

The Journal



March - April 2001

Editorial

by Chris Diamond, Cobble Hill, BC



“I take for granted that the chief task of theologians and biblical scholars is to use the tools of their trade to seek meaning and truth... But they are not primarily defenders of past positions.” (R. Brown in “The Critical meaning of the Bible” p56)

Readers of the dialogue of Heinz Vogels, Arthur Menu, and François Brassard need to approach it with an open mind. We were all brought up on “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.” writ large on the dome of St. Peter’s in Rome “TU ES PETRUS ET SUPER HANC PETRAM...” pronounced without any hesitation as the very words of Jesus to Simon near Caesarea Philippi, and recorded in Mt 16:18.

Unless you have kept up on scripture study, you may be surprised to learn that the most respected Roman Catholic scripture scholars today do not think these are the very words of Jesus. At best, they say that these words are from the risen exalted Jesus and put into the mouth of Jesus during his ministry by the author of Mt. This translation of Mt’s Greek has been used to support a particular view of papal primacy. It has been used (abused?) very effectively so that it is very difficult for us to hear any other translation of this text. Today, we know that we will never know the very words of Jesus, an uncertainty that we just have to live with. We believe that the Spirit of Jesus is with the whole christian community in so far as it remains true to God’s Way.

Mt.’s text reads “You are Petros, and on this petra I will build my ekklesia.” The key words are Petros, this petra, and ekklesia. Petros is not the masculine form of petra. The best Greek lexicon, Liddell

and Scott, says that petros has to be distinguished from petra. They signify two distinct things, one a single stone and the other a shelf of rock. Whatever ‘this petra’ is, it is not Petros. Nor is it the accepted practice of biblical scholars to revert to Aramaic dialects to determine the meaning of Greek words or puns.

There is no difficulty with the notion that Jesus may have given Simon the name Petros. The difficulty lies in equating Petros with the idea that Simon is therefore a solid shelf of rock suitable for building on. Jesus is the rock. Mt’s gospel does show, however, that Simon did receive a special revelation from God. There is no doubt either that Simon Peter holds a prominent place in the christian scriptures and also that, in subsequent church history, the church in Rome became the principal church of Christendom.

Ekklesia in Mt, however, is not so easy. Most of the time in the christian scriptures, ekklesia means the local group of disciples, and occasionally it means all of them as a whole. In Mt 16:18, it is impossible to determine which meaning it has. In Mt 18:17, it clearly means the local gathering. Note that it is not exegetical to borrow its meaning from some other writer and then apply it to Mt. There is nothing in Mt to show that Jesus during his ministry had foresight of a world-wide ekklesia.

After the death of Jesus, the group of disciples saw themselves as one, and they used words such as the Way, koinonia, and ekklesia to describe themselves. From this initial unity there developed a diversity of groups and the language to describe them. Ekklesia became the term used to distinguish a local group of christians from a synagogue of Jews and the whole christian community from others. The scriptures written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit reflect that.

Corpus Canada

A Corpus Gathering: Building Small Faith Communities

Date: September 14 - 16, 2001

Place: Bragg Creek, Alberta (20 km west of Calgary in the foothills of the rocky mountains)

Chuck McLellan and Natalie Manzer are co-chairing the organizing of the National Corpus Canada Conference.

The May/June issue of The Journal will contain an insert detailing the Registration, Accommodation, Transportation, and the Costs of the Conference. All are welcome to join Corpus Canada as we explore ways of building local faith communities.

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March - April 2001
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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

Send your membership fees to Corpus Canada Treasurer,
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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>

FOCUS TOPIC

for the May - June 2001 Issue

Ministry: Tell Your Story

Articles for this issue are due by May 15.

On The Lighter Side!

One Sunday morning, the pastor noticed little Alex was staring up at the large plaque that hung in the foyer of the church. The plaque was covered with names, and small Canadian flags were mounted on either side of it.

The seven-year old had been staring at the plaque for some time, so the pastor walked up, stood beside the boy, and said quietly, "Good morning Alex." "Good morning," replied the young man, still focused on the plaque. "Pastor Smith, what is this?" Alex asked. "Well, son, it's a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the service."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque. Little Alex's voice was barely audible when he asked, "Which service, the 9:00 or the 11:00?"

Overseer in the New Testament

by Dr. Michael Zarb, Cobble Hill, BC



For our idea of 'office' the Greek language has a wealth of terms. In the New Testament the Greek terms 'archê' (precedence, being at the head, ruling) and 'archôn' (ruler) are used for Jewish and Gentile authorities, demonic powers and for Christ (Col. 1.18). 'timê' (position of dignity) is used only once (Heb. 5.4) of Christ's official dignity as high priest. 'telos' (complete power of office) is nowhere found in

the New Testament. The early Christians used the common terms of the time to express the tasks of the various functionaries in their communities. Thus for the task of service, help or assistance they employed *diakonia*, *diakonos*, *diakoneô* and for the task of supervision they used the terms, *episkopê*, *episkopos* and the verb *episkopeô*. The primary and main sense of these words is that of 'looking upon, observing, inspecting' which then acquires the connotation of 'visitation' whether benevolent or punitive. So *episkopos* could be used of people in charge whether they were a god, an army general, a city official or a student's tutor. It is in this general use that *episkopos* and the related terms are employed in the New Testament. They did not yet have the specific meanings the modern terms, derived from them, have today.

Paul

In the Pauline letters community order is shown to be in a fluid state, functions are defined in terms of gifts, 'charisms' of the Spirit rather than offices and it is expressed in the natural and familiar terms for the particular functions in use at the time. The terms and functions overlapped, one person could perform more than one function. Synonymous terms for the same functions were used by Paul, thus the '*episkopoi*' i.e. overseers, those in charge were also called '*proistamenoî*' (those in front, leaders, - Rom 12:8 and 1 Thess 5:12) or '*kubernêseis*' (leadership, guidance, - 1Cor 12:28). The Christian groups had their local community projects to undertake, which necessitated the involvement of those who were capable to organize i.e. overseers and those willing to help in carrying them out, the servers, assistants.

Phil. 1:1, "Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. To all the holy ones in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the overseers and servers." In this salutation Paul addresses all the members of the Philippian community as 'holy ones' or 'saints' in the fundamental sense of '*hagios*' i.e. set apart 'in Christ' which became a common designation for the Christians (cf. also 4:21). Yet he appends two groups of functionaries, '*episkopoi*', i.e. overseers, superintendents and '*diakonoi*' i.e. servers, ministers*. This is done as a special mention, at the outset, of those who were instrumental in procuring the pecuniary contribution of the Philippian community to Paul,

and at the end, in 4:10-20, he makes it a point to thank and praise the whole community for their gift sent to him by means of Epaphroditus (2:25). Note the plural '*episkopoi*', obviously not one leader over others, so this addition amounts to Paul saying, "and those who were in charge, supervised, and those who carried out, assisted" i.e. in the collection. The recipients of the letter would be well aware of those involved in the collection project. Here there is no evidence of 'ecclesiastical offices or orders.'

Luke-Acts

Luke-Acts uses two words connected with this topic, '*episkopê*' (inspection, guardianship) and '*episkopoi*' (overseers, guardians)

In Luke 19:44 '*episkopê*' refers to the visitation / inspection of God while at Acts 1:20, in the sense of 'guardianship, overseership,' it is found in a quote of Ps 109:8 regarding Judas' position among the 'Twelve' taken over by another after his defection and death.

In Acts '*episkopoi*' is employed only in Paul's farewell speech to the elders of Ephesus, "Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopoi*), to shepherd the assembly of God that he obtained with the blood of his own (i.e. son)." (20:28) In Luke's mind the elders are all overseers in charge of the community; 'overseers', here, does not carry the force of title of office especially since it is so closely connected to and overwhelmed by the vocabulary expressing the metaphor of the shepherd (watch, flock, shepherd). This is preacher's exhortative parlance not the designation of official titles. From the lack of a fuller use of the term, - only this instance, - one may conclude that '*episkopos*' was not yet established as an ecclesiastical title in the communities comprising the early readership or audience of the author of Acts and that neither does the author want to depict the existence of 'bishops', in the modern sense, in the early times of the Christian movement.

The Pastorals (pseudonymous late writings)

In the Pastorals we find a different atmosphere from that of the genuine Paulines. In these writings, even though they deal with the qualities and characteristics of functionaries in the communities, the Holy Spirit is not said to bestow upon the members any functional gifts for the building up of the community. On the contrary these letters stipulate what desirable and required qualities the officials should possess. The officials are not the choice of the Holy Spirit but are appointed and installed through the laying on of hands (1 Tim 5:22). In 1 Tim 4:14 the gifts (*charismata*) are given through the prophetic utterance at the laying on of hands by the elders. The Spirit does not come into the picture at all; again in 2 Tim 1:6 the gift of God within Timothy was given through the laying on of the author's hands. On the other hand the 'charisms' of the time of Paul were considered bestowed by the Spirit without any dependence on the laying

on of anybody's hands; in fact, 'the laying on of hands' does not figure at all in the genuine Paulines. The ritual is an import from and imitation of the same Jewish custom when many Christian communities adopted and adapted elements of the Jewish system of leadership around the end of the first century.

In 1Tim 3 we find both *episkopê* and *episkopos*. After providing guidance relating to community members (ch.2), the writer starts his instructions regarding the leaders by quoting a saying applicable to all 'overseership' in human life, "The saying is sure: whoever aspires to overseership (*episkopê*) desires a noble task." (3:1) Then he goes on to elaborate on the qualities of the overseers (3:2-7) and of the assistants (3:8-13)*. Little is said of their duties but the whole stress is laid on the character of the functionaries.

1Tim. 3:2 "Now an overseer (*episkopos*) must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, [3] not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. [4] He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way-- [5] for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's assembly? [6] He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. [7] Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil."

That 'overseer' (v.2) is in the singular does not necessarily mean that there was only one in the community but it more probably denotes the singular of definition, as a type (similar to our saying, 'the/a Christian is...'). No definition of his duties is given, but the following seem to be implied: a) some management involving discipline, cf. the analogy of the family (vv.4-5); b) teaching (v.2); c) control of finances, cf. 'not a lover of money', otherwise the community purse would be in jeopardy (v.3); and d) representative of the community to Christians elsewhere cf. 'hospitable' (v.2) and to outsiders, cf. 'well thought of by outsiders' (v.7).

