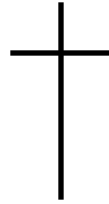


The Journal



November - December 2000

Editorial



Since the last issue of The Journal, I have attended gatherings of Church renewal groups in Boston (CITI - Celibacy Is The Issue), Ottawa (Corpus Canada) and Milwaukee (COR - Catholics Organized for Renewal- and CTA -Call To Action). The largest gathering, some 3000+ people, was the CTA Conference. It was preceded by caucus

gatherings of other renewal organizations such as Corpus USA, ARCC (Association for the Rights of Catholics), WOC (Women's Ordination Conference), Dignity USA, FCM (Federation of Christian Ministries), etc. I attended several of these pre-conference meetings and networked with many people - friends and acquaintances, both new and old. It was good to see Jim Noonan and Jack Shea at the Corpus USA and ARCC gatherings. Also, I had a wonderful breakfast conversation with Gregory Baum about the progressive happenings in the Church of Quebec. And because I was assisting in the information booth of CITI Ministries, aka. Rent-A-Priest, I met hundreds of people with whom I had fascinating conversations. Diagonally across from the CITI booth was the Sophia Center out of Oakland, CA, where, lo and behold, was my friend, Jim Conlon ("The Sacred Impulse") whom I hadn't seen since 1968, in the heady days of Gregory Baum's Catholic Group in the Annex area of Toronto. We caught up on our separate, yet common journeys, I with Corpus and he with Matthew Fox's "Original Blessing" community.

Wow! The feelings I experienced, not only in Milwaukee, but in Ottawa and Boston as well, were powerful and engaging. The content of what was discussed at each of those gatherings is very important and it is or has been reported in various publications including this

one. But it's the feelings that I picked up at each of those meetings that need to be shouted from the roof tops.

People came to these gatherings with doubt and apprehension, flowing out of discouragement and despair over the state of the renewal movement in the Church. They came away with renewed hope and excitement, on fire with Godde's Creative Spirit. The feeling of inclusiveness permeated the very core of our beings. We were so many renewal groups, all raised up by the same Spirit, all with different agendas. Yet there was the strong feeling that we were all in this together. There was a common sense of respect: of understanding and admiration for our different goals, strategies and leadership styles. And there was a wonderful willingness to cooperate wherever possible from the treasury of each group's gifts.

I sense those same feelings in this issue of The Journal. Do you?

François Brassard, Ladysmith, BC

A poem Mother Teresa hung in the Calcutta orphanage:

People are unreasonable, illogical, self-centered
love them anyway.
If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives
do good anyway.
If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies
be successful anyway.
The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow
do good anyway.
Honesty and frankness will make you vulnerable
be honest and frank anyway.
People love underdogs but follow only top dogs
follow some underdog anyway.
What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight
build anyway.
People really need help but may attack you if you try to help
help people anyway.
If you give the world the best you have, you may get kicked in the teeth
but give the world the best you have
Anyway.

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November - December 2000

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The Journal welcomes submissions from small faith communities and individuals that share its vision of the Christian Church as one in which all are equal, decisions are made by consensus, healthy relationships are nurtured, justice is done, and the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.

All submissions to the Journal must be received by the 15th of each of the following months: January, March, May, July, September and November.

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Renew Your Membership In Corpus Canada

See enclosed appeal letter.

Send your membership fees to Alanna Menu, Corpus Canada Treasurer,
9878 Seventh Street, Sidney, BC V8L 2V8 (See P.20 for details.)

Corpus members with email can join the Corpus-N list and participate in discussions.

If you have internet access, check out Corpus Canada's new WEB SITE:

<http://www.corpuscanada.org>

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FOCUS TOPIC

for the January - February 2001 Issue

Leadership in our own local faith communities

Articles for this issue are due by January 15.

Theological Soapbox

Leadership In The Church (Part II)

by Arthur Menu



In my previous Theological Soapbox article I said that the role of leaders in the Roman Catholic Church is the same as the role of leaders in any human society. Leaders and those who follow their directions freely cooperate in order to attain common goals. In so far as they lead, leaders do not coerce. According to my definition and understanding, dictators, in those

instances when they impose their will through coercion, do not act as leaders. The chief qualification of leaders is that, in the sphere of activity in which they exercise leadership, they adequately grasp their society's goals, and adequately understand what has to be done in order to achieve those goals.

I distinguish leaders from prophets and visionaries. Through prophets God speaks directly to people for various purposes. Visionaries proclaim goals for a society that go beyond the goals that the society has. If the society accepts the new goals, then leaders will co-ordinate activities within the society to attain those goals. Some, but not all, prophets and visionaries have the practical qualifications to be leaders. Moses, for example, was a prophet, visionary and leader.

Having seen that leadership in the Church functions in the same way as leadership in other societies, it is time to look at leadership in the Church from a theological viewpoint. Before I address the topic of leadership in worshipping communities, which is my main concern, I would like to clear away the notion, common among Catholics, that the hierarchical structure of leadership in the Roman Catholic Church has been established by God and cannot be changed. This notion comes from theologians who hold that Jesus appointed St. Peter to be the supreme leader of the Church. These theologians consider St. Peter to have been the Church's leader par excellence, and they hold that the Petrine ministry, regarded as a ministry of leadership, is the patrimony of every pope. But if we look at the evidence of the New Testament, such claims cannot stand.

First, let's look at the claim that Jesus appointed Peter as leader over the community of disciples. A key text is from Mt 16:17-19. I recommend that readers take a look at Michael Zarb's commentary on this passage in the August 1999 issue of *The Journal*. As he cautions, this passage presents a viewpoint on Peter that has elements unique to the Gospel of Matthew, and may not represent the way Peter was viewed in the Church as a whole. Here is the passage as translated in the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible:

" 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of

heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' "

Here is the passage again, paraphrased along lines suggested by Michael Zarb:

" 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, indeed you are a building stone, since the Father revealed this to you; and in addition, on this bedrock [the revelation of the Father], I will build my community. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.' "

For present purposes I will follow the NRSV translation, but it will be evident to readers that the interpretation of this passage put forward by Michael Zarb in his article, no less than my interpretation, counters those who would use Matthew to establish papal supremacy.

Even if Jesus called Peter "the rock" in the sense of bedrock, that in itself did not anoint him as leader of the Church. The passage says that Peter will serve as a source of rocklike stability upon which the Church may be built, but does not specify how.

The meaning of "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" is explained by what follows: "whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Jesus does not declare this role of binding and loosing to be Peter's exclusively. Jesus uses the very same words in Mt 18:18 to declare that the Church as a whole exercises this role.

A passage in the Gospel of John, parallel to Mt 16:17-19, has the risen Jesus declare to all the disciples gathered in a house, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:22-23).

The weight of scriptural evidence is that Jesus declared the role of binding and loosing to belong to the Church as a whole, not to Peter personally. When Peter bound and loosed, he did so as one representing the Church. Jesus' statement (Mt 16:19), "Whatever you bind....," although addressed to Peter, applies to anyone representing the Church.

Jesus did single Peter out. But Jesus did so, not to give him a role different from the other disciples, but to call him to be stronger than the others, and to assure him that he would not fail (Luke 22:31, John 21:15-19). From that time forward the other disciples would, in the face of difficulties and persecution, draw strength and inspiration from Peter's rock solid commitment to Christ.

When we examine the New Testament further we find that Peter did not regard himself as the Church's leader. In Mt 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8, Jesus assigns to the disciples the task of bearing witness about him to the peoples of the earth, "teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." In the speeches made by

Theological Soapbox Continued...

Peter in the early chapters of Acts, he makes it clear that he and the others disciples “cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). In Acts 6:1-6 the Twelve find that administration of the daily distribution of food to widows was taking them away from their primary responsibility: “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables.”

It seems clear that Peter and the rest of the Twelve regarded themselves as commissioned by Jesus chiefly to bear witness to what Jesus said and did, in particular to bear witness to Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. They were, first of all, witnesses of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and preachers of the Way of Jesus (see Acts 9:2 for an example of the distinctive Christian use of the “the Way”). They avoided leadership roles in order to concentrate on preaching the faith. They also tried to follow the teaching of Jesus not to act like rulers who lord it over others. “Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant” (Mark 10:43).

So we find in Acts 15 at the so-called “Council of Jerusalem,” that it is James, the kinsman of Jesus (not to be identified with either of the two James belonging to the Twelve) who chairs the meeting, and gives directions to the Church based on the council’s deliberations. Peter speaks in the council as a preacher of the faith, not as the leader. His view prevails, but he does not issue commands. That is left to James.

The role of the Twelve as witnesses to Jesus was a more exalted role than that of leader of the Church. But remembering Jesus’ words that those who exalt themselves will be humbled, Peter chose to follow the directions of James in matters of community discipline, as we see in Galatians 2:11-14.

That Peter was one of the most influential people in the early Church - perhaps the most influential - cannot be denied. It may well be that the leadership of the Church was his for the asking. But that was not the mission Jesus gave him. Hard as it is for Catholics of today to imagine, there are roles in the Church more important than that of pope.

With the death of Peter, his mission of bearing witness with immovable fidelity to what he had seen and heard - what made him “the rock” - came to an end. Is there any sense in which he can be said to have successors?

I believe that anyone who bears witness to what Jesus Christ has done in their life carries on the mission of witnessing that Peter had. Unlike Peter we do not walk in the physical presence of Jesus, but we do live in the spiritual presence of Jesus. The God who revealed who Jesus was to Peter (Mt 16:17) reveals Jesus to people of faith today. The Petrine ministry of witnessing to Jesus Christ is carried on today by anyone who proclaims publicly what they have personally experienced Jesus to be doing in them and in the world around them. The greater the faith and love and constancy of the preacher, the more rocklike and Petrine their ministry becomes.

The Petrine ministry is more than just preaching the doctrines of the Church. It is bearing witness to Jesus Christ as one has personally encountered and come to know him through a life of discipleship. One does not do Petrine ministry simply by holding an office, even the office of pope, and one does not do Petrine ministry simply by repeating what others have said about Jesus.

The one who does Petrine ministry is the one who can truthfully speak the words of the First Letter of John, “We declare to you ... what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands” (1 John 1:1).

