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SOME CATHOLIC CONCEPTS IN
PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL CASE WORK

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of The Requirements For The Degree Of
Master Of Arts In Social Work

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1939

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INTRODUCTION

The most important and the highest repository of life is man. This is a truth which is admitted by practically all persons, and, for this very reason, education, psychology, philosophy, religion, medicine, social work, and, in fact, all the sciences worthy of the name have been vitally concerned about man and deeply interested in analyzing, probing, and understanding his nature and the problems of that nature.

Social Work has been greatly interested in the understanding of man, for man and the solution as well as the prevention of his problems is the "raison d'etre" of its existence. In order to insure the solution as well as the prevention of man's problems, Social Work has been divided into Group Work, Social Welfare Planning, and Social Case Work. As a result of this division, Case Work embraces family welfare work, child welfare work, work in connection with delinquency, probation and parole protective care, medical social work, psychiatric social work, and social investigation. While it is easily conceded that each particular field of social work endeavour is equally important, it is likewise admitted that Social Case Work has the prime place and the most extensive import, because it is that specific type of social work activity which permeates all the species of generic Social Case Work and is the method embraced by them.

Consequently, in this thesis, the direction of attention is to the field of Social Case Work. Considered in itself and in its relations to the branches of Social Work, Social Case Work admits of wide application. Hence the scope and limits of a thesis necessitate the choosing of a particular aspect or phase of social case work. As a means to the fulfillment of this end, this thesis embraces only one phase of Social Case Work, that is the phase which has to do with the fundamental Catholic concepts which appear in professional social case work. The reason for the choice of this particular aspect of case work is twofold; first, to show that Catholic thought has found its way into case work, and secondly, to point out the fact that some of these basic principles and concepts in Social Case Work, which are Catholic in principle, are accepted by the leaders in this field.

The purpose of this thesis is to indicate that Social Case Work and its problems are diversified, mutable, and complex. Its ends, methods, and techniques are flexible and subject to the change required by progressive growth in knowledge and content. New discoveries in subject matter and its application has lead to the formulation of new principles and, in some instances, to an adaptation of already existent principles. Nevertheless, there are certain fundamental and basic concepts in Social Case Work which have remained constant in spite of the new discoveries in this field. These basic concepts are

accepted in professional case work. Some of these are distinctly Catholic in principle and have been extracted from Catholic thought and incorporated into the content of professional social case work data and principles.

Consequently, to accomplish the purpose of this thesis, these fundamental concepts in professional social case work, which are contained in Catholic thought, are pointed out, and likewise their acceptance in professional social case work will be indicated, through the medium of quotations from authorities and practitioners in the case work field.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONCEPT
"MAN'S COMPOSITE NATURE" IN SOCIAL CASE WORK

Catholic Doctrine teaches that man is a rational creature composed of body and soul.¹ The body is one element of man's nature and the soul is the other element. The existence of more than one element in the same being signifies the presence of a composite. In order to understand the full meaning of this statement, it is necessary to know the definition of a composite philosophically considered. A composite, in its philosophical interpretation, is that which is made up of distinct parts or elements. In the person of man this definition is fully realized, because man is composed of two distinct elements. One element is material and is called the body; the other element is spiritual and is called the soul. Therefore, man is a composite.

A complete understanding of the nature of man's body and soul is of prime importance, if the full significance of the Catholic truth--man is a rational creature composed of body and soul--is to be grasped. Man's body consists of organic matter with functions proper to it. Organic matter is that which occupies space and possesses the properties of life, namely,

¹ A Seminary Professor, Exposition of Christian Doctrine (Philadelphia, 1927), page 96 ff. Charles Dubray, Introductory Philosophy (Longmans, Philadelphia, 1875), Chap. II.

growth, movement, nutrition, and development, and these are the functions proper to man's body. Hence, man is a corporeal, sentient, living being, like the animal; and, as such, animality is the genus to which man belongs. However, man is not to be identified with the animal, because man possesses an added substance which distinguishes him from the animal. This added substance which man possesses is spiritual and is called the soul. The soul of man is, therefore, a simple, spiritual substance, capable of existing apart from the body. It is an individual source of life and power, which gives to man the ability to conceive abstract and universal ideas, to reason upon them and to express these same ideas in intelligible language.