These qualifications form guidance for scrutinizing the candidates who desire the position. They are partly the ordinary moral qualities expected and respected in any member of the community and partly those required for his special standing in the community.

In the writing to Titus, while discussing the appointment and qualities of elders, the author, abruptly switches over to 'overseer' (*episkopos*) in the singular (as a type cf. 1Tim3:2 above) indicating thereby that he refers to identical functionaries.

Tit 1:5 "This is why I left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you, [6] if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of being profligate or insubordinate. [7] For an overseer (*episkopos*), as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, [8] but hospitable, a lover of goodness, master of himself, upright, holy, and self-controlled; [9] he must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it." Many of these qualities parallel those in 1Tim 3. Note

that the marital status of these candidates, while not explicitly stated as necessary requirement, it certainly is of utmost significance, ability in domestic rule is the test for the candidate's ability to manage the congregation - so much for the Roman Catholic celibacy rule concerning priests!

1 Peter (a late writing)

In 1 Peter we have *episkopê*, *episkopos* and the verb *episkopeô*. In 2:12 *episkopê* refers to God's day of visitation / inspection - judgment. In 2:25 by *episkopos* God or Christ is meant, 'but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian (*episkopos*) of your souls.' The passage more pertinent to our topic is 5:2ff where the author exhorts the elders of the community, [2]"to tend (shepherd) the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight (*episkopountes* - omitted in some MSS), not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it-- not for sordid gain but eagerly. [3] Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. [4] And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away."

In this writing 'oversight' is connected with the metaphor of 'shepherding' both regarding God or Christ in 2:25 and, if in 5:2 the reading is original, the responsibility of the leaders of the community. It is possible that under the influence of 2:25 a copyist added the idea of oversight to that of shepherding. The latter instance (5:2) parallels Acts 20:28, in both, the concept refers to the elders.

The term shepherd figuratively used for the leader was very common in antiquity even since Babylonian times when kings were sometimes called 'shepherds'. In the New Testament we also find 'shepherd' (*poimên*) denoting a task as a gift of God in Eph. 4:11 "The gifts he gave were that some would be envoys, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers, ..." In the Gospel of John ch.10 through several metaphors Jesus is represented as the Good Shepherd. Then in ch. 21, Jesus, still being the owner of the flock enjoins Simon Peter to feed his lambs and sheep after rehabilitating him among his disciples by insisting Peter avows his love for him (Jesus) three times to counter the three denials of 18:17,25,27, then tells him, "Follow me" and Peter literally begins to follow him. Thus the author of ch.21 (a later addition), though he rehabilitates Peter, brings him back into Jesus' group and allows him to feed the flock. Yet in no way does he exalt him above the other disciples. He rather humiliates him by having Jesus force the avowal out of him, irk him (v.17) and even rebuke him (v.22). The disciple assigned preeminence in the Johannine community was the Beloved Disciple, whoever he/she was.

The wandering charismatic preachers of the Good News, i.e. envoys, prophets and teachers are never called *episkopoi*. The term is applied where there are settled local congregations and it seems to imply no distinction from the elder (*presbuteros*) including plurality in one place where none takes precedence. The Pastors clearly show that these elders were selected and appointed according

bestower of these qualities. Therefore no monarchical 'episcopate' in the modern sense can logically be inferred from these passages. Nor should the word *episkopos*, being a secular term, be translated in its New Testament occurrences by 'bishop' since this carries highly ecclesiastical connotations. Besides, for some people today the word 'bishop' carries too much excess baggage like mitres, gold brocade, bejeweled rings, palliums and gilded sticks - the luxurious trappings of power, totally alien to Jesus of Nazareth.

* **Note:** '*diakonoí*' (servers, assistants) will be discussed in a future article.



On The Lighter Side!

An exasperated mother, whose son was always getting into mischief, finally asked him, "How do you expect to get into Heaven?"

The boy thought it over and said, "Well, I'll just run in and out, and in and out, and keep slamming the door until St. Peter says, 'For Heaven's sake, Jimmy, come in or stay out!'"

The Petrine Ministry: A Dialogue on Mt 16:18-19 by François Brassard, Ladysmith, BC

Editorial Note:

After considerable deliberation, the editorial board of "The Journal" has decided to report a shortened version of a dialogue on the nature and scriptural foundations of the "petrine ministry" of the papacy. The dialogue was initiated by Dr. Heinz-J. Vogels, Ph.D (theology) of Alfter, Germany (author of *Celibacy - Gift or Law?* and member of the International Federation of Married Catholic Priests) who took issue with Arthur Menu's Theological Soapbox article in the Nov-Dec 2000 issue of "The Journal." The dialogue went on for six weeks, beginning on Jan. 28, 2001. It involved Dr. Vogels, Arthur Menu, François Brassard and, indirectly, Dr. Michael Zarb, Ph.D (Ancient Middle Eastern languages) who also wrote on the topic in the Aug '99 issue of "The Journal."

The dialogue in its entirety would more than fill an issue of "The Journal." The editorial board struggled with several questions: Could we devote this much space to a highly politicized ecumenical topic? Could we provide a radically shortened version that would be fair to all involved? Would this reporting really be of interest to our readers? On the other hand, are we not obliged in conscience to report a reader's honest, critical response to an article in "The Journal?" Obviously, the positive response to this last question won the day. Have we made the right decision? You be the judge. Your written comments would be appreciated.

From Heinz-J Vogels:

Only today was I able to read your issue of Nov-Dec 2000. Since correspondence is welcome, I would like to make some comments on Arthur Menu's Theological Soapbox, vol. 3/6, p.3-5. Even though I share his view that the Petrine ministry is broader than leadership and that there are many who do Petrine ministry in the church, I am under the impression that he overlooked some biblical references. First, but not essential to the topic, he overlooked Gal 1:19 where Paul says that James, the kinsman of Jesus, was in fact one "of the apostles." My Revised English Bible has: "Three years later (after

Paul's conversion) I did go up to Jerusalem to get to know Cephas, and I stayed two weeks with him. I saw none of the other apostles, except James, the Lord's brother." Therefore, you cannot say that the kinsman of Jesus, James, is "not to be identified with either of the two James belonging to the Twelve." And Cephas was the first authority Paul contacted!

Second: You can hardly say that "leadership was not the mission Jesus gave Peter." The words in John 21:16-18, three times repeated: "Tend my sheep," clearly bestow on Peter the authority to lead the flock, whether or not we like the image of being a sheep. And it is significant that this passage stems from the Johannine community, which had no elaborate structures, rather than from a Petrine community.

Third: If we turn to Mt 16:18ff, it seems to be hazardous to say that "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." What should we say of the parable of the Prodigal Son or the Merciful Father in Lk 15:11-32, which is unique to Luke? Should we not eliminate it as well, simply because it is unique to Luke? Furthermore, Peter is called Kephas, Rock, in three sources independent from one another: Mt (16:18), John (1:42) and Paul (Gal 1:19 and 1 Cor 1:12, etc.). Does this not reflect a common understanding of Peter in the Church? - As to "the sense in which he can be said to have a successor," I would point out that in Mt 16:18 Jesus speaks in the future tense: "I shall build my Church on this rock," not in the present tense. In view of that, is there not a sense of a successorship intended? The same applies to the prophecy: "The gates of Hades will not prevail against it". Shall the rock disappear in history, which would be equivalent to a victory of Hades or Death? If Paul "opposed Peter to his face" in Antioch (Gal 2:11), he did so because of the overwhelming authority Peter had in this and all communities. What he did and said was seen as normative for others, so Paul had to correct him to preserve the "truth of the Gospel." As to the keys of the kingdom, one cannot dismiss as irrelevant the only parallel in the Old Testament, that is Is 22:22: "I shall place the key of David's palace on his shoulder," which is explained in the preceding verse as "I shall equip him with your

sash of office and invest him with your authority.” The Greek text has *oikonomia*, which is administration. It is true that the other apostles received similar authority as Peter (Mt 18:18 for loosing and binding, and John 20:22f for forgiving sins), but it is not possible to deny his special authority over “my church” as a whole in Mt 16 or on “my sheep” in John 21. So leadership, in my understanding, was indeed the mission given by Jesus to Peter.

The question is rather how to interpret this leadership. I agree, as most non-Catholic denominations and many Catholic theologians do, and even as John Paul II indicates in “*Ut Unum Sint*” (94ff), that the right interpretation has not yet been found! Vatican Council II stated in the Decree “*Unitatis Redintegratio*” (UR 14) that the role of the Roman See in the first millennium was the role of “a (mere) moderator with whom all agreed when dissensions on faith or discipline arose among them.” So he has the last word in matters of faith or discipline, but not of jurisdictional administration over the whole church. Perhaps we should return to the first millennium! This is what bishop Walter Kasper, now a Cardinal, said in earlier publications edited together with Card. Ratzinger!

The “Synod” of married priests and laypersons that took place after the Atlanta Congress of the International Federation in 1999, where François Brassard, Jack Shea and Jim Noonan from Canada took part, dealt with this question of Petrine authority. If I may quote from this document, I bring home to you what your fellow theologians agreed to.

“A first step in reforming the Church will be the partial renunciation of the papal claim of the ‘Primacy of Jurisdiction’ over the whole Church of Christ, particularly, the recent custom of appointing all bishops.”

Conclusion: If we maintain the mainstream view on the biblical sources of the Petrine ministry, there is more realistic hope for a change in the pope’s exercise of this ministry than if we challenge the foundation of his leadership in the will of Jesus.

From Arthur Menu: A Response To Heinz Vogels

I welcome Heinz Vogels’ critical response to my Theological Soapbox article in the November-December issue of *The Journal*. The private dialogue between him and me that ensued via e-mail explored in greater depth some of the issues raised in my article. Rather than repeat or even summarize everything I said in the dialogue, I will try to state in general terms where I differ from Heinz regarding Peter’s role in the Church.

Everyone has the moral authority to teach what they know. Peter had the moral authority to teach what he knew about Jesus and about what Jesus taught. Indeed, it is possible that no one else knew as much about Jesus and his teaching as Peter, and, hence, it is possible that no one possessed as much moral authority to teach about Jesus as Peter.