There are many who do Petrine ministry in the Church. Some are ordained or have vows of religion. Some preach professionally. But most of those who do Petrine ministry are lay people who, although they would never think of themselves as “preachers,” live knowingly in the company of Jesus. They have heard Jesus command them, “Feed my sheep.” And they obey.

Apart from teaching his disciples that, among them, the leader must be last of all and the servant of all, Jesus said nothing about how leadership should be structured in the Church. The Church has a free hand in setting up its leadership structures. In the first century, up to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the Church adopted a leadership structure parallel to that among the Jews. The church in each city had a council of elders (as did the synagogue). Missionaries like St. Paul sometimes supervised, or appointed supervisors, over the churches and councils of elders they established. By the end of the first century it was common for one member of the council of elders of a church to be recognized as the chief leader of the church (the bishop). In the beginning the council of elders of the Jerusalem church functioned as a kind of Sanhedrin, with power to “bind and loose” for the whole Church. After the dispersal of the Jewish population of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. the Jerusalem council of elders could no longer exercise oversight over the whole Church, a role which the elders and bishop of the church of Rome took more and more to itself over the next three centuries. With the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity and the subsequent fall of the Empire in the west, the Church in the west adopted an imperial system of leadership in which the pope (the Bishop of Rome) took the place of the emperor and the bishops took the place of the provincial governors. In the east the Byzantine emperor continued to dominate Church government and the Patriarch of Constantinople served as a counterweight to the pope in Rome. With the great schism between east and west, the ascendancy of the pope to the status of absolute monarch of the western Church continued. The Protestant reformers, reacting against the centralization of power in the papacy, assumed leadership in part of the Church, and the part of the Church which followed the pope continued to centralize leadership in the papal office, and, with Vatican Council I and the doctrine of papal infallibility, and the subsequent code of canon law, brought the pope to the pinnacle of ecclesiastical power.

None of this was ordained by Jesus. The Church created the papacy and the Church can abolish it. All the ways in which leadership is exercised in the various Christian churches are consistent with the teaching of Jesus. Reason demands that leadership in the Church be structured in the way that best allows the Church to carry out its mission to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, and reason tells us that structures of leadership may have to be changed to accommodate changing conditions in the world. How leadership should be structured, is a matter to be decided by consensus of all the faithful, for there is no greater instrument for discerning the will of God than the entire body of those among whom the various gifts of the Holy Spirit have been distributed.

Before looking at the role of leaders in the parish or small faith community setting, it has been necessary to critique the theology of papal supremism that sometimes clouds the thinking of Roman Catholics. With the Petrine ministry properly defined as witnessing to Jesus Christ, not leadership, it becomes possible to see that the true centre of leadership in the Church is found among worshipping communities, such as parishes and Basic Church Communities, where faith is nurtured and sustained.

In my next article I will return to the questions with which I concluded the first part of this series: Can we continue to look to priests for leadership in our worshipping communities? Will the role or characteristics of the priest have to change in order for the priest to be an effective leader? Should leadership in parishes shift from the priest to elected lay leaders? What is the relationship between leading and providing sacraments?

On The Lighter Side!

Are We Communicating???

A man spoke frantically into the phone,
"My wife is pregnant and her contractions
are only two minutes apart!"

"Is this her first child?" the
doctor asked.

"No!" the man shouted, "This is her
husband!"

Think Again and Trust the Good News: Jesus as Leader in Mk 1-3

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



Jesus was not some divine know-it-all operating under a mask of human ignorance. As a human being, he came to understand God's relationship to people in the same way that we all do, by virtue of his own

lived experience and his reflection on that experience. In such a way, he arrived at the "good news" about God.

He went to the wilderness by the River Jordan to John the Baptist who was preaching salvation from the coming judgement of God through baptism by John. This made those who were baptized distinct from the rest of the Jews for whom, in John's eyes, there was no other hope, not in the Temple, nor in the synagogue, nor in the fact that they were sons of Abraham. Jesus differed from John in that he did not believe that people should separate themselves from the rest of the world; his vision, his aising, was that the common people were better off when they collaborated with one another. Jesus left "after John had been arrested" (Josephus says Herod was afraid of John.) and he went to Galilee "proclaiming the good news of God" (Mk 1:14) to everyone who would listen.

At that time, there were many Jews who believed that the safe thing to do was to draw a circle where those inside were safe while those outside were doomed: John's followers, the Qumran communities, the priestly caste, the pharisees, the scribes, they knew what it was to be clean and who were the unclean, and they had their codes of conduct to know who was which; they maintained their identity by keeping themselves apart. Jesus knew that God's good news included everyone without distinction of persons or vested interests.

If we accept that Mark's Gospel is the first Gospel, then Jesus' first gospel words announcing God's intervention are "The time is perfect. The Reign of God is among you. Think again, and trust the good news." This is Mk's summary of the word that Jesus brought. Just as John had done, Jesus did not take that word first to Jerusalem but to his home country, to the synagogue first and then to people's homes, to the city first and then to the little hamlet villages and the open country, to those who considered themselves clean and to all those who were considered unclean. Jesus took God's good news to everyone; but not everyone took it. God's Reign dawned first in the boonies and not among those who held power. In this Jesus made a political statement and a religious statement; in those days, it was hard to keep them separate.

Jesus did not pick helpers from among those who were interested in setting up separate elite gatherings. Instead, he asked workers engaged in family business. They were not educated scribes; they were ordinary people going about their ordinary jobs. In a scene reminiscent of Jeremiah 16:16 where God seeks out the people to bring them back to the land of their ancestors, Jesus recruited helpers to bring back the people to God's way. In the synagogue at Capernaum, he taught the life-giving news of God. (Mk does not tell us what Jesus said at that time.) But in the synagogue, Jesus was challenged by someone who recognized that he had come into the space that belonged to the scribes. Jesus healed him of his unclean spirit, and all were amazed.

Jesus often had conflict in the urban synagogues, but in homes, it was different. Witness the next scene in Mk: in the privacy of the home of Peter's mother-in-law, Jesus felt free to take away her fever even though it was the sabbath. On the other hand, the whole town waited until the sabbath

was over before they came to the house to be released from their illnesses. Illness and disease were connected with sins, in the common Jewish cultural understanding, and they often caused social isolation. Jesus set himself against the tyranny of isolation caused by codes of purity and morality. When he retired to quiet places, it was to refresh himself and his followers so that they might return again to bringing God's good news.

When Jesus was petitioned by a leper who had been to see the priests, Jesus was indignant. Tame translations say that "he was moved with pity", but literally, his guts boiled and he snorted out, and he touched the man (thereby making himself unclean), declared him clean, and sent him back to the priests to confront them with the evidence. The leper, an outcast, should not have come to Jesus but the leper was a victim of a system of purity laws that made him pay to be restored to social contact. The stewards of the status quo saw Jesus' action as deviant; the poor were impressed by his disregard for pharisaical purity laws.

Back again in a house in Capernaum where many gathered, Jesus spoke to them the word. Another poor victim was brought to him, a paralytic- due to someone's sin and therefore in debt to God. Jesus forgave his sins and his debt and restored the man's social position. The scribes were angry; they were "the reasoners"; they said Jesus spoke blasphemies since from their point of view only God could forgive sins, and they were God's stewards. Jesus had broken their code. So Jesus confronted them and asked them why they thought that way. Then he healed the sick man and sent him home. Again the crowd was impressed. Jesus freed victims and ignored the prerogatives of those who saw themselves as stewards of God, and they were not going to stand for that.

In 2:3, Mk uses the word "crowd" (ochlos). This is not the usual word for "the people" (laos) but for the confused ordinary, the masses, the outcasts, the sinners, the alienated, despised by the power people though often manipulated by them; they are like the "People of the Land" who remained behind after the Exile. The pharisees would not eat with them nor travel with them. Jesus does both; he accepts them as equals. But Jesus will be branded for it and will not be able to enter a town openly. Scribes will ask "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (2:16) in defiance of the purity codes.

Jesus showed that God's good news was for everyone (the well-off too if they would respond), and so he called Levi who was well-off but was a social outcast because he was a customs agent working for the oppressor. Levi responded. Jesus then went to his house and ate with him. This was part of Jesus' inclusive attitude and it was contrary to the pharisaic rules for table fellowship which they held to strictly. Table fellowship was a very significant part of cultural and religious identity. The just and clean would eat only with the just and clean. The pharisees did not identify with the masses but solidified their own identity by socializing only with those whom they saw as righteous.

Jesus connected with the sinners and the sick as opposed to the strong and said that he was calling sinners-which included non-observant Jews and Gentiles- to "think again". God's way according to Jesus included them. The pharisees had strict rules about public righteousness, fasting, and sabbath observance.

Disciples of John and disciples of the pharisees fasted more than was required and they asked why Jesus' disciples did not do the same. There was no obligation to do extra fasting. Jesus then used metaphorical (allegorical) language known to all: The bridegroom's friends party while the bridegroom is with them. And like a piece of new unshrunk cloth sewn to an old cloak or freshmade wine put into old skins, God's good news cannot thrive with old distinctions.

After that, Jesus took on the rigorous pharisaic sabbath observance but tied it in with eating and with bread. If people had control of the sacred, their lives would be less worrisome. Once grain was harvested (plucked), it became subject to purity laws watched over by the pharisees. The hungry, the poor, paid little attention to such laws- they could not afford to. The poor sometimes had to break the (sabbath) law in order to eat when the opportunity came. Subsistence farmers did not have the leeway to be fussy about ritually pure grain. There was a difference of opinion between them and the pharisees over what could be eaten and sold and over what had to be tithed (locally and in Jerusalem). Jesus showed that hungry people did not have to bother with such (oppressive) niceties. He put people first before the sabbath law; this was unacceptable to the pharisees because it put the people in charge in their own house.

Another sabbath/synagogue incident set the pharisees to join with the Herodians and it brought scribes from Jerusalem. They all were watching Jesus to get evidence that they might use to convict him of breaking the Law and blaspheming in contempt for God. Blasphemy was the charge that they would eventually use to execute Jesus.

