world.

On the basis of the transposition of grace into interiority, I argued in Chapter Four that grace is experienced and appropriated as a dialogical reality, where dialogue is understood to be a reciprocal communication. I described the dialogue of grace as a three-way dialogue between the inner and outer words of God’s love and the outward words of love spoken in charity by graced recipients. Informed by an analysis of grace as dialogical, I argued in Chapter Four that the lay vocation is essentially a call to participate in the dialogue of grace. I argued that, precisely as a participation in the dialogue of grace, the lay vocation is a communal reality that is necessarily informed by and directed to communion with God and others. I argued further that the lay vocation cannot be understood except as dialogically related in grace to all ecclesial vocations, and that, in fact, all ecclesial vocations are mutually interdependent in the dialogue of grace for their full realization. I concluded that the full realization not only of the lay vocation, but of all

¹ Yves Congar, “Mother Church,” in *The Church Today*, trans. Sr. M. Ignatius (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1968), 42.

ecclesial vocations, requires participation by both clergy and laity in dialogical communication in which the concerns of both clergy and laity are spoken and heard.

The present chapter will continue and extend the analysis of the lay vocation undertaken in Chapters Three and Four by examining its ecclesial dimension. The purpose of this analysis is to better understand, from the perspective of interiority, the ecclesial identity and role of lay ecclesial subjects. Such an analysis obviously requires that the graced, concrete, existential reality of the Church itself be examined from the perspective of interiority. The analysis of the present chapter will be guided not only by Lonergan's transposition of grace into interiority, but also by Lonergan's worldview, by his understanding of God's solution to the problem of evil, by his understanding of the universal offer of God's grace, by his understanding of the Church as community, and by his understanding of authority. Through the application of Lonergan's thought to ecclesiology, the present chapter will seek to understand the ecclesial dimension of the lay vocation and the ecclesial identity and role of the laity in an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan.

ECCLESIOLOGY INFORMED BY LONERGAN

Although Lonergan referred to the Church often in his writings, he never produced a treatise on ecclesiology.² Nevertheless, his interiority analysis, his teachings on grace, and his worldview provide rich analytical tools by which we can arrive at an understanding of the Church as a graced, concrete, existential reality in which the laity play a constitutive role. We turn first to seek an understanding of the Church and of the lay vocation from the perspective of Lonergan's worldview. Lonergan's worldview provides a cosmic context within which we can understand

² Probably Lonergan's most sustained writings related to ecclesiology can be found in Lonergan, Chapter 20, "Special Transcendent Knowledge," in *Insight*, 709–51, taken together with the Epilogue, in *ibid.*, 753–70, in which he provides a heuristic description of purpose of the Church; also in Lonergan, Chapter 14, "Communications," in *Method*, 355–68, where he reflects on the Church as a process of self-constitution.

that the salvific purpose of the Church is directed not only to the transformation of individual human lives, but also to the transformation and healing of all of humanity and creation.

Ecclesiology Informed by Lonergan's Worldview

We saw in Chapter Three that each person is dynamically oriented towards his or her self-transcendent fulfillment in God by virtue of his or her passionateness of being. In Lonergan's view, passionateness of being describes the personal dimension of the universal cosmic dynamism by which all of creation is oriented to God. Lonergan refers to that universal dynamism as vertical finality.³ An understanding of vertical finality helps to illumine not only the cosmic dimension of grace, but also the cosmic purpose of the Church and the necessity of lay participation in the Church's cosmic purpose.

Lonergan's notion of vertical finality is informed by his understanding of the hierarchical unity of the universe. Just as Lonergan understands the human subject to be a dynamic, conscious unity in which the unity is prior to any of the levels of consciousness,⁴ so Lonergan conceives the universe to be a unity that is prior to finite natures.⁵ He writes,

I would affirm that world order is prior to finite natures, that God sees in his essence, first of all, the series of all possible world orders, each of which is complete down to its least historical detail, that only consequently, inasmuch as he knows world orders, does God know their component parts such as his free gifts, finite natures, their properties, exigencies, and so on. Coherently with this position I would say that the finite nature is the derivative possibility, that it is what it is because of the world order, and that the world order is what it is, not at all because of finite natures, but because of divine wisdom and goodness. Thus the world order is an intelligible unity mirroring forth the glory of God.⁶

Consistent with his understanding that the order of the universe is prior to finite natures, Lonergan understands the universe to be hierarchically ordered, that is, he understands the universe to consist of a series of horizontal strata in which lower natures are subordinate to higher

³ Lonergan, *Insight*, 470–76 at 471; Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22.

⁴ See, for example, Lonergan, "Natural Knowledge of God," in *A Second Collection*, 128.

⁵ See Lonergan, "The Natural Desire to See God," in *Collection*, 84–85.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

natures in order to serve the greater perfection of the whole.⁷ Subordination in terms of simple relation of inferior to superior, however, does not fully describe the way in which lower natures are related to higher natures in Lonergan's understanding of the order of the universe.

Lonergan's notion of subordination conceives the relation of lower being to higher being to be one of participation through vertical finality and obediential potency.

Vertical Finality and Obediential Potency

Lonergan defines 'finality' to be the relation of a thing to its end.⁸ He describes three kinds of finality. Absolute finality refers to the relation of every finite being to God.⁹ Lonergan maintains that we have to think of the universe as "a series of horizontal strata; on each level reality responds to God as absolute motive and tends to him as absolute term; but on each level it does so differently."¹⁰ Horizontal finality refers to the relation of a creature to its "proportionate end," that is, to an end that follows from or is consistent with what the creature is naturally capable of.¹¹ Vertical finality refers to the relation of a creature "to an end higher than the proportionate end."¹² Vertical finality, says Lonergan, is the concrete, evolutionary, directed dynamism of our hierarchic universe "towards fuller being."¹³

A constitutive aspect of vertical finality is that it operates "through the fertility of concrete plurality."¹⁴ Lonergan describes four ways in which this can happen. First, just as many chisel strokes give rise to the beauty of a statue, so a "concrete plurality of lower activities" can

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 24. 'End' here is a metaphysical term by which Lonergan refers to the 'ultimate perfection' of a thing. Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum*, 97.

⁹ Lonergan describes absolute finality to God as "universal," "unique," and as "hypothetically necessary, for if there is anything to respond to motive or to proceed to term, then its response or tendency can be accounted for ultimately only by the one self-sufficient good." Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22. See also Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 24.

¹⁰ Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 20.

¹¹ Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 24; "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22.

¹² Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 24.

¹³ Lonergan, *Insight*, 470–76 at 471; Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22.

¹⁴ Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 21.

be instrumental in producing a higher end.¹⁵ Second, just as the many activities of research contribute to scientific discovery, so a concrete plurality of lower activities can be “dispositive” to a higher end.¹⁶ Third, “a concrete plurality of lower entities” can give rise to a higher form as through the biological growth of an organism or evolution of a species.¹⁷ Fourth,

a concrete plurality of rational beings have the obediential potency to receive the communication of God himself: such is the mystical body of Christ with its head in the hypostatic union, its principal unfolding in the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit by sanctifying grace, and its ultimate consummation in the beatific vision . . .¹⁸

By ‘obediential potency’ here Lonergan refers to a potential capacity that can only be activated by God.¹⁹

In all four ways of describing vertical finality, Lonergan locates its basis, or ‘fertility,’ in concrete aggregates of pluralities. It is not through an individual act, or organism, or person by which the statue, the scientific discovery, the evolution of a species, or the reception of God’s communication is produced or received. Rather, it is through collaborative acts and collaborating populations that vertical finality is realized. In affirming that vertical finality is the basic dynamism of the actually-existing universe, Lonergan is simultaneously affirming that the process of evolution takes place through aggregates – through collaborative aggregates in the case of humans – and that we humans stand related to our higher ends, and to God in particular, not as isolated monads, but as related to each other.²⁰ Accordingly, the full impact of God’s gift of grace can only be appreciated from the perspective of “the concrete aggregate of [human beings] of all times.”²¹

¹⁵ Ibid., 20.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 20–21.

¹⁹ Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum*, 83–86. In more technical metaphysical terms, obediential potency is a remote essential passive potency, that is, it is an ability to receive something which the recipient cannot produce on its own. Ibid., 86–88; see also Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 143–48. In humans, a remote essential passive potency is said to be obediential “if it can be actuated by God alone.” Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum*, 88

²⁰ See Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 56–57.

²¹ Lonergan, “Finality, Love, Marriage,” 38; Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 177.

Cosmic Dimension of Grace

The dependence of the dynamism of vertical finality on the fertility of concrete plurality helps to inform an understanding of the cosmic dimension of grace. The reader will recall that in Chapter Four I argued that the gift of grace is received in and directed to dialogue, and that this dialogue can be understood as a mutual self-mediation in Christ by which the recipients of grace are led into communion with God and one another. That argument can now be extended to suggest that the dialogue of grace creates the condition by which a fertility of concrete plurality of human persons is able to receive God's self-communication in grace. In other words, the reception and appropriation of grace by individuals is necessarily a participation in concrete plurality that both supports and is the consequence of the dialogue of grace. This suggestion is supported by Lonergan's emphasis that "the vertical end is had only by escaping the limitation of isolated essence through the fertility of concrete plurality."²²

The cosmic dimension of grace includes not only the concrete plurality of all human beings of all time, but also all of creation. As aggregates of graced individuals are brought into communion with God and with one another in the dialogue of grace, they are able to establish in the words of Vatican II, "the proper scale of values in the temporal order and to direct it towards God through Christ."²³ In this way the lower strata of the universe are brought into participation in the directed dynamism of the hierarchic universe towards fuller being, which is realized in the fulfillment of all of creation in Christ.

²² Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22.

²³ *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 7, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 413.

Vertical Finality and Emergent Probability

As evolutionary, the dynamism of vertical finality proceeds according to what Lonergan terms ‘emergent probability.’²⁴ Emergent probability provides an explanation for the fact that the development of human society and the unfolding of history exhibit a certain degree of randomness.²⁵ According to Lonergan’s understanding of emergent probability, world process is open but also increasingly systematic. It is a process in which actually-occurring schemes condition the probability of emergence of future possible schemes.²⁶ Increased systematization occurs insofar as succeeding schemes are higher-order schemes which serve to integrate the preceding schemes.²⁷ When human beings are factored into the equation of world process, probabilities of schemes can no longer be considered to be purely random because they are influenced, in part, by intelligence. While human intelligence can affect world process, the corresponding effect may not always be directed to progress. Lonergan recognizes that neither the full attainment of progress nor the full attainment of the end of vertical finality can be reached through human efforts alone. Both require grace and graced authenticity.²⁸

Cosmic Purpose of Church

Just as Lonergan’s notion of vertical finality informs the cosmic dimension of grace, so it helps to inform the cosmic purpose of the Church considered as “a divine solidarity in grace.”²⁹ Considered as a divine solidarity in grace, the Church can be seen to be “a concrete plurality of rational beings who have the obediential potency to receive the communication of God

²⁴ For Lonergan’s explanation of emergent probability see *Insight*, 144–51. Lonergan describes the directed dynamism of finality as “an effectively probable realization of possibilities.” *Ibid.*, 473. For an excellent treatment of Lonergan’s notion of emergent probability see Kenneth R. Melchin, *History, Ethics and Emergent Probability: Ethics, Society and History in the Work of Bernard Lonergan* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1987).

²⁵ Lonergan, *Insight*, 147.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 149.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ See Melchin, *History, Ethics, and Emergent Probability*, 249.

²⁹ Lonergan, “Finality, Love, Marriage,” 27.

himself.”³⁰ When the obediential potency of the Church to receive God’s self-communication is situated in the larger context of the world, the Church is arguably at any given time in history the obediential potency of all of humanity and of the universe to realize its final consummation in Christ.

The cosmic purpose of the Church informed by vertical finality can be understood in a way analogous to the vertical finality of passionateness of being. Just as passionateness of being underpins and accompanies and reaches beyond the individual subject, so the obediential potency of the Church in vertical finality can be understood to underpin and accompany and reach beyond the Church towards the realization of all things in Christ. Such an understanding of the cosmic purpose of the Church helps to explain how the Church is “the seed and the beginning,”³¹ of the kingdom of God. It also informs an understanding of the kingdom of God that includes human and material progress, not as an ends in themselves, but as realized in vertical finality in and through Christ.³² Such an understanding is consistent with Lonergan’s affirmation that the graced communion of knowing and loving realized in the Church “is directed both to the ultimate end, which is the good itself by essence, and to the proximate end, which is the general good of order, the kingdom of God, the body of Christ, the Church.”³³

World-order and Church-order

In its concrete, historical existence, the Church is in the world. Arguably, then, Lonergan’s worldview applies as much to the Church as it does to the world. Thus, Lonergan’s position that the unity of world-order is prior to finite natures can be extended to inform a

³⁰ Ibid., 20.

³¹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 5, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 4.

³² This conclusion is consistent with *Gaudium et Spes*’s statement, “Far from diminishing our concern to develop this earth, the expectation of a new earth should spur us on, . . . That is why, although we must be careful to distinguish earthly progress clearly from the increase of the kingdom of Christ, such progress is of vital concern to the kingdom of God, insofar as it can contribute to the better ordering of human society.” *Gaudium et Spes* no. 39, in *ibid.*, 205.

³³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 511. As noted in an earlier footnote, Lonergan wrote this prior to Vatican II. After Vatican II he explicitly states that the kingdom of God and the Church are not to be identified. My source for this information is a communication from Robert Doran of March 6, 2011.

