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**Assessing and Enabling Effective Lay Ministry  
in Scotland: Lay Ministry and its Place in the  
Changing Reality of Scottish Catholicism**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of  
Theology and Ministry in Durham University  
Department of Theology and Religion**

**by Catriona Fletcher**

**2016**

## Abstract

The purpose of the dissertation is to assess where and how full-time, stable, lay ministry is developing in Scotland and to understand the ways in which lay ministry could grow and thrive with adequate resources and formation. The background to the dissertation is the changing circumstances of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Numbers of priests and consecrated religious have sharply declined in recent decades and there has been an on-going decline in levels of practice. Parishes are increasingly relying on their greatest asset: the laity. Within this cohort some are called to positions of pastoral leadership as pastoral assistants, chaplains, or youth workers. My interest in this topic arises from my work in such contexts over the last thirty years. Despite the emerging reality I found a dearth of literature about lay ministry or new models of ministry in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Noel Timms' extensive research project *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices* (2001) does, usefully, include findings from two Scottish dioceses. In contrast the pastoral reality of lay ministry has been extensively researched in the United States and the thesis draws on the considerable study of Lay Ecclesial Ministry that has taken place there.

The new ecclesiological vision which emerged from Vatican II emphasised the common priesthood of all the baptised. This, together with a renewed historical consciousness, has led some theologians to call for a greater diversity in ministry within the Roman Catholic Church. Other theologians believe that change is only possible through deconstruction of the Tradition.

In this thesis I aim to pursue the following lines of enquiry: - What place does lay ministry have in the changing reality of Scottish Catholicism? What factors make for effective lay ministry? What elements would need to be put in place to enable the further development of lay ministry?

The research process involved semi-structured interviews with diocesan personnel in seven of the eight Scottish dioceses and two case-studies of parishes with lay ecclesial ministers. The research found that ministry flourishes where there is an attitude of openness, where positive relationships are built, where there is the motivation and intention to actively create a total ministering community and where there is the practice of pastoral planning. The research revealed that across all the dioceses there are considerable theological and psychological barriers to be overcome before lay ministry can flourish. Contradiction and ambiguity in ecclesiological understanding has further contributed to the hesitant acceptance of lay ministers in Scotland. At the present time there is also a lack of synchronisation between the hermeneutical lens operating in postmodern culture and the philosophical understanding underpinning magisterial statements made in a pre-modern or modern era. Dialogue, solidarity and community were noted to be of particular importance for mission and ministry in postmodernity. A ministerial model of collaboration and co-responsibility can provide the vitality needed to enable this mission.

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## Abbreviations

APC	Archdiocesan Pastoral Council
AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem
CDF	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
CELAM	<i>Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano</i> , Latin American Bishops' Conference
CG	Called and Gifted
CGTM	Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium
CL	Christifidelis Laici
GS	Gaudium et Spes
LG	Lumen Gentium
RCIA	Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium
TAR	Theological Action Research
TGS	Together in God's Service
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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## **Introduction: The Purpose of the Dissertation**

The purpose of the dissertation is to assess where and how lay ministry is developing in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland and to understand the factors that support and promote its growth. The dissertation is set within the context of the changing demographics faced by the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Numbers of priests and consecrated religious have sharply declined in recent decades and there has been an on-going decline in levels of practice. As a result parishes are increasingly relying on their greatest asset: the laity. Within this cohort some demonstrate considerable pastoral leadership within the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, in positions such as pastoral assistants, chaplains or youth workers.

The research looks at the extent of lay ministry throughout the eight Catholic dioceses in Scotland and at the context in which it has developed. At the present time many factors at local level are contributing to the need and the opportunity for lay ministry. However to sustain and embed new developments, the support of the wider Church is needed and considerable resources are required. The questions explored in this thesis bring to light a complex set of attitudes, social norms and expectations in addition to normative and operative theologies. These need to be addressed if lay ministry is to grow and develop in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. The questions explored by the thesis are –

1. What place does lay ministry have in the changing reality of Scottish Catholicism?
2. What factors make for effective lay ministry?
3. What elements would need to be put in place to enable the further development of lay ministry?

The world is changing in ways and at a pace that has never been seen before. So much is this the case, that Michael Paul Gallagher asserts there is effectively a generational change every five years.<sup>1</sup> The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland has equally been affected by these rapid changes. As Roger Haight reminds us, this is inevitable since the Christian Community

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Paul Gallagher, 'Catholic Identity and Today's Culture', Keynote Address: Living Theology 2006, Ushaw College, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2006.

exists in history with the result that there can be no time when it is not encountering new challenges.<sup>2</sup> Many have experienced the marked decline in clergy in recent years as problematic. Some parishes have closed and in the towns and cities many parishes are now clustered. Some dioceses have large rural areas with priests serving three or four parishes many miles apart from each other. Many religious orders have withdrawn from Scotland and those that remain are increasingly few in number, with most of their personnel beyond the normal retirement age.

In the light of this falling number of ministers it is worth noting that, at the beginning of the fifth century, St. Jerome commented: “the church is not a church without ministers”.<sup>3</sup> That is, ministry is inherent in the nature of the gathered Christian community. In the light of this Edward Schillebeeckx<sup>4</sup> comments that a “shortage of priests” is an “ecclesiological impossibility” unless the Spirit is “quenched” in the community of believers. When we recognise the growth and development of lay ministry in recent years throughout the church many would conclude that far from being “quenched” the Spirit remains active in calling forth ministers to serve the Christian community. However the profile of these ministers is different from what has gone before. Essentially, throughout Scotland, there are vast numbers of lay people whose voluntary contribution to ministry keeps parishes functioning. These people exercise ministry as Eucharistic ministers, pastoral visitors and catechists. In doing so, they act on behalf of the church as representatives of the Gathered Community.

There are also a gradually increasing number of lay people whose full-time work is in the church. These people are employed as pastoral assistants in parishes, chaplains in schools, hospitals and prisons, as youth workers and in diocesan agencies. While the numbers of lay people holding such positions is still relatively small in Scotland they represent a significant growth in a style of ministry that is more collaborative and inclusive. Crucially, they embody for all lay people the ‘ordination’ received through

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<sup>2</sup> Roger Haight, *Ecclesial Existence (Christian Community in History, III)* (New York & London: Continuum, 2008), preface viii.

<sup>3</sup> Jerome, *Dialogus contra Luciferianos* 21, PL23, 175.

<sup>4</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1985) p. 207.

baptism.<sup>5</sup> This thesis focusses primarily on this group of lay people. It is with my own experience of this role and with particular reference to this group of 'Lay Ecclesial Ministers' that I am undertaking this research. The term, "Lay Ecclesial Minister", originates in the USCCB<sup>6</sup> document, *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. Lay Ecclesial Ministers are differentiated from ministers who are volunteers and characterised by: authorisation by the hierarchy to serve publicly; leadership in a particular area of ministry; close mutual collaboration with bishops, priests and deacons and appropriate preparation and formation. *Co-Workers* explains:

We do not use the term in order to establish a new rank or order among the laity. Rather, we use the terminology as an adjective to identify a developing and growing reality, to describe it more fully, and to seek a deeper understanding of it under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup>

Lay Ecclesial Ministers in the United States are given a position by this document albeit a tenuous one. There is no equivalent recognition of lay ecclesial ministers by Scottish bishops but 'Co-workers' gives a valuable blueprint in working towards a framework for emerging lay ministry. Much of the energy of Scottish bishops in recent years has been directed towards filling gaps left by falling numbers of priests and consecrated religious.<sup>8</sup> The

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<sup>5</sup> John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, (London: DLT, 1985), pp. 215–216. Also referenced in Richard R. Gaillardetz, 'Ecclesiological Foundations of Ministry in an Ordered Communion,' in *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood: Theologies of Lay and Ordained Ministry*, ed. Susan K. Wood, (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2003), p. 35. Orthodox theologian John Zizioulas asserts, "There is no such thing as a 'non-ordained' person in the Church." When a person is initiated into the ecclesial community that individual becomes a member of a particular 'ordo,' being initiated into a specific ecclesial relationship with others who profess the Christian faith.

<sup>6</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

<sup>7</sup> *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, (Washington: USCCB Publishing, 2005) p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Across Scotland there has been between 2001 and 2011 a decrease in the number of practising Catholics of 7%. The number of secular priests has declined by 25%, the number of Religious by 39%. There has been a ten fold increase in the number of foreign priests and many secular priests have chosen to postpone retirement with 28% of priests active in parishes now over 75. Figures based on information from the *Scottish Catholic Directory*, (Glasgow: Burns, 2001. ) and *Scottish Catholic Directory*, (Glasgow: Burns, 2011.).



increase in lay ecclesial ministry<sup>9</sup> has almost gone unnoticed, yet I find that lay ministry is a new and exciting resource in the church which could contribute much needed new life and energy. In what follows I will refer to lay ministers active in Scotland by the title they are given in their parish or diocese, while recognising their service to be Lay Ecclesial Ministry.

Since 1987 I have been engaged in full-time salaried ministry within the Catholic Church in the U.K. I have been part of the first generation of lay people and in particular lay women who have had the opportunity for a sustained ministerial role. While this has been joyful and fulfilling, it has also brought me into the conflict between those who welcome the increasing role of women and lay people in ministry and those who want to limit it. I am therefore very much an 'insider' in this research. I have a passion and a vested interest in these questions. Positively, this has allowed me to draw on my own rich experience of working with religious orders, of working with young people and of working in a parish and university chaplaincy. I have also witnessed the changing patterns of ministry first-hand over the last thirty years. In many ways my own story has been 'shaped' by these changes and by the new opportunities, challenges and pain they have brought.

Negatively, as an 'insider', it can be difficult to remain attentive to the many perspectives encountered in a lengthy project such as this. However, my own viewpoint is balanced by the breadth of the literature reviewed, the variety of the participants and the feedback of peers and supervision. My aspiration is that this study will be of practical use to those engaged in developing new approaches to ministry throughout the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland.

My work has been informed by two major studies, which came to fruition at the beginning of the millennia. The first of these emanated from the United Kingdom and the second from the United States. In the United Kingdom, the Queen's Foundation, 'Authority and Governance' report was published in 2001. This examined contemporary dimensions of authority and governance in the Roman Catholic Church. The study was undertaken by an interdisciplinary group working in conjunction with the Queen's Ecumenical

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<sup>9</sup> There were three lay Pastoral Assistants in the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh in 2001 and nine in 2011.

Foundation for Theological Education in Birmingham. The study was centred on six dioceses in the U.K. and included four dioceses in England and Wales and two in Scotland. In each of the dioceses, selected researchers interviewed parishioners, priests, diocesan personnel and bishops. The aims of the study were to assist the Church to address the complex problems of authority, governance, relationships and participation in contemporary Britain. Implications for the lay baptismal vocation were of particular concern.<sup>10</sup> Many dioceses were found, in the study, to suffer from “conflicting ecclesiologies”.<sup>11</sup> This was exemplified by a clerical model, which was adequately resourced and a more collaborative model of lay ministry which, although much spoken of in bishop’s letters and diocesan mission statements, did not have “the advantage of an overall strategy and resource allocation to bring it about.”<sup>12</sup>

While my own study does not in any way replicate the Queen’s Study, it is informed by its findings. There are many resonances between the findings in this thesis and those of the Queen’s Study. In particular, I found there to be similar problems and conflicts arising from clashing ecclesiologies and an absence of coherent vision.

The second body of work, which formed a backdrop to this study of lay ministry, emanates from the United States. From 2003 to 2007, the ‘Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership’ project, a collaborative effort of six national organisations,<sup>13</sup> conducted national research on the emerging models of parish leadership. Research initiatives centred round six areas: lay ecclesial ministry, Canon 517.2 leadership, multiple-parish pastoring, human resource issues, the next generation of pastoral leaders and a leadership series that studied best practices for pastoral leaders and parish leadership structures. This seminal research is of interest as it is the first study to provide a route map for emerging models of lay leadership and collaborative ministry.

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<sup>10</sup> Noel Timms ed., *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices in the Roman Catholic Church*, (Essex: Matthew James Publishing, 2001), p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Noel Timms ed., *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, p. 99.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> National Association for Lay Ministry, Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development, National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, National Association of Diaconal Directors, National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association, National Federation of Priests’ Councils.