In the synagogue that sabbath, Jesus was aware that God's good news as he proclaimed it was not acceptable to the authorities. They were concerned with rules that kept many people outcasts. Jesus had declared that everyone was included in God's Reign; God did not keep people outside because they owed something to God. With God, all debts were as though they did not exist. Jesus declared that no one was outcast from social contact; everyone needed to be part of an extended family group without which life was very difficult. So in the synagogue, Jesus called up a man with an crippled (arthritis?) hand and asked the pharisees the question about sabbath healing. They refused to answer. Jesus was very angry at their obstinate stupidity; then, he healed the man's hand.

To this point, Jesus had acted on the assumption that people had certain rights. But in the synagogue that day, for the first time he sought out a confrontation with the authorities. This action offended the authorities. Jesus and his disciples then retired to the quiet of the sea. From the disciples, Jesus picked twelve and gave some of them new names- Peter, James, and John. This symbolic act took place on a mountain and indicated that he was setting up a symbolic new Sinai group to live God's way as an alternative collaborative way to that imposed by the institutional authorities.

When he returned to Capernaum, he was followed by the crowd made up of people from all points of the compass. The number was so large that he could not eat. His friends and family came to

take him away because they thought that he had gone too far in opposing the pharisees. (Mk is the only one who mentions this.) The scribes from Jerusalem accused Jesus of being possessed. This was their way of dismissing his work and of giving them an excuse to interfere with it. Jesus attacked their reasoning and turned their argument against them: if God's people were divided, they would not be able to withstand the force of Satan; if the temple was divided, it too could not withstand; if Satan was divided, his end was near.

Jesus was in battle with Satan and was binding 'the strong one' (Satan) by freeing the "prey of the strong one" and rescuing captives from tyrants (Is. 49:24). With a solemn Amen, Jesus declared that the sins of all were forgiven (sins of weakness and bad theology), all sins except the sin of setting one's self against the liberation found in God's good news. The authorities refused to see that their course was opposed to God's purpose and held people captive to the way things were, resisting change and suppressing human rights.

Jesus' family again showed up concerned about him and

themselves and thinking that he had gone too far. But he did not wish to recognize anyone who stood in the way of his work. He declared that relationships which liberate were more important than burdensome relationships even if they existed within family.

Jesus led the way forward confident that he was attuned to God's way. By his actions, he stated clearly what that way was. He gathered a group who were willing to learn that way. He declared God's way to everyone, and he opposed those who would not allow the freedom of God to all.

Diarmuid O'Murchu in "Religion in Exile" p.187 says the following: "True justice begins with an emphatic solidarity with those condemned to experience life as non-persons; the justice-seeker (and the justice-promoter) needs to be able to stand inside the skin of the other and know, at a gut level, what it's like to be condemned to such a meaningless existence. Then, and only then, will we truly hear the excitement and anger that cries out for justice."

For a fuller treatment of Mk's Gospel, read "On Binding the Strong Man" by Ched Meyers.

Apostle In The New Testament

by Dr. Michael Zarb, Cobble Hill, BC



Apostle in the New Testament

The word usually translated 'apostle' in the New Testament is 'apostolos' which in Classical and Hellenistic literature means, 'messenger, envoy, ambassador,' devoid of any religious connotation, from the verb 'apostellô' meaning, 'to send off, dispatch on some mission or service'.

Jesus as One who was sent

Jesus is called 'apostolos' in the New Testament only once, namely, in Heb 3:1, "the messenger (apostolos) and high priest of our confession," and is immediately compared to Moses, another personage appointed and sent by God, but to whom Jesus is superior as 'son' is superior to 'servant' (vv.5-6). In the Gospel of John the sending of Jesus by God is a main theme of the author, yet, the term 'apostolos' is not employed for Jesus. John, in contrast to the Synoptics, where the subject is the sending of Jesus by God, prefers the verb 'pempô' to 'apostellô', - both meaning 'to send'- especially in the description of God as 'he who sent me' ('ho pempas me', 6 times).

Paul:

As the Pauline texts are by far the earliest texts to deal with the Christian messenger concept, we must analyse them first. Paul, in the salutation of his letters, introduces himself as

'apostolos' i.e. messenger, envoy of Christ /Christ Jesus' (1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1, etc.) In Rom 1:1 and 1 Cor. 1:1 he stresses the calling, 'called to be an envoy' of Christ and in Gal 1:1 he emphasises that his envoyship is 'not from men... but through Jesus Christ and God the Father.' He claims he was set apart before he was born, was called through God's grace and had a revelation of the Son for the task set for him, to preach him among the Gentiles (Gal 1:15f.). In Rom 1:5 and 11:13 he insists he received his 'envoyship' as grace to be 'envoy to the Gentiles'.

Paul vindicates the parity of his call with that of the other 'apostoloi'. He doesn't claim to have known Jesus in his lifetime, a condition required of the other 'Apostoloi' according to Acts, but he insists that he has seen the risen Christ like them, 1 Cor 9:1f., "Am I not free? Am I not an envoy ('apostolos')? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? 2 If I am not an envoy ('apostolos') to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my envoyship (apostolê) in the Lord." This vehemence shows that his envoyship was questioned, and he defends it especially with respect to the Corinthians. Thus in Paul's view envoyship is not a universal office but a function in relation to a group for which the commission is given (cf. Gal 2:8 and 1:16)

Again 1 Cor 15:5-9 "and that he (Christ) appeared to Kephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the envoys ('apostoloi') 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the envoys ('apostoloi'), unfit to be called an envoy ('apostolos'), because I persecuted the church of God. " In v.7 'apostoloi' embraces all those who have seen the risen Christ and does not refer to just the 'Twelve' already

Focus Continued...

mentioned in v. 5 . Thus for Paul there are more 'apostoloi' than the 'Twelve'. One may conclude from this passage that Paul considers all those who received an appearance, whether physical or spiritual, of Jesus are 'messengers, envoys' of Christ to witness to him.

Paul's envoyship to the Gentiles is as valid as that of Peter to the Jews (Gal. 2:8). He compares and places himself on the same level as the 'apostoloi' in Jerusalem (Gal 1:17, 19) and in 1 Cor. 9:5 Paul claims the same rights for an accompanying wife as "the other envoys ('apostoloi') and the brothers of the Lord and Kephaz"; people mentioned as recipients of an appearance of Christ in 1 Cor 15

Paul doesn't seem to be the originator of the term and concept since he refers to others who are 'apostoloi' before him (Gal. 1:17) and some of whom he met or did not meet in Jerusalem, Gal. 1:19 "but I did not see any other envoy except James the Lord's brother." This is understood by some as indicating that Paul, here, seems to consider James as an 'apostolos' /envoy. - especially when considered in conjunction with 1 Cor 15:7.

Thus Paul's definition of 'apostolos' would probably have been, 'a person who has had a revelation of the risen Christ and was commissioned by Christ himself to preach and witness for him.'

In 2 Cor 12:11 he defends his envoyship again not so much in relation to the first 'apostoloi'/envoys whom he seems to hold in high esteem but against others, the Judaizing missionaries, called 'apostoloi'/envoys by those questioning his envoyship and whom he could sarcastically call 'super-apostoloi', "I have been a fool! You forced me to it. Indeed you should have been the ones commending me, for I am not at all inferior to these super-envoys, even though I am nothing."

In Rom 16:7 Paul explicitly refers to two people, Andronicus and Junia, as envoys, "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the envoys ('apostoloi'), and they were in Christ before I was." These are plausibly a couple, man and woman and perhaps to be included among the many early messianists who claimed to have seen the risen Christ as in 1 Cor 15:6-7.

In 1 Thes 2:6 "we might have made demands as envoys of Christ," the 'we', according to some, may include Silvanus and Timothy mentioned at the beginning of the letter. - but Paul does not explicitly call them 'envoys' and it is seriously questioned whether Paul would position these people on his own level of envoyship after all the trouble he goes through to prove himself an 'envoy' (apostolos) like the earlier ones unless they were among those who have seen the Christ, which surely does not apply to Timothy, Paul's child in the Lord (1 Cor 4:17). 1 Cor 4:9, is another 'we' passage wherein Apollos is seen by some commentators to be included, however as in the previous passage the 'we' means chiefly Paul himself as the following listing of tribulations clearly indicate but at the same time he associates himself with the troubles to

which other 'envoys' were also submitted.

From Paul we gather that, though the envoys, as the chief heralds, were pivotal for the communities at the beginning, the vitality of the community was demonstrated also and concomitantly by other functionaries and people gifted with diverse charisms, such as prophets, teachers, healers, leaders etc. 1 Cor 12:28f: "And God has appointed in the community first envoys, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues...." (cf. also Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 12:7-11, and Eph 4:11). This diversity of functionaries and charisms is a truer picture of the actual situation in the operation of the Christian communities in the time of Paul than an assumed monarchical and hierarchical order.

The Gospels and Acts

Mark: In Mark the term 'apostolos' is rare and questionable. In Mk 3:14 "And he appointed twelve, -whom he also named 'apostoloi'-, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message..." the expression, "whom he also named 'apostoloi' " is seen by many critics as an addition after Lk 6.13.

When Mark resumes the account of the sending of the disciples he starts, "The messengers ('apostoloi', those that were sent) gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught (Mk 6:30). The word 'apostoloi' here, since the author does not use it anywhere else as a title would, most likely, not be understood as such by his original readers but they would take it in its common meaning, i.e. messenger, emissary, one sent for a purpose. Thus the Markan community did not make use of 'apostolos' as a title.

Matthew: Matthew, for the disciples of Jesus, besides the term 'disciple/s' prefers to use 'the Twelve'. The term "apostolos" is used only once, at the introduction of the list of the twelve, Mt. 10:2 "These are the names of the twelve 'apostoloi': first, Simon, ..." This is an editorial introduction which could easily contain a later interpolation of the word 'apostoloi' [note: Some MSS have 'disciples']. So Matthew's community definitely did not make real use of this term.

John: In John the term 'apostolos' does not figure at all in connection with this topic. In Jn 13.16 it just means 'messenger' and does not apply to Jesus' disciples. Mark, Matthew and John all employ 'the twelve' for the inner circle of disciples.

