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Education for Professional Responsibility in the Jesuit Tradition

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This paper was given at a March, 1983 program on Moral-Ethical Education in Jesuit Professional Schools, presented by members of the Jesuit Conference of Nursing Programs and hosted by the Marquette University College of Nursing.

This discussion of the relation which the ideals of Jesuit university education bear to the professional training of nurses will demand a certain brashness on my part and a corresponding patience on the reader's part. Though I am not particularly familiar with the training of nurses, I can speak of the relation of professional training as such to the Jesuit educational mission — a topic which any Jesuit on a faculty such as Marquette's might be expected to address with some competence. The Society of Jesus is, after all, a society of professionals, in the ancient sense of people who are under final vows of commitment to the Church's mission. This, the religious sense of profession, has colored and transformed the meaning of professionalism as that is encountered in the so-called great professions — the clergy, the military, the physicians, the lawyers — for in the Christian West, all these

have been the occupation of vowed religious who have left upon the priesthood, the military, medicine and law a cachet of discipline, of learning and of high responsibility. In the past, these were the hallmark of an upper class, but now, under the impact of this Christian transformation, they are seen to specify human existence across the board. Nowadays, we are all nobly born. The problem is that of living nobly, and here, as before, the classic professions can provide a model.

Before all else, we learn that a profession is a self-donation, so much so that the professional is in some sense married. The law student is told that the law is a stern mistress, but he may have no other. The soldier, the physician are in a similar case, and the priest par excellence. The professional bears what the lawyers call a fiduciary relation not only to those who seek his professional aid, but also to the community which warrants him, whether by ordination, by commission, or by admission to practice, for the professional is privileged. He or she is put in a position of trust, honor, and authority whose strict correlative is the assumption of an extraordinary responsibility — one whose structures vary with the nature of the profession — but which is, in every instance, an unconditioned moral obligation. So measured, a professional responsibility is saved from becoming an idolatry only by its assimilation to the worship of God, only by its dedication to His service, by which all human benefaction must be judged. An anonymous profession becomes demonic. This is the lesson of Nuremberg, where soldiers, lawyers and physicians alike were judged by their peers and found wanting, convicted of having foresworn their calling, abused their authority and betrayed their trust. For so many a treason, for so blind and obdurate a crime, there is no explanation short of the emergence of a false worship and the conversion of the professional class to a diabolic world-view. The dignity and the honor of the professions, as of all that is human, are sustained only by the worship of God. This is the single testimony of a cloud of witnesses. Among that host, men such as Thomas More and Abraham Lincoln may speak for the lawyers. For the soldiers, the most eloquent monument of our time is that graven on the memorial of the infantrymen who died in the final assault upon Monte Cassino. For the physicians and nurses, not only Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton speak, but also Camillus de Lellis, Catherine of Siena, and those thousands of nursing sisters, known now but to God, who gave their selfless lives to Him in the service of the dying in dozens of pestholes scattered across the globe and across the centuries. To their eloquence there is no rebuttal. Like beauty, it transcends all argument simply by being there. Confronted by this testimony, we are measured and assessed, for it is our commitment, our deeds, our professionalism which are in question, not theirs. The tradition of Christian professionalism does not await our judgment or approval; it is there, a fact of being, and it judges us. To ignore this tradition is to traduce one's

profession, to reduce it to a mere manipulation, more or less technologically informed, of people and of things, for ends which are finally self-serving and, when taken seriously, are idolatrous: the false divinities of wealth, of reputation, of pleasure, and of power.

These idolatries present the permanent temptations of our fallen condition, the standing alternatives to a living faith and to that love of humanity which is the counterfoil of the love of God. Christian education in the professions exists in order that these temptations may be recognized as such. The professional schools informed by the Jesuit tradition have no other justification than the insistence, in season and out, that all professionalism which is not directed to the greater glory of God is bogus.