Church-order in which the unity of the Church is prior to the Church's realized structure and prior to any distinction between clergy and laity.³⁴ From the perspective of Lonergan's worldview, the Church is first and foremost a divine solidarity in grace and a concrete plurality of believers. On the basis of Lonergan's worldview, the actually-existing structure of the Church has no absolute claim on the order or unity of the Church.³⁵

Similarly, we can argue that vertical finality is a feature of Church-order, just as it is for world-order. We have already seen that vertical finality depends for its realization on the fertility of conjoined plurality. To better understand how Church-order is informed by vertical finality, it is helpful to consider Lonergan's explanation of how vertical finality depends on conjoined plurality:

But vertical finality is in the concrete; in point of fact it is not from the isolated instance but from the conjoined plurality For the cosmos is not an aggregate of isolated objects hierarchically arranged on isolated levels, but a dynamic whole in which instrumentally, dispositively, materially, obedientially, one level of being or activity subserves another.³⁶

In interpreting Church-order in light of vertical finality, we can say that just as the vertical finality of the universe depends on the fertility of concrete aggregates of pluralities, so too, God's purpose for the Church depends on the fertility of graced collaborations among its members.

Lonergan's understanding of vertical finality can inform an understanding of the hierarchical nature of the Church. From the perspective of vertical finality we can see that a proper understanding of the hierarchical nature of the Church should not be based on relationships of superiority-inferiority, but rather should be based on the recognition that the realization of the vertical finality of the Church depends on the collaborative participation of its

³⁴ Susan Wood affirms as much in her statement, "a dichotomy [between lay and ordained ministry] fails to acknowledge that both forms of ministry are essentially grounded in baptism and that all the baptized share a common mission and common identity as the *Christifideles* before they are further specified by state in life and particular ministry." Susan K. Wood, S.C.L., "Conclusion: Convergence Points toward a Theology of Ordered Ministries," in *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood*, 260.

³⁵ Stebbins makes a helpful clarification in this regard. He says, "Just as insight does not grasp terms apart from their interrelations, so God does not conceive or create natures except as parts of a total cosmic order. As a result, the exigencies of any finite nature do not count as a kind of absolute claim on the order of the universe." Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 176.

³⁶ Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22.

individual members and groups. Thus, the hierarchical structure of the Church is one in which the greater perfection of the larger groups and activities of the Church depends on the participation of smaller groups and individuals. Concrete examples include the participation of parishes in the diocese and the participation of particular churches in the universal Church. Beyond these examples, Lonergan's notion of vertical finality informs the necessity of mutual participation of all individual members and ecclesial subgroups in the realization of God's purpose for the Church.

Necessity of Lay Participation

Lonergan's understanding of world-order constituted by vertical finality helps to inform the necessity of lay participation in the Church. Lonergan emphasizes that "the vertical end is had only by escaping the limitation of isolated essence through the fertility of concrete plurality."³⁷ He clarifies, however, that although the vertical end escapes the limitation of isolated essence, nevertheless it requires participation of isolated essence in concrete combination with other essence.³⁸ Applied to the Church Lonergan's clarification suggests that the higher end of the Church, which is to bring about the communion of all people with God and one another in God's kingdom, requires the participation of the laity.

Lonergan's notion of vertical finality illustrates how the purpose of the Church is thwarted to the extent that its members exist isolated from one another as the consequence of any kind of exclusion or through lack of efforts to include. An obvious issue here is the lack of lay voice in ecclesial policy and decisions, a lack which affects not only the laity but the whole Church. For example, inclusion of the voices of lay experts arguably would have led, and still could lead to a more acceptable, and possibly more just, handling of the clergy abuse crisis. But other types of exclusion, say through racism or any kind of marginalization, apply as well.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 23.

Vertical finality illustrates not only how the Church depends on the laity for the realization of its mission, but also how the Church depends on the laity for the graced becoming and salvation of all its members. Lonergan explains:

[J]ust as there is a human solidarity in sin with a dialectical descent deforming knowledge and perverting will, so also there is a divine solidarity in grace which is the mystical body of Christ; as evil performance confirms us in evil, so good edifies us in our building unto eternal life; and as private rationalization finds support in fact, in common teaching, in public approval, so also the ascent of the soul towards God is not a merely private affair but rather a personal function of an objective common movement in that body of Christ which takes over, transforms, and elevates every aspect of human life.³⁹

In other words, the graced authentic becoming of each lay person is not a private affair, but both occurs in graced solidarity with others in the Church and contributes to that graced solidarity and to the graced becoming of all others in the Church.

I see three ways in which Lonergan's notions of vertical finality, obediential potency, and emergent probability inform the necessity of lay participation, both for the full realization of the purpose of the Church and for the full realization of all ecclesial vocations. First, lay participation enlarges the capacity of the Church to receive God's self-communication in obediential potency. Lay participation does this by creating conditions in the Church and in the world that favor the dialogue of grace in which God's self-communication takes place. Second, lay participation, especially of authentic lay persons, sets up a dynamism of influence that helps to support the full realization of all ecclesial vocations. As Lonergan says, "subjects are confronted with themselves more effectively by being confronted with others than by solitary introspection."⁴⁰ Thus, the full realization of ecclesial vocations requires a community of faithful becoming in which, to the extent that each ecclesial subject authentically lives his or her vocation, others are influenced by example, by self-sacrificing care, and by the graced attraction of heart calling to heart in *cor ad cor loquitur*.

³⁹ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁰ Lonergan, "Cognitive Structure," 220.

Third, lay participation fosters a dynamism of ecclesial intentionality that influences all Church members. Under the rubric of ecclesial intentionality of Church members I include the intending of ecclesial community, the intending of ecclesial purpose, and the intending of self-identity and commitment to the Church. I would argue that ecclesial intentionality is a consequence of mutual self-mediation and therefore can only take place in the context of self-donation and receptivity of others. Put another way, an internalization of ‘we’ and of ‘our mission together’ can only be had through communal participation. While participation in liturgy is foundational for this sort of internalization, other opportunities for participation that contribute to a greater sense of belonging, of discipleship together, and of mission are needed. Such participation must be dialogical in the sense that it includes some reciprocal communication among and between peoples and groups, and between laity and clergy. Concrete examples of such dialogical participation are forthcoming towards the end of the present chapter where the Church will be considered as a process of self-constitution.

Clearly the participation of the laity in an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan’s worldview is constitutive not only of the capacity of the Church to receive and to appropriate God’s gift of its own purpose, but also of the capacity of its members to fully realize their graced becoming in Christ. This is not a Pelagian assertion because the sort of participation that vertical finality requires depends on grace. What is asserted is that, because the natural and supernatural are intrinsically related in vertical finality as parts of a single whole, lay participation serves the divine purpose of the Church.⁴¹ Although the capacity of the Church and of each of its members to receive God’s self-communication are not the consequence of human achievement, each of these capacities does require, is conditioned by, and becomes more probable to the extent that the Church actually exists as a plurality of mutually-participating graced human persons. From the

⁴¹ This is a paraphrase of Stebbins’s summary of Lonergan’s view of vertical finality: “Hence, the natural and the supernatural orders are intrinsically related parts of a single cosmic order.” Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, 176.

perspective of vertical finality, the obediential potency of the Church to fully realize its purpose resides in the fertility of the concrete collaboration in mutuality of *all* the members of the Church.

Ecclesiology Informed by God's Solution to Problem of Evil

We turn now to consider an ecclesiology informed by the heuristic structure by which, according to Lonergan, we are able to recognize God's solution to the problem of evil in the world. Like vertical finality, this heuristic structure is informed by Lonergan's understanding that the universe is governed by emergent probability in which human intelligence and authenticity play a role. As does vertical finality, this heuristic structure illumines the dependence of the Church and its mission on participation by the laity.

To better understand the exigency for Lonergan's heuristic structure, we begin by noting that Lonergan discerns three major movements within human history, namely, progress, decline, and redemption.⁴² Progress in Lonergan's view is a cumulative development that results from authenticity. It "proceeds from originating value, from subjects being their true selves by observing the transcendental precepts, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible."⁴³ Decline, on the other hand, is the cumulative result of unauthenticity consequent on disregard of the transcendental precepts. Decline both supports and is the result of the reign of sin described in Chapter Four.⁴⁴

In *Insight*, Lonergan describes the reign of sin as both the fact and the problem of evil. The reign of sin is a fact because, rather than being something incidental, it is the rule insofar as it limits the effective freedom of human persons and causes their moral impotence.⁴⁵ In light of the existence of God, the reign of sin can also be regarded as a problem in search of a redemptive solution. Although a redemptive solution is impossible for human beings to achieve, it is assured

⁴² Lonergan, *Insight*, 764.

⁴³ Lonergan, *Method*, 53.

⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, 53–55; *Insight* 710–15.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 715.

by the unrestricted understanding, unlimited power, and complete goodness of God. On the basis of the existence of such a God Lonergan can affirm, “Because God is omniscient, he knows [humanity’s] plight. Because he is omnipotent, he can remedy it. Because he is good, he wills to do so.”⁴⁶ Redemption is God’s solution to the problem of evil.

Lonergan maintains that God’s solution to the problem of evil must be consistent with the intelligible unity and actual order of the universe. Accordingly, he holds that the solution “admits antecedent determinations”⁴⁷ and therefore possesses a heuristic structure that can help us to identify it. Although Lonergan does not explicitly identify the solution with the Catholic Church, he intimates in the Epilogue to *Insight* that the Roman Catholic Church must be considered to be part of the historical manifestation of God’s solution to the problem of evil in human history.⁴⁸ Thus, Lonergan’s heuristic structure by which God’s solution to the problem of evil can be identified can also help to inform the redemptive identity and role of the Church and the role of laity in its mission.

Heuristic Structure of Solution

In his chapter on special transcendent knowledge in *Insight*,⁴⁹ Lonergan describes the heuristic structure by which God’s solution to the problem of evil can be identified. Ten features of this structure that are especially relevant to ecclesiology include the following:

(1) The solution will be one, universally accessible, and permanent.⁵⁰ It will be “a harmonious continuation” of the actual order and nature of the universe.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Ibid., 716.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 718.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 763. Lonergan writes, “Finally, to the foregoing considerations that regard any individual that has embraced God’s solution, there is to be added the consideration of the cumulative historical development, first of the chosen people and then of the Catholic church, both in themselves and in their role in the unfolding of all human history and in the order of the universe.” The connection between the Roman Catholic Church and God’s solution to the problem of evil as explicated by Lonergan in Chapter 20 of *Insight* is developed in Butler, “Lonergan and Ecclesiology,” 4–7. While Butler’s article provided the idea for the present section, my development of Lonergan’s heuristic structure of God’s solution to the problem of evil, and the points I make in this section, are my own.

⁴⁹ Chapter 20, “Special Transcendent Knowledge,” in *Insight*, 709–51. The heuristic structure of God’s solution to the problem of evil is taken up on pages 718–25 and 749–51.

(2) Because the problem is a human problem, the solution will be consistent with human nature and accessible to human persons.⁵² At the same time, because human persons cannot solve the problem on their own, the solution has to be in some sense relatively transcendent or supernatural.⁵³ Thus, while the solution will not change human nature, it will endow human beings with new habits⁵⁴ that will help to reverse the priority of living over knowledge.⁵⁵ In this way the solution “will constitute a new and higher integration of human activity.”⁵⁶

(3) Because the manifestation of the problem varies as human persons and societies develop and decline, so, too, the solution must be capable of development and adaptation.⁵⁷

(4) Since the order of the universe is informed by emergent probability, the manifestation of the solution will be in accord with actual probabilities.⁵⁸ The relevant probabilities will depend on the extent to which persons apprehend and consent to the solution.⁵⁹ Thus, the effectiveness of the solution will depend on the apprehension and consent of human persons for its reception. The reality that human development is tainted by the reign of sin suggests that the solution will be only partially received. Therefore, its manifestation will be in terms of “an emergent trend in which the full solution becomes effectively probable.”⁶⁰

(5) The “appropriate willingness [required for the apprehension and consent of the solution by human persons] will be some type or species of charity.”⁶¹ It is through charity that higher collaborations of human beings will be able to overcome evil with good.⁶² More

⁵⁰ Ibid., 718.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., 719.

⁵⁴ Note the connection between the new habits associated with the solution and the traditional way of defining sanctifying grace as the supernatural entitative habit that perfects human nature by producing supernatural operative habits (virtues). See Lonergan, *Method*, 288–89.