Luke-Acts: The situation is different with Luke-Acts. Luke-Acts' concept of 'envoyship' is definitely different from Paul's.

Luke: In the parallel passage to Mark and Matthew above, dealing with the choosing of the Twelve, Luke introduces the title 'apostoloi,' which he subsequently employs in the Gospel and further develops in Acts. - Lk. 6:13 "... he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named 'apostoloi' 'Envoys'." The word 'named' indicates that Luke here turns the term into a title. Then again Lk. 9:10 "On their return

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the envoys told Jesus all they had done." "apostoloi" is used for the 'Twelve' three more times in Luke: Lk. 17:5; 22:14, and 24:10. It is significant that the term is editorial and not on the lips of Jesus; however in 11:49, (a Q saying parallel to Mt 23:34) Luke substitutes 'apostoloi' for Matthew's "sages and scribes" and refers to the future, which perhaps indicates Luke's predilection for this word. As the other Gospels do, Luke, in addition to 'apostoloi', also uses 'the twelve' for the inner circle of disciples.

In the passage narrating the Sending of the Seventy, 10.1ff (exclusively Lucan), the term 'apostoloi' is not used even though these are sent out for a similar mission as the 'Twelve'. - this corroborates the view that in Luke's mind the title 'apostoloi' is reserved for a specific group, i.e. the Twelve.

Acts: For Luke only the Twelve (or the Eleven) are 'apostoloi'. In his view the early Christian community is represented by them. In Acts 1.2 he reiterates their choice by Jesus stressing that this choice was through the Holy Spirit before Jesus' departure and that they shall receive the Holy Spirit to be Jesus' witnesses (vv. 4 and 7f). This is the essence of 'Envoyship' in Luke's ecclesiology. He develops this concept in 1.15-26 by reestablishing the 'Twelve' through the divine choice, indicated by lot, of Matthias in place of Judas Iskariot, and by defining the nature of 'envoyship', that is, a man must fulfil two conditions to qualify as an 'apostolos', a) to have known Jesus during his lifetime from the baptism of John to his ascension and b) to be a witness of the resurrection together with the 'Eleven' (1.21-22). This situation is unique, it cannot be reproduced. Thus according to this author's mind 'envoyship' cannot be handed down to others, in other words there is no apostolic succession. There is no transfer of 'Apostolic' authority in the choice of Matthias. It is worth noting that there is no imposition of the hands here, the appointment is left in the hands of the Lord (God or Jesus).

This reestablished group is exclusively called the 'apostoloi' not the 'Twelve' in Acts (except once, 6:2). It is on this group and the other disciples of Jesus that the Spirit descends at Pentecost enabling them to start their ministry as the guarantors of the resurrection. The title of 'apostoloi' is so restricted to this initial group that the author makes no mention of an appointment of a successor to James, the brother of John, killed by Herod (12.2), thus indicating that the 'Apostoloi' are not replaceable as they die; the divine choosing of Matthias was done to complete the 'Twelve' before the witnessing was launched. Also, despite all the effort to present Paul as the great missionary, repeatedly commissioned by Christ to preach, Acts does not refer to him as the 'apostolos' of the Gentiles. For Luke, Paul's meeting of Jesus on the road to Damascus (despite the triple narration) does not have the same value as Jesus' appearance to the 'Apostoloi' prior to the ascension; it does not qualify him for the title of 'Apostolos.' The one (or two?) time Paul and Barnabas are referred to as 'apostoloi' in 14:4, (14, unattested in some MSS) the term may have been used in the common meaning of 'messengers'.

The 'Apostoloi' are presented as the first leaders of the Jerusalem community of believers and as the launchers of the Messianic

movement. They proclaim and witness the resurrection (4.33), their teaching is the foundation of the believers' faith (2:42), they perform 'wonders and signs' (2:43, 5:12), they receive the offerings of the other members in aid of the community (5:35) and they appoint the Seven (6:6) as table-servers. A special function Luke attributes to the 'Apostoloi' is the imparting of the Holy Spirit by their prayers and laying-on of hands when baptism alone is ineffective in this respect (8:16, 17). Note that Luke does not attribute to them any priestly functions.

In chapter 15 we find that the 'Apostoloi' are not any more the sole leaders in Jerusalem, they are paired with the 'elders' (15:4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4). This is an indication that Acts does not consider the 'elders' as the replacement or successors of the 'Apostoloi' but they are coexisting with them and concurrently performing leadership functions. This chapter also reveals the presence of a special personage, neither listed with the 'Twelve' nor established, anywhere in the book, as a successor to the 'Apostoloi', but very prominent in the governance of the Jerusalem community, namely James (the brother of the Lord) who plays a considerable part in the decision regarding the admittance of Gentiles in the movement (15:13ff).

After 16:4 the 'Apostoloi' disappear from the scene in Acts and in 21:8, when Paul visits Jerusalem he deals only with James and the elders.

Although Luke did not invent this concept, his presentation reflects the idealised picture of the 'Apostoloi' in vogue in his own time, the last decade of the 1st century.

The concept of the "apostoloi" ('messengers, envoys, those sent with a task') as a special group probably developed from the belief that Jesus had, somehow, commissioned his disciples to bear witness and to preach as expressed in Mt 28:19f ('make disciples of all nations'), Lk 24:47f ('be preached.. to all nations'), Jn 20:21 ('as the Father has sent me, even so I send you'), Acts 1:8 ('..you shall be my witnesses ...to the end of the earth') and the longer ending of Mark, Mk 16:15 (Go... and preach the Good News to the whole creation.) Despite this order to preach, however, in the New Testament, there is an eloquent lack of evidence of any missionary activity of the Twelve outside of Jerusalem and the preaching/witnessing we get in Acts is represented only by Peter - at times accompanied by the silent John. This concept of the 'messenger' was combined and compared to that of the Old Testament prophets who were initiated into their preaching career by a vision. Thus the 'Apostoloi' and Paul had the vision of the risen Christ start them on their preaching mission.

It is highly improbable that Jesus ever called his disciples 'apostoloi' or sent them on any mission during his lifetime; the sending of the twelve to perform healings during his lifetime is a later development; not even the healings of Jesus himself are verifiable as historic events let alone those of his disciples. Jesus

was the one with a mission and the disciples were the recipients, beneficiaries of his mission, but the later generations anachronistically retrojected the idea of 'apostleship' into the time of Jesus. Perhaps already in the last decades of the 1st century the rabbis had started the custom to send some of their disciples as their representatives ('shaliahim' i.e. 'those sent' i.e. 'apostoloi') as evidenced in the 2nd century CE, to conduct their business, financial or religious, in their place, which may have encouraged the Messianic movement to enhance the 'apostolos' concept on the pattern of the Rabbinic 'shaliahim'.

Acts 14:23 has Paul and Barnabas appointing 'elders' in some communities they established. Far from being a case of transmission of characteristics or powers from one person to another, this means helping the local community set up their leaders to administer and care for the community. Surely, each community required order and governance but hardly a resident 'Apostolos - messenger'. If Paul or others actually appointed elders (the only time this is indicated is Acts 14:23) to lead the community, this in no way means that they hand down the distinctive feature of 'apostolos' to these elders but that they confirm them in the leadership of their local community. If Paul ever did this he certainly could not have passed on his 'envoyship', a special personal gift, which he boasts to have acquired by virtue of his seeing the Lord who called him for a specific task. This 'envoyship', this special status as witness to Christ's resurrection is not transferable or bequeathable. In all honesty, it should be admitted that the New Testament never shows any of the Twelve or 'Apostles' appointing a successor.

Other Writings

The content of the term 'apostolos' is theologically varied.

First, Hebrews uses it of Christ (Heb 3:1).

Second, Luke-Acts and Paul see in it the witness to whom the risen Jesus appeared and who was commissioned to preach. Luke

emphasises the eyewitness to the life and resurrection of Jesus while Paul stresses the appearing of Jesus to him personally. Third, in later writers the 'Apostoloi' appear as a body belonging to past history: in 2 Pet. 3:2 and Jude 17, not necessarily the 'Twelve', they are the representatives of normative preaching. Ephesians pairs 'apostoloi' with prophets as the foundation and agents of revelation (Eph, 2:20; 3:5). Thus here the foundation is the message of earlier time irrespective of the source, whether imparted by Jesus or the Holy Spirit. In the Pastorals 'apostolos' is reserved only for Paul as the only guarantee of the tradition (1Tim. 1:1, 2:7, 2 Tim. 1:1, 2 Tim. 1:11, Titus 1:1) In Rev. 21:14 the term refers eschatologically to the 'Twelve,' "And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve 'Apostoloi' of the Lamb." This is akin to Luke's having the Twelve perform the eschatological function of sitting with Jesus in judgment of the twelve tribes of Israel (Lk 22:30).

Fourth, false 'apostoloi' - in the wider sense the word also refers to false 'envoys'. In Paul's time these are already pointed out, thus 2 Cor 11:13 "For such boasters are false envoys, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as envoys of Christ." The later writing Revelations, still makes reference to similar people (Rev 2:2)

This variety in connotation of the term 'apostolos' does not correspond with the meaning of the word 'apostle' in the modern languages which conveys an exclusively religious and distinctively Christian sense acquired and accumulated during the process of the development of the Christian Church. The early readers of Paul and of the other New Testament writings did not understand 'apostolos' as we understand 'apostle' today. Therefore it is about time to realize that the translation 'apostle' in the New Testament passages is anachronistically misleading.

Toward A Spirituality Of Leadership (Part II)

by Dianne Peck, NS

Leadership itself, like the People of God, is in transition. It, too, is passing through a transformation experience. We know, as an observation of life, that change is the only constant, and that change is the natural state of all living organisms.

In "Leadership Is", author Harrison Owen explains that leadership is experiencing the 3 C's which are change, challenge, and crisis. A transitional event, or change, is the source of new life, new energy, and a new cosmology. It is a challenge because all persons and all systems are conservative by nature. It gives the appearance of a crisis because it can be painful and difficult, and can seem to take an inordinate amount of time to come to pass.

Owen defines the current leadership transition as a shift from formal to informal leadership. He draws an analogy with the game of soccer:

New Rules for Leadership:

1) Whoever has the ball is leader.