Nursing Authenticity Not Questioned

It is hardly the nursing profession which needs this reminder, for the authenticity of the nursing profession is not much in question; its idolatries are rare. From the dawn of the Christian era, the care of the sick has been a religious duty, even an official religious duty — one assigned first to those "deacons" who were charged with the temporal concerns of the Christian community. With the regulation of the religious vocation which is associated with the rules of such founders as Basil, Augustine and Benedict, the care of the sick became assimilated to the religious vocation. With the Crusades, the several orders of hospitallers made this a professional concern, one which became the ordinary recourse of the ill for the centuries before any other form of public medical care was proposed other than that which professed religious — increasingly the orders of women — provided in their hospitals and lazarets. With the decline of the religious orders and their institutions at the time of the Reformation, the quality and availability of such care diminished sharply. Nursing became mere scut work, performed incompetently, carelessly, grudgingly, by untrained hacks for bare subsistence wages. Particularly was this the case in England, where the religious institutions had fared the worst during the Reformation, and where the secularization of medical care had proceeded the furthest. The early 19th century saw the quality of the nursing element of medical care reach its lowest point in that country, from which most of the contemporary American hospital practice was then being learned. The recovery from this nadir began with Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton who, in England and the United States, began to reinstitute, under the pressure of war, the training, the discipline, and the devotion which nursing, as a religious profession, has always demanded of those who accept that vocation and bear its burden and its glory.

The contemporary world is one which proclaims, *con brio*, its secularism. It also attaches great value to the label of professional. To be so described is understood as a high compliment, whether attached to athletes or to physicians, to mail sorters or to attorneys, to entertainers or to nurses. In fact, the term is used so lavishly that it has lost its original and real meaning; it now refers to a certain level of competence without invoking that notion of public responsibility which the more valid usage knew. That this should be so is understandable enough: it is not an easy thing today to designate that authority to which one might be thought answerable for a level of performance transcending a mere technical competence. Such is the heavy pressure on a secular society. A public professional vocation such as nursing, the sick becomes incomprehensible, for the discipline and devotion which a vocation demands have no profane object. In such societies as ours the professions are continually threatened by that devaluation which would reduce them to mere functions, to trades, to ways of earning money by the use of more or less esoteric skills. That this can happen to the professionalism of the lawyer, the soldier, the physician, the priest — this needs no further demonstration. The examples which this century has offered of the degradation of high callings to specialized, technologically-informed manipulation are fresh in recent memory. But we are here concerned with the profession, the vocation of nursing, with the training which is the precondition of that profession and with the relation of that training and that professionalism to the goals, the educational mission, of the Society of Jesus.

I have said that the summary of the Jesuit professional training of Jesuit education generally, is its submission to a single criterion: the greater glory of God. I have pointed out that this submission was the commonplace of the professions until the modern period when circumambient secularism began to make the serious inroads upon the very possibility of professionalism which now constitutes the serious problem confronting professional training across the board. At the point that the ancient commitments reaffirmed in the installation ceremonies are now often matters for irony, to be taken seriously only by the uninitiated. Such irony betrays an emptiness, a vacancy of soul, the contemporary sickness and the ancient sickness which, having denied God, cannot take humanity seriously either. It is a sickness which was prevalent in the years when St. Ignatius founded the Society of Jesus. The Society was, in fact, formed to counter it, by the rededication of human energies to the greater glory of God after the Renaissance explorations of human autonomy had sufficiently illustrated the futilities of that project. This mission is proper to the Jesuits, for the sickness is a perduring one, endemic to our human condition, a pathology which yields finally only to the Resurrection.

Until that day when Christ shall come again, it is our common task

our responsibility and our high dignity to seek out, to promote, the greater glory of God. This conviction underwrites the existence of this Marquette College of Nursing. But such slogans become abstract. Comparable pieties adorn the pediments, the letterheads of educational institutions long secularized, long disdainful of their religious heritage and now anxious to disavow it. If a comparable oblivion is not to overtake us at Marquette, we must give a concrete, historical and contemporary content to this "glory of God" which is so easily, so lightly invoked. In the first place, it is evident that we have to do with the created order. The uncreated order which is personal to God is beyond all comparatives, all attainment; we can no more increase it than we can diminish it. However we understand our relation to God, we can give to Him only what we have first received. If the Jesuit motto is to have any concrete meaning, it must be understood that the glory of God is simply His creation, the world He has made, the people He has redeemed. In brief, it is His covenant, understood in the most comprehensive sense of the world whose center, whose axis, whose creation is the Father's sending of the Son to give the Spirit by which we may again belong to God.