⁵⁵ Lonergan, *Insight*, 719.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 720.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 745.

generally, Lonergan says, the solution will be apprehended and consented to through the higher integration of human activity in faith, hope, charity, and repentance.⁶³ By virtue of their higher integration, human persons will recognize that the universe is not ordered according to clockwork perfection, but rather is ordered according to emergent probability. They will, therefore, acknowledge the problem of evil and will accept that the present order of the universe is foundational for the solution.⁶⁴ As consistent with the actual order of the universe, the solution will be effective not by eradicating evil and its consequences, but by enabling those who so choose to rise above the consequences of evil.⁶⁵

(6) The solution will have a nature, content, significance, and power of its own.⁶⁶

Because the solution is God's solution to the problem of evil, it will lead to a new and higher collaboration of persons through faith, hope, and charity. At the same time, the implementation of the solution in harmonious continuation of the order of the universe will require human cooperation with God and collaboration with one other.⁶⁷

(7) Because God respects human freedom, the reception and implementation of the solution can be expected to be marked by human deficiencies. In particular, these deficiencies can lead to heresy. Therefore, as God's work, the solution can be expected to assume some institutional form that will be able to protect the faith against heresy.⁶⁸

(8) As continuous with the actual order of the universe, the solution must be accessible to human persons on the sensible as well as on the intellectual level.⁶⁹ The solution, accordingly, will exist not only on the level of ideas, but also on the level of images "so charged with affects that they succeed both in guiding and in propelling action."⁷⁰ At the same time, the solution will

⁶³ Ibid., 719–40.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 720–21.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 745.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 744–45.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 743.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 744.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

be perceived by human persons as mystery, that is, as a sign and symbol of something that is only partially comprehended and realized.⁷¹

(9) Every solution will be transcendent insofar as it involves a new and higher integration and will be religious insofar as it is constituted by faith, hope, and love that look primarily to God.⁷² At the same time, solutions will exist on a continuum from natural to supernatural depending on the extent to which they are limited by the natural capacities of human persons. Natural solutions will be based solely on human understanding, human truths, hope in human abilities, and human ability to love.⁷³ An absolutely supernatural solution, on the other hand, will have its sole ground in God and will totally exceed the ability of any finite creature whatsoever.⁷⁴

(10) The supernatural solution will not only meet a human need, but will go beyond it “to transform it into the point of insertion into human life of truths beyond human comprehension, of values beyond human estimation, of an alliance and a love that, so to speak, brings God too close to [the human person].”⁷⁵ To the extent that the solution is supernatural it will create dialectical tensions and struggles as lower levels resist being transcended. Because the solution is a harmonious continuation of the present order of the universe, these tensions and struggles will play out in human living and history. Some people will revolt against the proffered supernatural solution.⁷⁶ Those who acknowledge and consent to the solution will do so in accord with emergent probability. Therefore, says Lonergan,

even in those in whom the solution is realized, there are endless gradations in the measure in which it is realized, and by a necessary consequence there are endless degrees in which those that profess to know and embrace the solution can fail to bring forth the fruits it promises in their individual lives and in the human situations of which those lives are part.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Ibid., 745.

⁷² Ibid., 746.

⁷³ Ibid., 746, 748.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 746–47; Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum*, 55.

⁷⁵ Lonergan, *Insight*, 747.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 749.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 748.

Heuristic Structure of Solution Applied to Church

Although Lonergan's heuristic structure for discerning God's solution to the problem of evil arguably points to the Church, it does not support an argument that God's solution to the problem of evil resides exclusively in the Roman Catholic Church. Just as Vatican II recognizes that elements of the Church exist outside the Catholic Church,⁷⁸ so, too, the heuristic structure proposed by Lonergan recognizes the existence of elements of God's solution outside of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, Lonergan's heuristic structure points to the Roman Catholic Church as an agent of God's solution to the problem of evil and informs three fundamental aspects of the Church: 1) that the Church has a supernatural purpose of participating in God's redemptive plan for humanity, 2) that the Church is contingently realized in history, and 3) that the Church is constituted by collaboration.

Church's Supernatural Purpose. An ecclesiology informed by Lonergan's heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil recognizes that the purpose of the Church is to participate in God's redemptive purpose for all of humanity and the world. It recognizes that the redemptive purpose of its mission is that of overcoming the problem of evil, not through force, nor solely through teaching, but through transformation and healing brought about by the collaboration of its members with God and others in faith, hope, and self-sacrificing love. It recognizes that the accomplishment of this mission is totally beyond natural human ability, and therefore acknowledges that the source and ground of its mission is in God and depends on grace.

Church Contingently Realized in History. Because it recognizes that God's solution is a harmonious continuation of the order of the universe, an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan's heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil understands that the Church exists concretely in a universe conditioned by emergent probability and is itself, therefore, culturally

⁷⁸ For example, *Lumen Gentium* acknowledges that "many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside [the Church's] visible confines." *Lumen Gentium* no. 8, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 9; see also *Unitatis Redintegratio* [Decree on Ecumenism] no. 3, in *ibid.*, 503.

and historically contingent. It thus recognizes that a correct understanding of the Church cannot be had solely through deductive application of universally-conceived ideals. Rather, while acknowledging that the Church is God's work, it recognizes that in its concrete, historical existence the Church has developed and continues to develop along the lines of what is probable and possible.

In recognizing that the Church has developed and continues to develop along the lines of what is probable and possible, such an ecclesiology acknowledges the need for continual critical evaluation of the Church's present structures and disciplines in light of their ability to mediate God's solution in the present context. In recognizing that the present reality of the Church is part of the concrete unfolding of God's plan of redemption at this point in history, such an ecclesiology seeks to discern how present trends in the Church, such as the burgeoning growth of lay ministry in the United States and the continuing unfolding of the clergy abuse crisis worldwide, might be manifestations of what God's solution requires at this point.

Church Constituted by Collaboration. Lonergan's heuristic structure envisions that God's solution to the problem of evil will lead to a new and higher collaboration of persons through faith, hope, and charity. To understand how the Church might be realized in collaboration it is first necessary to understand what Lonergan means by collaboration. Although Lonergan does not define what he means by the higher collaboration brought about by the solution, his description of the collaboration's purpose, effects, and what it entails suggests that he envisions it to be a collaborative effort by those who have embraced the solution of working together towards the common goal of realizing God's solution to the problem of evil. Lonergan's notion of collaboration as working together obviously must include some form of reciprocal communication that constitutes dialogue.⁷⁹ Lonergan seems to assume, moreover, that this

⁷⁹The reader will recall that in Chapter Four I followed Hinze in defining dialogue to be a form of reciprocal communication directed ultimately to love. I argued that the experience and mediation of grace is inherently dialogical and that the dialogue by which grace is experienced and mediated is supported and conditioned by dialogue within the Church.

collaboration is graced because it is “principally the work of God” and includes cooperation with God.⁸⁰ Thus, the ecclesial collaboration informed by Lonergan’s heuristic structure of God’s solution to the problem of evil depends both on the dialogue of grace that I described in Chapter Four and on some form of ecclesial collaboration that entails the dialogical working together of believers within the Church. Because God’s solution is intended for all of humanity and the world, such collaboration cannot be limited to those within the Church, but must include the dialogical working-together of members of the Church with all people who have in any way embraced the solution or who are dealing in any way with the consequences of evil in the world.

Lonergan’s descriptions of the higher collaboration required and brought about by God’s solution suggest that it will be effective to the extent that the collaborators are authentic, which is to say that they have undergone conversions on all levels. Religious conversion is required because the collaboration will be marked by faith, hope, and self-sacrificing charity.⁸¹ Moral conversion is required because the higher integration will pursue the truth of human living⁸² and will meet evil with a more generous good.⁸³ Intellectual conversion is required because the collaboration will include the sharing of knowledge.⁸⁴ Beyond the sharing of knowledge, intellectual conversion will help the collaborators to grasp and formulate the solution for different groups and in different contexts.⁸⁵ Moral and intellectual conversions will also provide some assurance that the collaboration will be informed by truthfulness and accuracy. Finally, psychic conversion is required, not only to serve the other conversions, but also to make it possible for the solution to penetrate to the sensitive level and psychic levels.⁸⁶

An ecclesiology informed by the heuristic structure of God’s solution to the problem of evil recognizes that the Church is the catalyst, instrument, and sign in the world of cooperation

⁸⁰ Lonergan, *Insight*, 741.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 744.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 741.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 745.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 740.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 743.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 744–45.

with God and of collaboration with others in bringing about God's solution to the problem of evil. Such an ecclesiology recognizes, therefore, that graced collaboration is necessary for both the life of the Church and its mission. It recognizes that such collaboration will be one not only of embracing and helping to realize the solution in the present, but also one of making the solution known to others, of transmitting the solution from each generation to the next, and of helping those in different cultures and contexts to understand and embrace the solution.⁸⁷ The Church informed by such an ecclesiology will encourage, inform, and support collaboration, not only among its members, but also between its members and those who are not members. Its structure will support collaboration while its ministers will serve collaboration by encouraging it, and by unifying, directing, and keeping it true.

Lay Vocation Directed to Graced Collaboration

An ecclesiology informed by Lonergan's heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil will understand that all ecclesial vocations are directed to participation in graced cooperation with God and collaboration with others in helping to realize God's solution to the problem of evil. It will acknowledge that the principal energy and implementation of such collaboration rests with the laity who make up over 99 percent of the Church's membership.⁸⁸ Such an ecclesiology will understand that the primary role of the laity is one of active collaboration with others both within and outside the Church, and that the lay vocation is, accordingly, directed to collaboration. It will recognize the importance of forming the laity for their role in collaboration.

Formation of laity for collaboration must be directed to helping the laity to recognize that the lay vocation is indeed a call to participate in the dialogues and collaborations by which God's

⁸⁷ Ibid., 743.

⁸⁸ CARA reports that in 2008 there were 409,166 priests worldwide while there were 1.166 billion Catholics. The percentage of laity in the Church based on these figures is 99.965%. CARA, "Frequently Requested Church Statistics," accessed January 10, 2011.

solution to the problem of evil will be realized. Because heart speaks to heart in grace, foundational experiences of formation for the laity will include participation in the liturgical prayer and in the graced collaborations of their parish. Certainly, formation of the laity for graced collaboration will be more effective in an ecclesial atmosphere of loving inclusion and respect that provides opportunities for people to be heard and to engage in dialogue.

Because participation in the dialogues and collaborations that constitutes the Church's mission requires knowledge and acceptance of Revelation and the teachings of the Church, formation of laity for collaboration must include catechesis. But catechesis directed only to individual understanding and acceptance fails to fully appreciate the cosmic significance of the lay vocation as it participates in the Church's vocation of being a catalyst, instrument, and sign in the world of cooperation with God and collaboration with others in bringing about God's solution to the problem of evil. Full catechesis must be directed to mission. Accordingly, it must include dialogue and collaboration and must support conversion on all levels. Support for conversion will include opportunities to learn about Church history, social justice issues, and Catholic social teaching. It will challenge lay faithful to think critically, to consider higher values in moral decision making, and to reflect on what it means to be a disciple in all aspects of living. It will challenge lay faithful to live in observance of Lonergan's transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible.

Role of Institution and Clergy in Graced Collaboration

An ecclesiology informed by Lonergan's heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil recognizes that even graced collaboration is prone to deficiencies and failures because it is "effected through human channels and in accord with the probabilities."⁸⁹ Such an ecclesiology recognizes the need for a Church organization "capable of making necessary judgments and decisions that are binding on all" that will keep the collaboration true to its

⁸⁹ Lonergan, *Insight*, 744.

purpose.⁹⁰ Accordingly, it recognizes and affirms the necessary roles of those who participate in and serve the collaboration by helping it to be true to its purpose and by helping to unify and lead it. The clergy in this ecclesial vision are those who are called, authorized, and responsible for serving the collaboration that is the Church.

Ecclesiology Informed by God's Universal Gift of Salvation

The mission of the Church is commonly interpreted in terms of the mission of Jesus Christ. For example, in his commentary on the mission of the Church as informed by the documents of Vatican II, Kloppenburg writes:

The Church is the sacrament of Christ, that is, the sign and instrument he uses in continuing his mission in the world until the rule of God becomes perfect. Consequently *the mission of the Church must be sought in the mission of Christ himself*. In its Constitution on the Church in the Modern World the Council states: 'Inspired by no earthly ambition, the Church seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ Himself under the lead of the befriending Spirit' (GS 3c/201).⁹¹

This understanding of the mission of the Church as a continuation of the mission of Christ under the lead of the Spirit is consistent with the view that in the temporal order God first sent the Son and then sent the Spirit to bring the work of the Son to completion. It is symptomatic of what David Coffey describes as "the reluctance of the West to admit a special mission of the Holy Spirit at all."⁹²

Holy Spirit as God's First Gift

There is, however, another way to view the temporal order of the missions of the Son and Spirit, namely, that "God first sent the Spirit, and then sent the Son in the context of the Spirit's mission, to bring to completion – perhaps not precisely the work of the Spirit, but the work which God conceived as one work to be executed in the twofold mission of first the Spirit and then the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Kloppenburg, *Ecclesiology of Vatican II*, 97–98, emphasis in the original.

⁹² David M. Coffey, "A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit," *Theological Studies* 47 (1986): 227.

Son.”⁹³ This reversal of the common interpretation of the temporal order of the missions of the Son and Spirit is not really novel. In fact it is consistent with the view, found in several contemporary magisterial statements and in recent articles, that the mission of the Spirit precedes the mission of the Church.⁹⁴ It is consistent, as well, with the idea of the Spirit as God’s first gift found in Augustine and Aquinas.⁹⁵ It is also consistent with the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church that everyone receives sufficient grace for salvation⁹⁶ and that grace is a gift of the Holy

⁹³ Crowe, “Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 325. This paper was delivered by Crowe as the Chancellor’s lecture at the Regis College Convocation on the eve of Bernard Lonergan’s death, November 26, 1984. In Doran’s words, “I dare say the lecture could very well prove to be the single most outstanding contribution of Crowe’s illustrious career in promoting and advancing the legacy of Bernard Lonergan. It continues to be quoted and mined for its contributions.” Doran, “What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?” (Paper, Doing Catholic Systematic Theology in a Multi-religious World, Marquette University, October 29, 2009), <http://www.lonerganresource.com/conferences.php>. An understanding that the mission of the Spirit predates that of the Son is not a novelty. The Nicene Creed professes that the Spirit spoke through the prophets. *Ad Gentes Divinitus* states, “Without a doubt, the holy Spirit was at work in the world before Christ was glorified.” *Ad Gentes Divinitus* no. 4, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 446.