Additionally, a number of salient church documents and theologians have influenced my work and their contribution is laid out in the literature review in chapter two. However, I want to mention briefly, two authors whose approach, I found helpful, in aiming to “clear a space for some new and more challenging forms of ecclesiology”, linking theology and practice.<sup>14</sup> For the first of these, Gerard Mannion, ecclesiology embraces the study of the story and ongoing development of the church, the conversations and disagreements within and without the church, and the aspirations of the church, in local and universal contexts alike.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Nicholas Healy seeks to focus theological attention on the church’s actual rather than theological identity. He notes that: “the identity of the concrete church is not simply given; it is constructed and ever reconstructed by the grace-enabled activities of its members as they embody the church’s practices, beliefs and valuations”.<sup>16</sup> This resonates with my research which is focussed precisely at the ‘grass-roots’, on ordinary lay members of local parishes, who are certainly ‘graced’. This is where lay ministry can best flourish. Yet the research raises many difficult issues about clergy and lay people, authority and decision-making and how to envisage future mission, in a time of diminishment. These difficulties result in the laity, who are indeed, ‘graced’ and ‘gifted’, not always being ‘enabled’. Contention is not surprising, as Mannion insists, ecclesiology is about difficult conversations.<sup>17</sup> The declining numbers of clergy and the emergence of lay ministry, at this point in time, suggest the need for an ecclesiological enquiry which “probes the self-understanding of any given ecclesial community and of the church as a whole”.<sup>18</sup> This process is painful for the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland and many individuals I engaged with in this research process expressed hurt and disappointment. Yet, it is also the *kairos* moment when transformation can take place, provided we do not avoid the “difficult conversations”.

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<sup>14</sup> Nicholas M. Healy, *Church, World and Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Gerard Mannion, *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007), preface xiii.

<sup>16</sup> Healy, *Church, World and Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology*, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Mannion, *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time*, preface x.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

There are many different models of lay ministry across the Christian churches and much to be learned from dialogue between the varied Christian traditions. However given the limited time scale of this project the focus of the dissertation, reflecting my own experience, will be the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland.

When I started the research project I had expected to focus on training for lay ministry. However, after completing an initial set of interviews across seven dioceses it became clear that lay ecclesial ministry had not grown in any uniform way. There were 'hotspots' where growth had taken place and large areas where there had been no new initiatives for many years. This led to a change of focus. It seemed the most useful research strategy was to research how and why there had been effective growth and development in these 'hotspots' and whether the learning from these situations could be transferred to other places.

Using James and Evelyn Whiteheads' model of reflection in ministry<sup>19</sup> I have addressed the thesis questions using the three poles: 'tradition', 'authentic witness' and 'culture'. This methodology is explored in chapter one. Chapter two examines literature relevant to the thesis questions. This both emanates from and comments on the 'Tradition'. Chapter three looks at both historical and present cultural influences on the changing shape of ministry in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Chapter four will focus on the insights gleaned from the initial research interviews across seven of the eight Scottish dioceses. Chapters five and six focus on two case-studies of parishes where lay ministry is developing effectively. The two-case studies were selected because the forms of ministry they have developed could be replicated elsewhere. The parishes involved were willing and enthusiastic about sharing their experiences and attribute the growth they have experienced to 'the work of the Spirit'. Chapter seven offers some analysis of the research findings which leads to six recommendations which are laid out in chapter eight. Key findings from the case-studies demonstrate that an open and positive attitude to collaborative ministry is needed as a pre-requisite for effective change. Parish structures such as mission statements,

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<sup>19</sup> James Whitehead and Evelyn Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1980).

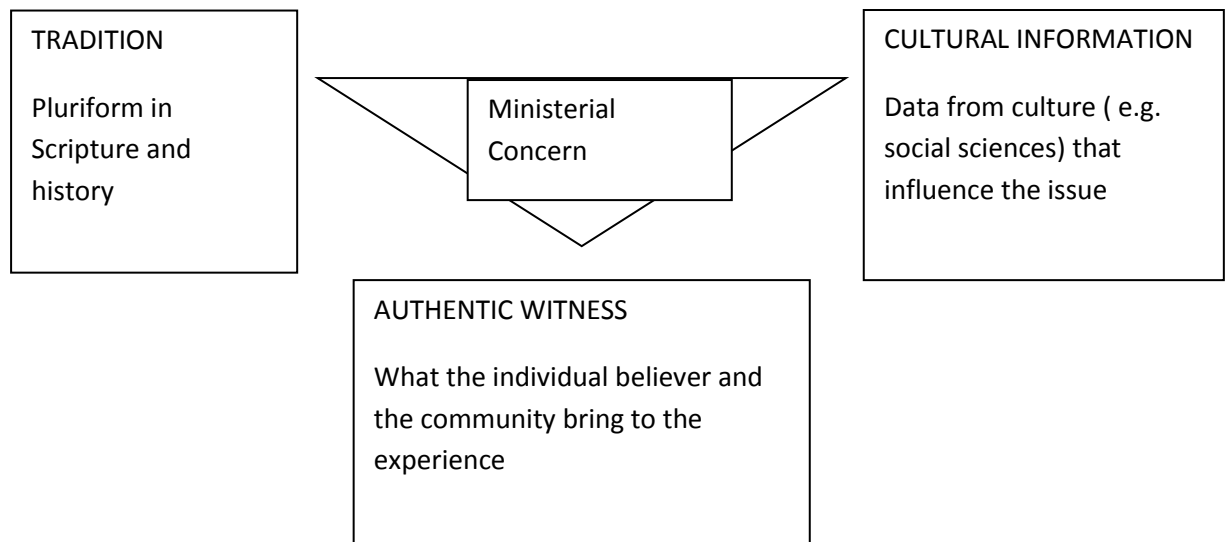
a five-year plan and an effective parish pastoral council were seen to enable the formation of a 'total ministering community' where lay ministry could flourish. Lay ecclesial ministry was seen to offer a collaborative structure that is open and adaptable to the variety of pastoral situations encountered in today's world. However growth beyond the few 'hot spots' identified in the research requires a renewed commitment to formation and adult education for both lay people and priests. This is because there are many fears and ambiguities to be overcome and many uncertainties about the shape ministry will take in the future.

# Chapter One: Creating the Research Project

## 1:1 Research Methodology

A multitude of frameworks are now available for research in pastoral theology, many using the pastoral cycle.<sup>20</sup> My chosen method draws on James and Evelyn Whiteheads' model of reflection in ministry<sup>21</sup> (see Figure 1). This method holds three poles of information in tension – tradition, authentic witness and culture; allowing the opportunity for each to be explored in detail. All three sources are pluriform, overlapping and ambiguous; and the ensuing theological reflection entails a process of clarifying and interpreting the interaction between them in order to address current issues in contemporary ministry.

Figure 1: Whiteheads Model of Reflection in Ministry



<sup>20</sup> Practical theology has concerned itself with method and a cyclical model of 'experience – exploration – reflection – action', see Paul Ballard and John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action* (London: SPCK, 1996), pp. 77-78.

<sup>21</sup> James Whitehead and Evelyn Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*.

The Whiteheads describe 'Tradition' as the pole of theological reflection representing information drawn from Scripture and Church history.<sup>22</sup> This they acknowledge is a massive and complex source of information. The Whiteheads approach the theological information available in the different historical stages of the Christian Tradition as "grounded in the Christian conviction of the continuing, formative presence of the Spirit in the Church."<sup>23</sup> They note that Christian Tradition has been pluriform from its inception and that for this reason different theological weight is assigned to different stages of the tradition. This gives priority to certain elements of the Tradition most relevant to pastoral reflection. For example, scriptural judgements would outweigh practices of the medieval church and the decisions of Ecumenical Councils such as Chalcedon outweigh religious practices and beliefs which arose in opposition to these decisions.<sup>24</sup> As the Whiteheads acknowledge, tradition is first and foremost the life of the Spirit in the Church.<sup>25</sup> Varied traditions arose from this embodied through scripture, creeds, practices, liturgy, holy people, theology etc. It is therefore inevitable that in using this model only a small segment of what is justifiably called 'Tradition' will be considered and that the choice of material will itself reflect the biases of the researcher.

The pole of 'experience', the Whiteheads point out is influenced itself by Tradition and culture and has at times been subsumed by them. They note that individual experience has not always been valued, observing that a failure of religious education in the past has been to focus on the movement of salvation in Jewish and early Christian history and to neglect the salvation history of this particular person and this particular community.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Whitehead and Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* p. 14.

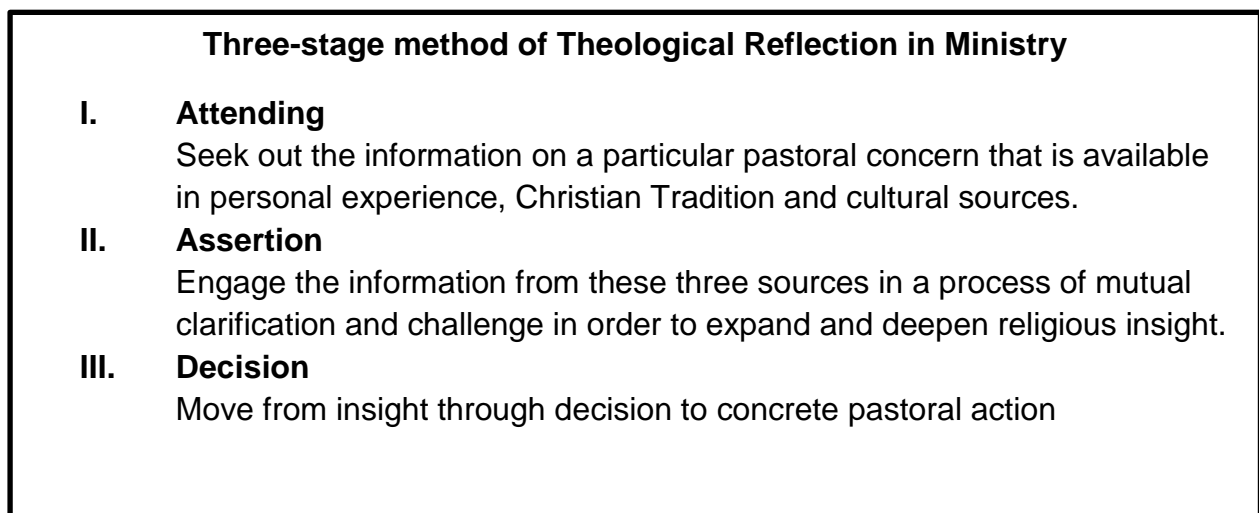
<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

To discover the overlap of individual experience and Christian tradition is, they urge, an essential return to the *sensus fidelium*.<sup>27</sup>

In the above model, cultural information includes both historical and contemporary aspects of a culture. The Whiteheads' definition of culture draws on Don Browning's work. He describes culture as, "a set of symbols, stories (myths) and norms for conduct, that orientate a society or group, cognitively, affectively, and behaviourally to the world in which it lives."<sup>28</sup> For the Whiteheads this includes philosophical understanding, political interpretations of human community, social sciences and other religious traditions. In the second part of the methodology the Whiteheads move the process on through three further stages - attending (listening to the information), assertion (mutual clarification and challenge) and decision i.e. moving to pastoral action.<sup>29</sup> This is shown in figure two.

Figure 2: Three-stage Method of Theological Reflection in Ministry



<sup>27</sup> This sense of the faithful refers to the believing community's intuitions and instincts of belief and recalls the notion in early Christianity of 'vox populi, vox Dei'. In Vatican II the *sensus fidelium* is presented as representing universal accord but it also acknowledges that the faithful "penetrate" the faith once delivered to the Saints, "more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life." (LG 12). For a systematic discussion of the *sensus fidelium*, see International Theology Commission, *Sensus Fidei* In the Life of the Church, (2014) available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti\\_documents/rc\\_cti\\_20140610\\_sensus-fidei\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_sensus-fidei_en.html) and Ormond Rush, *The Eyes of Faith: the Sense of the Faithful and the Church's Reception of Revelation*, ( Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America). Rush explains that: "Before there is any expression of or response to what has been revealed, there will be, at the heart of faith, a moment of receptivity. It leads to the 'sense of faith', that is, a spiritual sensibility for understanding, interpreting and applying salvific revelation in a meaningful way, and for discerning what interpretations of salvific revelation are true to that revelation and what are not" p. 68.