Living Gives Glory to God

It is living in this world, refusing allegiance to any other, that gives glory to God, by that continual worship which is His praise, the celebration of His gift, the sharing of His sacrifice, the free return to that love with which He first loved us by creating us in Christ. There is then no aspect of our lives which is not thus covenanted, for the covenant and creation coincide: all else is counterfeit, fraudulent, a world God never made. Should this be thought extravagance, the overstatement which pulpits seem to induce in their fortunately transient occupants, it would be well to think again. What I have said is as prosaic as the *Baltimore Catechism* which informed its readers long ago that God had made us to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him, and to be happy with Him forever. We have no alternative to this, our destiny, save damnation, and the Christian and Catholic tradition of this university proposes that our human condition be taken very seriously.

Taken seriously, then, we are a covenanted people, and our profession, fundamentally and formally covenantal, knows only a covenant morality. To this we now turn.

Fundamental to the nursing profession, as to any other profession, is the authority which is the correlative of its responsibility. Because the entirety of our Western culture is immersed in an authority crisis, in a radical confusion over the meaning, the function, the source of

authority in every context of its exercise, it may be tempting to postpone a discussion of authority in its bearing upon the nursing profession until that confusion is somewhat reduced. Such a postponement is not possible, however, except insofar as it masks an abdication of the responsibility which authority connotes. The training and education of nurses, insofar as it is their preparation for responsibility, is their training also in the meaning and exercise of authority. Whether or not the nursing schools place much formal emphasis upon this element of the nursing profession, I do not know. Obviously, such matter can be communicated in a myriad of ways apart from formal inclusion in a curriculum, and perhaps is best done so. It is important, however it be taught, that it be taught well, for without a clear recognition of the range and limit of their professional authority, it is idle to speak of the nurses' professional responsibilities.

The professional authority of nurses has suffered, like all professional authority, from its secularization. Deprived of its ultimate religious qualification, it becomes a species of authoritarianism, requiring servility on the one hand and arrogance on the other. Nurses are commonly under the authority of physicians: too often they permit this to be interpreted as some kind of social inferiority. On the other hand, nurses commonly exercise professional authority over patients: too often this, too, is interpreted as requiring the reduction of the patient to an inferior social status, to a childlike subservience. That such commonplaces are also aberrancies is evident enough. It is less evident that over the long run they involve a real diminution of the dignity of the profession, a neglect of its responsibilities, and an erosion of its authority. The responsibility of the nursing profession is the personal well-being, the care, of the patient. It is not the personal well-being of the hospital.

It is, of course, quite true that the nurses are not in charge of the hospital, but they are in charge of nursing care. This is a responsibility which they are not free to abdicate in favor of whatever administrative ideal. Their professionalism is inseparable from this kind of responsibility, and they are not free to forego it, much less to deny it. That they do forego it, that a notion of nursing care which is impersonal, oriented to the well-being of the hospital rather than the patient, is, for practical purposes, forced upon the individual nurse by immediate administrative demands has been the common criticism of contemporary hospital care for a dozen years. It would be a rather wide-eyed critic who placed the blame for this situation on the nurses. There is plenty of blame around for everyone and, given the domination of the modern hospital by physicians and professional administrators, it is clear enough that the initiatives which led to this situation have another origin than the nursing profession. Nonetheless, to be a professional is to place oneself under the criteria of the profession and to refuse to submit to any others, however inevitable they may appear

however cogently they may be presented. Such criteria are no more than a program for the abolition of professional nursing as something obsolete in the technologically advanced society, the society whose base is secular, noncovenantal, impersonal and inhuman, capable of supporting that fiduciary relation, that trust and personal responsibility which gives meaning and dignity to all the professions, to all nurses.