⁹⁴ For example, Pope John Paul II writes, “The Spirit manifests himself in a special way in the Church and in her members. Nevertheless, his presence and activity are universal, limited neither by space nor time (Cf. Encyclical Letter *Dominum et Vivificantem*, 53: loc. cit., 874f). The Second Vatican Council recalls that the Spirit is at work in the heart of every person, through the ‘seeds of the Word,’ to be found in human initiatives-including religious ones – and in mankind’s efforts to attain truth, goodness and God himself (Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes*, 3, 11, 15; Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 10-11, 22, 26, 38, 41, 92-93).” Pope John Paul II, “*Redemptoris Missio*” [“On the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate”] no. 28, encyclical letter (December 7, 1990), http://www.catecheticsonline.com/ChurchDocuments_POPEJOHNPAULII_redemptoris.php, accessed February 6, 2011. It is impossible to list all of the articles that support an understanding that the Spirit’s mission precedes that of the Church. See, for example, Robert M. Doran, “What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?” Doran, “Social Grace and the Mission of the Word,” (Paper, Doing Catholic Systematic Theology in a Multi-religious World, Second Colloquium, Marquette University, November 4, 2010), <http://www.lonerganresource.com/conferences.php>; Susan Smith, RNDM, “The Holy Spirit and Mission in Some Contemporary Theologies of Mission,” *Mission Studies* 18 (2001): 227–50; Steven Bevans, SVD, “The Church as Creation of the Spirit: Unpacking a Missionary Image,” *Missiology: An International Review* 35, no. 1 (2007): 5–21; Thomas Hughson, S.J., “Interpreting Vatican II: ‘A New Pentecost,’” *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 3–37.

⁹⁵ See St. Augustine, *De Trinitate* Book 15 (29) in Augustine: *On the Trinity; Books 8–15*, ed. Gareth B. Matthews, trans. Stephen McKenna (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 200–1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Part I, Q38, A2, in *The Collected Works of St. Thomas Aquinas*, electronic resource (Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corporation, 1993), <http://encore.csd.mu.edu/iii/encore/search/?formids=target&lang=eng&suite=def&submitmode=&submitna me=&SORT=D&target=the+collected+works+of+St.+Thomas+Aquinas&searchImageSubmitComponent=Search> (accessed February 6, 2011).

⁹⁶ This doctrine is stated explicitly in *Lumen Gentium*, “Nor is God remote from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, since he gives to everyone life and breath and all things (see

Spirit.⁹⁷ Lonergan scholar Frederick Crowe maintains that Lonergan's later work on the Son and the Spirit was guided by "the tacit supposition" that in the temporal order the mission of the Spirit precedes the mission of the Son.⁹⁸ Crowe argues that this understanding of the temporal order of the two missions makes sense "if we think of the ontological rather than of the cognitional order" in light of the principle that what is first in our eyes is not first in itself.⁹⁹

Lonergan's later view, that the gift of the Spirit as God's inner word of love is universally offered to all people from the beginning to the end of human time, is consistent with an understanding that the mission of the Spirit precedes the mission of the Son in the temporal order.¹⁰⁰ It is precisely as God's universal offer of love that the Spirit can be considered to be God's first and foundational gift and that the mission of the Spirit can be understood to be ontologically prior to the mission of the Son. The acknowledgment that grace is universally offered in the gift of the Spirit as God's first and foundational gift has rich implications for an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan. We proceed now to consider five of these implications.

Implications for Ecclesiology

Charisms and Institution. The first implication for ecclesiology that follows from an acknowledgement of the universality of grace given in the Spirit is that the missions of both the Spirit and the Son are necessary for the realization of the Church's purpose. This implication is

Acts 17:25-28) and since the Saviour wills everyone to be saved (see 1 Tim 2:4)." *Lumen Gentium* no. 16, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 22.

⁹⁷ Pope John Paul II explicitly says that, while the grace by which all are offered the gift of salvation comes from Christ, it is communicated by the Holy Spirit. He writes, "The universality of salvation means that it is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church. Since salvation is offered to all, it must be made concretely available to all. . . . For such people [outside the Church] salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace which, while having a mysterious relationship to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation. This grace comes from Christ; it is the result of his Sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It enables each person to attain salvation through his or her free cooperation." Pope John Paul II, "*Redemptoris Missio*" no. 10; See also no. 1999 in Catholic Church, United States Catholic Conference, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1994), 484.

⁹⁸ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," 325n3.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 327.

¹⁰⁰ See Lonergan, *Method*, 108–9.

supported by Congar's argument that the missions of the Son and Spirit are coequal with regard to the origin and continuity of the Church.¹⁰¹ This implication is also consistent with an acknowledgement of the mutual interdependence of the two missions in graced subjects.

Loneragan affirms this mutual interdependence when he writes, "[w]ithout the visible mission of the Word, the gift of the Spirit is a being-in-love without a proper object; it remains simply an orientation to mystery that awaits its interpretation. Without the [invisible] mission of the Spirit, the Word enters into his own, but his own receive him not."¹⁰² As Crowe observes, "God, it seems, needs both Spirit and Son to achieve the fullness of the divine being-in-love with us."¹⁰³

An acknowledgement that the missions of the Spirit and the Son are equally necessary for the realization of the Church's purpose supports the assertion that both charismatic and institutional elements are necessary for the realization of the Church's purpose. Lonergan's affirmation that the two missions are mutually interdependent in graced subjects can be extended to inform not only the necessity of both charismatic and institutional elements in the Church, but also their mutual interdependence in the Church. Lonergan conceives the mutual interdependence of the two missions in realizing the Church's purpose in terms of the interdependence of two currents operative in the Church: a mystical current that tends towards the ideal in renewal, and an organizational, conservative current.¹⁰⁴ Dialectically interwoven, these currents serve to impel the Church to greater authenticity.¹⁰⁵ An understanding of the mutual interdependence of charism and institution will affirm that charisms are necessary for life and

¹⁰¹ Congar argues this in Congar, "The Spirit Animates the Church," in *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, 'He is Lord and Giver of Life,' trans. David Smith (Original edition *Je crois en l'Esprit Saint*. Paris: *Les Editions du Cerf*, 1979–1980, New York: Crossroad Publishing Company), 5–14. A subsection has the title, "The 'Two Missions': the Spirit as the Co-instituting Principle of the Church." *Ibid.*, 7–14. Congar finds support for his argument in the writings of a number of Scholastic theologians and Church fathers including St. Irenaeus who refers to the Spirit as a 'co-instituting' principle of the Church. *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰² Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 32. The bracketed term replaces the word 'visible' in the misprint, "Without the visible mission of the Spirit" in the original.

¹⁰³ In making this observation, Crowe cites Rom 5:8 and 1 Jn 4:8-9 that describe the love God has "towards us" (Paul) and is "disclosed to us" (John) in the sending of Christ into the world to die for us. Crowe says, "we would understand this as the very Love that is a divine person, the *amor donabilis* of God, given to all of us since the world began." Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," 330.

¹⁰⁴ Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 11–12.

¹⁰⁵ See *ibid.*

mission of the institutional Church and will simultaneously affirm that the institution provides the means, via dialogical collaboration, by which outward words expressed through charisms are discerned and enabled to serve the greater good.¹⁰⁶

Arguably, the mutual interdependence of charismatic and institutional elements in the Church is realized precisely in ecclesial dialogue and collaboration. This suggests that dialogue and collaboration are the necessary means by which the Church participates in the missions of the Spirit and Son. It also suggests that, to the extent that dialogue and collaboration are neglected in the Church, to that extent not only is the balance between charism and institution skewed in favor of institution, but office is separated from charism while charism is severed from its role in building up the Church and may even be severed from the Church itself. To neglect dialogue and collaboration in the Church is thus, in effect, to subordinate charism to institution and, thereby, to subordinate the mission of the Spirit to that of the Son. Such neglect can also lead to a subordination of institution to charism and the mission of the Son to that of the Spirit in the case, and to the extent, that charismatic individuals or groups separate from the Church. The result in either case is to deny the full religious becoming of ecclesial subjects and the full realization of the Church and its mission.

Church-world Relationship. A second implication for ecclesiology that follows from acknowledging the universality of grace given in the Spirit has to do with the Church's relation to world. To affirm that the Spirit is God's first gift given to all people of the world is simultaneously to acknowledge that the Church is not apart from the world, but is part of a larger world-community of all people who, without exception, are loved by God and have been offered the gift of God's love.¹⁰⁷ This affirmation supports an acknowledgement that beneath the differences among various cultures, languages, political aspirations, religious rites, and traditions

¹⁰⁶ Recall that in Chapter Four I argued that each person's charisms inform his or her uniquely-expressed outward words of love as he or she participates in the dialogue of grace.

¹⁰⁷ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," 335–36.

of people, the gift of the Spirit serves as “the ontic basis of all dialogue” between the Church and the world.¹⁰⁸

Church and Kingdom. A third implication for ecclesiology that follows from the acknowledgment that grace is universally offered in the gift of the Spirit is that the Church is directed to the kingdom. In *Lumen Gentium*’s words, the Church serves as “the seed and the beginning of [the kingdom of Christ and of God].”¹⁰⁹ One way in which the Church serves as a seed and beginning of the kingdom is through its faith. Faith, which as we saw in Chapter Four is the knowledge born of love, is a consequence of the gift of the Spirit.¹¹⁰ Faith calls persons to the higher authenticity that overcomes evil with good. It does this by placing “all other values in the light and the shadow of transcendent value,”¹¹¹ thereby revealing that the good of humankind is also God’s glory.¹¹² It does this also by exposing the basis of social decline in human sinfulness and biases and by calling those graced with faith to meet the pressures of social decay through the charity of self-sacrificing love.¹¹³ In this way the faith of the Church supports human progress that is directed to God’s kingdom.

The Church is also directed to the kingdom by virtue of the proximate end of the missions of the Spirit and Son in which it participates. Lonergan affirms that the missions of the Spirit and Son have the same ultimate end of the beatific vision and the same proximate end of “that good of order which, according to various analogies with human goods of order, is called either the kingdom of God, or the body of Christ, or the church, or the mystical marriage of Christ with

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 338.

¹⁰⁹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 5, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 4.

¹¹⁰ While faith is a consequence of the gift of the Spirit, faith is also, Doran argues, a created participation in the invisible mission of the Word. Specifically, faith is constituted by “the set of judgments of value that participates in the Word’s role in breathing the Holy Spirit.” Doran, “Social Grace and the Mission of the Word,” 7.

¹¹¹ Lonergan, *Method*, 116.

¹¹² Ibid., 117.

¹¹³ Ibid.

the church, or the economy of salvation, or the city of God.”¹¹⁴ Lonergan describes the good of order in terms of an organically interconnected “succession and series of particular goods” that requires “many coordinated operations among many persons.”¹¹⁵ He maintains that the degree to which the good of order is achieved corresponds to the presence of persons to one another in the habitual operations of knowing and loving that flow from grace.¹¹⁶

One way to understand how personal relationships of presence in knowing and loving are directed to the kingdom of God is through Doran’s notion of social grace. Doran understands social grace to be the embodiment of self-transcendent loving in social structures with the consequent realization in these structures of the integral functioning of vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values.¹¹⁷ He suggests that, in a way analogous to the downwards healing movement of grace in persons by which grace leads to religious conversion which leads to moral conversion and they both lead to intellectual conversion and all three lead to psychic conversion,¹¹⁸ so on the social and cultural levels of human living informed by the scale of values, graced relations

move from the community of persons in love with God to the efforts of the people in that community to strive together for personal integrity, and from these two sources to the constant purification and development of the meanings and values that inform given ways of life (cultural values); the movement then extends from integral cultural values to the social order and from the social order to the equitable distribution of vital goods to the entire community.¹¹⁹

Arguably, insofar as the members of the Church love one another as Christ has loved them, which, as we saw in Chapter Four, requires participation in the dialogue of grace and is

¹¹⁴ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 495. As noted in an earlier note, Lonergan wrote this prior to Vatican II. After Vatican II he explicitly states that the kingdom of God and the Church are not to be identified. My source for this information is a communication from Robert Doran of March 6, 2011.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 505.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 505–13.

¹¹⁷ Doran, “What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?” 12; Doran, “Social Grace and the Mission of the Word,” 16.

¹¹⁸ Doran, “What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?” 12.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

conditioned by ecclesial dialogue, to this extent the Church serves as an agent of social grace and as the seed of the kingdom of God.

Relation to World Religions. A fourth implication for ecclesiology that follows from the recognition that the gift of the Spirit is God's first and foundational gift has to do with the Church's relation to world religions.¹²⁰ To acknowledge that the Spirit is active in all world religions is simultaneously to recognize that on some basic level we share community in the Holy Spirit with members of other faith traditions, and that we expect to find in them fruits of the Spirit.¹²¹ Our attitude towards those of other religions should be based on the recognition that we share, in Lonergan's words, a common "orientation to transcendent mystery."¹²² While respecting and affirming the treasure we have in our own tradition, we should, Crowe says, "bring ourselves to attend to the experienced religious conversion that is given as a common basis,"¹²³ and "open our minds and our hearts to what the Spirit is saying to us," through other world religions.¹²⁴

Evangelization. A fifth implication for ecclesiology that follows from the recognition that the gift of the Spirit is God's first and foundational gift has to do with the way in which the Church evangelizes. Informed by the recognition that others have already received the inner word of God's love in the gift of the Spirit, the purpose of evangelization becomes that of sharing God's outer word of love, which is, in Lonergan's words, "the word of tradition that has accumulated religious wisdom, the word of fellowship that unites those that share the gift of God's love, the word of the gospel that announces that God has loved us first and, in the fullness of time, has revealed that love in Christ crucified, dead, and risen."¹²⁵ Because God's outer word is a word that witnesses to the love of Christ, it must be spoken not only in words but by means of lives rooted in Christian discipleship.

¹²⁰ See Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," 333–43.

¹²¹ Ibid., 335; Doran, "Social Grace and the Mission of the Word," 5.

¹²² Lonergan, *Method*, 341.

¹²³ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," 337.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 336.

¹²⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 113.