<sup>28</sup> Don Browning, *The Moral Context of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), p. 73.

<sup>29</sup> Whitehead and Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*, p. 22.



The first stage in the method is attending and requires careful listening. The listener must attend critically to Scripture and Tradition. Then she must listen to experience. This has two dimensions: the intrapersonal attending which requires being alert to the movements of her own heart and mind and an interpersonal attending where she listens alertly to the experience of the community. She must also carry to the conversation both the awareness of the present culture and the historical background to the pastoral situation that is being studied.<sup>30</sup>

The Whiteheads insist that:

The necessary ingredient in effective listening to each of these three sources is the ability to suspend judgement. This is a threatening venture. It leaves me vulnerable to new information that may challenge the way I see things and perhaps require that I change. Yet any tendency to quick evaluation will cut short this exploration and lessen the chance of new insight that may lead to creative pastoral response.<sup>31</sup>

Following this period, of 'holding' the material for consideration; the next stage of the Whiteheads' method of theological reflection moves to assertion. They describe 'assertion' as "a style of behaviour which acknowledges my own needs and convictions in a manner that respects the needs and convictions of others."<sup>32</sup> Assertiveness strikes a balance between not being able to share a conviction and forcing a conviction on others. It is a relationship between different ideas which both challenge and confirm pre-existing positions.<sup>33</sup> The two assumptions that ground this conviction, for the Whiteheads, are that God is revealed in all three sources and that the information from each is partial. The assertive interaction of tradition, experience and culture in turn generate insight. New insights can then be generated into recommendations for action.

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<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 82-84.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 22-23.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

The research in this thesis draws on each of these poles. 'Authentic witness' is given by the participants through interviews and case studies. 'Tradition' is reflected on through scripture, relevant church documents and the work of theologians. 'Culture' is explored within the milieu of the case studies, through research on the Scottish historical context and on the church in postmodernity.

Attending and listening are attitudes I have tried to maintain throughout the research but which came particularly to the fore in interviews, 'in-situ' case studies and in the process of coding the data. Working through the 'assertion' phase I found I had a great deal of material and some unexpected findings. Here the process of "challenge and confirmation" was greatly helped by on-going conversation with research participants, supervisors and peers.

I found the Whiteheads' model to be useful given the broad parameters of my research questions and the many variables involved. I found that the method did allow me to gain valuable insight. However the method is now more than thirty years old. While the Whiteheads insistence on a historical-critical approach remains useful, I believe an updated version of the method would place more emphasis on reflexivity and on the constructed nature of tradition and culture itself.

Considering the research material from the three perspectives of tradition, culture and experience offered by the Whiteheads, gives a way to manage the considerable body of material generated in a research project such as this. However, many practical theologians have noted the inter-relatedness of these three 'poles'.

George Lindbeck was influenced by Wittgenstein's emphasis on the particularity of culture and language and their determining role in the shaping of thought and practice.<sup>34</sup> Lindbeck's work, in turn, led Hans Frei to an understanding of the Christian church as a cultural community with a sacred text and "informal rules and conventions governing how the sign system

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<sup>34</sup> George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine; Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984), pp. 117-118. For further discussion see also Paul D. Murray, 'Theology After the Age of Foundationalism', *The Way* 38 (1998) pp. 160-169.

works".<sup>35</sup> Lindbeck and Frei's critics question the 'intratextual' process<sup>36</sup>. David Tracy, for example, asks if the reading practice supposedly generated 'intratextually' might actually be generated by the social milieu in which the texts are read.<sup>37</sup> Paul Murray finds the "somewhat nuanced language about the primacy of the gospel narratives and the need to 'absorb the world' into the text of scripture can tend somewhat to suggest the image of the tradition as a fixed static entity which requires mere reception."<sup>38</sup> He voices the concern that this runs counter to "the more dynamic image of tradition implied by belief in the risen Christ as a living personal reality who continues to make an impact on the particularities of a new situation, in ways which while always consistent with the scriptural witness to the ways of God in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, are also always genuinely new."<sup>39</sup> He suggests that "the combination of continuity and creativity" arising from this may be better captured "with the musical image of dynamic improvisation within accepted forms".<sup>40</sup> The discussion between Lindbeck's post-liberalism and its critics undoubtedly serves to demonstrate the complexities in giving separate consideration to tradition, culture and experience. It leads to questions about the 'language' used in each context and the extent to which that 'language' provides a hermeneutical framework which is carried from one 'pole' to another. Paul Murray's useful reminder of the constant presence of the risen Christ in Christian living allows for the possibility that in authentic Christian living, a 'harmony' should exist between all three 'poles'.

Working in the U.K., in recent years Helen Cameron, Deborah Bhatti, Catherine Bruce, James Sweeney and Clare Watkins have developed a methodology of 'theological action research' (TAR) as a research tool for

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<sup>35</sup> Hans Frei, *Theology and Narrative: Selected Essays*, G. Hunsinger and W.C. Plancher (eds.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 149.

<sup>36</sup>For discussion of 'intratextual' process see Elaine Graham, Heather Walton and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods*, (London: SCM, 2005), pp.98-100.

<sup>37</sup> David Tracy, 'On Reading the Scriptures Theologically', in B. Marshall (ed.), *Essays in Conversation with George Lindbeck*, (Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1990), pp. 35-68.

<sup>38</sup> Paul D. Murray, 'A Liberal Helping of Postliberalism Please', in *The Future of Liberal Theology*, Mark D. Chapman (ed.), (Farnham: Ashgate, 2002), p. 213.

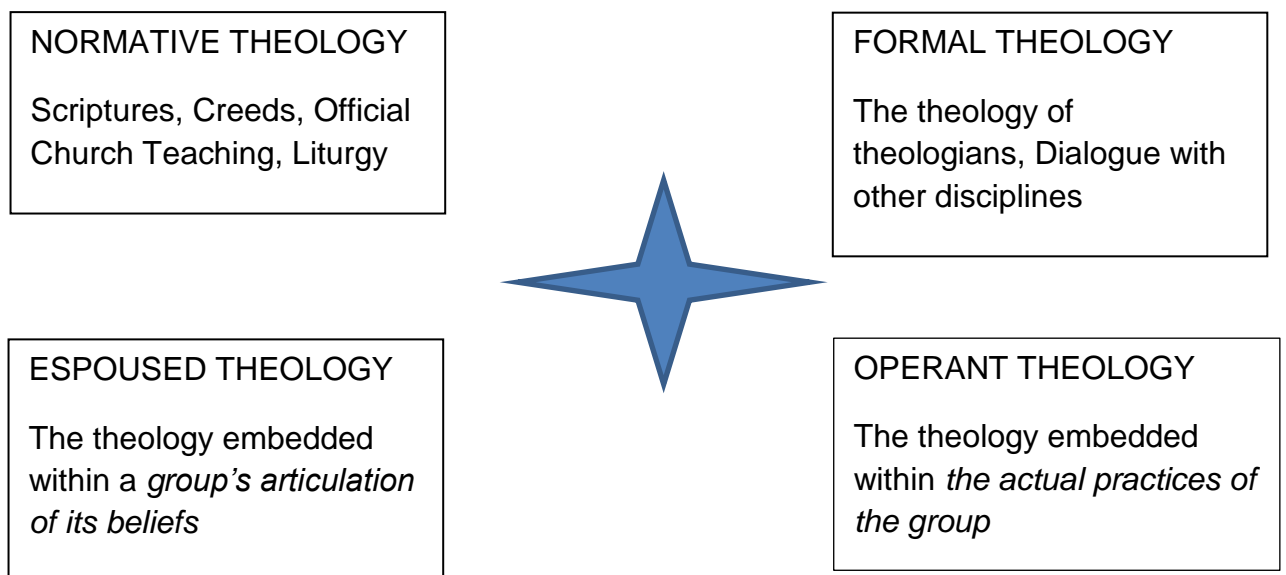
<sup>39</sup> Murray, 'A Liberal Helping of Postliberalism Please', p.213.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid* p.214. see Frances Young, *The Art of Performance: Towards a Theology of Holy Scripture*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990).

practical theology.<sup>41</sup> (Action research is discussed further in section 1.3 of this chapter). In contrast to the Whiteheads' method which places theology at the 'pole' named 'Tradition', 'theological action research' insists that research in pastoral theology is "theological all the way through". The idea of a 'living Christian tradition' is key in the methodology of TAR, leading the researchers to conclude that "practices participated in and observed are themselves bearers of theology".<sup>42</sup>

TAR notes that there is "coherence" between the theological "voices" offered for consideration in practical theology research. For heuristic and hermeneutical ease they describe four theological sources which can be found in a piece of practical theology research in terms of four "voices". They note that: "we can never hear only one voice without there being echoes of the other three". The 'four voices', identified by TAR, are shown diagrammatically in figure three below.<sup>43</sup>

Figure 3 : The 'Four Voices' of Theology in Theological Action Research<sup>44</sup>



<sup>41</sup> Helen Cameron, Deborah Bhatti, Catherine Duce, James Sweeney and Claire Watkins, *Talking About God in Practice*, (London: SCM, 2010).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

The insight that theology is present throughout the research in different voices is valuable even though TAR is not my principle methodology. In this research TAR was used in a loose, indirect sense. It raised my awareness that I could and should find theology present in culture and experience as well as Tradition. It helped me to notice that how people attribute meaning to their experience will be determined by their theology. For some, the present situation of decline is evidence of God's Spirit, renewing and recreating. For others, the current difficulties faced by the church represent a period of exile, until the priesthood will be restored again. Socialisation, in turn, plays a part in informing people's theological understanding. This means it can be difficult for Catholics who have been socialised into a model of deference in a priest-run church to be expected to actively participate in the life of the parish. Depending on their life experience, the theological image of the 'Body of Christ' can be, for some, the distribution of communion by a priest and for others the support of a project in a developing country which reaches out to those in need. TAR defines practical theology as theology in active mode, grappling with contemporary culture. It seems to me that this is important because people's motivation and energy comes from their theological outlook and their experience.

In a more specific way, engagement with TAR enabled me to note instances where the espoused theology of dioceses was incongruent with their operant theology, in regard to lay ministry.<sup>45</sup> Support for lay ministry was voiced in all the dioceses researched. In reality, however, training for seminarians continues to be funded while training for lay ministry receives no funding provision. Equally bishops, in planning clergy moves, fail to consider existing or possible lay ministry which suggests that a clerical model still prevails.

The methodology of 'theological action research' is primarily applicable to a homogenous institution or organisation. It is for this reason that it proved unsuitable as a primary methodology in this research project.

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<sup>45</sup> Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, *Together in Hope*, 2002, pp. 3-4. This report recommends that every parish needs to consider how it will make faith formation its chief concern, in order to increase involvement in ministry and shared decision making. The financial implications required for this, it states, are to be considered and a plan drawn up. Fourteen years on there is still no diocesan plan to fund lay ministry.

The dioceses researched in this thesis were found to be more diffuse entities with varied practice, ecclesiologies and leadership styles. This is linked to the decades of short-term, pastoral planning experienced in all dioceses in Scotland. It is also the result of geographical and cultural differences between different parts of Scotland and even within dioceses.<sup>46</sup>

Returning to the Whiteheads' method, a further comment comes from Robert Kinast who notes their method is primarily "ministerial" in style.<sup>47</sup> This research looks at 'professional' ministry and perhaps that is why the Whiteheads' categories have seemed applicable. However it is good to note that the story told would be different if told from the communal perspective of the congregations visited. It would be different too, if told from the perspective of each individual who took part, and was set in the context of each of their unique Christian journeys.

The complex interplay of Tradition, experience and culture lead the key aspect of the Whiteheads' overarching methodology to be one of mutual critical correlation. This is described by John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, as "bringing situations into dialectical conversations, with insights from the Christian tradition, and perspectives drawn from other sources of knowledge (primarily the social sciences)."<sup>48</sup> In addition to the work of social scientists I have drawn on the work of historians, sociologists, philosophers and educational professionals, leading to a multi-discipline approach.