Only someone who holds the office of legislator of doctrine has the juridical authority to legislate a teaching, that is, juridically impose and enforce the teaching within the community.

I contend that Peter, notwithstanding all the influence and moral leadership he exercised in the Church, did not hold the office of legislator of doctrine. Heinz Vogels, as I understand him, does. That is the crux of our disagreement.

This disagreement can be broken down into two main points.

(1) I hold that Jesus gave Peter and the rest of the Twelve Apostles the mission of bearing witness to him and his message, at first to Jews alone (Matthew 10:5-6) and then to the whole world (Matthew 28:19). I hold that Jesus gave Peter the special mission of strengthening and encouraging the disciples in the difficult times that followed Jesus’ death (Luke 22:31). I do not believe that Jesus gave Peter or the Twelve legislative authority over the whole Church in matters of faith or morals. Heinz, as I understand him, agrees with me about Jesus’ giving the Twelve the mission of bearing witness. In opposition to me, he holds that Jesus also gave Peter legislative authority over the whole Church in matters of faith and morals.

(2) I hold that the “office” of membership in the Twelve was not a permanent office in the Church to be filled by successors when the original members of the Twelve died. Heinz Vogels holds that membership in the Twelve was a permanent office and that bishops are successors in that office. I do not hold that the special mission Jesus gave Peter constituted a permanent office in the Church to be filled by successors. Heinz, on the other hand, holds that Jesus installed Peter in a permanent office the successors to which are the popes of the Roman Catholic Church.

With regard to (1) let me make a logical point. From the premise, (a) the Church obeys person X, one cannot validly deduce the conclusion, (c) Jesus gave person X authority over the Church. In order to make this inference valid, one must adduce a second premise, (b) the Church obeys person X because the Church believes that Jesus gave person X authority over the Church. It seems to me that Heinz Vogels spends much effort showing how Peter or the Twelve wielded authority in the early Church. But no matter how much authority they wielded, it would not prove that Jesus gave them such authority, unless Heinz Vogels also shows that the Church believed that Jesus gave that authority to Peter or the Twelve.

It is an assumption easily made, but false, that the early Church would not have obeyed Peter or the Twelve unless the Church believed that Jesus gave Peter or the Twelve authority over the Church. It was an entirely human, natural and instinctive response of the disciples in the tumultuous days after the death and resurrection of Jesus to look to Peter and the Twelve for leadership. The disciples would have done so whether or not Jesus had given Peter or the Twelve this authority. The simple fact of the Twelve’s close association with Jesus would have been enough to win them this role. It took no special commissioning by Jesus for the Twelve to be “elected by acclamation,” as it were, to the position of leadership.

But the Twelve recognized that taking on the governance of the community of disciples interfered with the mission of bearing witness to the whole world that Jesus gave them, and they shed that leadership role quickly. We see this when they hand over to the Seven the distributing of food to the widows of the community (Acts 6:1-7). We see it when doctrinal matters are decided by a council of apostles and elders chaired by James, the kinsman of Jesus and not one of the Twelve (Acts 15). (For the reasons that this James should not be counted among the Twelve see Raymond Brown's article "The Twelve and the Apostolate" in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 81:141.) We see it finally in the lack of any trustworthy historical record that any of the Twelve governed any Christian community anywhere.

In fact, the role of missionary is not compatible with the role of governor of a community. A missionary goes from place to place founding churches, a governor resides in the community he governs. Heinz refers to the authority that Paul exercised over the churches he founded. But when we read the letters to the Corinthians, we find Paul writing, not as a governor would, giving directions he expected would be obeyed without question, but pleading, cajoling, arguing, threatening, and persuading the community to do as he was asking them to. If 1 Corinthians 1:12 and 2 Corinthians 10:10 are any indication, Paul did not rule the church at Corinth. (I recommend the article by Dr. Michael Zarb in the January-February 2001 issue of *The Journal* on the charismatic leadership of the Pauline churches.)

Peter also worked as a missionary as we see from his travels in Acts, Paul's mention of him as living in Antioch, and his martyrdom in Rome. If Peter had wanted to be the pope, he would have stayed in Jerusalem, the mother church, and chaired the council of elders (being missionaries, the apostles eventually left Jerusalem and no longer participated in the council). According to Acts, this council was the only body whose rulings were authoritative for the whole Church.

I turn now to (2) above, the question of whether membership in the Twelve constituted a permanent office in the Church, and whether Jesus installed Peter in a permanent office. Heinz cites the election of Matthias as successor of Judas as a reason for seeing membership in the Twelve as a permanent office. Judas Iscariot had "turned aside from this ministry and apostleship" (Acts 1:24) and, according to Peter's interpretation of Scripture (Acts 1:20), had to be replaced. However, as the quoting of Psalm 69:25, "Let his habitation become desolate," shows, this interpretation applied to Judas alone, and is not to be taken as establishing a regular succession to membership in the Twelve.

In addition we must remember that membership in the Twelve had eschatological implications. At the last supper Jesus said, "You are the Twelve who have continued with me in my trials; as my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:28). In order for the Twelve to fulfil their eschatological role, which Judas had forfeited, it was

necessary for him to be replaced. However, once the number was restored to twelve, there would be no more successors appointed, as we can infer from Acts' not mentioning that anyone replaced James, the brother of John, among the Twelve, after James was killed by Herod (Acts 12:2).

Heinz Vogels' argument from Scripture for the view that Jesus appointed Peter to a permanent office rests primarily on his interpretation of Matthew 16:18-19. This passage has three parts:

- (A) And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it.
- (B) I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven,
- (C) and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Biblical scholarship has taught us when the Gospel writers combine sayings of Jesus in a continuous narrative we are not to assume that they were so connected when Jesus himself spoke them. It is possible that (A), (B) and (C) are independent sayings of Jesus that Matthew has combined in this passage in pursuit of his theological agenda.

With that in mind, I agree that (A), with its focus on the name "Peter," was addressed to Peter individually. I contend, on the basis of parallels at Matthew 18:18 and John 20:23 in which Jesus conferred the same thing upon the community of disciples, that (C) was addressed to the whole Church and not to Peter individually.

Because (B) and (C) are both couched in juridical language and are parallel in content, I contend that the combination (B)-(C) should be taken as an example of linguistic parallelism, common in the Hebrew Scriptures and not surprising in the mouth of Jesus, or in Matthew, the most Jewish of the Gospels. Matthew may have elaborated his statement of (C) in this instance by borrowing and modifying Isaiah 22:22 ("I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open"). More than in the other Gospels, Matthew's Jesus speaks in the language of the Hebrew Scriptures.

If (B) and (C) are parallel in this way, then (B) would also be addressed to the whole Church and not to Peter individually.

Does Matthew want the reader to think that Jesus addressed these words to Peter as an individual? Not necessarily. Matthew clearly wants to enhance the status of Peter, but this purpose is accomplished to some extent if we regard (B) and (C) as addressed to Peter in his role as representative of the Church rather than to him as an individual.

But, for the sake of argument, let us suppose, as Vogels contends, that (B) was addressed to Peter individually. Does (B) install Peter in a permanent office?

Heinz Vogels' argument that it does rests on Matthew's allusion to

Isaiah 22:22 in which Isaiah prophesies that Shebna is to be replaced as royal steward by Eliakim. Isaiah adds, "And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." Here Isaiah describes either a customary privilege of the office of steward or a special privilege over and above the privileges customarily attached to the office. In either case the office of steward already exists; the conferral of the privilege on Eliakim does not create the office. If the office of royal steward did not already exist, one can imagine a person being appointed to exercise this privilege as a personal prerogative rather than as the holder of a permanent office.

Heinz Vogels would agree, I think, that Jesus had not established a pope-like office prior to speaking these words to Peter. Therefore, even if one takes (B) as addressed to Peter as an individual (which I do not) and accepts that (B) alludes to Isaiah 22:22, it is possible to interpret (B) as conferring a personal prerogative on Peter without creating a permanent office.

In conclusion, my Biblical interpretation of the Petrine texts has been greatly influenced by my extensive experience working in Protestant churches and with Protestant Christians. I have experienced that authentic Christianity can be found in churches that do not accept the pope as legislator of doctrine. Both Heinz and I agree that the papacy must change to accommodate ecumenism, but I think the change must be more radical than Heinz believes. It is inconceivable to me that Protestant churches would surrender their freedom from absolute papal rule in faith, morals and church discipline, for which the blood of Protestant martyrs was shed, and which is the *raison d'être* for Protestantism itself.

From François Brassard:

In a recent meeting, Michael Zarb and I discussed the petrine ministry dialogue between essentially Arthur Menu and Heinz Vogels. He is not interested in entering this discussion; he stands firmly by his exegesis and sees no convincing reason to change it. However, I am interested in this discussion, and I would like to pass on to you a number of comments that Michael made and add a few of my own. However, before doing so, I would like to say that I agree wholeheartedly with all of Arthur Menu's remarks above with the exception of his interpretation of Mt 16:18,19. Also, I am in total agreement with Heinz Vogels' main purpose behind this discussion, namely, the reformation of the Petrine ministry.

First of all, I want to pass on to you a written comment that Michael Zarb sent to me after our meeting:

"Heinz is working on the assumption that these sayings come from Jesus; this is not my assumption. My fundamental assumption is the text, i.e. that the author is saying that these are the words of Jesus; there is no way of demonstrating that these are the actual words of Jesus; the Jesus Seminar rejects the authenticity of about 90% of the known reported sayings and with good reason.

As far as I am concerned, I would require proof of the reliability of these sayings as the 'ipsissima verba Jesu;' and proof that the authors are just reporters and not authors in their own right, which, as a result of my studies, I have rejected some time ago and cannot accept any more. Each

evangelist is an author in his own right, has his own agenda, own purpose for writing, own christology, own ecclesiology, own theology and, hence, each saying of Jesus has to be taken within the context of these individual parameters. Therefore, the Matthean 'rock' passage has to be understood in the context of Mt, not of any other book or mixture of books and that is, I think, what I did in my article; I kept to Matthew's understanding of the passage."