Ways to Understand Authority

The point is worth some stress. Fundamentally, there are two ways of understanding authority. One of these considers authority to be a matter of the suppression of freedom in all those under authority. This is the pagan view of the relation between divinity and humanity, husbands and wives, masters and slaves, physicians and nurses, nurses and patients. It is a notion which identifies freedom with disorder and chaos, which supposes that such evil is to be eliminated simply by eliminating freedom, and gives this task to whomever has authority. The alternative notion of authority is that which I have called covenantal. Its paradigm is the covenantal relation between God and His people which is initiated in the Old Testament and completed in the New Testament, in the relation of Christ to the Church. This covenant is a marital one, as we see from a very early period in the Old Testament, in the Book of Hosea, and as Paul stressed eight centuries later in the Letter to the Ephesians. But here, authority creates, supports and affirms the freedom of those under authority, as Moses affirmed it in those who followed him, as Jesus affirmed it in His disciples, as husbands and wives affirm it in each other, and finally, as rulers of free societies must affirm it in those under the rule of law. There is perhaps no element of Christian doctrine more difficult to accept than this, if we may judge from the historical record. Over and over again, Catholic kings, bishops, superiors, husbands, wives, physicians and nurses have reduced Christian virtue to some sort of childishness, to the abdication of personal responsibility in favor of servile obedience to an authority figure. Obedience is certainly a Christian virtue, but servility is only servility. No Christian can be servile, and no Christian can require servility of anyone else, particularly not in the name of Christian virtue. The Christian notion of the authority-obedience relation has said goodbye to all that. Authority, whether of husband or of wife, of hierarchy or of laity, of ruler or of citizen, is mutual. To possess authority is also to be under authority, the qualitatively different authority of one's spouse, one's fellow Christian, one's fellow citizen. So to be authorized is also to be free, to maintain one's own dignity in the affirmation of the dignity of those for whom one is given responsibility by God.

The social order which arises out of this marital notion of authority could not be more different from or more radically contradictory to, the social order of the pagan world, whether that paganism rests upon some ancient creation myth or upon a contemporary ideology. The Christian social order is covenantal. It rests not upon power, not upon the suppression of the freedom of others, but upon love which finds its own freedom in a selfless devotion to the freedom of others. Nor is this devotion abstract, a sort of generalized love of a general humanity. It is concrete with the concreteness of history, of marriage, of self-sacrifice in the here and the now.

The ultimate expression of this love, this covenant, this freedom is the self-donation of Christ on the Cross, re-presented in the daily sacrifice of the Mass, in the bread and wine which cause the Church at once to be, and to be free, which at once cause and constitute its worship. Christ, the King, is present among us as the servant, and we Christians have no authority which might find any other base. To be a professional, to possess and to exercise the authority of the profession, is to enter upon that servitude which knows no servility, and wants none, which grants no obeisance to arrogance, and expects none.

This professionalism is covenantal. Having affirmed this several times in several contexts, it is time to unpack the notion and to examine some little of its depth. First, this covenant, the reality which it designates, is free. It is not an inference or necessary logical deduction from any prior truth, nor is it in any causal nexus with any prior condition of its possibility. As the name of creation itself, it is a pure gift, given *ex nihilo*. It is the gift of our free responsibility for the history through which the Lord of history redeems His people. This covenant, this good creation, this "community by which we belong to God," is then gift, and it is revelation. As we cannot provide it out of our own resources, so we cannot know of it by any conventional wisdom, whether it be ideology or technology. These enclosures only more firmly within our own necessities. The freedom of the covenantanted life is no latent possibility within us. It is rather that which is continually made us by the Author of all good things of the freedom which is His creation in us of our worship of Him. We have no other reality than this. We may refuse it, but only to engage in that self-rejection which is damnation, the hatred of the real. This is the message of the Old Testament. It finds its final promulgation in the eucharistic worship of the Church, by which the Lord of history is present to His people, sustaining their freedom and their dignity in the world which has no other hope than Him, and no other life than His.