### **1:1:2 A Multi-Discipline Approach**

This diversity of disciplines does not always sit comfortably with Christian theology. The disparity in approach lies in theology's assumption of the reality of truth and the possibility of moving towards it, in contrast to social science's emphasis on constructionism,<sup>49</sup> which maintains that truth and knowledge are largely constructed by individuals and communities. This

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<sup>46</sup> E.g. The Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh covers the capital city, large rural areas in the borders, the ex-mining towns of Fife and the central belt. The pre-Reformation (pre-1560) dioceses were retained when the hierarchy were finally restored in 1878.

<sup>47</sup> Robert L. Kinast, *What Are They Saying About Theological Reflection*, (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), pp. 6-15.

<sup>48</sup> John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, (London: SCM, 2006) p. 77.

<sup>49</sup> Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba, *Naturalistic Enquiry*, (London: Sage, 1985 ).

opens up the debate about the position of theology with regard to other disciplines. A number of models have emerged in the consideration of dialogue between theology and other disciplines. Three of these, of use in pastoral theology, can be described as correlational, transformational and transversal; each model shows considerable diversity in its use.

The correlational model has roots in the work of Paul Tillich.<sup>50</sup> Tillich sought to correlate existential questions with theological answers from the Christian tradition. He suggested that reason and experience, as they are worked out in embodied situations, raise questions which can then be addressed to scripture and tradition. His method, however, has been criticised for being uni-directional, applying Christian truth to the world without allowing the world to significantly question particular interpretations of that truth.<sup>51</sup> This led David Tracy and Don Browning to develop a revised correlational model, which envisaged greater mutuality in the conversation between theology and other disciplines.<sup>52</sup> This model too has its limits, since its proponents have largely been occupied with cognitive meaning and academic discourse.

James Loder prefers a transformational model to a correlationist model, as it honours the different language spoken by theology and other fields. Here, moving from one field to another is not a matter of translation, but of transforming what is learned in one field by lifting it into a different disciplinary context. In support of this methodology, Loder has turned to the theological grammar of the formulations of the Council of Chalcedon.<sup>53</sup> He suggests three rules which determine the relationship between the human and the divine. The first of these is the indissoluble differentiation of the human and divine, resulting in the knowledge given to faith being unique and different from other forms of human knowledge. Secondly, he argues, the divine and the human cohere with inseparable unity, i.e. it is part of the essential work of theology to dialogue with other forms of human knowledge.

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<sup>50</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, combined volume (Welwyn: Nesbit, 1951).

<sup>51</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, p. 38.

<sup>52</sup> David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979); Don Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

<sup>53</sup> James Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998). The Chalcedonian model is also developed by Deborah Van Deusen Hunsinger, Deborah Van Deusen- Hunsinger, *Theology and Pastoral Counselling: A New inter-disciplinary Approach*, (Grandrapids: Eerdmans, 1995), pp. 65-69.

Finally, he concludes, the relationship with the divine follows an asymmetrical order, with the divine having logical and ontological priority over the human. Theology then can interact and learn from other fields but ultimately it transforms their insights according to the rules of its own theological grammar.<sup>54</sup>

John Swinton and Harriet Mowat concur that the position taken by the Chalcedon model has the advantage of resisting any drift into relativism. However they also find some problems with it. In pointing out that the way in which revelation is interpreted, embodied and worked out are deeply influenced by specific contexts, histories and traditions; they ask if we can so easily recognise those dimensions which are social constructs? They suggest three modifications are necessary. First practical theology must show hospitality and welcome insights respectfully. Secondly qualitative research is subject to conversion i.e. moves from a position where it is fragmented and without a specific telos, to a position where it is grafted-in to God's redemptive intentions for the world. Thirdly through "critical faithfulness", new knowledge acquired through other disciplines can lead to critical theological reflection and revised practice.<sup>55</sup>

A different approach and one I find preferable is the concept of transversality, meaning "lying across, extending over, intersecting, meeting and converging without achieving coincidence".<sup>56</sup> The transversal model of cross-disciplinary dialogue, extends this concept to the nature of conversation between practitioners in different disciplines.

Félix Guattari's work explores the transversal forces operative in institutional settings and organisations in terms of their different constellations of power, and their different structures of decision making<sup>57</sup>. The example Guattari gives is of the complex organisation involved in the establishment and maintenance of a psychiatric hospital. Communication is essential in such a setting between the medical team, patient, family, hospital

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<sup>54</sup> Richard Osmar *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) p. 168.

<sup>55</sup> Swinton and Mowat pp. 91-95.

<sup>56</sup> Calvin Schrag, *The Resources of Rationality: A Response to the Postmodern Challenge*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992) p. 149.

<sup>57</sup> Calvin Schrag, *The Self after Postmodernity*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 131-132.



administrators, social services, etc. and, claims Guattari, communication flows across the transversal working of these groups. Transversality, he suggests, “is a dimension that tries to overcome both the impasse of pure verticality and that of mere horizontality; it tends to be achieved when there is maximum communication among the different levels, and above all, in different meanings.”<sup>58</sup>

This model pictures the relationship between different disciplines as a network. In a specific dialogue, the values and perspectives of the conversation partners may overlap at points, but they may also diverge in e.g. the ways they conduct research and in their evaluation of religion. How this communication is possible is described by Calvin Schrag in his development of Guattari’s approach. He concludes, communication is viable because members of different fields share common resources of rationality such as interpretive strategies, justify their claims through argumentation and disclose truths that are subject to future consideration.<sup>59</sup>

Referring to Schrag, Wentzel van Huyssteen notes that:

What is at stake in this notion of transversal rationality is to discover, or to reveal, the shared resources of human rationality precisely in our very pluralistic, diverse assemblages of beliefs and practices, and then to locate the claims of reason in the overlap of rationalities between groups, discourses or reasoning strategies.<sup>60</sup>

He finds that Schrag’s work on the resources of rationality manages in a positive way, to avoid the extremes of the modernist nostalgia for one, unified form of knowledge, as well as the relativism of extreme forms of postmodernism.<sup>61</sup>

I find this model attractive because it respects the epistemological understanding of each discipline, which we must surely do, given the belief that God is present in the created order and in human endeavour. Working

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<sup>58</sup> Félix Guattari, *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 18.

<sup>59</sup> Schrag, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>60</sup> J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality: Towards Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science*, (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 136.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

with this model I have chosen to approach other disciplines in a way that has no desire to 'convert' them to my idea of theological truth, nor with any fear, that my position will be subsumed by them. It allows respectful engagement with other disciplines and a mechanism to receive insights through the interconnections that arise in our shared conversation.

From the contrary perspective James Gustafson warns of the dangers of theological reductionism, where the human reality of the church is not considered at all and ecclesiology revolves around abstract ideas.<sup>62</sup> This criticism is expounded by Leonardo Boff, who finds that the absolutising of dogma and law can diminish praxis.<sup>63</sup>

The need for an appropriately reconfigured understanding of the systematic ecclesiological task that affords a role to empirical methods and data within its own modes of procedure is addressed by Paul Murray. He suggests the proximate focus, (as distinct from its ultimate destiny) of ecclesiology is the "living truth of the church".<sup>64</sup> This analogy usefully encompasses the human and divine dimensions of the church and its theological and empirical expressions. In this understanding practice, and in particular the dynamic response of practice when faced with new situations, contributes to the on-going search for truth.

### **1:1:3 Qualitative Research**

Every diocese and parish is different; every set of circumstances in which a pastoral assistant or lay ecclesial minister works is unique. Therefore it seemed to me that qualitative methods would best permit the depth of engagement and exploration required to explore the thesis questions. Sharan Merriam offers this explanation of qualitative research:

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<sup>62</sup> James Gustafson, *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: the Church as a Human Community*, (New York: Harper, 1961).

<sup>63</sup> Leonardo Boff, *Church, Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church*, (New York: Crossroad, 1985) pp. 84-85.

<sup>64</sup> Paul Murray, 'Searching the Living Truth of the Church in Practise: On the Transformative Task of Systematic Theology', *Modern Theology*, 30, (2013), pp. 1-6.

The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not the fixed, single, agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that it is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research. Instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context.<sup>65</sup>

The following are identified by Sharan Merriam as key characteristics of interpretive qualitative research designs:

- Researchers strive to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences.
- The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis.
- The researcher's own biases and subjectivities need to be identified and monitored.
- Qualitative researchers build toward theory from observations and intuitive understandings gleaned from being in the field.
- The product of a qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive - words and pictures are used to convey learning.
- Qualitative research attempts to understand and make sense of phenomena from the participant's perspective.<sup>66</sup>

Given the degree of personal engagement needed to understand the experience of lay ministers in parishes, in diverse and changing circumstances, it has been clear that an interpretive qualitative study as described above by Merriam best suited my research parameters.

### **1:2 Data Collection**

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<sup>65</sup> Sharan Merriam, *Qualitative Research in Practice*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

## ***1:2:1 Phases of Data Collection***

### ***Phase One***

The first exploratory phase took the form of semi-structured interviews with those responsible for pastoral planning and formation in seven of the eight Scottish dioceses. My aim was to familiarise myself with the extent of lay ministry across Scotland, and to find out what training is available to enable people to develop and grow in ministry. I also wanted to identify situations where lay ministry was working effectively for further study. The interview questions are available in appendix one.

The role of religious sisters over the past three decades, in creating parish teams, emerged as an important step in the move from clerical leadership to collaborative ministry. To explore this dynamic further I undertook three focussed conversations with parish sisters. The opening question I used when meeting with parish sisters was: “Can you tell me something about your parish work? “. As the conversation unfolded I explored with them the changing nature of parish work, the sustainability of ministry and areas of concern.

### ***Phase Two***

This phase consisted of two case studies of parish-based lay ecclesial ministry. I spent six months following events in each of the parishes. In addition to attending services, events and meetings, I interviewed lay ministers and parish priests. I also collected newsletters, mission statements, historical documents and minutes of meetings.

### ***Phase Three***

Phase three of the research aimed to deepen, confirm, and where necessary, correct the findings from the initial research process. I presented my findings to five of the participants, and used these to re-open conversation about each of the participant’s own ministry situation, and what they might see as the future for lay ministry in their local area.

### **1:2:2 Interviews and Conversations**

“Conversations allow participants to discover things about their interlocutors which they never knew before and to see themselves and others from new angles and in a different light.”<sup>67</sup> This unique space where meaning is shared and created is true of interviews too but Swinton and Mowat point out two essential differences. The first is power. They insist that the interview is a dangerous gift that people offer to the researcher; a gift that can be received, treasured and accepted, or abused, manipulated and implicitly or explicitly discarded.<sup>68</sup> This leads to the necessity for respect on the part of the researcher and the need for transparency. The second point made by Swinton and Mowat is that the interview is not therapy; for me, it has been important to remember that the interview is not pastoral care, although I have found that difficult issues have been opened up. In some parts of the research project, I used set interview questions. This was particularly helpful when it came to comparing responses across the dioceses. Elsewhere, e.g. with parish sisters, I held conversation around particular topics judged to be relevant.<sup>69</sup>

### **1:2:3 Case-Studies**

A key part of this research project involved case-studies. In order to investigate what factors make lay ministry effective it was necessary to connect with lay ministers *in situ*. In doing this I have aimed, through the use of narrative, to provide a “thick description” of each different situation.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Stephen Pattison, “ ‘Some Straws for the Bricks’: A Basic introduction to Theological Reflection”, *Contact*, (1989:2) pp. 2-9.

<sup>68</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Qualitative Research in Practice*, p. 64.

<sup>69</sup> Focussed conversation is the sole method used by the Queen’s, ‘Authority and Governance Report’. They describe conversation as a means of engagement which constitutes “the meeting place of various modes of imagining”. see Timms (ed.) *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, p. 9.