(It is impossible that one person should lead with the ball all the

time. This means exhaustion for the leader and defeat for the team).

2) Ball hogs die.

(The old model of leadership that we are leaving behind, in which the one or the few had all the answers, the power, and kept the order/protected the rest of us, no longer produces or achieves or is creative for us).

3) Never oppose force with force.

(Gathering all the available forces and charging through the resistance as a management/leadership tactic, results in failure).

4) Play the whole field.

(The soccer way is to take advantage of the available space in order to reset the dynamics of play and create an open space which reveals the path).

5) Cooperate in order to compete.

(Cooperation replaces a desire to succeed that is based on

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hostility and anger).
6) Honour the opposition.

We ask why it is time for new rules of leadership and why it is time to move from formal to informal leadership.

People everywhere are discovering their spiritual identity, their spiritual birthright, and often that discovery is being made outside of formal religion. Statistics quote two-thirds of adults as having a personal spirituality, but only one in ten as attending a church.

For Owen leadership is about empowering the spirit. Owen's definition of leadership is, "Leadership is liberation, the capacity to inspire the human spirit on its quest for fulfillment". He believes that all of us all of the time operate out of a sense of being connected to an inner core of meaning. This is very similar to Diarmuid O'Murchu's definition of spirituality as the human search for meaning. Spirituality is our instinctual drive for the transcendent, and is equally as powerful as our other instinctual drives, perhaps even more so. The drive toward meaning and toward ultimate mystery, which comes from deep within the human spirit, is inescapable. Anthropologists and archaeologists say that as a species, we have behaved in a distinctly spiritual way for at least 70,000 years. Formal religion is only 4,500 years old.

Therefore, in order to be effective and fruitful, what must the characteristics of informal/creative leadership be?

Creativity comes from the brain itself, which is split into two hemispheres, each controlling very specific and very different functions. The "right brain" controls our creativity, so we all have the capacity to be creative; it is the natural function of the brain. Rollo May, in "The Courage To Create", defines creativity as, " the encounter of the intensely conscious person with his or her world".

May lists the characteristics of creative leaders.

- 1) They are passionately innovative.
- 2) They often question the status quo.
- 3) They think holistically, perceiving the overall patterns, which often leads to differing conclusions.
- 4) They are not likely to be obedient all the time.
- 5) Their loyalties are first to their own ideas and second to those who will help carry them out.
- 6) They do not presume that supervisors in the organization will always make the right decisions.
- 7) They acknowledge their own limitations and strengths, and are not threatened by the strengths of others.
- 8) They embrace the opportunity to help others grow and develop.

Other observations of May are that the creative person is always dissatisfied with the mundane, the apathetic, the conventional and thus is always threatening the status quo by first seeing and then

pushing on to new worlds. Hence creativity is first an act of destruction, necessary for the birth of something new, and is always a threat.

May's position is, "We are living at a time when one age is dying and the new age is not yet born... we are called upon to do something new... to push into a forest where there are no well-worn paths...to leap into the unknown."

He then challenges us, "If you do not express your own original ideas, if you do not listen to your own being, you will have betrayed yourself. You will have betrayed your community in failing to make your contribution to the whole."

In this interim time, this time of "dying but not yet reborn," where will creative leadership come from? For increasing numbers of spiritually awakened people, soul-making has become the goal of living. If church leaders are not enabling and nurturing this, many others are. These are some of the sources of leadership that are sustaining me.

- 1) Books: To learn how to soul-make, the advice of Joseph Campbell in "An Open Life," is to find a writer who speaks to you, and read everything he/she has written. Stay with that author until you have devoured the teaching, and then devour the books the author has read. (Bibliographies are wealthy coffers).
- 2) Meditation: Access the deep soul by the practice of meditation, or Yoga, or Reiki, or contemplation of nature.
- 3) Nature as meditation: Draw soul-life from the energy fields of the Universe. Grow courage from exposure to the light of the moon and the stars and the sun. Grow health from the earth's fruit and vegetation and natural medicines. Breathe in the cosmic breath of the winds.
- 4) Art as meditation: Feed the soul from myth and storytelling. Draw out the soul. (see www.touchdrawing.com). Write out the soul in personal journaling.
- 5) Reform Groups: Other sources of leadership available to us are the many groups, such as ARCC, CITI, Dignity, and of course, Corpus, who are seeking to establish compassion and justice both inside and outside the Church. Within the Institution is the leadership of the Congregations of Religious Women who continue to labour and fight, often against great odds, to implement the reforms of Vatican II.

In order to again lead vibrantly and effectively, all major religions are called by these times to let go of themselves as religions and recover themselves as spiritualities.

In the interim, the People of God are "leaping into the unknown" of their own spiritual depths, and discovering the nature of true leadership.

The Tablet, 21 Nov. 1998:

"All Hollows College, Dublin, which for nearly 200 years has sent priests especially to Australia and America, now has not a single clerical student. On the other hand, it has 550 lay people taking theology courses."

Quoted in "Religion in Exile" by Diarmuid O'Murchu

Jesus' Chaburah
"The Medium is the Message"
Marshall McLuhan

When Jesus lived and worked in Nazareth as a carpenter, there were in Palestine many different Jewish sects and parties. Some used violent means to attain their goals (the "sicarii"). Some believed that you had to separate yourself from the corrupting influences of society if you were going to be saved by Yahweh:

- the Essenian communities sought physical separation from the corrupt Powers That Be (PTB) in Jerusalem by living in isolated areas;
 - the Pharisees sought spiritual separation from the polluted riff-raff of society by establishing a complex network of purity laws and traditions for which they were both judge and jury.
- And then there were the Sadducees, the temple priests, and the Scribes, the civil servants, who rigorously maintained their power through collaboration with the hated Roman overlords. All these groups: Sadducees, Scribes, Pharisees, Essenes, represented the intelligentsia and they shared a common contempt for the "mob," the outcasts, the marginalized of society.

These groups were varyingly intolerant of opposition, particularly from prophets who pointed the finger at their abuses and, especially, at their dereliction of pastoral responsibilities. That's what John the Baptist did, and he was soon arrested and terminated. Interestingly enough, John the Baptist exercised his prophetic mission in true Essenian fashion, in the isolation of the desert near the Jordan river. Common people, good Jews at heart, sincerely searching for connection with Yahweh, went into the desert to hear the message of John. Jesus was one of those people, was deeply affected by John, and felt a prophetic calling of his own. When John was arrested, Jesus left the desert and returned to Galilee to begin his own ministry.

When Jesus began to preach the "Good News" about the "Kingdom of Godde," he adopted a radically different style of ministry. And he did this because his target audience was not primarily the elite of society; it was rather the common people, the outcasts, the marginalized. That's why he didn't start his ministry in Jerusalem, the seat of Temple power. He went first to the synagogues of the larger towns of Galilee, his home province. These synagogues were houses of communal prayer, spiritual discussion and education in the scriptures and traditions. As an institution, it was male dominated and controlled by the Scribes, the Pharisees and the occasional Sadducee. These leaders were impressed with the knowledge and simple eloquence of this Galilean carpenter. The common people were attracted to his very hopeful and inclusive message: they were welcome with love and respect in the "Kingdom of Godde." They were even more impressed, if not astounded, by his power to heal, that is, to free them from spiritual and physical restrictions that made them outcasts of society according to the complicated rules of the leadership elite. Jesus empowered them: by total trust in Godde's Power, they were healed and re-integrated to society with respect and dignity. On occasion, Jesus confronted the priests and Pharisees with the evidence of healing, thus forcing them to recognize officially the

person's re-entry into society.

The elite quickly saw Jesus as a threat to their power and authority, and he was soon unwelcome in the urban synagogues. And whenever they could, they sought to discredit him publicly by declaring him a friend of the devil or by showing him to be opposed to the Law of Moses and to the sacred Traditions.

Undeterred by such opposition and buoyed by the enthusiastic support of a coterie of friends and disciples, Jesus changed tack. He adopted a more grassroots approach. He went to the smaller villages and hamlets where he and a few of his disciples (of men and attached women) were invited to share the hospitality of ordinary folk in their homes. Over bread, fish, cheese and wine or whatever they had to share, he would tell them stories that illustrated the "Good News" of the all-inclusive "Kingdom of Godde." In these smaller family gatherings where traditional Middle Eastern hospitality was fully extended, women were included in the lively discussions. That had not been possible in the synagogues.

For Jesus, this new method of promoting his prophetic mission was far more inclusive, intimate and effective, and he made it his preferred promotional medium. As a medium, it wasn't new. Small, free-flowing discussion groups of family, friends and guests (where women could also participate) already existed. It was called a "chaburah" in Hebrew. We might call it today a small faith community.

Jesus formed his own chaburah of family, friends and disciples (men and attached women). Indeed, the Last Supper was a gathering of Jesus' chaburah. And when he said: "do this in memory of me," he was referring to the chaburah as the best way to make the "Kingdom of Godde" real and alive.

One gets a feeling for the wholistic, energizing experience of the chaburah from Bohdan Piaseki's recent painting of the "Last Supper." It offers by far a more historically accurate picture of the event (except for the table) than Leonardo DaVinci's famous rendition. Re-read the passage from Luke (24:13-35) that describes a chaburah experience in the home of Cleopas and his wife. Ponder in particular their reaction to the experience: "Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?" (v.32) Can you not sense the peace, joy and excitement that flooded the very being of those disciples? One can feel the creative energy of the Holy Spirit bubbling up inside them: "they got up at once and went back to Jerusalem." (v.33)

Is it any wonder then, why, after the death and resurrection of Jesus, his disciples continued to gather, to tell the "Good News" stories about the all-welcoming "Kingdom of Godde," whilst they broke bread and drank wine in heartfelt conviviality. In repeating this special chaburah experience, they were convinced that Jesus was alive and present among them in a very powerful way.

This & That Continued...

Thus, Jesus' chaburah became the trademark medium of this nascent Jewish sect called the "followers of the Way." It became the operational model for Paul and the other apostles. The gospels as well as the letters of Peter, Paul, James, John and Jude were written to specific "chaburot" (communities) for the faith enhancement of its members.