The outer word of God's love spoken in evangelization by those who represent the Church must flow from their being in love with God and others so that it will be recognized through the eyes of faith of the recipients. Ultimately, in order for this outer word to be recognized and received as truly God's word, the Church itself must be a credible sign of this word. Crowe argues that the Church must show plausible grounds for why "the events of long ago and far away that Christians claim as their origin" should be taken seriously by people today.¹²⁶ He writes, "our immediate responsibility in evangelization is clear: it is to make the Church what Christ our Lord would have it be, and on that basis begin to talk to others about Jesus of Nazareth."¹²⁷

Lay Role Informed by Spirit as God's First Gift

An acknowledgment that the Spirit is God's first gift provides several insights into the lay role. First, such an acknowledgment recognizes that the role of each individual lay person in the life of the Church and its mission has a charismatic basis consistent with his or her natural gifts. The exercise of these gifts is not easy to regulate, which explains the silence of the Code of Canon Law on the possibility of a charismatic basis for ministry. On the basis of my argument above, that it is only through dialogue and collaboration that charismatic gifts and their exercise for the good of the Church and its mission to larger society can be properly discerned, an acknowledgement that the Spirit is God's first gift will include an acknowledgment of the necessity of on-going ecclesial dialogue and collaboration for the proper discernment and expression of individual lay roles.

Second, an acknowledgment that the Spirit is God's first gift affirms that the secular character cannot be an ontologically-distinguishing characteristic of the laity.¹²⁸ This affirmation

¹²⁶ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," 343.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ This is in reference to *Lumen Gentium* no 31, which says, "To be secular is the special characteristic of the laity." *Lumen Gentium* no. 31, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 49.

is supported by the argument that, if the Spirit is God's first gift, then the Church is in the world as part of the larger world-community of those who have received the gift of the Spirit. By situating the Church in the world, this argument thereby does away with Church-world and religious-secular dualisms. An acknowledgment that the Spirit is God's first gift is consistent, however, with an interpretation of the secular character of the laity that affirms that the laity have the principal responsibility for evangelizing the world, taken to include those both inside and outside the Church who need the word of the gospel.

Finally an ecclesiology that acknowledges that the Spirit is God's first gift understands the lay role to be one of serving the kingdom both inside and outside the Church. Such an understanding effectively does away with any tendency to 'clericalize' ecclesial lay ministry, because it recognizes that all work motivated by faith and graced love, whether done inside or outside the Church, is directed to the kingdom. Just as full discernment of how charismated persons can best serve the life and mission of the Church requires ecclesial dialogue and collaboration, so the role of lay persons in serving the kingdom can be only be fully discerned and realized through ecclesial dialogue and collaboration.

Church as Process of Self-constitution

To this point each of the ecclesiological perspectives informed by Lonergan that we have examined recognizes that graced collaboration and dialogue are constitutive of the Church's life and mission. Such recognition is consistent with the concrete, existential view of the earthly Church that underlies each of these perspectives. Focus on the earthly Church is not intended to deny or neglect the divine element of the Church, nor is it intended to neglect those members of

Whether the secular characteristic referred to in this statement should be interpreted as ontological or as merely descriptive has been the subject of some debate. See, for example, Fox, "Laity, Ministry, and Secular Character;" Hagstrom, "The Secular Character of the Vocation and Mission of the Laity;" Richard R. Gaillardetz, "Shifting Meanings in the Lay-Clergy Distinction."

the Church who enjoy the beatific vision in glory. It is, rather, to regard the earthly Church as part of the “one complex reality comprising a human and a divine element,” that the Church is,¹²⁹ while seeking to better understand the earthly reality of the Church’s life and mission. We continue in this section to explore how Lonergan’s interiority analysis can help to inform the concrete, existential, reality of the earthly Church as a process of self-constitution.

Church as Concrete Existential Reality

Just as Lonergan understands the human subject to be an existential reality in the conscious “psychological, sociological, historical, philosophic, theological, religious, ascetic” dimensions of his or her ‘*Existenz*,’¹³⁰ so Lonergan considers the Church to be an existential reality.¹³¹ Lonergan is reluctant to define what he means positively by the adjective ‘existential’ applied to the human person or to the Church because to do so risks constraining and reducing all that it implies.¹³² Rather, he says, “one arrives at the existential, first of all, when one arrives at oneself.”¹³³ Thus Lonergan describes an existential subject to be a person who has reached the point of existential decision in which he or she decides who he or she will be. We have seen that such a decision is not a one-time event, but always remains a precarious and never-ending achievement. We have also seen that every existential decision is ultimately a decision to authentically or unauthentically become oneself. In light of this understanding of authenticity, Christian authenticity can be understood to be the result of the graced gift of conversion in which one is healed and elevated to authentically be oneself as gift for others in Christ.

¹²⁹ *Lumen Gentium* no. 8 in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 9.

¹³⁰ Lonergan, “*Existenz* and *Aggiornamento*,” 222.

¹³¹ Lonergan, “A New Pastoral Theology,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1965–1980*, 231.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 231–32.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 232.

Lonergan builds on his understanding of Christian authenticity in describing the existential reality of the Church. He holds that as an existential reality the Church is grounded in and mediated by authentic Christian experience that is shared and transmitted.

For it is authentic Christian experience that is alive. It is that experience as shared by two or more that is intersubjective; that as shared by many, is community; that, as transmitted down the ages, is historic; that, as intended for all Christians, is ecumenical and, as intended for all [people] is universalist; it is the same experience, as headed for an ultimate goal, that is eschatological. So a single human reality, in its many aspects, and through its many realizations, at once is alive and intersubjective, communal and historic, ecumenical and universalist and eschatological.¹³⁴

Such an understanding of the existential reality of the Church informs Lonergan's description of the Church as a community constituted by communication.¹³⁵

Church Constituted by Communication

When Lonergan formally introduces the topic of church in *Method*, he does so in a chapter titled "Communications."¹³⁶ Lonergan describes communication to be a process in which people come to share meanings.¹³⁷ "On the elementary level," he says, "this process has been described as arising between the self and the other when, on the basis of already existing intersubjectivity, the self makes a gesture, the other makes an interpretative response, and the self discovers in the response the effective meaning of [his or her] gesture."¹³⁸ Thus communication proceeds from intersubjectivity to common understanding through gesture and interpretation. Unfortunately, the communication of intended meaning is not always entirely successful. In the case of failed communication, people are apt to misunderstand and distrust each other, to remain

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 361–63.

¹³⁶ Lonergan, Chapter 14, "Communications," in *ibid.*, 355–68.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 357. Recall from Chapter Three that Lonergan considers meaning to be a constitutive element in human becoming. Chapter Three explained that while meaning can be mediated through various carriers including language, culture, art, ritual action, and the lives and deeds of others, ultimately meaning depends either directly or indirectly on intersubjective communication.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

in different worlds, and to operate at cross-purposes.¹³⁹ The extent to which intended meaning can be communicated so that it is understood as intended depends, says Lonergan, on “a common field of experience,” on “common or complementary ways of understanding,” on “common judgments,” and on “common values, goals, policies.”¹⁴⁰

Constitutive Communication. If the Church is constituted by communication, the question arises, in what way can communication be considered to be constitutive? Lonergan scholar Fred Lawrence answers this question as follows: “Performatively, constitutive communication means ‘reciprocally opening ourselves to others, appreciating them, considering them, putting ourselves in the way of feeling the pull of their humanity, and being willing to act in accordance with our resulting sense of that person.’”¹⁴¹ The reader will recall that in Chapter Four I described the dialogue of grace performatively in terms of mutual self-mediation in which healed and elevated graced persons offer the gift of self in graced love and are willing to receive the self-gift of others. Moreover, as I have argued in the present chapter, it is only through participation in the dialogue of grace that individuals are able to cooperate with God and to collaborate with one another in helping the Church to realize its redemptive purpose. Thus, constitutive ecclesial communication depends on participation in the dialogue of grace performatively in mutual self-mediation.

Forms of Ecclesial Communication. The communication by which ecclesial subjects are able to become and know who they are as members of the Body of Christ takes place in ecclesial community. Such communication can take several forms.¹⁴² It can be monologue or one-way

¹³⁹ Ibid., 356–57.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Fred Lawrence, “Lonergan’s Foundations for Constitutive Communication,” *Lonergan Workshop* 10 (1994): 267. In his description of constitutive communication Lawrence relies on Austin Farrer’s formulation in Austin Farrer, “A Moral Argument for the Existence of God,” *Reflective Faith: Essays in Philosophical Theology*, ed. Charles C. Conti (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1972), 114–133 at 121.

¹⁴² I am influenced in the discussion of types of communication that follows by Geoffrey Cowan and Amelia Arsenault, “Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration: The Three Layers of Public

communication. Communication via monologue may include homilies, speeches, visual arts, catechetical instruction, written statements, printed instructional aids, books, or any kind of audio-visual presentation. Monologue communication can be very useful in conveying information or ideas, in offering a vision or perspective, and in exhorting or persuading.

Ecclesial communication can also take the form of dialogue. We have already seen that dialogue is a reciprocal type of communication. Dialogue within the Church can take on many different forms including informal chats that take place person-to-person or via electronic media, interactive Web sites or even call-in shows, listening sessions, reflection groups, parish or pastoral council or committee meetings, conferences, and synods. Dialogue can also be fostered through collaborative activities such as parish social and service activities. The important thing about dialogue is that it provides a voice for all involved. Geoffrey Cowan and Amelia Arsenault report that “people tend to listen more closely and to be more receptive when their questions are being addressed and their comments heard, and when they believe that they, or people like them, are a part of the conversation.”¹⁴³

The purpose of dialogue is not that of reaching consensus or winning an argument. Nor should ecclesial dialogue be equated with having a deliberative voice or vote in Church policy. Instead, the fundamental purpose of dialogue within the Church is to support the dialogue of grace. Beyond supporting the dialogue of grace, the primary purposes of dialogue, whether ecclesial or not, should be those of improving understanding, forming relationships, and thereby forming community.¹⁴⁴ Cowan and Arsenault maintain that “the very act of exchanging information, or illustrating a willingness to exchange information, can lay the groundwork for deeper attachments.”¹⁴⁵ Listening to another person is necessary in order to receive the gift of that person as well as the outer word of God’s love that that person embodies and speaks. Listening is

Diplomacy,” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (March 2008): 10–30.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 18.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 18.

the way in which we become present to another in graced love as heart speaks to heart. Thus, listening is both an expression and necessary condition of the dialogue of grace. Ecclesial subjects and the Church itself can only fully become who they are called to be through listening to God's outer word in all the ways that God speaks in the Church and in the world.

As has already been amply noted in this chapter, ecclesial communication can also take the form of collaboration. We have seen that collaboration involves working together to achieve a common goal or vision or purpose. Ecclesial collaboration can take many forms including any type of group planning or discerning, social activities, campaigns, and outreach in service and evangelization. Because collaboration includes dialogue, collaboration serves to form relationships and community in all the ways that dialogue does. But beyond shared information, collaboration provides shared experience and possibly shared achievement. Cowan and Arsenault point out that "[i]ndividuals who build or achieve something together . . . are forever bound by their common experience and/or achievement."¹⁴⁶ Collaboration can help to bridge cultural gaps within the Church and between the Church and the larger society in which it exists. This is the case because, although collaboration does not depend on preexisting bonds of trust, it can create goodwill and bonds of trust between those of different cultures and classes and ultimately lead to a set of shared values and expectations.¹⁴⁷

While ecclesial communication certainly depends on verbal exchange, it can also take place in non-verbal and even non-cognitive ways. Lonergan describes two forms of communication that take place on the level of feeling that he terms "community of feeling" and "fellow-feeling."¹⁴⁸ He describes a community of feeling to occur when two or more persons respond in simultaneously parallel ways to an object or event.¹⁴⁹ Such a community can result, for example, in an audience watching a moving scene in a film. A community of worship can

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 22.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 23.

¹⁴⁸ Lonergan, *Method*, 58.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

become a community of feeling to the extent that worshippers are moved similarly and simultaneously in devotion.¹⁵⁰ Lonergan describes fellow-feeling as a sequential communication of influence in which one person's feelings are aroused by the influence of another or others.¹⁵¹ For example, fellow feeling accounts for the feelings of sorrow a person experiences over the loss experienced by another person. In a community of worship fellow feeling describes how a person can be touched by the prayerful attitude of others.¹⁵² One of Lonergan's favorite examples of non-verbal communication is that of the smile which can communicate a variety of meanings including the meaning of the self who smiles.¹⁵³ Lonergan's example of the smile illustrates that underlying all communication is the communicating self. "[T]he principal communication," says Lonergan, "is not saying what we know but showing what we are."¹⁵⁴

Liturgy and Prayer as Constitutive Communication. I have argued that the dialogue of grace is foundational for constitutive ecclesial communication. Liturgy and prayer are expressions par excellence of the dialogue of grace. They are also forms of ecclesial communication par excellence by which ecclesial subjects become who they are as members of the Body of Christ. Prayer can be described as dialogue with God. It is utterly gift because the first word is always that of God's love given in the Spirit. Just as religious experience is never solitary, but is directed to God and others,¹⁵⁵ so, too, prayer is never solitary. This is because, as a dialogue of love between God and a human person, prayer opens the person to God's horizon of concern for all of humanity and the world. Similarly, because all of a person's personal *Existenz* and concerns help to constitute who that person is, prayer brings all of these into dialogue with God. In a very real sense, then, prayer helps the person who prays to become more fully aware of his or her reality as it draws him or her into communion with God and more fully into

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 59–60.

¹⁵⁴ Lonergan, "Cognitive Structure," 220.