<sup>70</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973). In his first chapter in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Clifford Geertz discusses the role of the ethnographer. Broadly, the ethnographer's aim is to observe, record, and analyse a culture. More specifically, he or she must interpret signs to gain their meaning within the culture itself. This interpretation must be based on the “thick description” of a sign in order to see all the possible

Frederick Erikson argues that since the general lies in the particular, what we learn in a particular case can be transferred to similar situations.<sup>71</sup> This is counter-balanced by Robert Stakes warning that damage can occur when the commitment to generalise takes the researcher's attention from features important for understanding the case itself. He insists that: "it is the reader, not the researcher, who determines what can apply to his or her context."<sup>72</sup> Stake notes that "case researchers, like others, pass along to readers some of their personal meanings of events and relationship – and fail to pass along others. They know that the reader, too, will add and subtract, invent and shape – reconstructing the knowledge in ways that leave it more likely to be personally useful."<sup>73</sup>

Although the material generated by the case-studies substantially informs the findings and analysis in the dissertation I have aimed to present the material as directly as possible. I chose to present the case-studies in a narrative style with background detail, in the hope of retaining the "fibres" that bind the stories together.<sup>74</sup>

The case-studies focus on the work of two full-time lay ministers. One is a young man, the other a recently retired lady. One of the lay ministers works with a priest who has responsibility for three parishes, and with a part-time youth worker. The second works as part of a ministry team with two priests and two religious sisters; the team are also responsible for the running of three parishes.

### **1:3 Participant Involvement and Action Research**

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meanings. His example of a "wink of an eye" clarifies this point. When a man winks, is he merely "rapidly contracting his right eyelid" or is he "practicing a burlesque of a friend faking a wink to deceive an innocent into thinking conspiracy is in motion"? Ultimately, Geertz hopes that the ethnographer's deeper understanding of the signs will open and/or increase the dialogue among different cultures.

<sup>71</sup> Frederick Erikson, 'Qualitative Methods in Research on Teaching' in M.C. Whittrock (ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (Old Tappan, NJ: Macmillan, 1986) pp. 119-161.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Stake, 'Case Studies', in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000) pp. 435-454.

<sup>73</sup> Stake, 'Case Studies', *op. cit.*, pp. 435-454.

<sup>74</sup> Gary Thomas, *How to do Your Case Study: A Guide for Students and Researchers*, (London: Sage, 2011), p.184. Gary Thomas describes these interrelating fibres as concerning time, place, meaning, intention and much more.

In the third phase of the research project I re-engaged with three participants working at diocesan level and with two of those who took part in the case-studies at parish level. I shared the research findings with them and received their comments and feedback. Many of these insights inform chapter seven of this thesis, which focusses on findings and analysis. This process was drawn from the methodology of action research. Action research rejects arguments for separating theory and praxis. It is a methodology in which participants and researcher cogenerate knowledge through collaborative communication.<sup>75</sup> Approaches to action research tend to have multiple theory bases.<sup>76</sup>

This process of re-engagement and shared reflection with participants was an important part of the research process. As Swinton and Mowat argue all Practical Theology *is* fundamentally action research. For them Practical Theology, has a wide theological remit which involves challenging current practices in the hope that they will move closer towards faithfulness to God and God's mission in the world.<sup>77</sup> In particular, Theological Action Research (TAR) holds the 'central conviction' that : "by naming and recognising theological connections across the four voices, the theological embodiment at the operant level in particular will be renewed as its own authentic message comes to light, and is more clearly understood by those living it out."<sup>78</sup>

### **1:4 Validity**

One of the inherent difficulties with the assessment of qualitative research is the establishment of reliability and validity. Attempting to address this, Denzin and Lincoln offered the following view on the multi-method approach in qualitative research: "the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in

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<sup>75</sup> David Greenwood and Morten Levin, 'Reconstructing the Relationships between Universities and Societies Through Action Research' in Denzin and Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) pp. 96-97.

<sup>76</sup> For further discussion see Jean McNiff, *Writing and Doing Action Research*, (London: Sage, 2014).

<sup>77</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Qualitative Research in Practice*, p. 255.

<sup>78</sup> Cameron, Bhatti, Duce, Sweeney and Watkins, *Talking About God in Practice*, p. 58.

question.”<sup>79</sup> The multi-methods used in this research are semi-structured interviews, case-studies, participant observation, member-checking and the keeping of a research journal.

Merriam suggests another difficulty that: “reliability is problematic in the social-sciences simply because human behaviour is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences”.<sup>80</sup> She adds that a good degree of reliability can be established by spending adequate time in the field, to the point where the researcher achieves saturation. She further suggests that creating an ‘audit trail’, a term borrowed from finance, can offer other researchers an idea of the reliability of the work.<sup>81</sup> In the research I was aware of reaching a point where I observed the same things were coming up repeatedly. An audit trail was provided by research journals which were kept both during the action and analysis phases.

The small sample size common in qualitative research also raises questions of validity. Yet, as Merriam says, it is “selected precisely because the researcher wishes to understand the particular in depth, not to find out what is generally true of the many.”<sup>82</sup> For instance, in this research I wanted to explore in detail the particular ministerial experience of a small group of lay ministers and to offer some examples of good practice. Merriam is encouraging that it is possible through the provision of “rich, thick description to ensure external validity i.e. enough description and information that readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match, and thus whether findings can be transferred”.<sup>83</sup>

## ***1:5 Issues Arising from the Methodology***

### ***1:5:1 Reflexivity***

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<sup>79</sup> Denzin and Lincoln, *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, p. 7.

<sup>80</sup> Merriam, *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis*, pp. 25-6.

<sup>81</sup> Merriam, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-6.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p.179.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*



The need for researcher reflexivity has been increasingly recognised in recent years. This is defined by Swinton and Mowat as “the process of critical self-reflection carried out by the researcher throughout the research process that enables her to monitor and respond to her contribution to the proceedings”.<sup>84</sup> Hans-George Gadamer describes this as “the fusion of horizons” where the interpreter cannot speak of an original meaning of the work without acknowledging that, in understanding it, the interpreter’s own meaning enters in as well.<sup>85</sup> Personal reflexivity involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, and social identities have shaped the research. It also involves thinking about how the research has shaped and possibly changed us as people and as researchers.<sup>86</sup> Epistemological reflexivity encourages the researcher to also be aware that the way the research questions are investigated and designed will influence the story which emerges. Swinton and Mowat put it succinctly by describing the researcher as the co-creator of the narrative. Here I increasingly concur with Swinton and Mowat’s view that reflexivity is not a tool of qualitative research, but an integral part of what it actually *is*.<sup>87</sup> Since I have an avid interest in lay ministry it is obvious that reflexivity is an issue I need to address. Taping interviews, where possible, has proved helpful in overcoming the tendency to latch on to comments I agree with and to dismiss alternative positions. I have also kept detailed notes and a research journal where I have recorded my own observations and reactions.

### **1:5:2 Constraints**

Those individuals I approached, and subsequently interviewed, have been uniformly generous in their willingness to take part. I have found however that each diocese operates very differently and the key people with insight into lay ministry and adult formation have varying roles within the diocesan

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<sup>84</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, p.59

<sup>85</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Joel Weisheimer and Donald G Marshall, trans. (New York: Continuum, 1991) p. 576.

<sup>86</sup> Carla Willig, *Qualitative Research in Psychology: A Practical Guide to Theory and Method*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2001), p. 10.

<sup>87</sup> Swinton and Mowat, p. 58.

structures. Some work under the banner of 'Pastoral Resources', others within the remit of 'Education', others within 'Pastoral Planning'. It has taken some time to connect with the right people. This has also been a time of considerable change in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, with five dioceses having new bishops, and the scandal around the forced resignation of the Cardinal Archbishop of Edinburgh and St. Andrews and its repercussions.

A further constraint particularly with regard to case-studies has been my own time. As I work full-time, I have only been able to be present in these parishes on a periodic and part-time basis. It is inevitable that I have missed some key moments and events and at best only hear of them second-hand. At parish events and meetings it was noticeable that some parishioners chose to engage me in conversation and others did not. This perhaps means that my experience of these parishes is coloured by the views of those who felt 'they had something to say'. It may also be that my presence at meetings influenced the participation of some in the group.

### **1:5:3 Ethical Considerations**

"No researcher can manage to handle all ethical that is to say human relational, issues perfectly. Doing field-research is like learning a new language. Mistakes are unavoidable." This advice is offered to her students by Karen McCarthy Brown. She insists that "ethnographic research is a social art-form and therefore subject to all the complexities and confusions of human relationships in general."<sup>88</sup> At the outset, I had considered that this piece of research could be of 'no harm' to participants since those I have been working with are themselves professionals in the field of ministry. I have therefore been surprised at the difficult and sensitive topics that have arisen.

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<sup>88</sup> Karen McCarthy Brown, 'Writing About "The Other", Revisited,' in *Personal Knowledge and Beyond: Reshaping the Ethnography of Religion*, (ed.) James V. Spickard, J. Shawn Landres, and Meredith B. McGuire, (New York and London: New York University Press, 2002), p. 133.

In order to minimise risk the research has been carried out within the department's guidelines and approved by the Ethics Committee. Written permission was sought from all participants as was permission to use recording equipment or to take notes. Consent forms and the information sheet given to participants are included in Appendix Two. For the case-studies permission was sought from the parish priest to study the parish. I explained my research at all meetings I attended. Transcripts and notes have been available to all participants.

### **1:5:4 Participant Confidentiality**

Participant confidentiality is particularly an issue in Scotland where the Roman Catholic Community is small and interrelated. It is therefore important in any discussion of interview material that the participant's identities are concealed. As Peter Magolda and Lisa Weems suggest "we are never able to foresee all the possible ramifications of our actions, and that despite the promise of anonymity, it is often possible for insiders to recognise other insiders".<sup>89</sup>

To mitigate this, with Phase One interview material I have worked with Marion Goldman's suggestion of "anchored composites", where the responses of several people are pieced together to protect anonymity.<sup>90</sup> This is not possible with the case-studies in Phase Two where it is important that the narrative rings true. All names of people and places have been changed in the case-studies and any information which would immediately identify the parish omitted. However, due to the small number of parishes where new forms of collaborative ministry are to be found, it is difficult to promise total anonymity. Both the parishes I have used as case-studies understand this and have expressed their willingness to share their experience of ministry openly with others.

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<sup>89</sup> Peter Magolda, and Lisa Weems, 'Doing Harm: An Unintended Consequence of Qualitative Inquiry?', *Journal of College Student Development* 43, no. 4 (2002), pp. 496-499.

<sup>90</sup> Marion S. Goldman, 'Voicing Spiritualities: Anchored Composites as an Approach to Understanding Religious Commitment,' in *Personal Knowledge and Beyond*, (eds.) James V. Spickard, J. Shawn Landres, and Meredith B. McGuire. pp. 146-161.

## **1:6 Data Analysis**

A research project such as this inevitably generates a good deal of varied data. Wanda Pillow offers the following advice to researchers: “immerse yourself in your data; listen to it, read it, touch it, play with it, copy it, write on it, colour code it, over and over again.”<sup>91</sup> In order to understand the information I coded the data in a number of different ways through the research phase. Transcripts were made from the recorded interview material, with the conversations transcribed verbatim. Initially, I compared each of the participants’ answers to the questions. I then sifted through the data highlighting recurring themes and issues. Using *Nvivo*<sup>92</sup>, I searched for the words most frequently occurring in the transcripts (see appendix three). Through doing this I realised that much of the data had an emotional content. The frequency of the words ‘energy’ and ‘disenchantment’ led me to run a second query picking out the context of these words. This led to me to add ‘hurt’, ‘anger’ and ‘disappointment’ as categories for further analysis, alongside the expected categories such as ‘parish’, ‘change’, ‘need’ and ‘resources’. In addition to looking at word frequency across all transcripts, I was able to run queries about sets of responses to interviews questions (see appendix four), and to note differences and similarities. While Amanda Coffey et.al<sup>93</sup> and Marrku Lonkila<sup>94</sup> expressed concern about computer software as “no substitute for nuanced interpretive analysis”, I found this process a useful and revealing starting point and a productive way to categorise the material for further analysis.

My encompassing approach to data has drawn on ‘grounded theory’. Grounded theory was first propounded in 1967 by the sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, who found that previous methods of social research over-emphasised the verification of theory. They wanted to shift the

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<sup>91</sup> Wanda Pillow, ‘Exposed Methodology’ in Merriam, *Assessing and Evaluating Qualitative Research* p. 377.