Over the 4,000 years and more since Yahweh revealed Himself to Abraham, and the perennial exodus of the chosen people from paganism began, the implications of this liberation have become ever more explicit. They amount to the utter transvaluation of the relations between human beings. To the pagan mind, old and contemporary,

there is a profound absurdity in the notion of a widely distributed, widely shared freedom and dignity. Whether we look to the Babylonian creation myth current in the 3rd millennium before Christ, or to the gnostic visions which troubled Christianity in the 2nd century and emerged to do so again, continually, from the 12th century, or to those dystopias such as Huxley's *Brave New World* or Orwell's *Animal Farm* which carry the signature of our own more contemporary despair, we discover a single theme: God's freedom diminishes man's, and mine diminishes yours. Whether recited in an ancient fable, in gnostic speculation, in medieval heresy, in post-Enlightenment ideology or in contemporary time-and-motion studies, the solution to the absurdity of human freedom, of human spontaneity, human responsibility and human history is the annihilation of all of these, in order that a single and necessary insight may prevail. Freedom is either absolute, unlimited power, or it is intrinsically contradicted, mere foolishness, a chaos awaiting resolution by some firm hand.

Anaximander's Thinking

Out of this pagan insight, Anaximander, five centuries before Christ, concluded to the foundation of all motion and change, all finite vitality, in a primal injustice — the injustice by which some things are different from other things. Like all later rationalists, this sixth century Greek considered all reality to be absurd insofar as it is not reduced to an utter numerical unity, an unqualified sameness, an absolute lack of difference, a unanimity without possibility of alteration. Long before him, the great Eastern religions had taught the same: the Hindu speculations which issued in the Upanishads, the Taoism of the I Ching which so fascinated college students a decade ago, the Buddhism which finds a classic expression in Zen mysticism. The Greeks themselves made no fundamental advance upon this primordial pagan pessimism even in the most profound reaches of Platonic and Aristotelian speculation, nor did the Romans in their later development of Stoic moral doctrine. For all of these, all qualitative differentiation in the world was taken to be irrational, unjust, absurd, and in dire need of remedy. Always, the remedy proposed was the same — the reduction of all qualitative difference to a quantitative difference of more or less, and then the elimination of quantitative difference through some egalitarian formula whereby the individual was totally devalued by submersion in a primary and radical unity: the unity of the One, of the State, of the Cosmos, of Humanity, finally, of the Void, a speculative "black hole" of absolute unrelatedness, in which all contention is drowned, all differentiation obliterated.

If the best minds known to the pagan world cultures could not improve upon the radical pessimism of the Babylonian *Enuma elish*,

which summed up, long before Abram left Ur, the futility of the human condition in the melancholy maxim: "The gods have enslaved men, that they might be free; they have reserved life to themselves, and given death to men," and if in our own time such a nullification of the dignity and freedom of the unique and qualitatively distinct man or woman is still presented as the means whereby the problems of the world are to be solved, whether in terms of Nietzsche's superman, of Marx's economic man, of Darwin's evolving man, of Skinner's positively reinforced man, or of whatever other bogus humanity may be envisioned as the goal of the liberation-redemption process, we may be reasonably sure that the ability to see past the futility of such schemes, and to believe in a redemption from evil through the exaltation rather than the suppression of human responsibility and freedom, is an ability which must be given us. Very clearly we do not have it as our own native possession. This gift is the thing itself, the historical redemption. To be informed about it merely is to be informed of an absurdity. The Greek sophisticates whom Paul encountered on the Hill of Ares in Athens long ago knew this very well, for it is simply impossible to reconcile this optimistic view of the human condition with what worldly and sophisticated people know to be true. This is as much the situation now as it was when Paul preached on the Areopagus.