The statement that man is a composite consisting of body and soul does not mean that man is a creature consisting of a body plus a soul. This would constitute two individual substances complete in themselves and separately existent. This would not be a true definition of man; for man is a single unitary being of body and soul. St. Thomas Aquinas has given expression to the Catholic Doctrine on this point in the following words:

"Some have thought that man's body was formed first in priority of time, and that afterwards the soul was infused into the formed body. But it is inconsistent with the perfection of the production of things, that God should have made either the body without the soul, or the soul

without the body, since each is a part of human nature. This is especially unfitting as regards the body, for the body depends on the soul, and not the soul on the body."²

In the above quotation St. Thomas tells us that the body and the soul are each a part of human nature, and, in doing so, he further tells us that man is a composite because two elements are present in man's nature, namely the body and the soul. St. Thomas, in informing us that "the body depends on the soul, and not the soul on the body", expresses the relationship existing between the body and the soul. The relationship consists in this, that the soul is the substantial form of the body. The substantial form is a determining principle (soul) which, by its union with the subject (body) that it actuates, constitutes a complete substance of a determinate species. This means that the body and soul act together. There is a simultaneity in their actions, because body and soul form one man, and therefore, one complete principle of activity. The soul communicates to the body motion, life, and feeling, and the body informed by the soul completes human nature. Moreover, owing to this intimate union between the soul and the body, whatever affects one also affects the other.³

² St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica (Benziger Bros., New York) 1925) p.I,q. 91. A4.

³ Thoma Zigliana, Summa Philosophica (Beauchesne, Paris, 1926) A. 14.

The expose of this principle, namely, that man is a rational composite consisting of body and soul, is sound Catholic Doctrine and sound philosophy, scholastically considered. For professional social case work it has a far-reaching significance.

Gordon Hamilton formulates the following as the objective of professional social case work: the complete rehabilitation and satisfactory adjustment of the client, intrinsically and extrinsically considered. She expresses this objective in these words:

"The case work idea is now, however, fortunately no longer circumscribed by the practices of relief giving, but may be utilized whenever people lack capacity to organize the ordinary affairs of life or lack satisfactions in their ordinary social relationships. Anxiety, distress and incapacity are always personal and must be so understood. I should place as central in our discussion the understanding that problems are both individual and social; that a case is for us always a complex of inner and outer factors."⁴

There is agreement among professional social case workers regarding the objective of professional social case work. For Bertha C. Reynolds, in agreement with Gordon Hamilton, expresses the objective of professional social case work in the following terms:

⁴ Fern Lowry, Readings in Social Case Work 1920-1938 (Columbia, New York), page 156.

"Social Case Work is that form of social Work which assists the individual while he struggles to relate himself to his family, his natural groups, his community. It would be needless to say that if we really believe that life is for growth we shall use no methods that in themselves hamper the growth of the human spirit."⁵

Each of the authorities quoted bears out the principle that man must be considered in himself (per se); he must be considered in his relationships (per aliud); all of which can be summed up under the three headings, relationships to his family, to his natural groups, and to his community. He must also be considered in his growth of spirit. The statement that man must be considered in himself (per se) means that man must be looked at as a creature capable of experiencing states of pain and pleasure, states of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. He must be viewed as an entity (being) who is able to act, feel, and think for himself. Man in himself must be thought of as a person who is conscious of his cognition, personality, and character. It is said that man must be considered in his relationships (per aliud). This means that man must be looked upon as an individual who is conditioned, partially or totally according to the individual man's receptivity, by the impressions, attitudes, and ideals of others, in so far as they react upon him. The individual man must be recognized as one person capable of exercising the virtues of sincerity, altruism, loyalty, and reciprocity

⁵ Ibid, page 137 ff.

towards others as well as an individual who can practice hypocrisy, deceit, and dissimulation in his dealings with others. It is only when all these principles are viewed in the light of totality that they achieve the satisfactory adjustment and complete rehabilitation of man, which is the objective proper to professional social case work.

With the formulation and acceptance of this object of case work, it logically follows that the case worker must look at the total man, the complete individual, consisting of body and soul, and must recognize all his attributes, if the end of case work is to be fully realized.