<sup>92</sup> QSR International – NVivo version 9.

<sup>93</sup> Amanda Coffey, Beverley Holbrook, Paul Atkinson, *Qualitative Data Analysis: Technologies and Representations*, *Sociological Research Online*, 1 (1), <http://www.socresonline.org.uk> 7.6.

<sup>94</sup> Marrku Lonkila, ‘Grounded Theory as an Emerging Paradigm for Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis’, In Udo Kelle (ed) *Computer-aided Qualitative Data Analysis: Theory, Method and Practice*, (London: Sage, 1995), pp. 41-55.

focus to the data and derive theory illustrated by characteristic examples from the dataset. Therefore, in grounded theory, data analysis and theory development proceed conterminously, the data being continually referred to as findings are drawn from them and tentative theories put forward.<sup>95</sup> This process was helpful in drawing my attention to the question of why there is so much resistance to lay ministry in Scotland and in generating further avenues of enquiry as to why that should be so. Seminal as Glaser and Strauss' work has been, one of the major criticisms of the first generation of grounded theorists, is that they did not write about grounded theory as a methods/methodology package. Strauss has attempted to rectify this to some extent in the third edition of the book he co-authored with Juliet Corbin,<sup>96</sup> which includes a new chapter explaining pragmatism and symbolic interactionism as the philosophies that methodologically underpin Strauss' iteration of grounded theory methods. Glaser never really entered into the conversation about methodology, dismissing the applicability of any specific philosophical or disciplinary position, in his belief that adopting such a perspective reduces the broader potential of grounded theory.<sup>97</sup> Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln's work identified eight moments of qualitative research, each originating in the social milieu of their time.<sup>98</sup> Kathy Chamaz suggests that methodologically grounded theory has been influenced by researchers situated in the second, third, fourth and fifth of these moments. In the second moment, (from 1945-1970) post-positivism researchers worked within an ontological and epistemological frame where there was an assumed reality worth discovering as a detached observer. In the third moment, 'blurred genres', researchers began to question their own place in research texts. In the fourth moment, constructivist grounded theory, focused the place of the author in the text, their relationship with the

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<sup>95</sup> Barney Glaser, and Anselm Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Aldine, 1999), re-print of their 1967 volume pp. 4-6.

<sup>96</sup> Juliet M. Corbin and A.L. Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), (Los Angeles: Sage, 2008)

<sup>97</sup> B.G. Glaser, *The Grounded Theory Perspective III: Theoretical Coding*. (Mill Valley CA: Sociology Press, 2005)

<sup>98</sup> N. Denzin and Y Lincoln, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed) (Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage, 2005) The moments are identified as traditional (1900-1950), modernist (1950-1970), blurred genres (1970-1986), crisis of representation (1986-1990), post-modern (1990-1995), post-experimental inquiry (1995-2000)

participants, while the fifth moment emphasised the importance of writing in constructing the final text. This she claims finally reclaimed grounded theory from its positivist underpinnings to form a revised, more open-ended practice of grounded theory.<sup>99</sup> It is from this later understanding of grounded theory that I have tried to operate from. This entails an awareness of reflexivity, of the shared experience of co-creating the content of conversation with the participants, and of the power of my role as researcher in mediating the content of the final text. Stake reminds us: “Even when empathetic and respectful of each person’s realities, the researcher decides what will be included. More will be pursued that was volunteered. Less will be reported than was learned.”<sup>100</sup>

Giving the complexities of this, in approaching the data I have found Swinton and Mowat helpful in their insistence that data analysis is not a simple single event in the research process but can in practice be “a cycle of tentative construction, deconstruction, and reformulation - an on-going conversation”.<sup>101</sup> This is consistent with the methodology of this research project which involves an on-going conversation with tradition, experience and culture.

An essential pillar of this conversation has been engagement with the literature concerning lay ministry and with literature that offers reflection on the Scottish context and culture. It is to these we will now turn.

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<sup>99</sup> Kathy Charmaz, ‘Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods’ in N.K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), pp. 509-535, and Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, (Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage, 2006).

<sup>100</sup> Robert Stake ‘Case Studies’, Denzin and Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) p. 441.

<sup>101</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Qualitative Research in Practice*, p .146.

## Chapter Two Literature Review

Vatican II and its ecclesiological focus on “the people of God” made the emergence of new ministries possible. In particular Vatican II urged a renewal of the ministry of all the baptised<sup>1</sup> thus creating space for the many conceptions of lay ministry we have seen in the fifty years since the Council. This emergence of new possibilities, in turn, owes much to the work of *ressourcement* theologians such as Yves Congar, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Henri de Lubac, Romano Guardini, Jean Daniélou and others. They sought against the backdrop of Pius IX’s *Syllabus* and Pius X’s antimodernist campaign to rediscover the biblical and historical sources from which the Catholic tradition had arisen. This work underpins Vatican II. However, critical as Vatican II has been in the development of the Roman Catholic Church, there is inherently, within the documents and their post-conciliar interpretation, some resistance to the renewed thinking.<sup>2</sup> Fundamentally, there were differences between those who saw the task of *aggiornamento* as confined to the sessions of the Council and those who saw it as an inherent part of Catholicism. It is also noteworthy that the documents of the Council were written at a time when Western culture held a world-view that was largely optimistic about human progress and development in contrast to the current prevailing standpoint of postmodernity which assumes a more critical position. This was reflected in much of *Gaudium et Spes*,<sup>3</sup> the final document of Vatican II. These underlying attitudes have an impact on lay ministry.

In this chapter, first I will look briefly at the most relevant documents from the Council and its aftermath. I will then examine in detail a number of important themes that emerge from them which have significantly impacted on lay ministry. I will do this in two parts, looking first at those themes most relevant to the effectiveness of lay ministry within the life of the Church and then looking at lay ministry vis-à-vis the relationship between the church and the world. I will, in the final part of this chapter, look at the place of lay

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<sup>1</sup> Austin Flannery O.P. (ed. ) *Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, (Newton NSW: E.J. Dwyer Pty. Ltd, 1992), *Lumen Gentium* 17

<sup>2</sup> Paul Lakeland, *The Liberation of the Laity* , (New York: Continuum, 2003), pp. 88-89. (Discussion of *Lumen Gentium*)

<sup>3</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, *The Church in the World*.

ministry and the alternative positions taken by those who consider that the Tradition can be expanded to include emerging models of lay ministry and those who think the substantive change required demands the deconstruction of the Tradition.

There will be a number of authors referred to in the text of this dissertation who are not included in this literature review. Given the limitations of space, my aim in this section is to offer a route map through the literature which has given primary direction to the thesis. In Chapter Three I will look at the context of the research i.e. the Scottish Roman Catholic Church and the emergence of postmodernity. The body of literature, theological, historical and cultural, which underpins this context is explored in chapter three.

## ***2: 1 The Documents of Vatican II and Subsequent Relevant Church Documents***

The Vatican II documents which have particular relevance for developing a new place for the laity are *Lumen Gentium (LG)*: The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Gaudium et Spes (GS)*: The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World and *Apostolicam Actuositatem(AA)*: The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity. *Lumen Gentium* has particular significance as it deals with the self- understanding of the Church. Other significant documents include *Christifidelis Laici* published in 1989, following the Synod on the Laity and the 'Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests' circulated in 1997. The United States Bishops' Conference has also produced a number of useful documents: 'Called and Gifted' (1980) and 'Called and Gifted for the Third Millenium' (1995), 'Lay Ministry: The State of the Questions' (1995) and 'Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord' (2005).



These documents which form part of the Catholic Church's established body of teaching<sup>4</sup> are universally referred to in the discussion of lay ministry. They contain both suggestions of new directions and renewed emphasis on pre-Vatican II positions. At times the same documents often inform the move towards the expansion of lay ministry and give voice to the opinions of those who want to limit lay ministry. All of these documents contribute to understanding the position of lay ministry within the ministerial praxis of the Roman Catholic Church. For this reason their consideration is an essential aspect of this thesis.

In addition to the 'official' theology espoused by the above documents many eminent theologians such as Yves Congar, Edward Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner, Hans Küng, Kenan Osborne and David Power have continued to contribute to and enliven the discussion of ministry in the years since the Council. In recent years a considerable number of lay theologians such as Edward Hahnenberg, Susan Wood, Richard Gaillardetz, Paul Lakeland and Zeni Fox have further examined and explored the current and relevant issues around lay ministry. Their work notably begins with emerging practice and has particular reference to the growth of professional lay ministry in the United States.

### **2:1:1 *Lumen Gentium* (LG)**

The document which gives primary consideration to the nature of the Church is *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. This forms one of the key documents of Vatican II and was finally presented in November 1964. Its final form is very different from the original schema put forward in 1962. In its final version the document emphasises the Church as the People of God, underlines the Universal Call to Holiness and situates the Church in the mystery of the Trinity, in contrast to the first document which focussed on

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<sup>4</sup> The documents of Vatican II carry most weight. While these documents and the 1997 Instruction are applicable to the Universal Church, documents emanating from Bishops' Conferences are applicable to the particular churches under those Bishops' jurisdiction. However, the relative authority of the local and universal Church is a disputed point in Catholic ecclesiology. Documents produced by Bishops' Conferences, at the very least, can provide a reference point for other regional/local churches in their discernment.

hierarchy and authority. The notable difference is evident in the comparison of the two schemas in appendix five.

This document from its inception, however, became a focus of conflicting ecclesiologies.<sup>5</sup> As Lakeland notes it bears witness to the “battleground” from which it emerged.<sup>6</sup> Traditional bishops holding a view supporting Counter Reformation theology clashed with others who argued for a more historical view of the church, with emphasis on the local church and Episcopal collegiality, a more pastoral approach and dialogue with the contemporary world. The result is that at least four conceptualisations of the Church are present within the document i.e.

1. The Church as Mystical Body. This understanding drew on Pius XII’s encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943) and emphasised the image of communion around the Lord’s table (but in a very clearly hierarchically-ordered manner).
2. The Church as the People of God. The Church is a community consecrated by baptism and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, a pilgrim people chosen by God and united by God.
3. The Church is Hierarchical, with the Pope as monarchical ruler.
4. The Church as a sacrament of unity between God and his people.<sup>7</sup>

## **2:1:2 Gaudium et Spes (GS)**

This document addresses the dignity of human beings, the human community, the role of the Church in the world, culture, economics and social life, politics and peace. The document deals with the relationship between “the sacred and profane, the natural and the supernatural, the church and the world”.<sup>8</sup> Importantly, this document views the world in a positive light, as distinct from the prevailing view that the world was sinful and in need of

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<sup>5</sup> Susan Wood, *Sacramental Orders*, (Minnesota: Liturgical Press), 2000, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Lakeland, *The Liberation of the Laity*, (New York, Continuum), 2003, p. 89.

<sup>7</sup> Wood, *Sacramental Orders* pp. 6-24.

<sup>8</sup> Angel Anton S.J., ‘Postconciliar Ecclesiology: Expectations, Results and Prospects for the Future,’ in *Vatican II Assessments and Perspectives: Twenty–Five Years After* (ed.) Rene Latourelle, vol. 1, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), p. 43.

redemption. The world is seen as “created and sustained by the love of its maker”, “freed from the slavery of sin by Christ so that it might be fashioned anew according to God’s design and brought to its fulfilment”. From the perspective of this positive world view dialogue is encouraged:

The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of people who, united in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit press onwards towards the Kingdom....<sup>9</sup>

Three realities highlighted in *Gaudium et Spes* explain the Church’s positive relationship with the world: the dignity of the human person; the reality of the human community; and the meaning of human activity in the world.

### **2:1:3 Apostolicam Actuositatem (AA)**

This document also went through a number of revisions between 1960 and 1965. The initial document was criticised as too clerical and too juridical. The role of the laity in the work of the Church was regarded as a result of the lack of priests. This led various members of the commission to note that the lay-person’s “state” was not sufficiently recognised or understood.<sup>10</sup> Despite a number of contradictory positions within the document, Klostermann notes that the final decree does firmly place the laity in the “front-line of ecclesial life” where they “are” the Church in the world.<sup>11</sup>

The years since the Council, however, have seen nervousness about the position given to the laity at the Council and official documents have been at pains to clarify the difference between the priesthood of the laity and the ordained priesthood. *Christifidelis Laici* and the ‘Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests’ have emanated from this climate. It is noteworthy

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<sup>9</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, Preface.