Because Jesus' chaburah responded well to the universal need of people for a profound connection with the divine, this tiny Jewish sect, barely visible in the midst of so many diverse religious movements in the Roman Empire of the time, grew and grew and grew.

Down through the ages and to this very day, Christians have remained faithful to the tradition of the chaburah established by Jesus. However, in the last 1600 or so years, the Roman Catholic Church has progressively re-instituted a Sadducean Temple priesthood that claims for itself total control over Christian sacramental ministry. And because there is at present a critical shortage of priests, the traditional celebration of the Eucharist in our official communities is at risk. Not to worry! The Holy Spirit is busily at work raising up servant leaders (men and women) who are called to return us to our Christian origins.

Recently, I attended an Advisory Board meeting of CITI Ministries (Celibacy Is The Issue) in Boston and a National



Coordinating Team meeting of Corpus Canada in Ottawa. Both these renewal organizations endorsed a plan by which they will invite and train married priests and others to build Small Faith Communities in the Jesus tradition of the chaburah. The primary target audience is the unchurched: Catholics and others who no longer go to church.

I am very excited by this project for the following reasons:

- It is wonderful to see two different renewal groups collaborating on a single project. The prospect is that other groups might join this ministry, e.g. Corpus USA, WOC (Women's Ordination Conference), etc.
 - It is the oldest, most traditional method of evangelization in the history of the Christian Church.
 - It is one of the best ways to enhance the spiritual lives of the unchurched.
 - It is the most efficient grassroots means of bringing about Church renewal.
 - It is a ministry that allows women to exercise a leadership role in a manner equal to men. Was not "Junia" a leader of a house church under the direction of St. Paul?
 - It is one of the best ways of helping bishops fulfill their pastoral responsibilities, since the priest shortage doesn't allow them to do anything about the unchurched.
- Jesus gave us the chaburah. And he said: "Do this in memory of me!" Who will answer the call?

A Meeting With Men Who "Live In The Shadows"

by Bishop Pat Power

Excerpts from *The Catholic Voice* (Canberra), Nov. 2000

Some Time Ago I estimated that in this Archdiocese there were about 40 married Catholic priests no longer serving in the active ministry. In late September while the rest of the nation was focused on the Olympic Games, I met with five of them over a meat pie in my Favier House office.

On Palm Sunday 1996, I had travelled to Brisbane for a meeting of Epiphany, a group of former priests, their families and friends. It was an interesting and at times intense dialogue with about fifty people. I believed it was very worthwhile and productive.

In the latter part of 1998, there was a national meeting of Epiphany in Canberra. Most of the personnel were different to those I had met in Brisbane and I was limited in the time I spent with them, but again my impressions were very positive.

The recent informal meeting in my office grew out of concerns expressed in the Reconciliation Task Force which has been seeking to take some concrete steps to advance reconciliation in various areas during this jubilee year. We were aware of

initiatives taken in at least two other dioceses (Ballarat and Toowoomba) to give recognition and thanks to priests no longer in active ministry.

The five men invited are all good friends of mine and are all very committed to the Catholic Church. I thought I knew most of their stories but I was deeply moved by what we shared in a little over an hour. What does reconciliation mean in their situation? What can be done by the 'official' Church to address their issues? How can healing be brought about, not just for them but for others in similar situations? We probably came up with more questions than answers.

There were expressions of sadness, regret, guilt and anger, but I did not detect any bitterness. There were also sentiments of relief, satisfaction, peace and the recognition of God's love, the love of wives and families and acceptance by the community.

But in many ways they are people still living in the shadows, sometimes able to contribute to the life of the Church but in a way that can never be too obvious.

All of them, although they would be too humble to broadcast it, are making an enormous impact in their professional lives and are

A Meeting With Men Continued...

blessed in being part of a loving family life. They are advancing the reign of God but in a way that the official Church seems unable to acknowledge.

My five friends made no claim to speak on behalf of their brothers in similar situations. In fact, they were quite adamant that everyone's experience is different, just as there are differing needs, hopes and expectations.

I had hoped that they might be able to make some suggestions as to how some reconciling steps could be made towards people in their situation.

My friends did not warm towards the idea of any grand event or gesture, but were enthusiastic about the kind of conversation in which were engaged that day. I recognised that the reconciliation process was severely limited by the current discipline binding the universal Church.

It occurred to me that there could be me benefit in having similar informal meetings with other small groups of 'former' priests.

Then there is the question of the 20 or more who served as priests of this Archdiocese but are now living elsewhere.

It would seem beneficial to extend the hand of friendship to them as well. My friends pointed out to me that circumstances often dictated that they leave their parishes and friends without the chance to say 'goodbye'. There must be a lot of unfinished business for all involved.

I would hope that during this year of Great Jubilee we might be liberated from some of the fears and limitations which bind us. There are many more conversations to be had.

National Coordinating Team Meeting Highlights

by Arthur Menu, Sidney, BC

Members of the Corpus Canada National Coordinating Team met in Ottawa 21-22 October. This was the first time the Team had met since the Corpus Canada National Conference in Regina last year. In the months leading up to the Ottawa meeting Team members Jim Noonan and Jack Shea had been busy recruiting new members for the Team so that more regions of Canada would be represented. The new members are Joe Cashen (Toronto region) and D'Arcy Coulson (Quebec region), who were able to attend the meeting, and Gordon Irving (Vancouver region), Sr. Dolores Hall (representing Newfoundland, but living in Toronto for the year), and Fr. Eloi Arsenault (Prince Edward Island). We are still looking for representatives for northern Alberta, Halifax and New Brunswick.

The meeting dealt with numerous matters and turned out to be very productive. The minutes run to nine pages, so I won't attempt to provide a complete account of all our discussions. In this article I will present the resolutions that were passed by the Team, introducing each of them briefly.

1. Proposed Amendments to the "New Vision of Corpus Canada."

At the Corpus Canada National Conference held in Victoria in 1995, Corpus Canada adopted a mission statement entitled "A New Vision of Corpus Canada." This statement (without title) has appeared on the back page of *The Journal* for the last couple years. At the Ottawa meeting the Team came up with some changes it would like to propose to the membership of Corpus Canada at the next National Conference. Before then, if Team members find that the people and communities they represent agree with the changes, the Team will adopt the revised "New Vision" as Corpus' working mission statement until such time as it can be ratified at a National Conference. Here is the revised "New Vision." I invite readers to compare it with the original version which can be found on the back page of this issue of *The Journal*. If you agree or disagree with the proposed changes, please let your region's representative on the Team (or the one closest to your region) know.

Who Are We?

We began and continue to be a support group for married

Catholic priests, their family and friends, in dialogue with the hierarchy, seeking an optional married priesthood. We have become also a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did.

Where Are We Going?

This faith community is dedicated to:

- Renewal of ministry (service) in the Church.
- Being a catalyst for development of lay leadership in the Church.
- Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality.
- Justice for all based on Gospel values.

Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, but especially to the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach them through many ministries, and in a special way through the creation of small faith communities.

How Do We Get There?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through communal discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts that all creation might be transformed according to God's loving plan.

2. Training Course for Small Faith Community Developers.

Fran Brassard reported that he had been asked by the American organization *Celibacy Is The Issue* to prepare a training manual for married priests wishing to minister to groups in need of their services. Fran offered to expand this project to support Corpus Canada's goal of creating and supporting small faith communities. The training manual would include resources for anyone, not just married priests, who wants to start a small faith community.

MOTION:

That there be a training team, with François Brassard as coordinator, which would

- i) put together a training manual for developing small faith communities; and
- ii) promote workshops to train leaders to develop small faith

Meeting Highlights Continued...

communities aimed at the unchurched.

3. Other Strategies Discussed:

1) Le Manifeste: Jack Shea described the efforts of this francophone Quebec group to deal with the problems associated with the priest shortage. He sought Corpus support for the group's statement addressed to the bishops and urging them to consider their proposals.

2) March on Rome 2000: Leonard Schmidt proposed that Corpus Canada get involved in organizing a March on Rome 2000 by the laity modelled on the recent March on Ottawa by women. He hoped The Journal would raise up volunteers willing to take this project on.

4. Representatives on the National Coordinating Team

The Team felt that if Corpus Canada is to be truly a national organization, representatives from all regions of the country should sit on the Team. It was felt to be important for Team members to represent existing small faith communities, or be prepared to develop small faith communities with the Team's help. The Team also felt that Team members should be encouraged to find people to replace them after a couple years on the Team. The Team will do a better job if new people with fresh ideas are brought on board from time to time.

MOTION: that

(a) membership on the National Coordinating Team be expanded so that every Canadian province will have at least one representative;

(b) it not be necessary for a member of the Team to represent an existing Corpus community (or other small faith community) when they join the Team as long as they are committed to developing such a community;

(c) the National Coordinating Team commit itself to helping Team members develop a small faith community if they do not already represent one.

MOTION: that

(a) after two years of membership on the National Coordinating Team, each member shall search for someone from their region to replace them on the Team;

(b) if such a replacement be found, both the replacement and the two-year member shall sit together as full members of the Team for one more year, at the end of which the two-year member shall resign;

(c) if a two-year member cannot find a replacement, the two-year member shall remain on the Team;

(d) all Team members who have been on the Team for two or more years as of October 2000, shall be considered two-year members, and shall begin searching for their replacement forthwith.

5. New Appointments:

1) Treasurer: Alanna Menu graciously accepts to replace Jake Kutarna.

2) Community Development Representative: Francois Brassard will take responsibility for this through his coordinating the training team for developing small faith communities.

3) Outreach Representative: Joe Cashen has agreed to take on this ministry.

MOTION (Arthur Menu): that

a) Joe Cashen be the resource for ministry to priests and religious

in transition, particularly those unjustly treated when they left clerical ministry;

b) the Team support him in both time and talent;

c) Joe present a budget to the National Coordinating Team when he is in a position to do so.

ALL AGREED.

4) Media Representative: Francois Brassard was reappointed in accordance with the following motion.