An example of this idea is revealed in the case of an individual who may present to the worker the problem of social maladjustment. The worker may look for the causation of the social maladjustment in physical factors: either within the individual himself or in the external circumstances with which he is surrounded. It is undoubtedly true that in an individual socially unadjusted, the worker may find some or many physical factors which need treatment. The physical obstacles to the client's social adjustment may be entirely removed, and yet, in spite of this, the client may still remain socially unadjusted, unless the worker goes beyond the mere organic composition of man and sees in him the spiritual element of his nature, which we call the soul.

In order that the social adjustment may be effected, it is necessary that the case worker recognize not only the spiritual nature of man, which is his soul, but also its need for development and treatment under the proper guidance. The fact that social work has accepted the principles of Psychiatry and Mental Hygiene is a conclusive proof that social case workers recognize the need of the individual for spiritual development and treatment. Social case workers can and do realize that the basic cause of an individual's social unadjustment may be a spiritual malady. The spiritual malady causative of the social maladjustment may take the form of insecurity, worry, anxiety, resulting from a lack of confidence in the ability to form judgments, or it may be found in the individual's states of mental and moral conflicts. When the individual client's social maladjustment is caused by spiritual maladies, the case worker, recognizing his need for spiritual development and treatment, can suggest to him the remedies which he, as the patient or client, can and may use for the eradication of the spiritual maladies troubling him.

The recognition and admission of the fact that man's nature is composed of a material and a spiritual element, namely, body and soul, each having an influence upon the other, is a truth which is accepted by the more thoughtful case workers today. The following quotation, representative of the content of social case work data, lends authority to the fact

that social case work recognizes the composite nature of man.

"As in the art of painting, beauty and correlation of elements and harmony of composition were gradually subordinated to the conception and the expression of personality, so that case workers are beginning to see the very heart of their subject to be the potentialities, mental, moral, and spiritual of their families and of the individual members." 6

The quotation cited above points out in very clear and very evident terms the fact that social case work takes cognizance of the existence and the needs of man's soul. By the word subject it designates the existence of man's body and by the terms mental, moral, and spiritual it demonstrates the presence of the soul in man.

The statement given above is but one of several quotations which bear ample testimony to the truth that social case work recognizes the existence and needs of man's soul. The following excerpts also support this truth.

"However degraded and vile the haunts into which the social worker is called, the people encountered there are something greater than cases; they are sufferers, they are personalities, they are potentialities, they are souls."7

This quotation needs no interpretation, for the words "they are souls" is a self-evident proof of the belief of social case workers in the existence of man's soul.

6 Margaret Carpenter, "Forward Trends", The Family, Vol. 3-4 (Family Wel. Assoc.), page 246.

7 Ibid, page 207.

The soul, according to Catholic doctrine, is the vital principle existing in man. Its creation is of divine origin. It is separable from man's material body. In this life the soul and the body exist together, and in doing so form one complete individual; and, because these two elements exist in one person, that person can logically be called a composite, complex being.

The teaching of professional social case work is in agreement with the teaching of Catholicism, as stated previously. Social case work has formulated its conception of man's composite nature in the following words:

"May we for a moment consider what meanings the word 'spirit' and 'spiritual' have for us? Spirit, according to its definition in the New Standard Dictionary, 'comes to stand for the more truly divine and permanent principle in the complex nature of man'. It is 'the principle of life and vital energy, especially when regarded as separable from the material organism, mysterious in nature and ascribable to a divine origin'. It follows, then, that the word 'spiritual' pertains to 'spirit' as distinguished from matter, to the soul or inner man, relating to or affecting the immaterial nature of man. Considering this definition of the spirit in connection with our understanding of case work as the process of 'developing personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment', we are brought to a realization of the fact that all true case work is spiritual. The spirit is the very stuff and substance of case work. It would be impossible to develop personality through consciously effected adjustments between men and their social environment were it not for that life

principle and vital energy which William Ernest Hocking calls the 'miracle' in man."⁸

⁸ Ibid, Vol. 5-6, page 225.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CATHOLIC PRINCIPLE OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE
IN ITS APPLICATION TO SOCIAL CASE WORK

It is of the utmost importance to realize that the great religious codes have emphasized the necessity of self-knowledge. They declare it to be an indispensable aid or tool to a man, if he is to progress as he should in the spiritual, moral, physical, and social spheres.