¹⁵⁵ Lonergan, *Method*, 115.

communion with others. It is no wonder that Lawrence considers prayer to be the “acme of constitutive communication as human.”¹⁵⁶

Prayer mediates to us, says Lonergan, the higher part of our reality that is immediate in us but possibly merely in a vegetative sort of way, namely that “de facto we are temples of the Spirit, members of Christ, and adoptive children of the Father.”¹⁵⁷ Accordingly, prayer mediates to the one who prays his or her identity in Christ, which is an identity that includes not only all of the members of Christ, but all those whom Christ loves. In liturgical prayer those gathered by God to worship discover who they are as Church and who they are called to be, not only individually, but especially as Church; not only for each other, but for the world in Christ.

Self Informed in Community. Lonergan’s examples of communities of feeling and fellow-feeling help to illustrate the fact that subjects become who they are in community. As we saw in Chapter Four, the existential decision, which is an act of self-possession that both requires and leads to self-knowledge, can only take place within an awareness of a communal ‘we.’ In particular, self-identity is largely informed by one’s experience in community. Self-identity is an example of what Lonergan refers to as incarnate meaning, which he describes as “the meaning of a person, of his [or her] way of life, of his [or her] words, or of his [or her] deeds.”¹⁵⁸ Lonergan explains:

[E]very movement, every word, every deed, reveal what the subject is. They reveal it to others, and the others, in the self-revelation that is their response, obliquely reveal to the intelligent subject what he [or she] is. In the main it is not by introspection but by reflecting on our living in common with others that we come to know ourselves.¹⁵⁹

Thus, the ecclesial identity of each lay person and of the laity as a group is largely informed by their experiences within ecclesial community.

¹⁵⁶ Lawrence, “Lonergan’s Foundations for Constitutive Communication,” 257.

¹⁵⁷ Lonergan, “Mediation of Christ in Prayer,” 179.

¹⁵⁸ Lonergan, *Method*, 73.

¹⁵⁹ Lonergan, “Cognitive Structure,” 220.

Dialogue, Collaboration, and Lay Identity. For many lay persons the experience of Church takes place in the parish. In those parishes where dialogical and collaborative initiatives depend solely on lay persons and/or involve only lay persons, the laity are likely to feel like a caste apart from the clergy. When decisions of policy at archdiocesan or parish levels are made by clergy with no lay input and with no accountability to the laity, the message conveyed is that the laity aren't worth listening to and don't count. These kinds of experience and this kind of message cannot provide a unified consciousness of Church as 'we' for the laity, nor can it convey the full extent of the lay vocation. Instead, these kinds of experience communicate that the laity do not fully belong, despite any official rhetoric to the contrary. In the wake of the clergy abuse crisis, it seems reasonable and plausible to suggest that for many lay Catholics the ability to participate in dialogue and collaboration with their pastors and with their bishops would help to ameliorate the damage done by the crises. The ability of the laity to participate in dialogue and collaboration with their pastors would simultaneously enhance their sense of belonging while elevating the legitimacy of the hierarchy and of the Church as institution in their eyes.

The importance of dialogical and collaborative communication should also inform the ways in which the truths of the faith are presented to lay Catholics and to those outside the Church. If truths are communicated via impersonal formulas with self-contained content, not only are the truths diminished thereby, but the communication itself has the effect of de-personalizing both the communicator and the receivers. Such one-dimensional 'truths' are reduced caricatures of what is intended and are less likely to be understood and received than if they are presented in a way that recognizes and affirms the persons who are the intended receivers of the message by allowing some form of dialogical interchange. Those who are charged with the communication of Christ's message should remember that the credibility of such communication has its source in God. This implies that the process of communication must include the truth of God's love for the recipients and should serve to invite both those who speak the message and its intended recipients into communion with God and one another.

Constitutive ecclesial communication is constitutive precisely because it helps to form community and to inform the ways in which the Church is a sacrament of communion. From the summation of subjects mediated by the graced presence of others into the ‘we’ of community, to the active and collaborative participation of the community of faith in Eucharistic liturgy, and in all other forms of constitutive ecclesial communication founded on the dialogue of grace, the Holy Spirit is at work to bring the participants into communion with God and with one another in Christ. This is one way in which Lonergan’s description of the Church as “the community that results from the outer communication of Christ’s message and from the inner gift of God’s love,”¹⁶⁰ can be interpreted. To more fully appreciate this description of the Church we turn now to examine how Lonergan understands the Church as community.

Church as Community

In Lonergan’s understanding, community is the ideal basis for society.¹⁶¹ Lonergan takes the perspective of sociologists and social historians in considering the social to be empirically “anything that pertains to the togetherness of human beings.”¹⁶² “It follows,” Lonergan says, “that society must always be conceived concretely and, indeed, the fewer the groups of [persons] living in total isolation from other [persons], the more there tends to exist a single human society that is worldwide.”¹⁶³ Thus, when Lonergan speaks of the Church as community, he intends that the context of that community is worldwide society.

Community Constituted by Meaning. Within the larger society, community is not simply an aggregate of individuals. Rather, Lonergan understands community to be constituted by meaning whose genesis “is an ongoing process of communication.”¹⁶⁴ We have seen that meaning is a human construction brought about by the conscious operations of groups of human

¹⁶⁰ Lonergan, *Method*, 361.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 360.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 359.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 357.

beings. Common meanings become so only through successful and widespread communication, where communication includes all of the ways of communicating discussed above.¹⁶⁵

As constituted by common meaning, community is an achievement on four levels: it requires some common field of experience; it relies on common understanding; it acquires its form through common judgments; and it acquires its cohesiveness through common actions based on common commitments.¹⁶⁶ When people don't share common experience, they "get out of touch."¹⁶⁷ Where common understanding is missing, there is "mutual incomprehension."¹⁶⁸ Where common judgments are lacking, there is disagreement. And finally, to the extent that common commitment and achievement are not realized, to that extent the common meaning and bond of cohesiveness of the community is diminished.¹⁶⁹ Thus, Lonergan says, "[c]ommunity coheres or divides, begins or ends, just where the common field of experience, common understanding, common judgment, common commitments begin and end."¹⁷⁰

Common meanings are instrumental not only in shaping communities, but also in shaping history as they are transmitted from one generation to the next. Common meanings also constitutively shape individual persons. Lonergan says, "[a]s it is only within communities that [persons] are conceived and born and reared, so too it is only with respect to the available common meanings that the individual grows in experience, understanding, judgment, and so comes [to the point of existential decision]."¹⁷¹

Church as Process of Self-constitution. To describe the Church as "the community that results from the outer communication of Christ's message and from the inner gift of God's love," is to focus simultaneously on God's self-communication of love, on how Christ's message is communicated by individual members of the Church and the Church as institution, on the

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 78.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 79.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

meaning of the message that is communicated, and on the community that results from and is transformed by the process of communication. The inner gift of God's love is the gift of the Holy Spirit that draws all of the members of the Church into the dialogue of grace in Christ. In this way the Holy Spirit draws the members of the Church into communion with God and one another in Christ and simultaneously directs them to the mission of bringing all others into this communion. The Holy Spirit also equips the Church through its offices and structure and through the charisms of its members to participate in communicating Christ's message. Thus the inner gift of God's love inspires, equips, and directs the outer communication of Christ's message.

To fully understand how the Church is constituted by the communication of Christ's message we have to recognize that this communication involves more than simply the transmission of cognitive meaning. Those who communicate it, says Lonergan, must not only know it, but must live and practice it.¹⁷² It follows that the communication of Christ's message can never fully take place as a monologue. Rather, because it arises out of the dialogue of grace, the communication of Christ's message necessarily participates in the three-way dialogue that constitutes the dialogue of grace. Accordingly, it is constituted by God's inner word of love which is given as the gift of the Holy Spirit not only to those who communicate Christ's message, but to those who are the intended recipients of Christ's message. It is constituted by the outer word of God's love that is Christ's message, as well as by all the ways in which the outer word of Christ's message is informed by Church teachings, the Church's self-understanding, and the ways in which the Church lives discipleship. As we have seen, the outer word of Christ's message is also informed by history, culture, and world events. Finally, the communication of Christ's message is constituted by the outward 'words' of love that flow between those who communicate Christ's message and their intended recipients.

Because participation in the dialogue of grace is concretely realized as mutual self-mediation, the communication of Christ's message which arises out of the dialogue of grace is

¹⁷² Ibid., 362.

transformative and constitutive of every aspect of the speakers' and receivers' persons. The communication of Christ's message is constitutive also of ecclesial community because both the process of its communication and the message itself serve to bring those who speak and hear it into communion with God and with each other. This is the sense in which Lonergan can write:

Through communication there is constituted community and, conversely, community constitutes and perfects itself through communication. Accordingly, the Christian church is a process of self-constitution, a *Selbstvollzug*. While there still is in use the medieval meaning of the term society, so that the church may be named a society, still the modern meaning, generated by empirical social studies, leads one to speak of the church as a process of self-constitution occurring within worldwide human society. The substance of that process is the Christian message conjoined with the inner gift of God's love and resulting in Christian witness, Christian fellowship, and Christian service to [humanity].¹⁷³

Thus, the ongoing appropriation and communication of the message of Jesus Christ is the process by which the earthly Church realizes itself. So vital to the Church is the appropriation and communication of Christ's message that Komonchak can write, "[w]here that event occurs, the Church comes to be; where that event does not take place, the Church does not exist; where that event has ceased to take place, the Church has ceased to exist."¹⁷⁴

Church as Event of Self-constitution. To describe the Church as a process of self-constitution is to focus on its concrete realization as an event that "consists in human beings brought together by the message about Christ received in faith thanks to the inner gift of the Holy Spirit."¹⁷⁵ The concrete process by which the event of the Church's communication of Christ's message takes place is that of the mediation, self-mediation, and mutual self-mediation of the Church and of those who share in the communication of the Church. The Church mediates Christ's message through the witness of its internal life, through its dealings with larger society, and through its teachings. Similarly, members of the Church mediate Christ's message to each other and to the larger world through their faith, through their words, in the witness of their lives, and through their participation in graced collaboration with others. As noted above, the

¹⁷³ Ibid., 363.

¹⁷⁴ Komonchak, "Lonergan and Post-conciliar Ecclesiology," *Lonergan Workshop* 20 (2008): 170.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

communication of Christ's message is also a mutual self-mediation. It is a mutual self-mediation between members of the Church as they are mutually transformed through sharing Christ's message with each other. It is also a mutual self-mediation between the Church as a community and its members to the extent that the Church and its members are mutually transformed in communicating Christ's message. Likewise, insofar as the Church and the larger society are open through the communication of Christ's message to being transformed by the other, the communication of Christ's message is a mutual self-mediation between the Church as institution and the larger society. Finally insofar as its communication of Christ's message reveals to the Church who it is, it is a self-mediation. The principal agent in the communication of Christ's message by the Church as institution and through its members, and of the mediation, mutual self-mediation, and self-mediation entailed in its communication, is the Holy Spirit.

Role of Laity in Communication of Christ's Message

Arguably, there are at least three fundamental ways in which the laity participate constitutively in the communication of Christ's message by the Church. The first way is through the witness of their lives. The meaning of Christ's message cannot be reduced to formulas, arguments, or persuasive words. Rather, because Christ's message is God's outer word of love, it must be communicated in the context of the dialogue of grace as an outward word of love that flows from conversion. This implies that the communication of Christ's message will only be credible to the extent that it is communicated through the graced loving and living of converted persons.

The second way in which the laity participate constitutively in the communication of Christ's message by the Church is through their inclusion in the communication of the message. For Christ's message to be credible, the very life of the Church has to bear testimony to it. To the extent that the laity do not participate in the communication of Christ's message, to that extent the meaning and communication of the message is distorted. The presence in the Church of any kind

of exclusion from participation in the communication of Christ's message based, for example, on gender, race, age, or other criteria, seriously diminishes the meaning of the message and the perceived trustworthiness of the Church to communicate it. In this sense the full participation and collaboration of the laity, not necessarily in democratic decision processes, but in meaningful communication in which they are included and heard, functions to give powerful witness to the truth of Christ's message.

My claim, that collaborative and dialogical inclusion of the laity in the communication of Christ's message by the Church helps to inform the message itself, finds support in the statement, "Justice in the World," issued by the 1971 World Synod of Catholic Bishops. In its statement the Synod affirms that the Church in its institutional life and members is an important medium of its message. Calling on the Church to examine the credibility of its own witness the Synod states:

While the Church is bound to give witness to justice, she recognizes that anyone who ventures to speak to people about justice must first be just in their eyes. Hence we must undertake an examination of the modes of acting and of the possessions and life style found within the Church herself.¹⁷⁶

"Justice in the World" further insists that "the members of the Church should have some share in the drawing up of decisions, in accordance with the rules given by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and the Holy See."¹⁷⁷

A third way in which individual lay persons participate constitutively in the communication of Christ's message by the Church is through their contribution to the Church's outer word of this communication. Such contribution can be by way of mentoring others, for example as a sponsor in RCIA or as a confirmation sponsor. It can be by way of serving as a catechist or as a teacher of theology. Certainly lay theologians play a constitutive role in mediating Christ's message as professed by the Church to the larger cultural matrix. Finally, in their efforts to help to illumine different facets of Christ's message in communion with the

¹⁷⁶ 1971 Synod of Bishops, "Justice in the World" no. 40, http://www.osjspm.org/majordoc_justicia_in_mundo_offical_test.aspx, accessed February 11, 2011.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. no. 46.

Church, lay artists, composers, musicians, writers, dramatists, writers of all kinds, and dancers play a constitutive role in its communication.