MOTION (Francois Brassard): that

a) Francois Brassard be the coordinator of a Public Relations Team, consisting of Francois and regional representatives, which would deal with international, national, and local publicity;

b) Francois will be responsible for international and national public relations and the regional representatives for regional public relations;

c) This team will provide advice and resources that local Corpus communities can use for public relations and advertising as they deem appropriate;

d) Francois will present a budget to the N.C.T. for approval.

ALL AGREED.

6. The Journal: Many issues were discussed. Following are four motions that were agreed upon.

1) Motion (Arthur Menu): that in consultation with Chris Diamond, chief editor of The Journal, The Journal Editorial Board formulate the editorial policy, post it to the CORPUS-N list for review and approval by the National Advisory Council, and publish it in every issue of The Journal.

ALL AGREED.

2) Motion (Arthur Menu): that regional editors be named and noted in The Journal: Ottawa - Jim Noonan; Saskatchewan - Emil Kutarna; Alberta, Manitoba, Newfoundland, P.E.I., Toronto representatives to be found.

ALL AGREED.

3) Motion (Jim Noonan): that the Editorial Team put directions in The Journal on how people can subscribe to the CORPUS-N and CORPUS-L lists.

ALL AGREED.

4) Motion (Chuck McLellan): that

a) The Journal place more emphasis on membership in Corpus Canada in the appeal letter that goes out annually as an insert in The Journal;

b) the appeal letter go out in the name of, and be signed by, Corpus Canada;

c) the appeal letter include the note that people can also contribute to the Xristos Community Society in support of The Journal.

ALL AGREED.

7. Corpus Canada National Conference: Chuck McLellan felt these conferences were crucial to the life of Corpus.

MOTION (Arthur Menu): that National Coordinating Team

members ask their regional communities if they are interested in hosting a Corpus Canada national conference next year, so that a decision about holding a national conference next year can be made

by Easter of 2001.

ALL AGREED.

Leadership in Corpus Canada

by Jim Noonan, Corpus-NCR

In the discussion on leadership in the Church, I thought it would be useful to introduce the question of leadership in Corpus Canada, and in particular the role of the facilitator in our organization, partly because I now hold that position.

First, a bit of history: A few years ago it was decided that Corpus Canada should operate by consensus, that is, make decisions only when all members of the National Coordinating Team had come to agreement on a particular issue. This it was felt was more democratic, more fair, and more in keeping with the practice of the early Christian communities. No longer would it have a president as it had in its early days, and as Corpus-USA still does..

Along with the decision to operate by consensus came the agreement to work with no designated leader of the Team, but after a year of operating in this manner it was felt that a leader of some sort was needed, that someone should take responsibility for initiating and overseeing the discussions that took place, usually on the Corpus-N email list.

That leader was given the title facilitator at the Regina Conference of 1999, where it was also decided that a different member of the Team would be the facilitator for a three-month period of the year. Four people agreed at the Team meeting in Regina to act as facilitator for the upcoming year, beginning in October - Art Menu, Jim Noonan, Emil Kutarna, and Chuck McLellan.

During Art Menu's tenure that year the role of the facilitator was discussed and agreed upon through discussion on the Corpus-N list, and the details of that role were published in the January-February, 2000 issue of The Journal, on pages 9 and 15.

At the recent Ottawa meeting of the Team, the term of the facilitator was reviewed, and it was felt that the three-month term was not long enough, and that the person holding this position needed more time to become familiar with it, and to become comfortable working with other Corpus members and with the job description.

There was uncertainty on how to proceed. Should the term of the facilitator be six months, a year, or longer? The question then arose as to who was ready to assume the position for whatever period of time was decided upon.

Unlike in Regina, where four facilitators were easily found, there was difficulty getting Team members to serve the longer term. So in typically Canadian fashion, a compromise of sorts was reached. I agreed to accept the job for a period of six months, i.e., to the end of March, 2001, when someone else would take over. But since no one else at the meeting agreed to succeed me for the following six months, my first assignment was to find a successor, which is partly why I am writing this article. I want to encourage some other member of the Team - perhaps even someone who was not at the Ottawa meeting - to come forward and assume the position in April, 2001.

I feel that ideally the position of facilitator should be for one year, and my hope is that someone will volunteer to accept the job for that period of time after I finish my six-month term.

Another issue closely related to this one, and agreed upon at the Ottawa meeting, is that the term of Team members should be only two years. After two years, other Corpus members from the same region would be invited to join the Team for the same period of

time while the retiring members remained on the team for one more year to help the new members become familiar with the job. Thus, in effect, a person's term as a Team member is three years. If no one else in the region is available or willing to join the Team, the member whose term is up is encouraged to remain on the Team for another two years.

It should be noted that there was agreement that the two-year term was retroactive, and thus several present members of the Team will now be looking for replacements in their particular regions.

My plea is that more members come forward to join the Team so that there is a healthy rotation of members. In this way more people will be available to become facilitators and assume the important work of helping the Team to discuss and plan for the future of Corpus Canada.

Another important issue for the facilitator this year is to help people decide if there is a need and desire for a Corpus Conference in 2001, as was felt at the Ottawa meeting, and to work in the planning of it. Team members are encouraged to consult Corpus members in their own regions to see if they are ready to hold a conference next year.

The minutes of the Ottawa meeting state that the locale of any such conference should be decided by Easter 2001. I suggest that the locale should be decided upon much sooner than that so that the detailed planning can begin in time to assure the success of the conference.

I see this consultation about a conference as much a responsibility in the remaining five months of my term as searching for a facilitator to replace me. And I ask not only members of the Team, but all members of Corpus Canada to reflect and pray on both these issues, and to decide if they are ready to offer themselves and their talents to carry out and expand the work of Corpus Canada in either of these ways: as a facilitator for a year, and/or as an organizer of a conference in 2001.

Both jobs would need, of course, to be approved by the present Team - preferably by consensus, which has worked well to this point, even when there has been disagreement in the course of the discussion among Team members.

On The Lighter Side!

With A Little Help From Our Friends!

Police in Oakland, California spent two hours attempting to subdue a gunman who had barricaded himself inside his home. After firing ten tear gas canisters, officers discovered that the man was standing beside them, shouting "Please come out and give yourself up!"

Remarks By President McAleese At The National Conference Of Priests Of Ireland - *Monday, September 25th 2000*

I am delighted to join you here in All Hallows for this opening session of your annual conference in the year of the Great Jubilee.

You gather to reflect on tomorrow rather than yesterday, to attempt together to discern the shape of Ministry in this changed and changing Ireland. The focus is on collaborative ministry, on working with the laity, on reaching out to young people, all contemporary touchstones, maybe even raw nerves.

I remember my first visit to All Hallows. It was over thirty years ago. I was a teenage lay Catholic, an enthusiastic member of the St. Vincent de Paul and the Diocesan Youth Council. We gathered here, young people from all over Ireland, to contemplate a new vision for our Church. Blessed John XXIII had said emphatically - I have come to cultivate a garden not to guard a mausoleum. We queued up to join his Ground Force Team! All Hallows demise as a seminary held no fears. The world was changing. We would not only change with it but we would become instruments of change. The future was collaboration, priests and laity, men and women; the future was ministry broadened, redefined, the future was ecumenical, a sisterhood of Christian Churches, a family of world faiths respectful of each other, the future was egalitarian, all God's creatures equal in his eyes and entitled to equal respect.

We began to perceive the divine rallying call to unity as unity in diversity not uniformity. The future was a place we could not wait to get to. And so here I am once again in All Hallows, much of our future already lived. Some of it has been lived well. Some of it wasted.

So to this conference we bring the accumulated successes and sadnesses, the debts and disappointments, the trials and errors, the fresh hopes and distilled wisdom out of which we hope and pray will come an educated, maybe even an inspired, insight to inform the next bit of future... the contribution made by priests and religious to so many important fields of endeavour would take up a sizable space. Yet we don't find them in celebratory or contented mode, nor do we generally find the public in gratitude mode.

The prevailing temper tends more towards disquiet, criticism and uncertainty. Much has been said in the media, in the newspapers and in our own homes about the devastating impact of church-related scandals and betrayals in recent years. There is little doubt about the palpable anger and bitter disappointment they have generated to say nothing of the awful human toll they have exacted on those directly hurt by such criminal acts and omissions. The indirect fall-out, the collateral damage has been extensive too and among its range of victims have been the priests and religious who honoured their vocation, lived it to the best of their ability, contributed to the well-being of our people, but who today experience a personal desolation and distrust which can be overwhelming and draining. Yet we know that these things alone do not explain the mood and the deep concerns about the future; rather they compound them.

Against the background of growing prosperity, growing

peace, growing confidence, against a backdrop of a youthful Ireland, vocations plummet, seminaries close quietly and the faces grow older and older at conferences of priests. When we talk of the marginalized who fear being marooned as prosperity sweeps others to a better life it is worth remarking that among those who face an uncertain future are many clergy and religious. Is this how you imagined it would be in the heady sixties?

In the wake of a very bloody and hate-filled first half of the 20th century, it was hoped that the Second Vatican Council would lead to a revitalised Church comfortably adapted to the modern world yet a profound centre of spiritual gravity, helping us to radically understand the commandment to love one another.

There has been change, massive change. The Church has absorbed the vernacular Mass, lay readers, lay ministers of the Eucharist, female altar servers, parish councils, a permanent diaconate in some places though not in Ireland, ground-breaking ecumenical dialogue, in particular the painstaking work of the Anglican and Roman Catholic International Commission.

The Pope has responded several times now to calls for dialogue with women. He has been in the vanguard of the discourse on liberty which infused the velvet revolutions. He has apologised for the many failures and faults of the church and attempted to mend fences with the other great Abrahamic traditions of Judaism and Islam. His appeal to the young at the huge Jubilee rally recently in Rome no doubt brought comfort and reassurance to many and indeed great pride to Ireland as we watched a young Irishwoman read the first Lesson.

So yes, there has been change but set against the huge changes that have permeated daily life in the Western world in the same period the Church's own institutional adaptation to the signs of the times looks considerably less dramatic.