Catholicism has laid down the principle of self-knowledge as one of the fundamental principles of the spiritual life. The means advocated by the Catholic Church to obtain this end, and to insure the fulfillment of this principle, is called the examination of conscience. As is known, the examination of conscience consists in determining, in an honest and sincere manner, faults and failings, as well as ascertaining the good qualities which are possessed. The Baltimore Catechism has formulated the direction of the Catholic Church in regard to the examination of conscience as a means of self-knowledge in very simple words. They are: "We must examine our conscience."¹ It does not say our neighbor's conscience or any other person's conscience; hence, the examination pertains to self.

¹ Baltimore Catechism (Benziger Bros., N. Y.), L.I.Q. 1911, p.20.

Tanquery's Spiritual Life, under the heading, "Methods for the Examination of Conscience", advises:

"Everyone acknowledges that these (general and particular examination of conscience) have been greatly perfected by St. Ignatius. In his Spiritual Exercises, he carefully differentiates between the general and the particular examination. The former bears upon all the actions of the day, the latter upon one special point, a fault to be corrected, a virtue to be cultivated."²

This quotation shows that the Catholic Church does believe in the method of self-examination as one of the means leading to self-knowledge. The Catholic Church, realizing that if a person lacks self-knowledge, it is morally impossible for that person to perfect himself. Consequently, the Catholic Church advocates the daily examination of conscience in a particular and general manner.

The Catholic Church believes in the principle of self-knowledge as a means to the betterment of one's self and one's situation. It is an axiomatic truth that one who explicitly wills the means to an end implicitly wills the end and its accomplishment. For example, if a person is standing in an orchard and he sees an apple tree in the orchard and he desires to have an apple, he has explicitly willed the end, namely, the apple. In so doing, he has implicitly willed the means to that

² Adolphe Tanquerey, The Spiritual Life (Desclee, Rome, 1930) page 227.

end, namely, the shaking of the apple tree until he obtains the apple. Applying this principle to Catholicism, it is found that the Catholic Church advocates the method of self-examination. This method logically and partially leads to one end, self-knowledge. Therefore, the Catholic Church, in explicitly willing, advocating, and teaching the method of self-examination, wills, advocates, and teaches implicitly the fulfillment of the end, self-knowledge.

Self-examination alone and unaided will not lead to a complete and full knowledge of one's self. It is the tool which needs the hand of the workman to guide it. In other words, the problems and faults which the self-examination brings to light must be explained and interpreted to the individual who is confronted with these problems. The interpreter does not solve the problems for the individual. He, through directional questioning and prudent guidance, stimulates the individual to seek a remedy for his problems. The remedy being found for the solution of the individual's problems, it then becomes the function of the interpreter to lead the individual to the point where the individual himself will apply the remedy and thus solve his own problems.

This is the method used by the Catholic Church. The penitent comes to Church, examines his conscience, gains a partial knowledge of himself through the discovery of his faults and the problems which confront him. He then goes to

confession, tells them to the priest, and the priest fulfills the role of interpreter. He assists the penitent to understand his problems. The penitent, in view of the priest's interpretation and explanation, is able to solve his problems and improve himself. Thus the Catholic principle of partial self-knowledge gained through self examination is fulfilled.

There is a striking parallelism between the Catholic principle of self-knowledge and the social case work principle of self-knowledge. Both seek the same end, namely, the gaining of a partial knowledge of the individual self. Likewise, the proper objective is common to both; that is, the obtaining of partial self-knowledge for the purpose of self-improvement and the solution of existent problems. The methodology of both, when analyzed and reduced to prime factors, results in a method of self-examination. In this way, the Catholic principle of self-knowledge is applied in social case work.

This same principle of self-knowledge arrived at through self-examination is used in social case work. Its method of application in social case work may be stated in the following terms. The caseworker endeavours to find out something about the client. For the task of the social case worker, which is knowing and understanding the client, requires a great deal of information. This has been expressed in the following words of Alice Webber:

"As social workers our job is, simply speaking, to try to meet human needs--really far from a simple matter. Our first step is to understand these needs. First there are needs which I call the needs of individuals as persons."³

There is implied by the above statement the fact that a case worker must know and understand the client and his needs.