1- When Heinz Vogels counters Michael's argument based on the singularity of the Matthean text, Heinz points to other texts found only in one gospel (e.g. Luke's prodigal son story in Ch.15) and he questions whether that negates their validity. Michael responds: "No, not necessarily, though it raises problems concerning sources." However, he continued, Heinz' argument indicates that he has misunderstood what is meant by the "singularity of the Matthean text (16)." In fact, there are three independent reports of the gathering of Jesus and the disciples at Caesaria Philippi: Mark, Matthew and Luke, each one using the "Q" document. But only Matthew adds in v.16 "the Son of the living God," and then adds vv.17-19. As Matthew follows Mark historically, that immediately makes the additions suspect: there is no proof that these words came out of the mouths of Peter and Jesus (respectively). When one adds to this that current scholarship dates Matthew in the 80's, it becomes clear that the Matthean author is addressing the faith concerns (i.e. the authority of Jesus) of his community in the historical context of the 80's, especially persecutions. Furthermore, Michael Zarb writes: "One has to explain why Mark and Luke expunged such an important saying from their narrative, especially Luke who has Peter as his hero in Acts," [if you choose to prefer a single documentary source which has additions not found in other sources].

2- Heinz bolsters support for his interpretation of Mt 16:18 by referring to:

A: Galatians 1-2. Heinz writes: "The apostle Paul here refers to the name and the position of Peter, long before the Gospel of Matthew was written. Kephias is clearly a translation of Peter and vice-versa. We do not need a whole glossary to see that, especially since Jn 1:42 gives the explicit translation: "Kephias, that is Peter, (the rock)." If Paul, three years after his "conversion" in 35, goes to the city of Jerusalem "to see Kephias (only Kephias!), and I stayed with him a fortnight" (Gal 1:18), does this not reflect the eminent position of Peter in the original community of Jerusalem? Does it not reflect the effect, if not the wording, of Mt 16:18? And if, 14 years later, Paul goes once again to Jerusalem to submit the gospel he preaches to the pillars of the community (Gal 2:1-2) "to make sure that I had not run and was running in vain," does this not show the eminent position of those pillars? If the validity of his preaching depends on the agreement of those of repute in Jerusalem - and again Peter is named in the first place (Gal 2:7-8) - then they have some sort of a supervision over the whole church. Does this not reflect Mt 16:18? If Kephias, again, in Gal 2:11 must be won over to the position of Paul as regards taking meals with pagans (Greek christians) as well as the question of the whole Jewish

Law, why should this have been necessary, if Peter had not a leading position for the whole church, outside of Jerusalem, i.e. in Antioch? All this goes back to the years 35 and 14 years later (49, the time of the Apostles' Council), long before Matthew's Gospel."

In response, I agree 1) that Kephas is the correct Aramaic translation of Peter; 2) that (contrary to some exegetes) this Kephas and this Peter are one and the same person; 3) that Peter is the nickname that Jesus gave to Simon, son of John (a phenomenon not unique to Peter: cf. Mk 3:17); 4) that the Galatian and Mathaeian (Mt 16) texts that you cite do indicate that Peter has an important leadership role. However, I do not agree that these texts prove that Peter had a pre-eminent role of "supervision over the whole church." Indeed, Gal 2:9 puts James, the brother of Jesus, first, followed by Peter and John. Furthermore, the texts seem to imply that Peter exercised a very important teaching role, consistent with his calling as an apostle: to bear witness to the life/teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, just like the other 11 and Paul himself, a call that all Christians of every generation are called to. Galatians 1:18 makes that clear: three years after his conversion - a time spent in prayer and reflection - Paul rightly goes to see Peter "to obtain information." He also visits another apostle, James, the brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19), but the text doesn't say why. One might infer that it was out of deference to James' (not Peter's) supervisory leadership of the council of elders of the mother church of Jerusalem. Such an inference is credible, I suggest, based on Acts 15:2,6,19; 21:18. Interestingly enough, James appears in these texts to exercise the supervisory role of a moderator of a consensus driven council of elders where apostles speak to the question as teachers. Though Peter and Paul are the obvious heroes of the author of Acts, they are portrayed as apostles and not, like James, as supervisory leaders.

B: Jn 21:15-24: Heinz refers to the resurrected Jesus' triple command to Peter "to tend my sheep" as a further indication of a special Christ given Petrine authority. In response I would say that the historical accuracy of the entire chapter (21) is very weak, since all scholars agree that ch.21 is a much later editorial addition by someone in the Johannine community. Others think that this Christ-like compassionate rehabilitation of Peter is a backhanded effort at compromise designed to resolve considerable differences (e.g. gnostic beliefs, structural organization) that existed at the time between the Johannine and Petrine communities. I say backhanded, because the editorial writer is reminding his readers of Peter's triple denial of Jesus (foretold by Jesus in Jn 13:38 and accomplished by Peter in Jn 18:16-17, 25-27), morally speaking a far cry from the leader of the Johannine community to whom, some claimed, Jesus had granted 'immortality.' "What's it to you, if I want him to live until I come?" Jn 21:22.

3- Heinz and Arthur as well, your interpretation of Mt 16:18-19 is unacceptable to me for the following reasons:

A: Your position presumes that the author of Matthew portrays Peter in a favourable, even privileged light in Mt 16:16-19. However, that interpretation does not coincide with Matthew's consistently negative view or presentation of Peter throughout his Gospel. An analysis of every Petrine reference in Matthew reveals a negative or, at best, neutral view of Peter. This is manifest even in ch. 16, four verses after the "keys of the kingdom" verse: "Jesus turned around and said to Peter, 'Get away from me, Satan! you are a stumbling rock [a 'scandalon,' not a 'petros'] in my way, because these thoughts of yours don't come from

God, but from man.'" v 23. In ch. 17:4 Peter is portrayed in a manner indicating that he doesn't understand the significance of the Transfiguration: Peter wants to set up a new tent/temple to replace the one in Jerusalem; whereas, by contrast, the Matthaean community understands it to mean that: by the revelation of the Father, Jesus' divine credibility and authority is the true foundation stone upon which the church is built. This is a reiteration of the Father's confirmation of Jesus at his baptism: "This is my own dear Son with whom I am pleased" Mt 3:17.

B: Arthur writes: "The problem I have with this is that the Matthaean text is undoubtedly based on an Aramaic text (there are obvious semiticisms in the Greek text), and in Aramaic the statement would be "You are 'kepha' and upon this 'kepha' I will build..." (see "Peter in the New Testament," ed. by Raymond Brown et al., Augsburg/Paulist, 1973, p.91). The two 'kepha' are exactly the same word and therefore the 'this' in "this 'kepha'" must refer back to the 'kepha' who is Peter."

In response, it should be pointed out that present scholarship would no longer be bold enough to affirm that the Greek Matthaean text is "undoubtedly" based on an Aramaic text. Most Aramaic scholars today, including specialists like J.A. Fitzmeyer, no longer accept Aramaic retro-translation as reliable or credible, because there is no solid database as yet of 1st century Palestinian Aramaic to draw from. And I quote from Michael Zarb: "Arguments for the historicity of the words of Jesus through retranslation of the Greek text into Aramaic are not valid in any way primarily for the reason that the language of Jesus is not known, that is, a) we do not have literature or texts from that period and from that region, b) the few pieces of text that possibly (dating and provenance debated) come from the area are not enough to establish an adequate glossary, lexicon or dictionary of the language let alone deep knowledge of the idiomatic expressions used by the local speakers. Therefore, guesses as to how Jesus may have expressed the Greek text are just that, futile guesses."

Arthur and Heinz rebut quite plausibly the above argument by stating that a retranslation into Aramaic that is restricted solely to Mt 16:18 is valid: "you are Kephas and upon this Kephas I will build my community." Perhaps, but the use of the Aramaic is still a presupposition, not the actual Greek text. Besides, though I admit that Kephas is a good Aramaic translation of 'petros' (a loose rock, one that could be used as a building rock), it is not so of 'petra' (a shelf of rock or rock foundation); in fact, we don't know what the Aramaic word for 'petra' would have been at the time of Jesus. And even if the text had been originally in Aramaic, as you say, shouldn't the Matthaean author have translated it into Greek as: "you are 'petros' and upon this 'petros' I will build my community." Instead, the author uses 'petros' (masculine singular) and 'petra' (feminine singular), two different words with two different meanings. Furthermore, your position doesn't respond to the other arguments indicated below.

C: Arthur writes: "The other problem I have is with Michael's interpreting Mt 16:19b,c as a future perfect tense "will have been bound/loosed." As Michael himself states, this is an ambiguous

phrase in Greek. It can be interpreted as a future perfect or as a past participle (“will be bound/loosed”). Michael chooses the future perfect interpretation, not on exegetical grounds, but on theological grounds. The past participle interpretation “turns theology upside down,” to quote Michael’s Journal article of August 1999, because it makes “the human the decider and God the lackey, the follower.”

It is incorrect to say that Michael Zarb’s interpretation of Mt 16:19b,c is not based on exegetical grounds, but only on theological grounds.

1- He chooses the future perfect tense because it is the initial, classical, traditional Greek form of the verb. The past participle interpretation is not traditional. While it is true that the author of Matthew rarely uses this Greek verb form in his Gospel, it is that very rarity that argues well in favour of the opinion that he consciously intended to use it in accordance with its traditional understanding as a future perfect.

2- This grammatical form, in conjunction with Michael Zarb’s translation of ‘petros’ and ‘petra’ (v.18 - the actual Greek terms in the manuscripts), is in literary conformity with the basic theological message of Matthew in this chapter, as well as in ch 17, indeed, in the entire Gospel, namely, that the faith and life (halakah) of the Matthaean community is based on the divine authority of the risen Christ as revealed by Jesus’ Father in heaven (through the mouth of Simon, son of John, in ch.16, through the Transfiguration experience in ch.17, and through the Father’s confirmation of Jesus at his baptism in Mt 3:17). It is this consistent Matthaean theology that provides solidity for Michael Zarb’s choice of ‘petros’ (building stone=Peter) and ‘petra’ (foundation rock) with the antecedent of the latter referring not to Peter (v.18), but rather to the revelation of the Father (v.17). Thus, Peter and the other apostles whom Peter represents are truly ‘rocks’ who, by their Spirit driven apostolic witness, will help build the risen Jesus’ ‘chaburah’ (community) on the rock solid foundation of the Father’s revelation. These exegetical remarks are also supported by cosmological and theological considerations:

a) Early christian cosmology believed that earth reflected the numinous world (heaven) and not vice-versa.
b) To question Michael Zarb’s interpretation of Mt 16:19b,c by confronting it with Jesus’ statement in Mt 18:19: “Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven,” is like comparing an elephant to a flea in terms of the importance of subject matter. Let me explain.