The law and language of equal opportunities has promoted an inclusive, meritocratic culture... Authority structures have become flatter. Multi-directional communication, upward evaluation and appraisal have reshaped all sorts of power-based relationships. Automatic deference is out. In-your-face scrutiny is in. Hidebound, arcane, institutional structures of all sorts and the attitudes which supported them have loosened. For many it was change or perish. Yet in changing many found to their surprise that they released huge new reservoirs of creative energies which had been untapped and hidden by the poverty of their old imaginations. We only have to think of the Peace Process or the Social Partnership here in Ireland to see the extent and the potential of those new energies. The attitudes and expectations now driven by these new energies are crafting the future, economically, politically, socially and spiritually.

It would probably be naive to expect the promise of the Second Vatican Council to be realised in such a relatively short period and it would certainly be unfair to ignore the

International News Continued...

significant changes which are already its legacy. Yet we can all sense disappointment and impatience on many fronts - the mixed messages about ecumenical dialogue with sister Christian churches, and respect for other faith systems, the failure to utilise the full giftedness of women, the paucity of avenues for debate, and the sense of drift rather than direction in the face of the collapse of vocations in the Western world.

Disappointment and impatience in themselves are perhaps no bad thing. They are the vital signs of a people who care. As a source of energy they hold the promise of more pressure, more change. Left to fester though, they generate a much worse enemy - indifference.

Yet you have resources it would be easy to diminish or downplay. The wellsprings of Christian faith in Ireland are deep and richly veined and strong. They have been immensely challenged in our lifetime by the grim legacy of sectarianism and inter-faith rivalry which has at times been grotesquely violent. This generation has set its face against that legacy. In embracing the Good Friday Agreement so overwhelmingly, a huge majority of the people of this island of all denominations and none, revealed the true nature of their hearts, their willingness to change, their desire for reconciliation to one another.

The relatively new phenomenon of refugees and asylum seekers has rigorously tested the Christian credentials of individuals and communities. Champions have emerged from within the family of Christian churches to challenge the fears and prejudices encouraging people to live the gospel, to truly love one another as children of God and to celebrate diversity as God-ordained.

It is true that there is no shortage of criminality and cruelty, of lovelessness and sheer badness. The worst of them make the daily headlines bringing us anguish and heartbreak. They corrode the fabric of community. Yet it is also true that the irrepressible idealism and Christian altruism of our people of all ages has many, many exemplars. They shine out as an encouragement to those in ministry who may feel dismay and disillusionment.

I meet them as I go about my work and so do you - they are carers, they are running youth clubs, respite care facilities, hospices, raising funds for sheltered housing, building homes for the homeless, teaching adult literacy classes, cleaning churches, running choirs, organising prayer groups, challenging sectarianism, promoting peace, organising community development programmes, setting up cr*ches, homework clubs, they are into drugs awareness programmes, mental health, disability support. They are raising loved children, trying to build nurturing relationships. They give generously to their churches. They care about our poor, our elderly, our bereaved, our young people our lonely. They believe in sharing these good times widely. They want an Ireland to be proud of.

They are climbing mountains in Nepal to raise funds, running

mini marathons, golf classics, car boot sales, you name it, they are doing it all over the country. They are living the gospel - doing things for others, collaborating with other denominations, carefully building up community, building up hope, building up love. They worry about our young people who fear each other's aggression, who take the brunt of peer bullying, who are victims of a culture too familiar with alcohol, too casual about sex, our young men who drive too fast, who can't articulate their worries, who end up taking the devastating and wholly unnecessary road to suicide, our young girls who end up as mothers long before they are ready. They worry about the kids who drop out of school and into freefall. They worry about the kids who are unloved and damaged and about how we seem to be missing them by a mile. They worry about kids growing up in a world without decent values. They worry about how to be good neighbours to those of different colours and creeds. They worry about loneliness, about death, about loss, about life itself.

Many of them are repositories of the most appalling chronic suffering, endurance and faith. They trust God to help them carry their burdens. They pray that through their work, through community, through nation we may together find workable answers to these things and offer each other some human comfort on this earthly pilgrimage. They worry enough, hope enough, pray enough and have faith enough, to care deeply that at Conferences like this those who have committed themselves to professional Christian ministry might harness the grace, energy, the insight and the determination to change the future, not entirely on their own, but in genuine, respectful, partnership with this huge lay endeavour that goes on day in and day out, almost unnoticed, largely unremarked.

What happens here at this Conference matters to a lot of people. Many people wish you well, not just from within the Catholic Church but from across the many denominations and faiths.

The Thesaurus on my word processor offered the following words instead of Ministry - office, bureaucracy, department, organisation. They are particularly suited I am sure you agree to running a mausoleum. There is another image of ministering- caring, tending, looking after, nurturing- these are words a good gardener might use. In this month when Pope John XXIII was beatified may you be inspired to cultivate that great garden we still dare to dream of. To paraphrase the words of one of the best known documents from the Council ? May God help you to carry" the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel"

May God Bless your deliberations and may you leave All Hallows full of energy and hope, committed anew to your vocation as Christian Ministers in this changed and changing Ireland.

Mary McAleese has gained enormous support and respect, and she has said what most people would say if they had her courage. The Church is very powerful here and people won't risk speaking out. It certainly has not done Mary any harm. We are absolutely delighted with her as President. People say that she is a great role model for women.

Carroll Martin, Dublin

Comments On The President's Speech

by Fr. Des Wilson, Springhill Community, Belfast

I think the President's speech to the Priests' Association was generally received as rather bland when contrasted with quite radical statements she has made in the past.

She has been strong on the rights of women and is known to favour ordination of women if women wish it. She is known to be impatient of weak church leadership and gave good example by receiving the Eucharist in an Anglican church. With this background it was considered that what she said to the Priests' Association was to be seen as gentle encouragement rather than an expression of her best views. But she is constrained of course since all speeches have to be approved by government. As time has gone on she is seen to be getting more and more careful rather than carefree, which is a pity.

The present Priests' Association came about as follows: In the sixties and seventies Irish priests came together to form their own

association. It managed to gather together a good number of priests and became more or less well organised in different dioceses in Ireland according to the radicalism - or lack of it - of Priests' discourse at the time. When it appeared that the Association was going to survive, and was asking for better relationships between priests and the rest of the church and for just processes within the church for those who had complaints or those against whom there were complaints, the hierarchy founded its own Priests' Association, which is the one existing now and which Mary McAleese addressed. Most priests then who wanted an association joined the hierarchical one and the original one withered. From time to time this association has made some interesting and reformatory statements but never anything radical. So Mary McAleese's speech was tempered by all this.

A Comment On President Mary McAleese's Address

by Joe Sheehy, Springhill Community, Belfast

An Irish President's scope for comment is extremely limited - especially in the area of religion. Before becoming President of Ireland, Mary McAleese was very active in Dublin BASIC (*Brothers and Sisters in Christ*), which campaigns for the ordination of women in the Catholic Church.

She continues to be a member of the group and keeps herself informed of our progress, through our Newsletter and close friendship with the founder, Soline Vatinel.

Two years ago, she received our Core Group at her official residence, *Áras an Uachtaráí* and was pleased to accept a copy of Bohdan Piasecki's "Last Supper". This extraordinary painting depicts the Last Supper as a Jewish family gathering, with women and children taking part - rather than an exclusive event confined to twelve Renaissance males.

Where Mary McAleese stands in a personal capacity is not in doubt: she wants a radical shake-up of church structures and spirituality, to be achieved by opening all ministries to women. However, as President, she has to be circumspect.

The agenda devised by the organisers of this conference - with eyes wide shut, lest they rock any further the leaking raft of the Irish hierarchy betrays the extent to which the Irish church lags behind the rest of the thinking world, the Vatican alone excepted. Thirty-five years on from the Second Vatican Council, the "laity" are still an object of curiosity and "youth" remains unchartered territory.

BASIC held a protest outside the gates of the conference. One poster asked: *Can the Church/Discover with faith/ Recognise with joy/ Foster with diligence/ Women's vocations/ To ordination?* And another: *Women Deacons & Priests/ With God nothing is impossible.* Mary McAleese had not been informed by us in advance and waved happily to our members on the way in. Several times during her speech, she referred to the protest outside

remarks, of course, which do not appear in the official text.

An initial reading of that official text is like wading through blancmange. Only those delegates with ears to hear would have experienced any discomfort. Between the lines, however, a radically different message emerges: I know what you are going through. But have courage: it is a time of *Kairos*, not *Chaos*, of God-given opportunity. There is spiritual famine out there - which only a ministry of men and women working together can address. Your choice is stark: to preside over a mausoleum - or bring about a new, vibrant church in the spirit of Vatican 2.

Personally, I would have preferred something more "in your face"; but a president must remain a president. Whether she should have accepted the invitation in the first place, is of course, another matter.

On The Lighter Side!

Did I Say That?

Police in Los Angeles had good luck with a robbery suspect who just couldn't control himself during a lineup. When detectives asked each man in the lineup to repeat the words, "Give me all your money or I'll shoot," the man shouted, "That's not what I said!"

Corpus Canada

Who Are We?

We began as a support group for married Catholic priests, their wives and friends, seeking acceptance by the hierarchy of an optional married priesthood.

We have become a faith community of men and women empowered by our baptism in Jesus' Spirit to reach out to others in their need as Jesus did.

Where Are We Going?

This faith community is dedicated to:

- Renewal of ministry (service) in the Church.
- Promotion of a wholesome view of sexuality.
- Justice for all based on Gospel values in matters related to the governance of the Catholic Church.

Our message is a healing one and is directed to everyone, but especially to the marginalized in the Church. It is our hope to reach them through the creation of local faith communities.

How Do We Get There?

Through a collegial approach based on consensus reached through discernment in the Spirit, we share our gifts in small faith communities building Christ's body (CORPUS).

How Can I Join Or Show Support?

If you wish to join or renew your membership in Corpus Canada for the year 2000 (membership is open to all regardless of denominational affiliation), write to Jake Kutarna, Corpus Canada Treasurer, Box 176, Lumsden SK S0G 3C0. Enclose a cheque for \$50 (individual membership) or \$75 (family membership) payable to "Corpus Canada." Corpus Canada will donate \$25 of your membership fee to Xristos Community Society in your name, and Xristos will send you an official tax receipt. At the

request of Corpus Canada, Xristos Community Society distributes The Journal free of charge to the membership of Corpus Canada.

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