<sup>10</sup> Ferdinand Klostermann, ‘Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity’ in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, (ed.) Herbert Vorglimer, vol.3, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 291.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.

that simultaneously in the same period, lay ministry has been growing rapidly and theological reflection, increasingly in the domain of lay theologians, has been striving to keep pace.

### **2:1:4 *Christifidelis Laici, the Post-Synodal Exhortation: Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People (1989) (CL)***

Following the call of Vatican II for further reflection on the topic, in 1987 John Paul II called a Synod specifically to address the question of the laity.<sup>12</sup>

Following the Synod, *Christifidelis Laici* was issued by Pope John Paul II.

Many bishops urged the Synod to regard the laity positively and not as second class and noted the need to grasp more fully the equality of all the baptised.<sup>13</sup> The voices of these bishops are reflected in the statements at the beginning of *Christifidelis Laici*, affirming the dignity and responsibility of the laity in the Church. The Synod also contributed to the concept of the Church as communion<sup>14</sup> and recognised communion and mission as deeply connected (CL 31). It acknowledged that the lay person is given lavish gifts for the common good of the Church. (CL 24) This pneumatological development was affirmed by all the small groups at the Synod, *the circuli minori*.<sup>15</sup> (CL 21, 24)

Despite the much positive affirmation of the dignity and responsibility of the laity, some of the discussions at the Synod continued to reflect a dichotomy between lay and ordained, a concern to preserve the distinct identity of the ordained and a suspicion of new developments regarding lay involvement. In the end *Christifideles Laici* strongly affirmed the essential

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<sup>12</sup> Participants included 49 cardinals, 6 patriarchs, 157 bishops, 1 Ukrainian major bishop, 7 metropolitans, 10 Superior Generals, 4 prelates, 1 priest and 1 brother. 60 lay people attended as auditors.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Oliver, *The Vocation of the Laity to Evangelisation: An Ecclesiological Enquiry into the Synod on the Laity (1987), Christifideles Laici (1989) and Documents of the NCCB (1987-1996)*, (Rome: Editrice Pontifica Universita Gregoriana: (360), 1997) p. 24 Bishop Karlen (Zimbabwe), Archbishop McGrath (Panama), Bishop Revoredo (Peru) urged a positive definition of the laity, while Cardinal Ballestrero (Italy) and Cardinal Pironio (Pontifical Council for the Laity) suggested that laity not be presented as second class.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38; Pierre Yet, Special Secretary of the Synod, noted later in reflections on the S[ynod] that communion is the dynamic union with God with a vertical and horizontal dimension expanding our concept of the Church beyond just a sociological reality.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.55, 59.

distinction between lay and ordained. It failed to explore any new ideas on the role of the laity even though a clarification of emerging models of lay ministry was sought by some participating bishops.<sup>16</sup>

One particular area lacking clarity centred round the term 'ministry'. Some argued that the term 'ministry' should only be applied to ordained clergy and preferred the term 'apostolate' to describe the activity of the laity. Others stated that only the work of the laity authorised by the church should be designated 'ministry'.<sup>17</sup> Other bishops used the term in a broader sense and did not want to imply that the laity needed authorization to carry out their mission.<sup>18</sup> The final document uses the language of lay people sharing "in the mission of Christ". There is reference to the "pastoral ministry of lay people" but not to "lay ministers". The document contains the corrective that "a person is not a minister in performing a task, but through sacramental ordination" (CL23). It seems these linguistic gymnastics to assert that a person carrying out a ministry is not called a minister is an expression of fear rather than a helpful clarification.

***2:1:5 Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests. (1997)***

This Vatican document was approved by the 'Supreme Pontiff' on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1997. It was signed by the prefects of the Congregation for the Clergy, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the Congregation for Bishops, the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and the Presidents of the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts.

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Kinast, "The Working Paper and the U.S. Consultation," *Gifts*, Summer/Fall (1987), 10.

<sup>17</sup> Oliver, *The Vocation of the Laity to Evangelisation*, p. 78 Listed are: Bishop Revoredo (Peru), Cardinal Hume (England and Wales), Cardinal Mayer (Commission for Sacraments and Divine Worship), Archbishop Mahony (Los Angeles).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Listed: Bishop Robinson (Australia), Fr Aranegui (Superior General, Marists), Bishop Kaseba (Zaire)

Although carrying less authority than Vatican II or *Christifidelis Laici*, the document is important because of the changed attitude to lay participation it portrays. It is addressed to bishops and is produced with no collaboration with lay people. The document has sixty references to canon law and only nine to the New Testament.<sup>19</sup> It seems that here lay participation is a matter for the hierarchy to control using canon law as a weapon rather than a theological issue. The forward insists the document is to provide guidance to local Churches where “certain practices have often been developed which have had very serious negative consequences and have caused the correct understanding of true ecclesial communion to be damaged”. What these practices are is not clarified. However, the document asserts:

1. The non-ordained must never be given the titles pastor, chaplain, coordinator or moderator which can confuse their role with that of the pastor.
2. In very restricted circumstances the non-ordained may be allowed to preach, but never at the Eucharistic liturgy.
3. Councils of priests may not have lay members.
4. Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils are only consultative and may not make decisions.
5. Lay people may not preside at liturgy or wear any kind of sacred vestment.
6. Extraordinary ministers of communion are to be reserved for cases of real necessity.<sup>20</sup>

This document engendered fear among many bishops which remains pervasive and still causes some to hesitate when new situations of ministry develop.

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<sup>19</sup> Thomas Höebel , *Laity and Participation: A Theology of Being the Church*, (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), p. 124.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Lakeland, *Liberation of the Laity*, p. 130.

## **2:1:6 Documents from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

To celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity" the U.S. bishops called for a series of conferences which led to the 1980 document *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity* (CG).<sup>21</sup> The document notes four "calls" to the laity: to adulthood, to holiness, to ministry and to community.

In 1995, The U.S. bishops produced a second document, *Called and Gifted, for the Third Millennium*. (CGTM)<sup>22</sup> This document reflects the increased numbers of lay people working professionally in the church and introduces the term "ecclesial lay ministers" to describe this role. (CGTM 18) The document affirms these ministers noting that:

With the entire Church we give thanks the Church has been blessed with many laity who feel called to ecclesial ministry, even as we continue to work and pray for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life. We also recognise that God is blessing the Church with lay vocations to ministry. (CGTM 17)

There is an acknowledgement these new models have brought vitality. The Bishops notice that they "have seen a welcome renewal in all aspects of parish life and ministry, due in large measure to an informed and committed laity often encouraged by their pastors and priests imbued with the spirit of Vatican II ". (CGTM 10)

## **2:1:7 Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions**

In 1995 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) formed a subcommittee for lay ministry. This resulted in the report 'Lay Ecclesial

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<sup>21</sup> National Catholic Conference of Bishops, *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity: Reflections of the American Bishops Commemorating the Fifteenth Anniversary of the issue of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, (USCCB: Washington, D.C., 1980.)

<sup>22</sup>USCCB, Committee on the Laity, *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*, (USCCB Publication No 5-002, Washington D.C., 1995)

Ministry: State of the Questions' (LEM). It is here that the term Lay Ecclesial Minister is first defined.<sup>23</sup> The collaboration of the ordained and laity is encouraged as a witness to communion. Bishops are urged to act as unifiers and to recognise their responsibility to encourage formation and education of Lay Ecclesial Ministers. Authorisation of lay ministry by bishops is recommended. The committee recommended further dialogue on these issues as well as academic research on the theology of ministry. In response to this a colloquium was held at the University of Dayton in May 1997. The papers were published as *Together in God's Service: Towards a Theology of Ecclesial Lay Ministry*<sup>24</sup>(TGS).

These positive affirmations of lay ministry offer an alternative perspective to *Christifidelis Laici* and the 1997 'Instruction'.

### **2:1:8 Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord (CVL)**

This document was approved on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2005 and aimed to provide a resource for guiding the development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry.<sup>25</sup> A draft incorporating feedback from bishops was sent to lay ministry associations in October 2004. The same problematic issues kept being raised, namely: the definition of the term ministers and whether it included volunteers; the question about the use of the term 'ministry' and the relationship of the roles of the lay and ordained. The subcommittee solicited feedback on three drafts and worked closely with many other Bishops' Conference committees, as a result Bishop Melchek, chair of the USCCB subcommittee on lay ministry described the final document as "a gift shaped and blessed by many hands".<sup>26</sup> However despite wide consultation at the November Conference preceding the vote some concerns continued to be raised about the term

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<sup>23</sup> It refers to those who have responded to a call to work in leadership positions in the church and have been educated and formed for a given area of ministry which is publicly and formally recognised by the Church. (LEM 7-8).

<sup>24</sup> *Together in God's Service: Towards a Theology of Ecclesial Lay Ministry*, (ed.) Subcommittee on Lay Ministry and Committee on the Laity, (Washington D.C., USCCB, 1998)

<sup>25</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, (USCCB Publishing: Washington, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> <http://usccb.org/laity/laymin/melczeknov14.shtml> accessed 14/10/2010.



'ministry'. Finally an intervention by Cardinal Dulles<sup>27</sup> proved persuasive.<sup>28</sup> *Co-Workers* clearly states that the document does not "propose norms or establish particular law". (CVL6). It does however call bishops "to become more intentional and effective in ordering and integrating lay ecclesial ministers within the ministerial life and structures of our dioceses." (CVL4)

The search for "effective" and "integrated" lay ministry returns us to a number of the unresolved tensions of Vatican II. The next section of this chapter will return to *Lumen Gentium* and its ecclesiology. Then the following section will examine in more detail, *Gaudium et Spes* and the relationship between church and world it envisaged.

### ***2:2 Issues Arising from Lumen Gentium: Renewed Emphasis on the Trinity***

In the second paragraph of *Lumen Gentium*, considering the nature and mission of the Church, the Council insists the Church emanates from the action of the Trinity, stating: the universal Church is seen to be a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Cyprian, *De Orat. Dom*, 23)<sup>29</sup>

The setting of the Church firmly within the action of the Trinity in these early paragraphs of *Lumen Gentium* provides a lens through which later developments in the document can be seen, such as the renewed emphasis on the priesthood of all the baptised, the charisms given by the Spirit to the whole people of God and collegiality.

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<sup>27</sup> Dulles argued that the use of the word was consistent with documents of the Holy See and previous documents produced by the UCCCB, see Dulles "Can Laity Properly be called "Ministers"?", *Origins* 35, no. 44 (2006) pp. 725-731.

<sup>28</sup> Bishop Matthew Clark in his book, *Forward in Hope: Saying Amen to Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (Indianapolis: Ave Maria Press, 2009) describes how he was persuaded by Dulles. He describes how Dulles spoke eloquently that such use of the word ministry was not a new development for the Church but rather had been part of our tradition for centuries.

<sup>29</sup> LG paragraphs 2-4.

## **2:2:1 The Priority of Baptism as the Foundation of the *Christifidelis***

The Council's frequent use of the term *Christifidelis* to refer to all the baptised and its emphasis on the common priesthood of all believers affirmed the equal dignity of all in the life of the Church. This was a conscious move away from Pope Pius X's description of the Church as an "unequal society" composed of two ranks, the clergy and the laity.<sup>30</sup> Kenan Osborne refers to this shared priesthood as the common matrix and concurs that this provides the basis for both ordained and non-ordained ministry in the church, based on Vatican II's teaching on the *tria munera* of Jesus.<sup>31</sup>

Within the biblical and patristic perspectives offered by the Council, the baptised are described as sharing in the three-fold office of Christ, namely as priest, prophet and king. As a priestly people, they are consecrated to God. As a prophetic people, they witness to the Gospel, and as a kingly people, their daily lives are ordered to God's will and permeated by love of others. The love of God and love of neighbour are seen to flow from the one consecration to God in baptism.<sup>32</sup> The result of their consecration to God and share in Christ's mission is that the baptised as a priestly people, are called to consecrate the world to God.<sup>33</sup> This colossal task is made possible by the gifts of the Spirit.