The worker does not perform the actual task of informing himself, but merely controls and directs this task during the many contacts with the client. It is the client who performs the task of informing the worker by his verbalized self-examination. It is true that some information about the client can be obtained from sources other than the client himself. However, it must be remembered that there are some factors of the client's make-up about which the worker cannot obtain information from any other source than the client himself, namely, personal attitudes towards his problems and purely personal relationship problems. The worker must learn these facts from the client himself, in order to obtain his personal viewpoint, feelings, and attitudes. The client's own story about his needs and problems is of the utmost importance, if the worker and the individual are to understand one another thoroughly and to establish the necessary rapport. This necessarily presupposes a process of self-examination by the client, consciously or unconsciously performed by him. It results in the client's gain-

³ Alice J. Webber, "Social Change and Social Case Work", Bulletin of New York School of Social Work, July, 1937, page 111.

ing for the client a partial knowledge of himself.

This fact is further emphasized when it is remembered that client participation in social case treatment is urged. The Milford Conference Report states:

"The client himself must be a participant in the art of social case work. In our discussion of methods we have defined participation as the method of giving to a client the fullest possible share in the process of working out an understanding of his difficulty and a desirable plan for meeting it."⁴

A client cannot participate in social case treatment in the Milford Conference determination of client participation unless he has an understanding of his difficulties. The client's arrival at an understanding of his difficulties may be, and often is, a long-time process. Individuals, for the most part, cannot arrive at an understanding of their difficulties by themselves. They need the interpretation and guidance of the case worker. The clients must furnish this material for the worker to interpret. One of the methods used by the client to accomplish this purpose is self-examination, consciously or unconsciously used by him under the worker's guidance. This method, together with the worker's interpretation, results in the gaining of a partial self-knowledge, which is the application in social case work of the Catholic principle of self-knowledge arrived at through self-examination.

4 "Social Case Work--Generic and Specific", Report of the Milford Conference, 1929, Chap. xi, page 30.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER AS A
CATHOLIC PRINCIPLE IN SOCIAL CASE WORK

The previous chapter treated the principle of self-knowledge and indicated that it is one of the contributory means to rehabilitation. Self-knowledge partially arrived at through self-examination, together with the case worker's interpretation, has certain logical active results, among which is the development of character. When a person wishes to achieve an end, namely, self-betterment or rehabilitation, he must use the means to that end, which, in the case of the end, self-betterment or rehabilitation, is the development of character. This chapter shall define character and treat of the subject of the development of character as a Catholic principle, as well as a social case work principle.

Character implies the possession of distinctive traits resident in a complex being. It is a specific entity (being) intimately related to and forming a part of the total complex nature of man. In brief, character is life dominated by principles. If these principles are good, the result is good character. If these principles are bad, the result is bad character. Everyone possesses character, which is good or bad,

depending on the principles upon which his character is based. Character is not static; it requires development and therefore necessitates a dynamic or active process.

This active process consists in the adoption of principles and in making these same principles a part of ourselves through the medium of repeated acts governed by these principles. Habit is developed by repeated acts. A person who acts in a dishonest manner and continues to do so for some time forms the habit of dishonesty. He is then said to have a dishonest or a bad character. Moreover, if he contracted many bad habits, he would be said to have a bad character. This example serves to illustrate the following points: 1) that character is individual and personal, and 2) that character can be developed.

The next step in the treatment of the subject of this chapter is to determine whether Catholic Doctrine teaches and advocates the development of character.

The whole purpose of the Catholic religion is summed up in the words,

"Be ye therefore perfect."¹

A thing or person is perfect when it has attained its own end.