The gift is, of course, the covenant, the presence of God in His people. By this, their free and responsible history is the means of their salvation. No longer enigmatic and finally destructive of all things human, no longer the meaningless succession of moments which pagan thinkers tried to nullify by numbering them, time is now more than number, more than quantity, for it is qualified, made to be history, the good creation, by the positive presence within it of the Creator of all things, the Lord of history. This is, simply, the good news — news so good that in less than three centuries it became the public faith of the Mediterranean peoples, and had made the former pessimism an intellectual impossibility. Paganism was able to survive only by going underground, so to speak, as gnosticism. They, however, it remained, presenting to the new Christian optimism a continual and recurrent temptation to the ancient pessimism, a temptation perennially renewed in all the Christian centuries, including our own. But this pessimism is now only a temptation: it is no longer a necessity of thought, and it is impossible to return to the world in which the good news had not yet been preached, to which the covenant had not been offered.

As the choice between hope and despair becomes more stark, so the necessity grows ever more urgent of understanding the nature of the Christian hope. We need little instruction about despair, for our world is once more drenched with it, inundated with all the ancient idolatries, but without the innocence which once imbued them and lent

splendor to their hopelessness. For us, that pagan innocence is no longer possible. Our melancholies are not golden; they are lies.

Those of us who worship the Lord of history by entering into the covenant He offers must find in any retreat from that worship simply the living out of a lie, the lie which rejects the covenant, the good creation which is our historical responsibility, and the revelation, Christ present in His Church, the one gift of truth upon which the Christian, the Catholic, must rely, without reservation, without regret, without turning back, in a life which is at once gift and the acceptance of the gift. We can refuse the gift, the truth, upon which our dignity and responsibility are founded. When we do so, we turn instead to those lies which deny our dignity in order to acquit us of responsibility, which degrade, diminish and destroy the image of God in us in order that some pseudo-absolute, often of an exceeding pettiness, may not be made ridiculous by our freedom, our responsibility, our historical concreteness as Christian.

Insinuation Recalled

By way of illustration, some of you here present may recall the solemn insinuation of a decade past that the American bishops' directives for the governance of Catholic hospitals were incongruous in a pluralistic society in that they imposed Catholic morality upon a clientele perhaps uncomfortable, on occasion, with that Catholic vision of hospital ethics. By a pleasant happenstance, I was accorded the opportunity by the officers of the Catholic Hospital Association to reply to this pusillanimity in the pages of *Hospital Progress* exactly 10 years ago. What had been proposed was the nullification of the Church's healing mission in favor of the superior dynamic, the superior moral standing of an uncovenanted world-view. This retreat from history is still proposed to every level of Catholic life. It will continue to be proposed for as long as the Church and history endure. When that proposal is accepted, we find progressively, what it entails. The golden legend, the vision of a new humanity unencumbered by the baggage of our covenanted history, begins to grind out the raw uncovenanted reality — the life which Hobbes described as solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. It is solitary, because community demands dignity; poor, because only love can afford to be unselfish; nasty, because of being without transcendence, incapable of worship, therefore unclean; brutish, because of being loveless; and short, because of being for this world only, and the world is fleeting.

To live in such a world is to cooperate in one's degradation, for the covenant we are offered is not one option among many possible ways of being human. The only human possibility is that which is real in Christ, which is realized in faith and hope and charity. There is no

world in which we may live other than that which God made good by His presence within its history. To turn away from this is to turn toward nothingness, to realize a lesser and yet lesser humanity, to enter upon that decline whose image is the unending descent into the abyss. For this entry upon self-destruction, only a single choice is necessary. Given this choice, one has chosen to choose no longer, has chosen to abdicate all responsibility, all authority, in favor of conformity to some timeless nonhistorical absolute which henceforth takes the place of God, and proceeds to devour His people.

Such surrenders are rarely dramatic. Not many of us find ourselves suddenly summoned to a supreme moment of choice between heroism and betrayal. We live our professional lives in prosaic circumstance, to the extent that it can be startling to be reminded that for all our everydayness, we are not prosaic, not pedestrian, but are each endowed with a unique dignity unmatched by that of anyone else, with a responsibility and an authority which are integral with our worship of God, with a unique historical significance to which only a transcendent destiny can respond, for we are judged finally by nothing on this earth but by God alone.