Mt16:19b,c is dealing with the faith and morality of the community, ‘halakah,’ whereas Mt 18:19 is dealing with prayer. The implicit condition that Arthur introduces with respect to prayer, namely, “that the thing prayed for must not be something for which it is wrong to ask,” can be easily understood and accepted in the case of prayer; however, such a condition applied to ‘halakah’ with your use of the past participle in Mt 16:19b,c is far too risky an option. In my opinion, it leaves too much room for doubt and error in judgement. On the other hand, the use of the future perfect tense in Mt 16:19b,c declares by its very nature that “the action in the second part is prior to that of the first part, meaning that the action in heaven is before the action on earth” (M. Zarb, Journal, 08/99, p.9). Thus, Michael Zarb’s theological argument in favour of using the future perfect interpretation in Mt 16:19b,c obviates the problem of “making the human the decider and God the lackey.” This concept is further confirmed by Matthew’s particular (singular) version of Jesus’ prayer, the “Our Father.” Only

Matthew has the phrase: “may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” Mt 6:10. True, it is not a future perfect verb form, but it is the same theological and cosmological sequence as the one found in the future perfect version of Mt 16:19b,c: God’s will is done in heaven first, and, hopefully, on earth afterwards.

Arthur Menu wisely rebuts that Michael’s translation says literally that whatever you (Peter or the Church) bind or loose on earth will have been bound or loosed in heaven. In other words, the halakah of Peter or the Church cannot be mistaken--a great argument for papal or Church authoritarianism. Instead of the pope or the Church saying, do what we tell you because God will always back us up, they can say, do what we tell you because whatever we tell you is what God has already decided.

Arthur’s comment raises a crucial political and theological question, one that everyone involved in this dialogue would agree is a very realistic danger, namely the abuse of power or authoritarianism. Frankly, I believe that either interpretation of Mt 16:19b,c lends itself to this possible abuse, if, as Arthur indicated, one interprets the text ‘literally’ or strictly. True, the Matthaean author couches the text in scriptural terms designed to give absolute authority to the assertion that God will reveal to the community without fail all that it needs to know in terms of ‘halakah.’ However, this is one more expression of Matthaean theology (described above) that the author, writing in the 80’s, feels that his community needs to hear to encourage them in the face of persecutions. Thus, an understanding of the historical context, namely, the need for absolute assurance that God is with them in all their decisions, allows a more flexible interpretation of the text when one’s faith is stronger and the need for certitude is not so great. Furthermore, the text is akin to those radical statements that Matthew puts into the mouth of Jesus (quite probably Jesus’ historical words), such as: “if your right eye is a source of sin, pluck it out,” etc. (Mt 5:27-30; 18:8-9). Should one take that literally? Of course not, because we know from many other NT passages that Jesus’ use of hyperbole was part of his dramatic oratorical style which, by the way, contributed to his authority and popularity. Applying this to Mt 16:19b,c and in accordance with the conditions that Arthur Menu placed on this text in his article, it is possible that the pope or a council or even the entire christian community could make an honest (perhaps even dishonest) mistake about slavery, about an earth centered universe, about the sexual perversity of women, about birth control, about the priestly ordination of women, and even about papal infallibility. Not to worry! God is with us always and will reveal the truth to us in good time.

D: Besides the other arguments that Michael Zarb presents on p. 10 of the August 1999 Journal, I would add that your interpretation (Heinz’ in total and Arthur’s in part) of Mt 16:18-19 was not put forward in any form until the 4th century C.E. Heinz counters this assertion by quoting Irenaeus (+202) in his book *Against the Heretics*: [we do this, I say,] “by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and

organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; as also [by pointing out] the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its pre-eminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolic tradition has been preserved continuously by those [faithful men] who exist everywhere.” (Adv. Haer. III, 3) Heinz comments on this text as follows: “Why should Irenaeus attribute this authority to Rome, if it were not for the role Peter (and surely Paul) played in the primitive church? Does this not reflect an effect of Mt 16:19?”

I do not accept this argument as probative, because:

1) Irenaeus is merely reflecting the pre-eminent religious prosperity of the christian community in the hey-day of the capital of the Roman Empire. Indeed, in the late 2nd century no other christian community compared to Rome in number and quality of bishops and faithful. This situation changed dramatically by the beginning of the 5th century in favour of Constantinople, the new capital of the Empire.

2) A little further in the text quoted above, Irenaeus refers to Mt 16:17, but he says nothing of vv. 18,19 which would have bolstered the authority of Peter, and which he should have used, in view of the fact that he wanted to use every argument in his arsenal in his battle “Against the Heretics” (Adv. Haer. III, 13).

Heinz also quotes Papias (early 2nd century) to explain why Mark doesn't have the additions of Matthew (Mt 16:17-19: “The commonly alleged reason why Mark has nothing about the prerogatives of Peter, is that he was ‘the interpreter (‘hermeneutes’) of Peter’s preaching,’ as Papias tells us. And that Peter, in his preaching, does not boast about himself concerning what Jesus had told him, is quite comprehensible after he had denied him three times.” In response, I point out that Papias is an unreliable source, because his remark quoted above did not come from his own authority, but rather from information that he was passing on from an unnamed source, and because modern exegetical studies have discredited his assertion (cf. Raymond Brown: *Peter in the New Testament*).

Finally, the great Father of the Church, St. Augustine, did not embrace Heinz’ interpretation of Mt 16:18,19.

Conclusion: In my view, Michael Zarb’s conclusion is valid: “Peter was certainly one of the pillars (Gal 2:9) of the nascent

Messianic movement, but he did not have the extraordinary powers that the Roman Catholic church claims for him and for his supposed successors.”

In summary, I do not believe that anyone can legitimately claim from New Testament exegetical analysis or from early scriptural interpretation of NT texts:

1- that Peter received from either the historical Jesus or the resurrected Christ a unique administrative authority to resolve questions of ‘halakah’ definitively for all christian communities; 2- and far less, that the successive leaders of the church of Rome would have inherited this presumed Petrine ministry.

This having been said, I do accept as historical fact that at some point in the fourth century C.E, leaders of the Roman church began to attribute to themselves, by right of succession, a presumed special petrine authority to resolve differences of ‘halakah’ among the different christian churches, and that, over time, for whatever reasons, true or untrue, this role was varyingly received by other christian communities.

That such an historical phenomenon should take place is neither bizarre nor extraordinary. Historically speaking, different types of leadership roles did develop and evolve in the different christian communities from apostolic times to the very present. Michael Zarb’s article in the Jan-Feb, 2001 issue of *The Journal* is a clear exegetical analysis of one such leadership role, namely, the Elder in the New Testament. And in this issue of *The Journal* he analyses the role of the ‘overseer’ in the New Testament. Such historical development is a natural socio-political outflow of any community large enough to need good order in order to survive and grow. It is because of the need for good order that I have no problem accepting that the leader of the christian church of Rome, the “pope,” has and should have a pre-eminent role to serve all other christian communities, namely, the moral authority to hold the communities together as one focussed clearly on the faith that christians have in the Person and Gospel of Jesus Christ, ‘halakah,’ as directed by the Ecumenical Councils of the Church. In essence, the “pope” serves the international christian community as a ‘conflict resolution facilitator’ with the express purpose of achieving a unity that liberates the creative Spirit (rather than a uniformity that destroys it). All this so that the “Kingdom of Godde” might develop on earth as it does in heaven.



Married Priests as Pastor Coordinators: A Dialogue

by *Jim Noonan, Stittsville, ON (Corpus-NCR)*



Recently there was a lively dialogue on this topic on the Corpus-N list on the internet, and the views expressed there by four members of Corpus Canada are reproduced here in a slightly abbreviated form. The topic is one that was treated briefly in the last issue (Jan-Feb) of The Journal in the article "Comments on

a 'New Model of Church'", and in an extensive story in Catholic New Times (Jan 28) entitled "Embracing a decades-old 'new model' of church".

Many of the views of the participants are based on personal experience, and are expressed in a lively personal tone. They coincide in tone and topic with an article published in the American publication *Around the Table* in September 1994. It was written by Dennis Becker, a pastor in the New Ulm, Minnesota diocese, and entitled "Pastor depicts church dilemma".

The dialogue on the net began with some questions and a challenge from Joan Lang, sparked by her reading the article in *Catholic New Times*:

I am intrigued by this article in today's issue of CNT, the most respected Catholic newspaper in Canada, and I would like to generate some dialogue with Canadian married priests about what this article means to them.

My questions are:

Is this an invitation to you to serve? It does not say that this new vision is for deacons, ordained or otherwise. What do you think? Is there someone in a location where a parish has closed, is closing, or about to close, willing to ask your Bishop if you might serve (if that is what you wish to do) and if so, to state under what conditions you would be willing to do so? Regardless, I would be interested in your thoughts.

Joan's challenge was taken up by Francois Brassard, who replied: I would like to propose a win-win strategy for introducing MP's into priestly leadership roles in parishes that have no resident priest, that are closing, or that are being consolidated. I have tried this strategy myself and was unsuccessful with it at the time, both because the lay parish council president was conservative ("we want a 'real' priest") and because I went about it the wrong way.

The *Catholic New Times* article provides greater credibility for this strategy. The article states: "Last month, the Archdiocese of Ottawa appointed a group of pastoral coordinators, lay people and women religious, to oversee administration of some parishes and, in cases where a priest is not available, perform marriages, baptisms and funerals."

The strategy would be to approach bishops who are seriously concerned about the priest shortage and who are open to listening to a possible solution, whether short term or long term. The first step is to show them how many bishops (especially in Quebec) are appointing lay pastoral coordinators to lessen the pressure of the priest shortage. The second step is to convince them to appoint lay married priests as parish pastoral coordinators. The presentation would include all the reasons why lay MP's would be ideal candidates for the position. A third step would provide a response to possible

objections.