Authority in the Church

Earlier in this chapter we saw that Lonergan's heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil informs an ecclesiology that understands the Church to be a graced collaboration participating in God's redemptive plan for all of humanity.¹⁷⁸ Such an understanding of Church recognizes the need for some sort of institutional organization capable "of keeping a collaboration true to its purpose and united in its efforts" and "of making necessary judgments and decisions that are binding on all."¹⁷⁹ This is equivalent to saying that as an institutional organization the Church requires the exercise of authority. Thus, we turn now to examine the nature of authority in an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan.

Lonergan's Analysis of Authority

The Church teaches that offices of authority within the Church exist by divine will and are promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit.¹⁸⁰ These two beliefs ground the official ecclesial criteria of legitimacy of the authority of the hierarchy. However, these two beliefs are not always sufficient *de facto* to ground the assent of obedience of the faithful to the authority of the hierarchy. Lonergan's understanding of authority based on the legitimate power that resides in a community and of the legitimate exercise of authority based on authenticity can help to illumine the dynamics underlying the *de facto* reception of authority within the Church by the faithful.

Authority as Exercise of Legitimate Power. In Lonergan's analysis, authority does not stand over against a community through the unilateral exercise of coercive force. Rather,

¹⁷⁸ Lonergan, *Insight*, 744.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ *Lumen Gentium* no. 21, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 28.

authority is an exercise of the legitimate power that resides in the community.¹⁸¹ To fully appreciate Lonergan's understanding of the role of legitimate power in community, we have to consider legitimate power in both its historical and social dimensions. In its historical dimension, present legitimate power builds on the achievement of the past and forms the basis for future legitimate power.¹⁸² In its social dimension, legitimate power is an achievement of cooperation in which people form groups to accomplish more than they could individually, and groups cooperate to form larger groups to accomplish what isolated groups could not. In both its historical and social dimensions, the source of legitimate power is cooperation, and its carrier is the community.¹⁸³ Authority functions to direct the exercise of the legitimate power of a community and has its basis in the sum total of ways in which cooperation is sanctioned by the community.¹⁸⁴ Authority operates not only to direct cooperating groups, but also to ensure that the fruits of cooperation are distributed among cooperating members and to prevent those who would disrupt cooperation from doing so.¹⁸⁵

Authority and Authorities. In more complex communities cooperation takes place within a vast web of interconnections. As communities grow in complexity, laws are enacted to govern what sorts of cooperation are permitted and not permitted. At some point it becomes necessary to elect or appoint officials who are entrusted and delegated with certain powers and who, thereby, function as 'authorities.' While these authorities may be empowered to act in the name of subgroups or of the whole community, authority belongs, says Lonergan, to the community because community is the carrier of the common meanings and values that inform the customs, the ways of cooperation, and the rules, laws, and offices of the community.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," 5.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 6–7.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 7. It is important to keep in mind here that Lonergan is not talking about how authority functions in the Catholic Church. However, Lonergan's analysis does provide insights into how de facto authority is received by the faithful.

Legitimate Authority. In Lonergan's analysis, the legitimacy of authority rests on authenticity.¹⁸⁷ When authority is authentic, it has a hold on the consciences of those subject to authority and authorities.¹⁸⁸ But the authenticity of authority cannot be located in any one individual or group or set of laws, nor is it a secure achievement. Rather the authenticity of authority must be realized in three different carriers that Lonergan identifies as 1) the community, 2) those who are authorities, 3) those who are subject to authority.¹⁸⁹ In each of these carriers authenticity always exists in dialectical tension with unauthenticity. For example, the meanings and values carried by a community may be more or less authentic. Lonergan explains,

They are authentic in the measure that cumulatively they are the result of the transcendental precepts, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible. They are unauthentic in the measure that they are the product of cumulative inattention, obtuseness, unreasonableness, irresponsibility.¹⁹⁰

Those who are authorities and those who are subject to authorities are authentic in the measure that they are committed to authentically becoming themselves through religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. Such conversions are realized through living the transcendental precepts in self-sacrificing love.

Because the authenticity of authority depends on the precarious achievement of authenticity in each of its three carriers, determining whether authority is legitimately authentic is difficult at best. Accordingly, some external criteria of legitimacy are required. To complicate matters, arriving at a consensus as to what these external criteria of legitimacy are and how they should be interpreted is not easy due to the manifold differentiations of consciousness that exist in any community.¹⁹¹ For example, from the perspective of common sense, the external criteria for legitimate authority will likely be based solely on existing laws. From the perspective of a theoretical differentiation of consciousness, on the other hand, laws may not be considered to be

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 11.

the sole guarantor of legitimacy, especially if the laws are regarded as not having been founded on accepted theoretical principles. In the last analysis, observes Lonergan, no matter what external criteria are used to support the legitimacy of authority, they will not be totally sufficient unless they are accompanied by authenticity.¹⁹²

De Facto Reception of Authority in Church

The de facto reception of authority in the Church depends on several dynamics. First, acceptance of the beliefs that offices of authority within the Church exist by divine will and are promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit requires a free assent of faith. Acceptance of these beliefs will be based on judgments that not only the remote source of these beliefs is credible, but also that the proximate sources of these beliefs, namely the Church and its office holders, are reliable, which is to say authentic. Some members of the faithful may have difficulty accepting the credibility of one or the other of these sources.

Second, for the legitimate exercise of authority by the hierarchy to be received by the faithful it must enjoy the support and sanction of the community, that is, it must be consistent with the legitimate power of the community as Lonergan defines it. Even in the case where the faithful assent to the beliefs that the offices of authority within the Church exist by divine will and are promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit, they may not accept that the exercise of power by particular office holders is proper. Such lack of acceptance may be fueled by perceived lack of authenticity as well as by demonstrated lack of ability or capacity of the office holders. Third, to the extent that there is a perceived or real lack of common meaning and common values in the ecclesial community as the result of lack of participation by the laity in the life and mission of the Church, exclusion (such as racism), ideology (such as clericalism), paternalism (Father knows best), all of which result in inadequate communication and cooperation, those in authority may enjoy de jure authority, but their authority will not be de facto persuasive or effective.

¹⁹² Ibid.

Each of these failures of the authority of office in the Church could be remedied through dialogical participation in which office holders are willing to listen to the concerns of the faithful, while the faithful, in turn, are willing and able to express their concerns to their pastors and to hear their pastors' concerns. Sociologist Michael P. Hornsby-Smith explains that "trust in authority relationships in the modern world, depends more and more not only on perceived competence but also on forms of participation in dialogue and decision-making which appear to respect the dignity, competence and autonomy of those whose lives are affected."¹⁹³ In light of all that has been argued above, it makes sense that this sort of dialogue is necessary for the authentic exercise of authority in the Church. Participation in such dialogue requires authenticity, that is self-sacrificing love and conversion on all levels, of both office holders and the faithful.

CONCLUSION: LAY VOCATION REALIZED IN GRACED COMMUNICATION

This chapter has examined lay identity, role, and vocation in an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan from four different perspectives: vertical finality, the heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil, the universality of God's gift of the Spirit, and community as a process of self-constitution. It has also examined how the de facto exercise of authority in the Church depends on dialogical communication. The analysis of the present chapter has demonstrated that, from each of these perspectives, communication rooted in and flowing from the dialogue of grace is constitutive of the Church and its mission. This analysis has also demonstrated that an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan recognizes the necessity of mutual and dialogical participation by all members of the Church, including the laity, in the communication that constitutes the Church and its mission.

From every perspective examined in the present chapter an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan's thought suggests that the full realization of the lay vocation requires participation in

¹⁹³ Michael P. Hornsby-Smith, "Some Sociological Reflections on Power and Authority," in *Governance and Authority in the Roman Catholic Church: Beginning a Conversation*, ed. Noel Timms and Kenneth Wilson (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000), 29.

the communication that constitutes the Church. Because all forms of constitutive ecclesial communication are rooted in the dialogue of grace, a necessary, but not sufficient, way in which lay vocation is realized is through participation in prayer and liturgy. Participation in prayer and liturgy is not sufficient, however, because to limit lay participation to prayer and liturgy is to neglect the other concrete ways in which the Church is an event of communication of Christ's message. Nor can the necessary participation of the laity in the communication that constitutes the Church be restricted to receiving one-way communication through homilies, letters, directives, and teachings.

In an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan the lay vocation, lay identity, and lay role are all understood to be constituted by dialogical participation. To become fully who they are called to be for the Church and for others through their incorporation in the Church, the laity must be able to participate in the dialogical and collaborative communication by which the meaning of the Church is constituted. This means, specifically, that the full realization of the lay vocation requires dialogical and collaborative participation with the clergy, with those who are in any way excluded and marginalized in the Church and in society, and with those outside the Church. Such participation can vary from face-to-face informal conversation to internet forums to listening sessions to synods. The possibilities are endless, but to be effective, all require graced conversion on the part of the laity and of the clergy. To the extent that conversion is lacking in the laity and/or in the clergy, dialogue is not possible and the full realization of the lay vocation, of the clerical vocation, and of the Church and its mission will fail. In Lonergan's words, "The presence or absence of intellectual, of moral, of religious conversion gives rise to dialectically opposed horizons," and the end result is a Babel.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, 247.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION: FULL, CONSCIOUS, AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

“It is very much the wish of the church that all the faithful should be led to take that full, conscious, and active part in liturgical celebrations . . . to which they are bound by reason of their Baptism.”¹

INTRODUCTION

I began this dissertation with an explication of some of the unresolved problems and tensions regarding the status and role of the laity that persist nearly a half-century following Vatican II. Among the lay faithful of the United States and much of the Western world, the sociological manifestation of these problems and tensions includes inadequate formation, confused Catholic identity, marginalization, lack of voice, and a steady rate of lapsing and decline in commitment. Theologically, problems and tensions regarding the status and role of the laity are manifested as unresolved questions regarding the exact nature and capacity of lay participation in the life and mission of the Church, and the relationship of such participation by the laity to that of the clergy.

I argued that the problems of status and role of the laity are symptomatic of deeper ecclesial problems. In light of Lonergan’s notion of bias, I argued that, despite the emphasis of Vatican II on the equality and dignity of all the baptized, the post-conciliar Church has failed to fully develop and actuate the laity into its life and mission precisely because of biases embedded in Church structures and ecclesial cultures as well as in the theologies, customs, disciplines, and laws that support them. Following Lonergan, I argued that the solution to problems of the Church and correlative problems of the laity will depend on the graced achievement of authentic subjectivity of its members.

Accordingly, while I focused on the authentic realization of the lay vocation from the perspective of Lonergan’s interiority analysis in much of this dissertation, I simultaneously

¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* no. 14, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 124.

argued that the authentic realization of the lay vocation cannot be achieved apart from the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations, nor apart from the full realization of the Church's life and mission in dialogical collaboration. Moreover, because all ecclesial vocations are grounded in baptism, the criteria by which the lay vocation is realized authentically are also criteria by which clerical vocations are realized authentically. In light of Lonergan's interiority analysis these criteria include the graced full appropriation of religious conversion through the commitment to fully become oneself in Christ, and, correspondingly, the graced willingness to live in self-sacrificing love for others and to participate in cooperation with God and collaboratively with others in the communication of Christ's message by which the Church's life and mission is constituted.

I argued that to the extent that all vocations in the Church are realized in authentic subjectivity, they enable the Church to be truly a sign and sacrament of communion with God and all of humanity. Based on the arguments of this dissertation, an authentic ecclesiology can be defined to be one that is capable of mediating the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations. Such an ecclesiology will have the following two necessary characteristics: it will seek to authentically communicate the message of Christ through graced dialogical collaboration of members with each other and with those outside the Church, and it will seek to support the authentic becoming of its members in such collaboration. On the basis of this definition I maintain that the solutions to the problems of identity and role of the laity require not only an authentic laity and an authentic clergy, but an authentic Church.

FULL, CONSCIOUS, AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Required for Authentic Realization of Lay Vocation

The words "full, conscious, and active participation" of my dissertation title, taken from *Sacrosanctum Concilium* no. 14, are paradigmatic for the realization of authentic ecclesial

subjects in an authentic Church. When applied to the laity, they refer to the participation of the laity not only in the liturgy, but also in the life and mission of the Church. Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli intimates as much in his address to the 2010 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions in which he says, “the concept of the active participation of the faithful is not just a liturgical issue. It is a theological issue. It represents a new emphasis in ecclesiology.”² Indeed, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* makes the connection between the participation of the laity in the liturgy and their participation in the life of the Church when it states, “the principal manifestation of the church consists in the full, active participation of all God’s holy people in the same liturgical celebrations, especially in the same Eucharist, in one prayer, at one altar, at which the bishop presides, surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers.”³ Arguably, the role of the laity in the liturgy represents their role in the Church.⁴

Required for Authentic Realization of Church

The words, “full, conscious, and active participation,” can also be taken to apply to the collaboration of all ecclesial members in realizing the life and mission of the Church. They express the principle of liturgical renewal according to which the active subject of liturgical action is the assembly, which includes both the laity in the nave and the ordained minister on the altar.⁵ This principle can be taken to be paradigmatic not only of the collaborative role of the laity and ordained in the liturgy, but of their necessary collaboration in life and mission of the Church. The words, “full, conscious, and active participation” are, therefore, paradigmatic of an

² Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli, (Address, 2010 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, Alexandria, LA, October 5–8), 3, <http://www.nccbuscc.org/romanmissal/serratelli-fdlc.shtml>, accessed February 28, 2011.

³ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 41, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 133.

⁴ The connection between the active participation of the laity in the liturgy and in the life of the Church is also made in *Lumen Gentium* no. 12, in *ibid.*, 17 and in *Apostolicam Actuositatem* no. 3, in *ibid.*, 406–7.