It is this dignity which underwrites all professional authority. It is this dignity which demands of every professional a recognition of a comparably unique dignity in all persons under that authority and charges him or her with a service and a self-donation whose only model is the love by which God first loves us. But this love, the meaning of freedom in history of responsibility and authority, is not achieved by a single choice, nor by any possible combination of free choices. However much we have done, Christian professionalism suggests that we have not done enough. Such suggestion can become neurotic, a kind of self-flagellation. It is saved from this juridicalism by being love, not law. Love has no outer limits. It does not constrain our freedom, but rather constitutes it. Without love, we must be either slaves or despots, as the pagan thinkers knew who did not know the Crucified, the Servant Whose freedom was total in a total self-donation.

To be a professional is to serve the people of God, the community which is humanity, and to do so responsibly, under authority, with authority. This cannot be understood except in terms of the covenant which is fulfilled and perfected in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, Who is the Christ. To be a professional in this full sense is to devote one's life to the greater glory of God. No profession demands of its adepts this full measure of professionalism to a greater extent than that of nursing. No priest, lawyer, soldier or physician is as continually presented with the full range of human dereliction as the nurse in hospital practice, nor as continually challenged by the temptation to avoid the extravagance of love which is the cross, nor as continually confronted by practices and attitudes which are erosive,

finally destructive, of professional responsibility and authority. The inroads which have been made upon this professionalism by the 10 years of *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* — not only in the nursing profession, but in that of lawyers and physicians as well — needs no illustration here. Nonetheless, if it is true, as all the evidence indicates, that the abortionists were first put in their bloody business by the professional defections of lawyers and physicians working hand in hand, it is also true that without the cooperation of comparably perverted segments of the nursing profession, this abomination would long since have ceased. The professions, including the clergy, have introduced this homicidal institution into our society; there are now vested interests in keeping it there, and apart from a widespread professional revolt, there it will remain, despite the almost universal disavowals by the politicians of any personal approval of the practice.

If there is, as I believe, a real relation between the training and education of professional nurses (or lawyers or physicians or priests) and the goals of Jesuit education, in our day it must be evidenced by a recognition that the most flagrant and deadly professional scandal of our time, the abortion business, confronts our professional schools as a blasphemous mockery of everything they stand for, of every reason they have for existence. Our response to this professional insult has not been on a level with that which has removed racism and sexism and anti-Semitism from legal institution, from professional accommodation. Our complaisance with the abortion scandal is close to condonation. Let us priests, physicians, lawyers, nurses, even soldiers — for it is professionalism itself which is an issue — honestly ask ourselves if there has been a single notable change in our training programs which is a direct response to this challenge. I have the impression that there has not been; that we rejoice rather when we are able, infrequently, to eliminate from secular training programs those disabilities which an anti-abortion stance regularly imposes upon the tyro. I believe that after the passage of 10 years, we are still too imbued with a false worship of a false pluralism to dare to speak to the full values of a Jesuit education, of a Jesuit professional training, even within our own Jesuit institutions. The devices by which our professional responsibilities have become dilute and their covenantal dimensions suppressed are those also by which we remove ourselves and others from the history which is our salvation because it is God's gift.

Every period in history presents one same challenge to faith, to the covenanted life. It is not history which here repeats itself, to the point of tedium, but infidelity, for negations have no novelty. Only the truth is ever ancient, ever new. The Society of Jesus exists only to meet the challenge of infidelity, and to educate and to train others to meet it, for the challenge is, at bottom, a summons to retreat from history, from the good creation, from the freedom of the covenant, from all personal responsibility and authority. We must return, in our

Jesuit professional schools, to an always unpopular theme, the existence of authority, and of responsibility, as integral, indispensable, to all professional practice. We must present this theme not as some abstract principle, but in its concreteness, as the worship of the Lord of history, as covenant virtue, as faith, as hope, as charity. This worship, taken seriously, is public and historical. It brings into public life the liberation from those idolatries which in our time have demanded such horrific sacrifices, such universal hatred of those human beings whose dignity is our responsibility, and for whose care our professional authority exists. Any professional training which ignores his responsibility, which does not inculcate a corresponding use of professional authority, is not worthy of the name for it is not, as professional training must be, directed to the greater glory of God.

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