1. The MP would be presented as a lay person, not as a priest. It presumes the MP in question has a rescript "reducing him to the lay state." The MP would do everything that any other lay parish pastoral coordinator does, including presiding at Communion Services.

2. If the bishop were to indicate that he couldn't appoint a lay MP because of the exclusionary conditions found in the rescript (that makes the MP less of a lay person than those non-ordained lay pastoral coordinators), one would need to respond authoritatively from Canon Law why such exclusions are invalid. If I'm not mistaken, Jim Harris of CITI had comments to this effect.

Now it is possible that some MP's might have objections to this proposal. I would think the most serious objection might be that an MP would not want to accept a position that does not recognize their priesthood. For me that is not a problem, because a priest (according to a renewed theology of priesthood), in essence, is not a provider of the sacraments. The priest is rather a servant leader who gathers the people (physically, emotionally, spiritually), who focuses their attention on the Person and Gospel of Jesus Christ, and who motivates them to live that focus in their individual and communal lives. In fulfillment of the role of servant leaders, it is normal, but not necessary, that the priest preside at the celebration of the sacraments (particularly the Eucharist, since traditionally this is the context in which the people gather). In my view, the parish pastoral coordinator fulfills in essence the priestly role. Of course, once an MP parish pastoral coordinator has won over the hearts of the parish community, he could also celebrate in time excluded sacraments, if requested by the community, in accordance with Canon Law.

Another advantage of this strategy for the MP in question is the liberating fact that he remains a lay person and not a member of the clergy with all the restrictions connected to it.

Despite the shortcomings of this strategy (which time and discussion will reveal), if it works, it allows us to accomplish an important goal, namely, to give the parish community the experience of a married priest as pastoral leader.

Happily, parish communities are already enjoying the experience of women in what is essentially a priestly role. This is an opportunity to establish a new custom in the Church of a renewed priesthood of men and women, single and married, gay and straight, rich and poor, and in rainbow skin tones. The priest shortage aside, the health of the Church is in dire need of such expressions of a renewed priesthood.

To this broad overview, Chris Diamond replied with some questions and some caveats of his own:

It might be useful if we knew :

1. Who and how many bishops anywhere are open to giving any nonclerical priest a meaningful service in the diocese? This is a matter of choice for any bishop which I believe some bishops exercise. But who, and where?
2. What functions and administrations are given to the lay priest?

When the Toronto chancery called me in and told me I had permission to marry (and I told them I would come back when I found someone who wanted to marry me!), I was given nothing to

sign nor did I ever read a document or hear one read to me.

I would find nothing objectionable to serving in a parish, even if the bishop calls me a 'layman'. That's his problem. I don't buy his language and I don't restrict my responsibilities. Lay/clergy don't belong in our vocabulary. I choose as I know you do to celebrate with any believer who asks.

Jim Noonan entered the debate with some further reflections:

I expressed some of my thoughts on this subject in the Jan-Feb issue of *The Journal*, and in a slightly different form in letters to *The Ottawa Citizen* (Jan. 7) and in *Catholic New Times* (Feb. 11). The use of MPs as pastoral coordinators is one issue I didn't envision in these publications. I saw the use of lay people in this capacity as a band-aid solution to the shortage of priests, and I would see the use of MPs in this role in a similar way if it were limited only to this. It would however be a large step for the Church in the recognition of MPs as leaders of the Catholic community, and as using their talents and training in the service of that community.

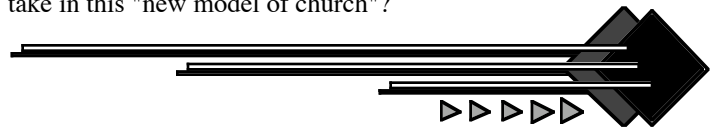
But to shop short of allowing them to preside at the Eucharist would, in the eyes of the Catholic community, be branding them as second-class citizens, trained and willing to serve the community in this way, but not allowed to do so. It would be a step in their repatriation within the Church, but I suspect it would be unsatisfactory to many MPs. They would feel the way many women feel now in being excluded from the priesthood. They would be

deemed unworthy to serve in the central role of presiding at the Eucharist, no matter what other "worship services" they presided at.

True, they might fully preside at a Eucharist when the need arose, and they would be justified in doing so if one wanted support from Canon Law as well as from the community. But it seems to me the need for them to preside at the Eucharist is already there in appointing them pastoral coordinators able to preside at "worship services" but not at the full Eucharist. Having MPs as pastoral coordinators would be a first, and an important step, in their full participation in the ministry for which they have been trained. But it would be demeaning if it were the last step. Even taking this first step would be difficult, and met by some clergy and laity with hostility and suspicion.

But let us pray that the groundwork can be laid for making this first step smooth and satisfying for everyone involved - the people, the MPs, and those already appointed as leaders of the people.

This is where the dialogue ended, and there are obviously many other questions to be asked. Are readers of *The Journal* willing to go further in this debate and help us all see who should be pastoral coordinators in the Church today, and what role married priests can take in this "new model of church"?



This & That

François Brassard, Ladysmith, BC



The christian churches are in a serious crisis. Young adults (18-34) and others have left or are leaving the institutional churches in droves. In the Catholic church it is largely due to a crisis in leadership. There is a priest shortage, both in numbers and in the capacity to respond effectively to the needs of the community.

There is a dearth of bishops, including the bishop of Rome, willing to try creative solutions that stray in any way from their vision of tradition or from their interpretation

of the dictates of Canon Law. Is there no way to maintain good order while, at the same time, making Spirit driven changes that can renew not only the Church, but the world as well?

Based on initiatives occurring in Quebec and in northern Canadian dioceses, I have thought that it was possible to come up with win/win strategies that would help bishops relieve the pressure of the priest shortage, while at the same time renewing the priesthood in line with Vatican II ecclesiology. With this in mind, I initiated a dialogue on the "Corpus-L" and "CITI-L" internet lists with a proposal for utilizing married/partnered priests as lay pastoral coordinators in parishes suffering the effects of the priest shortage (see Jim Noonan's article in this issue). Except for Chris Diamond,

editor of *The Journal*, and Jim Noonan, also on the editorial board, I received no substantial reply.

Frankly, I am baffled by the lack of response. Until otherwise informed, I can only presume that there is no interest in proposals that would involve married/partnered priests in the present clerical system of diocesan and parochial pastoral governance. If that is so, what other Roman Catholic strategies are possible to renew the priesthood and, at the same time, respond to the spiritual needs of the faithful?

CITI Ministries, Inc., now registered as a religious society (like the Jesuits, etc.) under the name of the "Society of Christ's Priesthood," continues to urge married/partnered priests to get involved in pastoral ministry wherever and however the faithful, churched and unchurched, ask them to. If they ask you to heal the sick and the elderly in nursing/palliative care homes, do it. If they ask you to celebrate the Eucharist in their homes, do it. If they ask you to bless their marriages, do it. If they ask you to do spiritual counselling or to help them reach a point of reconciliation and liberation, do it. If they ask you to do chaplaincy work in a prison, a hospital, a soup kitchen, a coffee house or even a pub, do it. If addicts, gays, street people, and all who are shunned, ask for your spiritual help in providing them with dignity and respect, do it.

And Corpus Canada, as well as its associated religious society, the "Xristos Community Society," urges all, the ordained as well as the non-ordained, to respond to the needs of the people, particularly the unchurched, by creating or participating in Small

Faith Communities, just as Jesus did. I am delighted to note that the Corpus Calgary community has chosen to focus on this topic for the upcoming Corpus Canada National Conference in September of this year. Right on!

If you feel you need permission to do these things, know that Jesus has already given it to you. Other than that, remember that in all things that you do, remain open, honest, truthful, respectful, caring, and, above all, profoundly connected to God's Spirit that Jesus continues to send us. Surely, this is the best way to help the leaders of our Church to renew the face of the earth.

On The Lighter Side!

Finding one of her students making faces at others on the playground. Ms. Smith stopped to gently reprove the child. Smiling sweetly, the Sunday School teacher said, "Bobby, when I was a child, I was told that if I made ugly faces, it would freeze and I would stay like that." Bobby looked up and replied, "Well, Ms. Smith, you can't say you weren't warned."

Science and Religion at the Edge of the Third Millennium

by Robert N.E. Haughton, B.Sc., M.A.Sc., P.Eng. (Corpus-NCR)

The universe is not only stranger than we suppose – it is stranger than we can suppose!

J.B.S. Haldane, Oxford University, 1920's

Current breakthroughs in science continually influence our knowledge of *who we are* and our ever-changing perceptions of the undefinable power, i.e., God. Great scientists such as Galileo, Newton, Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg and Hawking – to name only a few – have forever changed our understanding of the Universe, from the very small (microcosm) to the very large (macrocosm). Studies of cosmology (theory of the Universe) and particle physics (quantum theory) continue to provide an ever-changing perception of the underlying mysteries of the cosmos.

The relationship between science and religion rests on two basic premises: "Science," the search for truth in all aspects of the physical universe; and "Religion," the search for truth in the realm of spirituality. Here "spirituality" represents "that dimension of living in which we are aware of the indescribable mystery referred to as God – an ever-present possibility for each individual and a reflection of the immediacy of God's presence everywhere."¹ The word "religion" is an English translation of the Latin word "relegare." Legare means "to bind together;" thus re-legare is to "re-bind." Such community rebinding is revealed in churches, mosques, synagogues, etc. Science can nourish faith, and faith can deepen our understanding of what science reveals to us. Modern physics has shown that we are not only deeply connected to the universe but are an intrinsic part of it. We can be conceived as children of God who created all reality, through the continuing dynamism of the laws of nature. Everything in our bodies is shared with the rest of the universe. Without the stars and their prior explosions, over several billion years, there would be no oxygen, carbon, iron or other minerals that constitute us. We are truly stardust! Such a realization yields a deeper appreciation of the mystery of God.