"Each is said to be perfect in so far as it attains its own end, which is the highest perfection of anything."²

This is absolute perfection. There is, however, progressive perfection, consisting in the striving for the end proper to it

1 The Holy Bible, Opt. Cit., St. Matthew, v. 46.

2 St. Thomas Aquinas, Opt. Cit., IIIa, IIae, q. 184.

by the development of qualities proportionate to the attainment of that end. That this progressive perfection has a place in the Catholic Doctrine of perfection is affirmed in the following quotation:

"However, there is also a relative and progressive perfection which consists in the approach toward that end by the development of all one's faculties and the carrying out in practice of all duties, in accordance with the dictates of the natural law as manifested by right reason."³

The dictates of the natural law as manifested by right reason consist in specific form of the habits of honesty, temperance, justice, prudence, fortitude, mutual help, which is a form of charity, truthfulness, and numerous other virtuous acts of a similar nature, which, when acquired, become qualities descriptive of character. Progressive perfection consists in the development of qualities, and since qualities are the factors constituting character, Catholic theology, believing in progressive perfection, must logically and necessarily teach and advocate the development of character. Moreover, since character is life dominated by principles, and since the Catholic Church teaches and advocates the guidance and living of the individual's life according to the principles laid down by the Ten Commandments, the Church therefore advocates life founded on principles, which is character.

³ Adolphe Tanquerey, op. cit., page 156.

For the purpose of the present discussion, it is sufficient to emphasize that this principle of character development is applied and utilized in the field of social case work.

Character, as defined, is life dominated by principles. In examining the data of social case work, it is found that the case worker endeavours to assist the client to the point where his life will be founded on principles, so that he may develop to his fullest capacity and may attain the end of social case work, which is rehabilitation. The following quotation may be cited as indicative:

"After all, if a child has been referred to an agency because he has acquired certain definitely undesirable habits, a measure of the success of the agency's treatment will be found in the modification or elimination of these habits."⁴

This quotation states that the elimination or modification of undesirable habits is considered a necessary part of case work in the children's field. It has been shown in the beginning of this chapter that habits are developed by repeated acts. Likewise, it has been demonstrated that habits are the material which shape and mould character. For it was pointed out that a character is good if it is founded on good habits and good principles. It is bad or an undesirable character if it is founded on bad or undesirable habits. Consequently, social case work, in seeking to modify or eliminate undesirable habits

⁴ Baylor and Monachesi, Rehabilitation of Children, pages 229 and 232.

is seeking and endeavouring to modify character. This is another way of expressing the fact that social casework endeavours to develop character. In the light of the above quotation, it is evident that social case work not only endeavours to develop character, but the emphasis in social case work is placed on the development of good character by eradicating the undesirable habits in the individual's makeup.

CHAPTER FOUR
FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY
OF THE INDIVIDUAL

The Catholic principles of freedom and responsibility are natural rights of the individual and are recognized as such in social case work. This chapter will point out the fact that the principle of the freedom of the individual is a Catholic principle. Likewise it will indicate that Catholic Doctrine holds that each individual has the capability of assuming responsibility. The third purpose of this chapter is to point out the fact that these same principles have an accepted place in the field of social case work.

Freedom or human liberty is a property of the will, which property gives to the will the power to act or not to act, to act in one way or to act in another, when there is present all the necessary elements for the proper determination of itself. This freedom is called freedom of choice or simply free will, and is liberty with regard to the contradictory or to the contrary, and, as such, is called human conduct or volitional activity, in order to distinguish it from existent types of activity purely physical. Activities purely physical are necessary reactions of our mind and are of two kinds, namely, affective and conative. The affective consists in feelings and emotions.

The conative consist in impulses and instincts. Human conduct, or volitional activity, consist in the ability to choose between two opposites, or the capacity for determining the course of our action.

The exercise of this power of freedom of will is best illustrated through the citation of an example. The book entitled "This Creature, Man" gives the following example, and in doing so admirably bears out the fact of the freedom of the will or the power of volitional activity as regards human conduct.

"Consider the choice--act! I am confronted with a temptation to commit an immoral act --to steal a precious gem from the house of my employer. The evil thought may have been present in my mind for some time before I actually became aware of it, but as soon as I advert to its immoral nature, I am forced to do one of two things; either to resist it immediately and banish it from my mind, or to consent to the temptation and steal the jewel. Whatever I decide to do, however, I am conscious of making my choice freely. And the consciousness that I have chosen freely is the very ground for my subsequent feelings of remorse or self-approbation over my action. All our notions of virtue and vice, merit and demerit, rewards and punishments are founded on the fact that the agent of human acts is a responsible being, and, therefore, to be judged for every act committed with sufficient reflection and full consent of the will."¹

The quotation cited above not only establishes the freedom of the will, but also indicates the second point of this chapter, namely, the responsibility of the individual. Responsibility can be defined as that state or quality proper to a person, in

¹ James Francis Barrett, This Creature, Man, page 166-7.

virtue of which he is held to be answerable for the performance of an act and its consequences, or the omission of an act and its consequences.