⁵ See Yves Congar, “l’Ecclesia ou communauté chrétienne, sujet intégral de l’action liturgique,” in *La Liturgie après Vatican II*, *Unam Sanctam* 66, ed. J. P. Jossua and Y. Congar (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1967) 241–82; Judith Kubicki, *The Presence of Christ in the Gathered Assembly* (New York: Continuum, 2006).

authentic realization of the Church's life and mission. While the fundamental reality in an authentic ecclesiology is the appropriation of grace in conversion, this appropriation, as I have argued, is a communal reality and will remain incomplete to the extent it is not supported through experiences of inclusive dialogical participation in the collaborations that inform the life and mission of the Church. It is by virtue of its authentic realization in collaboration that the Church will be recognized to be a credible bearer of the message of Christ and of God's love for the world.

Required for Authentic Realization of All Ecclesial Vocations

Finally the words, "full, conscious, and active participation," point to how, in its authentic realization, the Church will mediate the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations, including the lay vocation. It will do this by providing opportunities not only for appropriate formation for the laity as well as for clergy, but also for participation by the laity in dialogical collaboration and communication that are inclusive of members of the clergy, of marginalized groups and peoples, and of those who do not belong to the Church. As paradigmatic for the authentic realization of all vocations in an authentically-realized Church, the words, "full, conscious, and active participation," support the thesis of my dissertation that collaboration of laity and ordained in the life and mission of the Church is necessary to support the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations as well as the authentic realization of the Church in its life and mission.

ROLE OF LAITY IN AUTHENTIC SOLUTION TO ECCLESIAL PROBLEMS

To speculate about how the authentic realization of the lay vocation and the participation of authentic laity might help to solve the problems of the Church and its laity is to beg the question, because such realization and participation presume and depend on the solution of these problems. Nevertheless, to the extent that the lay vocation is authentically realized in some lay

persons and those persons are able to participate actively and with self-sacrificing love in collaborations that support the life and mission of the Church, to that extent such lay persons can contribute to the solution of the problems of the Church and its laity. This is because, as *Lumen Gentium* recognizes, the laity proclaim Christ by their very lives through the authentic realization of their vocation and thus serve as “powerful heralds of the faith in things to be hoped for.”⁶ Thus, those laity who authentically live their vocation will serve to inspire, encourage, and invite others, indeed, become instruments through which the Holy Spirit can act, to do the same.

It is not difficult to imagine how the authentic living of the lay vocation might have an impact on the authentic becoming of all members of the Church. For example, the authentic living of the lay vocation arguably would play a role to inspire, support, and encourage vocations to the ordained priesthood. This is because, while God calls individuals to serve the Church as ordained priests, such vocations are discerned, invited, and received in and by communities in which others authentically respond to God’s call in their lives. It is also conceivable that participation by authentic laity in graced dialogical collaboration with clergy would serve to invite and support those clergy in the authentic realization of their vocations.

Participation by authentic laity in the life and mission of the Church can also help to create an ecclesial atmosphere of collaborative participation in which less-committed laity can recognize what the Church is called to be and what they are called to become as disciples of Christ. For example, the witness within a parish of a group of lay people who prayerfully and actively collaborate to provide shelter and/or meals for those who are homeless can serve not only to edify, but also as a means by which others can be instructed about issues of social justice and encouraged to more fully live Christian discipleship. Such an outcome of participation by the laity requires that they possess an authenticity that is motivated by self-sacrificing love to seek out the marginalized, to support those who are discouraged and full of doubts, to care for those in need, and able to instruct the confused.

⁶ *Lumen Gentium* no. 35, in Flannery, *The Basic Sixteen Documents*, 53.

Participation of authentic laity in an authentically-realized Church would help to bridge divides between groups that are marginalized within the Church and between the Church and those who are outside the Church. Participation in collaboration would help to bridge divides within the Church by fostering trust, mutual understanding, and good will. Participation in collaboration between groups of authentic lay members of the Church and those outside the Church would help not only to foster trust among participants, but would help to foster greater trust and credibility of the Church among those outside. Such collaboration could serve as a conduit for information while creating external loyalties.⁷ Collaborative participation between laity and clergy in an authentically-realized Church would help to strengthen the de facto authority of the clergy while helping all members of the Church to arrive at a common understanding of the meaning of Christ's message and of the role of the Church in helping to bring about God's kingdom. Finally, such collaboration would be able to recognize and address the presence of bias in ecclesial groups and in the Church. James Heft speculates "It is likely that the truth about the life of the church, both its strengths and its weaknesses, will be known if more of the laity become more active in the church."⁸

While participation by authentic laity in the life and mission of the Church can serve to invite, encourage, and inspire the authentic realization of clerical vocations, can serve to motivate and instruct less-committed Catholics, can serve to bridge divides within the Church, can serve to foster greater trust and credibility of the Church by those outside, and can illumine and address the presence of bias in ecclesial groups and in the Church, such participation will fail to achieve these outcomes to the extent that it does not include dialogical collaboration with clergy. It is too easy to consider and dismiss collaborative efforts initiated by and consisting solely of laity as "their thing." When such efforts challenge the status quo of the Church, as is the case with Voice of the Faithful, it is too easy for the hierarchy to ostracize those involved and to write them off as

⁷ Cowan and Arsenault, "Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration," 22.

⁸ James L. Heft, "Accountability and Governance in the Church," in *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, 126.

radicals or as cranks. Similarly, policy decisions arrived at solely by the clergy without lay input can serve to fuel distrust and resentment among the laity.

Because the problem of the laity is an ecclesial problem, to focus on the laity as I did in this dissertation could represent or lead to a skewed understanding of the reality of the Church. As all of the ways in which I examine the lay vocation and an ecclesiology informed by Lonergan make amply clear, the Church is first of all a solidarity in which all of the members are fundamentally related through grace and baptism as members of Christ's body. Distinctions are secondary, not primary data in the reality of the Church. Lonergan's notion of the Spirit as God's first gift suggests that the even broader fundamental reality for members of the Church is that they are part of a world-wide community in the Spirit. Lonergan's notions of the unity of the person, of the primordial 'we,' of his world-view informed by vertical finality that understands the universe to be a unity prior to the individuation of natures, and of differentiated consciousness which is capable of seeing the unity among differing viewpoints – all of these notions support an argument that unity is the fundamental reality of being and that distinctions must always be interpreted in light of that fundamental unity. For this reason, any ecclesiology that begins with distinctions, be they clergy/laity, Church/world, religious/secular or any kind of we versus them, can never be complete or authentic.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS OF CHURCH AND LAITY

Lonergan would be the first to say that the realization of an authentic Church is beyond the ability of the laity, or of any human collaboration, to solve. It requires God's grace and will be successful only to the extent that ecclesial members cooperate with God's grace in authentically living their vocations. Specifically, the achievement of an authentic laity is neither possible without the realization of an authentic Church nor sufficient to bring about its realization.

Lonerger's heuristic structure by which God's solution to the problem of evil in the world can be recognized provides, as well, a heuristic structure for the solution to the problems of the Church and its laity. It suggests that the solution to these ecclesial problems will be realized through participation by its members in the graced collaboration by which the Church realizes its purpose of cooperating with God in bringing about a solution to the problem of evil. It suggests further that such graced collaboration will require institutional support as well as the assistance of clergy who will responsibly serve the collaboration. Thus, Lonergan's heuristic structure suggests that the graced solution to the problems of the Church and its laity requires the authentic realization of all ecclesial vocations and conversion at every level of the Church.

CONCLUSION: "A PERHAPS NOT NUMEROUS CENTER"

What can the laity do to effectively address their own marginalization within the Church? Lonergan does not necessarily advocate taking an adversarial or confrontational stand. Rather, Lonergan advises first to make sure one's position is correct, which is to say, it is consistent with authenticity.⁹ Then, mindful that others are apt to be thinking from within different horizons and different dimensions of consciousness, one must recognize that people who do not agree with one's position are apt not to pay attention to what one says. Lonergan cautions, "Proof is never

⁹ In a response to the question, "What evidence would emerge in the life of an individual which would lead him to question the authenticity of his tradition and community? What process would provoke his making a valid judgment in this question?" posed during the 1980 Lonergan Workshop, Lonergan answered, "Well, when a person finds his community talking nonsense and finding it impossible to take into consideration anything but the nonsense they are talking, one is finding it to have some failure in authenticity. One keeps the peace and quietly works it out. There's no point in going about breaking plate glass windows. That would only prove to them that you were out of your mind and should be restricted to the funny house. So that's the business. What do you do about the community? Now, you can be rash in those judgments. A person can have bright ideas but they're anything but right. It's important to be sure you're right. And it may be the people can't understand anything else because they can't pay attention to what you're saying. And so on and so forth." Lonergan, Question and Answer Session (Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, Boston, June 17, 1980), 6, www.bernardlonergan.com, as 97400TE080 / TC975 A & B (transcription by Doran).

the fundamental thing. Proof always presupposes premises, and it presupposes premises accurately formulated within a horizon. You can never prove a horizon.”¹⁰

The fundamental problem of bias that underlies the marginalization of the laity in the Church is perpetuated by lack of authenticity due to lack of conversion.¹¹ Because the solution requires graced authenticity, it lies beyond the achievement of human ability. All an individual or group can do is to prayerfully and responsibly cooperate with God and collaborate with others to the best of their ability to overcome manifestations of this problem with greater good. In an oft-quoted passage that originally appears in Lonergan’s assessment of what the process of moving Catholic philosophy and Catholic theology from their classicist presuppositions to existential and historical awareness will entail, Lonergan advises:

Classical culture cannot be jettisoned without being replaced; and what replaces it cannot but run counter to classical expectations. There is bound to be formed a solid right that is determined to live in a world that no longer exists. There is bound to be formed a scattered left, captivated by now this, now that new development, exploring now this and now that new possibility. *But what will count is a perhaps not numerous center*, big enough to be at home in both the old and the new, painstaking enough to work out one by one the transitions to be made, strong enough to refuse half measures, and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait.¹²

Lonergan’s description of the “not numerous center” is similar to his description of “cosmopolis” that, as we saw in Chapter Two, is the higher viewpoint needed to overcome the effects of group and general bias. It is similar, as well, to his description, explicated in Chapter Five, of the higher collaboration needed to participate in God’s solution to the problem of evil.

I will interpret the “not numerous center” to include every group of religiously-converted authentic subjects whose purpose is to collaborate in cooperation with God to help bring about God’s solution to some specific problem of evil within or outside the Church. Insofar as the participants of these groups are converted on all levels, they will be able to offer suggestions that are true and accurate. To the extent that their participation in collaboration is motivated by

¹⁰ Lonergan, “Lecture 2: The Functional Specialty ‘Systematics,’” 195.

¹¹ Lonergan says, “The real menace to unity of faith . . . lies in the absence of intellectual or moral or religious conversion,” Lonergan, *Method*, 330.

¹² Lonergan, “Dimensions of Meaning,” 245, emphasis added.

graced self-sacrificing love, their efforts will be fruitful not only in addressing, but in rising above the problems they address.¹³ As Lonergan predicts in his heuristic structure of God's solution to the problem of evil, participants in God's solution to problems within and outside the Church should expect that their efforts will be resisted by some people both within and outside the Church. In the long run, however, to the extent that the participation of authentic ecclesial subjects in collaboration is an expression of their participation in the dialogue of grace, such participation will serve as a source of obediential potency through which God will be able to help the Church to realize its redemptive purpose.

Catholic theologians have a special role to play in "the not numerous center." Because "theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix,"¹⁴ theologians have the opportunity not only to invite and support the conversion of individual others, but to make a real contribution towards converting ecclesial and extra-ecclesial cultures. The effectiveness of the contribution of theologians to the conversion of ecclesial culture, however, will depend not only on their collaboration with other theologians and with scholars of other disciplines, but on their collaboration with "the rest of the believing community"¹⁵ as well as with those who do not belong to the believing community. Theologians will only be effective in helping to bring about an authentic renewal of culture to the extent that their work and collaborations are rooted in their personal authenticity and supported by conversion on every level.¹⁶

¹³ Crowe points out, "in Lonergan's position there is a link between love and knowledge not only with regard to motivation but also with regard to content. There is an apprehension of value that not only powers our thinking but guides it." Crowe, "Theology and the Future," in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, 175.

¹⁴ Lonergan, *Method*, xi.

¹⁵ Crowe, "Theology and the Future," 175. Bryan Massingale provides a wonderful example of this sort of collaboration with the believing community. He writes, "One of the highlights of the annual gatherings of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium is the evening spent with the black Catholic community of the city in which we meet. By conscious intention, we gather simply to listen to the community and to hear their concerns. There is no set agenda; we are not there to lecture or teach. We are present to listen and receive the voices and experiences we try to articulate in our scholarship." Bryan N. Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 169.

¹⁶ See Lonergan, *Method*, 270, 331–32.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of “the not numerous center” will require the participation with self-sacrificing love of both lay persons and ordained, who, having undergone religious conversion, are committed to living in Christ for others. Doran’s words cited in Chapter Five that describe the dynamism of social grace are worth repeating. They express my hope for the Church that the graced relations of collaboration of its authentic subjects will

move from the community of persons in love with God to the efforts of the people in that community to strive together for personal integrity, and from these two sources to the constant purification and development of the meanings and values that inform given ways of life (cultural values); the movement then extends from integral cultural values to the social order and from the social order to the equitable distribution of vital goods to the entire community.¹⁷

God can and will work through the graced collaborations of authentic ecclesial subjects to achieve the healing needed in the Church and world. As I have argued in this dissertation, such graced collaborations serve as the possibility of the full realization of the laity and of the clergy in an authentic Church and of the full realization of the Church’s mission.

¹⁷ Doran, “What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?” 8.

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