Studies of quantum physics and complexity theory are continually demonstrating that the universe is more sophisticated and harmonious than previously believed. Underneath it all, deep patterns of self-organization continue to emerge. Scientific discoveries since the early 1920's disclosed that Newtonian physics was incorrect when it claimed we exist in a deterministic world in which past events foretold the future. Instead, the universe at the microcosmic level appears to be permeated by intricate non-deterministic relationships,

an holistic totality. The part contains the whole, but the whole is greater than the sum of the parts! As we become more open to new understandings in science, we must be willing to release traditional anthropomorphic (humanistic) views of God. The "All-in-All"² (i.e., God) is not to be conceived as a tinkerer who enters creation only long enough to fix things when they go wrong. Instead, God is continually operating in reality and relationships. Science, however, does not explain the ultimate meaning of life. Why isn't there just nothing? The question of "existence" will last forever.

In 1987 a remarkable interaction occurred in the realm of Science and Religion. The occasion was a conference entitled "Our Knowledge of God and Nature," convened at Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer residence south of Rome, to mark the third centenary of the appearance of Isaac Newton's famous book *Principia Mathematica*, the founding work of modern mechanics. The meeting was organized by the Jesuit astronomers from the Vatican Observatory at Castel Gandolfo. The participating scholars (25) represented various religious backgrounds: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, etc. The resulting documents were published in a book entitled *Physics, Philosophy and Theology: A Common Quest for Understanding*, edited by Robert J. Russell (Chairperson), The Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, Berkeley, CA, William R. Stoeger, S.J., and George V. Coyne, S.J. The Foreword of the book, signed by John Paul II, emphasized the inter-dependence of science and religion. As quoted by the Pope, "We need each other to be what we must be, what we are called to be, with each helping to define the limits of the other so that theology does not profess a pseudoscience and science does not become an unconscious theology."³ The meeting emphasized that scientists cannot isolate themselves from wider human concerns for ultimate meaning and value, yet their own methods are not designed to deal with such concerns. They must, therefore, look beyond these methods and techniques and devote to this quest something of the energy and care that they give to their research in science. Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish. Contemporary developments in science have challenged theology far more deeply than did the introduction of Aristotelian philosophy into Western Europe in the 13th century. This

Science and Religion Continued...

challenge also promises resources for new theological development, but only if there are theologians sufficiently well-versed in the sciences to make authentic and creative use of the resources the best-established theories may offer them.

This common quest for understanding requires investigation of a diversity of sources. Science is not merely a means to technical control or accurate prediction; religion is not just a matter of moral action or private converse between the individual and God. Each contributes to our understanding of the remarkable universe in which we exist. The Science/Religion interaction is a collaborative one in which the viewpoints of the participants are to be respected. In the natural sciences (physics, biology, etc.) one can discern analogies to this search for unity through the discovery of natural laws and processes that unify all aspects of reality and, at the same time, give rise to the vast diversity of structures and organisms which constitute the physical, biological, psychological and sociological realms. In physics, for example, efforts to unify the microcosmos (quantum theory) with the macrocosmos (relativity theory) into one Grand Unified Theory have not yet been accomplished. It is crucial that the dialogue between religion and science remain an open one, each retaining its autonomy. The conference did not propose that science should become religion or religion science. Both should support each other as distinct dimensions of a common human culture. Neither should assume that it forms a necessary premise for the other. The unprecedented opportunity is for a common interactive and complementary relationship in which each discipline retains its integrity and yet is open to the ever-changing discoveries and insights of the other.

The 1987 conference was the first of a biennial series of meetings on science and religion alternating between Castel Gandolfo and the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, Berkeley, California. The resulting documents were compiled in a number of books – e.g., *Quantum Cosmology and the Laws of Nature*, 1993; *Chaos and Complexity: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action*, 1995; *Quantum Physics and Quantum Field Theory*, 2000. Distribution in the USA and Canada is provided by the University of Chicago Press. Since the mid-1980's Science/Religion discussion groups continue to

experience a rapid growth in areas such as North America, South America, Europe and India, along with a continuing increase in related literature.⁴

In closing, the following quotations provide a brief reflection on the interactions between Science and Religion as expressed in the above biennial conferences.

“Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind.”

- Albert Einstein.⁵

“Without any doubt, there is ‘something’ which links material energy and spiritual energy together and makes them a continuity. In the last resort there must ‘somehow’ be but one single energy active in the universe!”

- Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.⁶

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Dear Paul:

Thank you for the beautiful and comprehensive statement of the reasons for your leaving the priesthood. I am sure it will have resonance throughout the Catholic world. As a married priest who heard you speak and met you at the IFMCP/Corpus-USA Conference in Atlanta two years ago (was it your summer or ours?), I welcome you to the ranks of ordinary believers (but still priests) who hope and pray and work that reforms can take place to affirm the catholicity of the Church.

May you have peace and success in all your future endeavors.

Jim Noonan

Dear Jim:

Thank you so much for your kind message. I really did appreciate your gesture of support and warmth. In the last twenty four hours I've been overwhelmed with messages - at last I'm getting my money's worth out of my Internet server!! I am in good form. I've seen it coming for some time so I have been well prepared. Again thank you.

Paul Collins, Australia

When Disability Leads To Hope by Joe McIntyre, Ottawa, ON (Corpus-NCR)

About seven years ago my ophthalmologist told me that I could no longer hold a driver's license. This was bad news but it gets worse. Over the next few months my vision deteriorated to the point where I could not read ordinary print even with the aid of glasses. At this point I was declared legally blind. This means that while I could still see well enough to get around I could not recognize faces or read signs unless the print was very large. Fortunately the deterioration stopped at this point and has remained at this level for the past six years.

Being legally blind has been a very interesting experience in many ways. For instance I found that people are generally very kind. Total strangers are happy to help me get on the correct bus or read price tags in stores. I also found that my understanding of the limitations that a disability causes has improved. I feel that now I can empathize much more accurately with other disabilities. Other insights continue to occur.

Having a physical disability is not fun, but neither is it the end of the world. Most people who have a disability reach some kind of acceptance. We get past the point where we focus on all the things we can no longer do, and turn our attention to discovering what we can do. We understand that acceptance does not mean giving up. Rather it is a realization that this is my reality and that the best choice is to learn to live with it. Learning to live with a disability is not easy but I know a lot of people who have done it and, in the process, found peace.

But how can this acceptance be accomplished? For most of us some help is needed. Family and friends can be very helpful in this regard. But family and friends are not always available when needed.

Sometimes when we are feeling depressed or frustrated we may be entirely alone and we are forced to rely on our own inner resources.

For a person of faith, of course, we know that we do have more than just our inner resources. We have God to turn to for help. We can pray for peace of mind, for acceptance. We certainly find support in the gospels where we see Jesus consistently reaching out to the excluded members of society.

Jesus is the best advocate that the disabled community ever had or ever will have. The gospels are full of stories that deal with Jesus helping the lame, the maimed, the blind and the diseased. In the story of the good Samaritan, Jesus answers the question, "Who is our neighbor?" It is clear in the story that Jesus is sending all of us a message and this message is directed to both the disabled community and to those in a position to help and support that community.

I facilitate a support group for visually impaired people, and I once asked them to define "hope." They quickly agreed that the opposite of hope was despair. They had more difficulty defining "hope," but finally agreed that it had to do with our having confidence that in the final result everything would turn out well. Some went further to say that hope was confidence that God was present in their lives and a constant support in their struggles.

Those of us who are physically disabled can be confident that Jesus

will give us peace of mind. Jesus can help us to deal with the fear, frustration and anger that can afflict us. Jesus can give us a perspective that is both comforting and reassuring. Jesus can give us hope.

As for those in a position to help the disabled, Jesus demonstrated how to avoid being patronizing. Jesus showed us how to see the whole person and not just the disability.

Even if having a physical disability is not fun it can be seen as an opportunity to discover one's own real strength. It can also help us to come closer to God's very real love for us.



Jackques Lusseyran became blind at age 7 through an accident

At that time I still wanted to use my eyes. I followed their usual path. I looked in the direction where I was in the habit of seeing before the accident... Finally, I realized that I was looking in the wrong way, I was looking too far off, and too much on the surface of things.. I began to look more closely, not at things but at a world closer to myself, looking from an inner place to one further within, instead of clinging to the movement of sight toward the world outside. Immediately, the substance of the universe drew together, redefined and peopled itself anew. I was aware of a radiance emanating from a place I knew nothing about, a place which might as well have been outside me as within.. I felt indescribable relief, and happiness so great it almost made me laugh... Sighted people always talk about the night of blindness, and that seems to be quite natural. But there is no such night, for at every waking hour and even in my dreams I lived in a stream of light. Without my eyes, light was much more stable than it had been with them. As I remember it, there were no longer the same differences between things lighted brightly, less brightly, or not at all. I saw the whole world in light, existing through it and because of it.

Jackques Lusseyran, "And there Was Light", trans. Elizabeth R. Cameron, Little Brown 1963

Report From Saskatchewan Corpus

by Emil Kutarna, Regina, SK

On Jan 29 Archbishop Peter Mallon of Regina issued a letter which said, "We are all aware of the challenges facing our parishes today. Not the least of these challenges is the shortage of clergy and the dwindling numbers in church attendance". And so, a Visioning Steering Committee has been established. People of the archdiocese are invited to submit "concerns and suggestions ... on how we can better have a joyful, hope-filled Christian life in the years to come."

On Sunday March 4, seven married priest couples met in response to this invitation. We felt that: who is more qualified to offer suggestions than those whose experience is unique in the fact of seeing the church from "both sides of the altar" so to speak - the married priests and their wives?

A brief summary of topics discussed were: too many clergy were out-dated, needed ongoing training, are poor preachers, are very clerical-minded. There is no denying that the celibacy rule is a constant negative message about women and sexuality. Vatican II view of the church as the "people of God" needs more emphasis to counteract the autocratic governance so prevalent. There needs to be open dialogue, with both men and women equally heard and empowered. The new advertising in the Prairie Messenger concerning "vocations" suggests that marriage and single life are equally valid vocations along with the priesthood and religious - this is to be commended. Parents do not encourage their children to consider priesthood if they cannot equally encourage both sons and daughters to ministry.

At the close of the gathering, we felt that we need to meet again soon to continue our discussion with the hope of producing a statement to the Visioning Committee specifically from married priests and spouses.