Both freedom and responsibility have been defined in sequence, because one logically follows from the other. In order to have the quality of responsibility, a person must be free. There can be no responsibility unless freedom is present as a constituent factor. Consequently, because responsibility follows from freedom, or free-will, and, because of the intimate and necessary connection between the two, it is necessary to treat them together in this chapter.

Catholic Doctrine teaches both freedom of the will and responsibility as the effect flowing from free will or the freedom of the individual. In examining the teachings of the Catholic religion, such statements as the following are found, and they give ample evidence of the Catholic Church's belief in the principles of free-will and responsibility as existent and resident in the individual man.

"Is man endowed with liberty? Of this there is no possible doubt. The existence of free-will in man is an undeniable fact attested to by the analysis of our free act, by the innermost sense of the individual, and by the affirmation of all mankind. On the other hand, to deny man's free-will would be to destroy the foundation of all morality and of society itself."²

2 W. Devivier, Christian Apologetics, page 451.

"We are so free that, though human violence may restrain our exterior actions, it has no power over the act of the will. Liberty is a blessing; Leo XIII calls it praestantissimum donum--most excellent blessing of our nature; it is in virtue of our free will that we are responsible for our acts and that we can merit heaven."³

This, then, in brief, is the teaching of the Catholic religion on the principles of freedom and responsibility of the individual.

The next problem in this chapter is to satisfy ourselves as to whether or not these same principles of freedom and responsibility of the individual have been recognized and accepted in professional social case work.

"Judging by the material it (questionnaire) brought forth, the second question on the schedule--dealing with developing case work practices--was apparently the most challenging. This, too, was subject to several divisions which might be roughly set down as client's participation in responsibility, individualization, understanding of reality situations, levels of treatment, control of time, cooperation with the public agency and relief. A change from doing things for the client to helping the client do things for himself, through a mutual relationship, has developed. The broadening concepts of case work point to the case worker allowing this type (that is the type with a good capacity for adjustment) to continue handling their own problems despite their financial dependency."⁴

This statement gives evidence of the social case worker's acceptance of the principle of responsibility, and at the same

³ W. Devivier, Christian Apologetics, page 451.

⁴ The Family, op. cit. Vol. 15, page 208.

time it manifests the case worker's recognition of the fact that a client is still capable of assuming his individual responsibility, even though he may be on the level of financial dependency. Although social case work recognizes the necessity of allowing the client to assume responsibility, still it does not do so irrationally, but rather suits the amount of responsibility the client may assume according to his individual and personal capacity. This idea is set forth by Elizabeth Dexter in these words:

"The aim of treatment, as we thus conceive it, is to help the client realize his feelings and assume responsibility for them in so far as his desire and ability to do so permit."⁵

Social case work expresses its acceptance of the individual's freedom in the following words:

"The worker, through a willingness to let the client find himself without dictation, condemnation, or didactic advice, makes it possible for him to work out an individual adjustment consonant with his own essential feelings and founded on his increased ability to utilize his personal and environmental resources."⁶

By the acceptance of this principle of the individual's freedom, the social case worker does not command or force the individual to one certain course of action; but rather shows respect for the individual's client right to freedom by allowing him to determine his course of action under her guidance and direction.

5 The Family, op. cit. Vol. 14, page 205.

6 Grace F. Marcus, "Social Case Work", The Social Work Year Book, 1935, page 455.

These authorities in the field of social case work give us data representative of the thought content in social case work, and in doing so, establish the fact that the Catholic principle of freedom and responsibility of the individual is recognized and accepted in professional social case work.

CHAPTER FIVE

A TWOFOLD CONCEPT

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL
2. RESPECT DUE TO THE INDIVIDUAL

The previous chapters of this thesis treated of man and viewed him in his nature and some of the various aspects of that nature as they affect social case work. In this chapter, a demonstration is made of the fact that Catholicism does regard man as important and does believe that he is deserving of respect. This chapter shall also point out the fact that social case work has accepted the Catholic principle regarding man's importance and the respect due him as an individual.