CBC-TV Interview With Married Priest

Sandra from CBC Saskatoon video-taped an interview with Emil Kutarna on March 4 for over an hour. She said she is doing a story in response to the priest shortage. The October 2000 issue of the Saskatoon diocese newsletter stated that by June of 2001 there would be 10 fewer priests to serve the parishes. Sandra said that she also interviewed a former Catholic Sister who felt she had a vocation and was ordained an Anglican priest. This was in response to the rule in the Catholic Church which does not ordain women.

Although there are about ten married priests in Saskatoon, no one wanted to be interviewed. I guess there still is a lot of hesitation, or should I say real fear, of bad repercussions from being known publicly as a married priest. This is very sad. I had thought Corpus Canada after ten years of publicity had been instrumental in changing the image of the married priest. Sandra heard of me in Regina who was willing to speak out, and that is how I got involved.

I thought the interview went very well. She asked why I married. I gave several reasons. Vatican II was a whole new view of church, and there was talk of "optional celibacy". When love came knocking at my door I didn't run away as before. The policy on dispensations changed from never to

possible. I applied, it came, I got married. Another reason I gave was the experience of loneliness. I told the story of the old priest I visited in his eighty's. He told me all his relatives were dead, he had been moved from parish to parish, so he has no real deep friends, and he realized that he will die a desperately lonely man. He had tears in his eyes when I said my goodbye. That hit me very hard, as I pictured myself there in my old age.

Sandra asked me how it felt seeing the priest at the altar where I could be if I hadn't married. I said that the worst was my first Christmas because I especially enjoyed celebrating Christmas midnight Mass. But over the years one gets used to it. We also talked about Corpus Canada and how many married priests there were in Canada and throughout the world. She found that very surprising that one in five priests have left. She had difficulty understanding the concept of one still remaining a priest but not serving in a church. I explained that there is more to priesthood than the ritual celebrations, such as being with people in times of suffering loss, marriage problems, serious illness etc. which I still do for old friends and former parishioners who still call upon me.

I tried to portray a positive outlook on the whole matter of what is happening in the Catholic church today. Even the shortage of priests, I suggested that it has led to a greater involvement of lay people and especially women. This is something that it would be difficult if not impossible to roll back no matter how many priests may suddenly be ordained. As soon as I find out when this will be aired I will pass the word out via Corpus-L. I hope it shows well.

GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT LIFE THAT ADULTS HAVE LEARNED

Raising teenagers is like nailing Jell-O to a tree.

There is always a lot to be thankful for, if you take the time to look. For example, I'm sitting here thinking how nice it is that wrinkles don't hurt.

Families are like fudge . . . mostly sweet, with a few nuts.

Today's mighty oak is just yesterday's nut that held its ground.

Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber, not the toy.

My mind not only wanders; sometimes it leaves completely.

If you can remain calm, you just don't have all the facts.

To Forgive, Divine

by Jim Noonan, Stittsville, ON (Corpus-NCR)

Recently I saw a play presented by Kanata Theatre in Ottawa entitled "To Forgive, Divine" by American playwright Jack Neary. It had its first professional production in Lowell, Massachusetts in 1989.

In the brochure advertising the season's plays it was described as "a gentle comedy that brings a refreshingly light touch to a serious topic – priestly celibacy and the doubts and distractions that beset the vocation to the priesthood." I went to the play curious to see the refreshingly light touch brought to this serious topic.

The play is set in the sacristy of an old Catholic church in a New England neighborhood in the 1980's. It concerns the struggles of the parish priest Jerry Dolan with his vow of celibacy. The struggle focuses on his relationship with Katie Cachenco, on whom Father Dolan had a crush before he entered the priesthood. Now a parishioner of Father Dolan and unhappily married to Ralph, Katie comes to her priest for help with her marital problems, and confesses that she is now attracted to him.

The play does have some very funny scenes, especially the one in which Ralph confronts Father Dolan after Katie tells him she is leaving him for the priest. It actually becomes slapstick as Ralph chases Father Dolan around the living room of the rectory as the fearful priest proclaims in vain his innocence.

But Katie's reading of Father Dolan is wrong, and he convinces her to return to Ralph. The action up to this point all takes place on the Friday and Saturday of one weekend.

In the course of the following week both Katie and Father Dolan have second thoughts. Katie decides she will give her marriage with Ralph another chance, and Father Dolan is now ready to leave the priesthood for Katie. He tells this to Katie, but Katie tells him she is going back to Ralph. The play ends with Father Dolan alone on stage putting his Roman collar around his neck for the first time in the play as the lights bear down on his disconsolate face.

Some comedy this. But the play's co-director Susan Monaghan went even further when she told a writer at Ottawa's X-Press magazine (Nov. 9, 2000) that she "was attracted to the play because it seemed a very charming, funny play which also presented a priest in a good light". She concluded: "I hope that (the play) will give people a bit of respect for religious institutions".

On the contrary, the final scene emphasizes how unjust the Catholic Church is in imposing a law of celibacy on a man like Father Dolan. Whether or not he should have run off with Katie to rescue her from an unhappy marriage, Father Dolan - and many priests like him - emerges clearly in the play as a man for whom celibacy is an imposition and a burden.

The last scene, with the collar fastened around Father Dolan's neck, turns the play into a black comedy rather than the "charming funny play" that the co-director saw it to be, or the "gentle comedy" with a "refreshingly light touch" that the theatre's brochure claimed it would be.

If men like Father Dolan had the option to be married priests, they would be able to help people like Katie without feeling they can help both her and themselves by leaving the priesthood. And the collar around their necks would not be a yoke of servitude, but a sign of dedication to the God who welcomes both married and celibate priests.

The Church too would realize that the God of Mercy is ready to show Divine Forgiveness to Her when She removes the burden of celibacy imposed on so many priests for whom it was not necessary to make them good priests.



Always Be In A State Of Reform

by Chuck McLellan, Bragg Creek, AB

The traditional motto for the Church has always been that it must "always be in a state of reform." I would like to add to that "a state of healing." I like very much the model of Nelson Mandella. We would not have blamed him after more than twenty five years in jail that he would remain an angry person; instead he goes about leading and healing his people.

The healing stories of Jesus show very much that he wanted a very inclusive model of friendships as well as the kingdom. The only ones Jesus did not defend were the self-righteous.

In the early days of Corpus this was a big part of the organization, we were able to move on.

For our gathering in September there are words in Chris Diamond's article in The Journal that bears repetition in connection with Small Faith Communities. It reads in part "the all inclusive attitude is that there are no marginalised, no outcasts, everyone counts."

Who would Jesus be healing: those broken by divorce, those persecuted even though they are honestly working out their sexual orientation? In my sister's family she has two sons who are gay. They are persons who are most human; what more can we ask?

Within the model of a Small Faith Community, there can be healing; it is a circle. I'm looking for insights from Joe Cashen on the experience of his group.

When pro hockey players go to the Olympics, they are asked to check their ego's at the door, no matter what heroics they've done in the past; they have to start over being a team.

We too might have to check some of our baggage at the door; maybe a couple of pounds of religious jargon. It is easy to talk a good game. Everyone who has played organised sports knows the experience. Knowing the experience of the group, I know a lot of positive things will happen just being together.

We are all at home with the language of Vat.II, a language of fresh vitality. For me there is a sigh of relief when it is used as a given, in starting a dialogue.

Bruce Coburn when he was inducted in to the music Hall of Fame (March 4th 2001), in his thank you speech, he included Vatican II among the experiences that moved and directed his life.

For persons who have been around the block a few times, there has to be a sense of a new language, one we are hearing for the

Community Views Continued...

first time.

We have to remember not everyone in a group has had the freedom and time to be up to date on the latest words, we have to keep it simply to life experience.

We know that the Road Maps we have used in the past do not work anymore. We have had to cut out many things in religion that now are not valid (that have made us spiritual invalids, to play on the word). We do have plenty of truths to live by as it is. We don't need permission from anyone to celebrate them. We can keep symbols at a safe distance, so we don't have to do anything about them.

In our chapel a priest used to come for the celebration of the Eucharist. You had to make an act of faith that the stale wafer used for the liturgy was actually bread.

We can talk at length about Jesus, whether he was divine or human. Was he human on his mother's side and divine on his

Father's side?

A quote from Sam Keen expresses the importance of the Now. He says "after squandering my substance wandering in the past and future I was returning to my native time the present. I have to cultivate the present to LOVE the actual."

One of the ways to add to the experience of the GATHERING in the fall is to use billets and B&B's to keep what is happening throughout the PROCESS during the day, fully extended during our other sacred pauses. There will be time for prayer and play, and for some, the two are the same thing.

The weekend is a chance to live the Gospel stories of unity, trust, wholeness and pleasure.

If you mix the beauty of Bragg Creek, Western Hospitality, the experience of so many gifted people, how can we not trust in the Happening that is to be in the fall?

Notices

A word of thanks is due to Dick Perrott who has served on the editorial team for five years and who has organized the assembling and mailing crew as well. Dick's health does not allow him to continue his valuable service. We will miss his unique presence and wisdom as we wish him a speedy recovery. All the best from all of us, Dick.

Correction: In "The People of God" by Janet Malone in the last issue, the quote should read "Every leader is given responsibility for directing the activities of a group..."

The Xristos Community Society which publishes The Journal has enough money to put out this and perhaps the next issue. The Journal is distributed free of charge and is supported by donations which are tax-deductible. This year, there have been fewer donations. It is not necessary to be a member of Corpus Canada to receive The Journal. We look forward to your continuing support. Cheques should be made payable to
Xristos Community Society, 9875 Seventh Street, Sidney BC V8L 2V8, Canada.

Gord Irving, the National Coordinating Team member for the Vancouver area, was recently married to Adrienne McAlpine. The couple are living in Delta, B.C. The editorial board of The Journal and all members of Corpus Canada join in wishing them every happiness, and a long life together.

Letter

Dear Alanna:

Please renew our membership in Corpus Canada. I ask you to encourage your friends to keep up their effort. They may think they are a voice in the wilderness, but they are far from that." Please continue your dedication.

Leo & Julie Marcoux, Rehoboth, MA

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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