The Catholic religion states her acceptance of this principle in the following words:

"The body of man shares in a manner the nobility of the soul. The likeness of God stamps itself in some way on the body, as being the instrument of the soul and its dwelling-place, both in its upright bearing and in the dominion it exerts over the irrational creature."¹

The above statement shows that man is the highest of creatures in the visible universe. He is a creature composed of body and soul. His soul is immortal and is endowed with the faculties of intellect and will. He is gifted with rationality

¹ J. Laux, A Course in Religion for High Schools and Colleges, Part I, page 48.

which makes him superior to irrational creatures. The Bible gives evidence of the same idea, when it states:

"What is man that thou art mindful of him?
Thou hast made him a little less than the
Angels, Thou hast crowned him with glory
and hast set him over the works of Thy hands."²

Hence man, the highest of visible creatures, is important and, because of the faculties he possesses and the end to which he is directed, namely, eternal happiness, is worthy of respect.

Social Case Work believes that the individual is important.

It expresses its conception of this as follows:

"Social Case Work sets supreme value upon the individual in a world which seems, by blundering if not by design, to hold human life as the cheapest of commodities."³

Practically all the policies of social case work are directed to a definite end; that is, the satisfactory adjustment and complete rehabilitation of the individual man. From this it follows that social case work does admit that man is to be respected as an individual. Evidence of this truth is given in the statement that follows:

"Generalization with regard to human beings and human problems is giving way to individualization. We no longer speak of types of people, types of problems, types of solutions. Each person is an individual human being, each problem is a specific one, each solution must be based on peculiar circumstances surrounding a particular situation. In other words, a fundamental principle of social case work--that each individual must be

2 The Holy Bible, op. cit., Book of Psalms, 8;5.

3 The Family, op. cit. Vol. 16, page 240.

regarded and treated separately from any other individual--is rapidly becoming a part of the philosophy of the times."⁴

Social case workers have expressed as their aim the development in the individual of the fullest possible capacity for self-maintenance. In order that they may achieve this aim they must and they do respect the individual. For no individual can develop a capacity for self-maintenance unless he uses as a foundation for this capacity the principles of the individual's importance and respect. Social Case Work has incorporated this concept in the teaching of case work field. It is expressed thus:

"The most elementary concept of an ethical relationship rests upon a mutual respect for the integrity and individuality of the other. Without this as a foundation the case work relationship is a travesty."⁵

In concluding the treatment of the topic of this chapter, its material may be summed up thus. The quotations given above, representative of the thought of social case workers today, gives certitude to the point that social case work does believe in the importance of the man and does recognize the fact that respect is due to him as such.

⁴ Ibid. Vols. 9 and 10, page 287.

⁵ Robinson, A Changing Psychology In Social Case Work, page 165.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis there was covered some of the more basic Catholic concepts in so far as they are applied in the field of social case work. Evidence of the concepts as Catholic principles have been given. Statements showing that these same concepts as Catholic principles are applicable in social case work.

The primary purpose of this thesis was to show that there is a relationship between the Catholic principles and social work data. The two are not incompatible. The relationship is a concordant, harmonious one. The relationship may be thus expressed; a Catholic principle identifies in some respect with a social case work principle, showing that the two are not at variance with each other and that both seek the same end, namely, the betterment of mankind as a whole and the welfare of the individual man.

The conclusions are as follows:

- 1) Man's nature, consisting of body and soul, is a Catholic principle which is recognized in professional social case work.
- 2) Self-knowledge, partially gained through self-examination, is also a Catholic principle which is used in case work.

- 3) Catholic Doctrine advocates the development of character; so, also, does social case work.
- 4) The freedom and responsibility as resident in the individual is a very important principle, both in Catholic Doctrine as well as in social case work data.
- 5) The individual man is important and is to be respected--a concept acceptable to both Catholic Doctrine and Social Case Work.
- 6) A review of the literature in the field of Social Case Work has emphasized the possibilities, the need, and the material available for further research. Each principle as presented in this study may be the basis for extensive work in the correlation of Catholic principles with social case work tenets, both ethically and philosophical-ly considered.

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