## **2:2:2 Renewed Pneumatology**

The renewed understanding of the role of the baptised was accompanied by a renewed pneumatology and consideration of the charisms given by the Spirit to the whole people of God. Reminiscent of Paul's exhortation to the

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<sup>30</sup> Claudia Carlen (ed.), *Vehementor Nos.* in *The Papal Encyclicals*, (New York: McGrath, 1981) 3, pp. 47- 48.

<sup>31</sup> Kenan Osborne, *Ministry: Lay Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church: Its History and Theology*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), pp. 527-564

<sup>32</sup> LG 10.12, AA 2 and 4, see David Power, 'Priesthood Revisited' in *Ordering the Baptised Priesthood*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>33</sup> LG31, see commentary on this idea concerning the mission of the baptised as introduced into the council's debates by Cardinal Bueno y Monreal in Melvin Michalski, *The Relationship between the Universal Priesthood of the Baptised and the Ministerial Priesthood of the Ordained in Vatican 2 and in Subsequent Theology: Understanding "Essentia Et Non Gradu Tantum."*, *Lumen Gentium No. 10*, (Lewston, NY, 1996) p. 38.

Christians of Corinth to “strive eagerly for the spiritual gifts” (1 Cor. 14:1), *Lumen Gentium* notes that:

Allotting his gifts at will and to each individual, the Spirit also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts, he makes them fit and ready to undertake various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church. (LG 12)

This marks a return to the early insistence on the charismatic dimension of the church. This had suffered and declined as the institutional dimension of the church began to grow exponentially following the Edict of Milan. Already in the fourth century, we find John Chrysostom (347-407) offering spiritual interpretations of the charisms mentioned by Paul.<sup>34</sup> In the sixteenth century reaction to the Reformation further reinforced the institutional dimension of the Church. So much so that by the mid-twentieth century at the Council, Cardinal Ernesto Ruffini could put forward the view that “charisms were part of the early Church but are no longer necessary for the Church’s existence”.<sup>35</sup> However, at Vatican II, Cardinal Suenens, proffered a different view - that charisms are frequent and basic to life in the Christian community. He asked the Council:

Do we not all know laymen and laywomen in our own dioceses who we might say are called by the Lord and endowed with various charisms of the Spirit? Charisms in the Church without the ministry of pastors would certainly be disorderly, but vice versa, ecclesial ministry without charisms would be poor and sterile.<sup>36</sup>

This opinion prevailed and the renewed pneumatological thinking of the Council was further developed in *Apostolicam Actuositatem*’s emphasis that charisms are given both for the Church and for the world. It asserts that:

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<sup>34</sup> Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First eight Centuries*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), pp. 83-342.

<sup>35</sup> John Haughey, ‘Charisms: An Ecclesiological Exploration’ in *Retrieving Charisms for the Twenty First Century* Doris Donnelly (ed.), (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1999) p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Leo Josef Suenens, ‘The Charismatic Dimension of the Church’ in *Council Speeches of Vatican II*, Hans Kung, Yves Congar, Daniel O’Hanlon (eds.), (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1964) p. 32.

From the reception of these charisms, even the most ordinary ones, there follow for all Christian believers the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of humanity and the development of the Church, to use them in the freedom of the Spirit who 'breathes where he wills', and at the same time in communion with the sisters and brothers in Christ, and with pastors especially.  
(AA3)

In addition to individual charisms, Vatican II reaffirmed that the whole *Christifidelis* share in the prophetic office of Christ in the "supernatural discernment in matters of faith". This *sensus fidei* means the people of God "adheres unwaveringly to the faith given once and for all to the saints, penetrates it more deeply with right thinking, and applies it more fully in its life. (LG12, 35)

Together the common priesthood of the baptised and the recognition of the vocation and spiritual giftedness of lay people opened the door to the development of Lay Ministry.

### **2:2:3 Collegiality**

The ministry and role of the Bishop was given serious theological consideration in chapter three of *Lumen Gentium*. The core teaching on the episcopate firstly introduces the idea that bishops by virtue of their episcopal ordination are in receipt of "the fullness of the sacrament of orders"; thus affirming the sacramental nature of episcopal ordination. (LG 18)<sup>37</sup> While this marked a helpful move away from the post-Tridentine tendency to view the bishop as the vicar of the Pope it left the role of the presbyter undefined. With so much time given to the episcopate there was little energy left to redevelop the theology of the presbyterate which has impacted, as we shall see, on lay ministry.

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<sup>37</sup> By episcopal consecration the fullness of the sacrament of Orders is conferred, that fullness of power, namely, which in the Church's liturgical practice and in the Fathers of the Church is called the High Priesthood, the supreme power of the sacred ministry, But episcopal consecration, together with the office of sanctifying, also confers the office of teaching and governing, which however, of its very nature, can only be exercised in hierarchical communion with the head and the members of the college. (LG 18)

Secondly both *Lumen Gentium* and *Christus Dominus* (CD)<sup>38</sup> emphasised the pastoral character of the bishop's office insisting: "They should stand in the midst of their people, seeking to know the particular conditions and concerns that define the lives of their flock." (CD, 16) This, places the bishop once more in relationship with local churches as was normal in the early Church.

This desire to place the bishop at the centre of the local church however, stands in tension with the Council's teaching that the first effect of ordination is to introduce the bishop into the College of Bishops, even before he has been assigned to a local church. (LG22) It appears the Council was not able to commit to a vision of the College of Bishops, other than separate from and above local churches. As Xavier Rynne noted: the "universalist" framework that begins with the bishops' membership of the college of bishops with the pope as its head (LG 20-22) was never reconciled with the role of the individual bishop as "the visible principle and foundation of unity in their particular churches" drawing those churches "into being the one and only Catholic Church" (LG 23).<sup>39</sup> This dichotomy has relevance to the attention given by bishops to lay ministry rooted in local communities in 'particular churches'.

Thirdly the Council recalled and reinvigorated the bond of communion shared between bishops and with the Bishop of Rome as part of the tradition of the Church and attested to in the gatherings of bishops at synods and councils. However, this reinstatement of collegiality was met with resistance by those who were fearful of any rejection of Vatican I and any resultant watering down of papal or curial authority. The Council worked around this by emphasising the place of the pope within the College of Bishops as its head. Even so anxiety on the part of some participants prevailed and finally persuaded Paul VI to add the *Nota Praevia* to *Lumen Gentium*. This addition returns to a neo-scholastic position describing the distinction between the Pope alone and the Pope with the college as "two distinct subjects" holding supreme authority in the Church.

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<sup>38</sup> Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, 28<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1965.

<sup>39</sup> Xavier Rynne, *Letters from Vatican City: Vatican Council II (First Session): Background and Debates* (New York: Farrer, Straus and co., 1963), pp. 201-202.

In the discussion at the Council, Cardinal Bernard Alfrink of Utrecht had called for a permanent body of bishops to assist in the governance of the universal Church loosely akin to the permanent synods of the Eastern Church<sup>40</sup> (as proposed by Patriarch Maximos IV, Melkite patriarch of Antioch). These proposals were given little attention, perhaps because Paul VI had already promulgated *Apostolica Sollicitudo*, establishing the World Synod of Bishops. It is pertinent that at the present time Pope Francis has returned to this lost aspiration of Vatican II and established in recent times an advisory group of eight Cardinals from around the world. This visible promotion of collegiality gives new weight to Bishops' Conferences and their role in discerning the action of the Spirit in their local churches.

### **2:2:4 Episcopal Conferences**

In the spirit of collegiality, the Council had also recommended the setting up of regional or national episcopal conferences. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, had already given authority to these conferences. (SC 22) *Christus Dominus* was hesitant on the question of what authority these conferences had but recognised both their pastoral importance and that such gatherings were rooted in the ancient tradition of regional bishops meeting in synods. (CD, 36)

In the years following the council, the work of episcopal conferences gathered some momentum and the U.S. bishops' conference and CELAM in Latin America issued a number of influential pastoral letters. At the 1985 extraordinary synod the bishops requested a study of the status of bishops' conferences. The result was a working paper produced in 1988 by the Congregation of Bishops reflecting elements of the debate that had been brewing in certain ecclesial circles regarding episcopal conferences.<sup>41</sup> Influential in this debate was the work of Henri de Lubac on the theological

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<sup>40</sup> Richard Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), p. 80.

<sup>41</sup> Richard Gaillardetz, 'Draft Statement on Episcopal Conferences', *Origins* 17 (1987-1988), pp. 128-129.

status of bishops' conferences from the perspective of Eucharistic theology.<sup>42</sup> He asserted that in every celebration of the Eucharist there are two modalities in operation; first there is the community of believers gathered at the local celebration of the Eucharist, and second, there is the communion that exists among all Eucharistic communities i.e. the universal Church of Christ. Theologically, he concurred, the Church is at the same time, one and many, universal and local, but is never something in between. De Lubac concluded that therefore the bishop could realise the collegial character of his ministry in two ways: through the exercise of his ministry of unity within the local church, and through his participation in the whole College of Bishops. While admitting the pastoral usefulness of world synods and episcopal conferences he did not attribute to them any theological authority or recognise them as manifestations of the whole college.<sup>43</sup> Following de Lubac's argument, Ratzinger and Hamer (now prefects for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Congregation for the Congregation for Religious, respectively) expressed concerns that an authoritative role for episcopal conferences could bring about a return to the kind of church nationalism that had appeared in the past through Gallicanism and Febronianism.<sup>44</sup> They also noted the danger of bishops' individual authority being subsumed into bureaucratic committee structures. In 1988 Pope John Paul II promulgated the apostolic letter *Apostolos Suos*<sup>45</sup>, addressing the question of authority of bishops' conferences. *Apostolos Suos* admitted these conferences to be partial expressions of collegiality but delegated no new powers to them beyond those already stipulated in the 1983 Code of Canon Law. This stated that they could only issue binding statements when the document was issued in a plenary session, was approved unanimously or by a two-thirds majority and received approval (*recognitio*) from Rome. The document was criticised by those who wanted less centrality. As Francis

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<sup>42</sup> Henri de Lubac, *The Motherhood of the Church followed by Particular Churches in the Universal Church*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), trans. Sergia Englund, originally published in French in 1971.

<sup>43</sup> Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making*, p. 129.

<sup>44</sup> Joseph Ratzinger with Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), pp. 58-61; Jérôme Hamer, "La Responsabilité Collégiale de Chaque Evêque," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 105, (1983), pp. 641-654.

<sup>45</sup> John Paul II, *Apostolos Suos, Motu Proprio*, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1998.

Sullivan pointed out there is little collegial authority granted to the episcopal conference if authority must be either vested in individual bishops (through unanimous approval) or in papal teaching (by recognition by the Holy See).<sup>46</sup> The lack of freedom that Bishops' Conferences have been given has resulted in a tendency to look to Rome for initiatives to work with (such as the New Evangelisation) rather than engaging in the discernment of local needs and appropriate responses to them. The work done by the United States Conference of Bishops on lay ministry has led to lay ministry becoming a recognised and realistic response to the needs of the church in the United States. Greater autonomy for Episcopal Conferences would potentially allow lay ecclesial ministry to be developed at national and regional levels. This is surely required in order to address the need for ministry in the light of declining numbers of priests.

### ***2:2:5 Collegiality as a Model for Collaboration***

The promise of collegiality has not yet been fulfilled as both the restricted authority allocated to episcopal conferences and subsequent synods have demonstrated.<sup>47</sup> It is noteworthy that at the present time Pope Francis is seeking to renew the synodal structure which is a sign of hope for the future. For, collegiality remains an established alternative firmly rooted in Catholic tradition, to a strictly hierarchical structure of governance. This could be particularly efficacious if we follow Suenens understanding of collegiality as extending throughout the church.

*Lumen Gentium* notes that collegiality is also demonstrated in the presentation of the universal Church as the worldwide network of local churches, rich in variety of practice yet in reciprocal communion with one

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<sup>46</sup> Francis Sullivan, 'The Teaching Authority of Episcopal Conferences', *Theological Studies* 63 (September 2002), pp. 472-493.

<sup>47</sup> James Coriden has summarised a number of criticisms regarding synods as presently configured. These are: synodal processes are subject to excessive curial control; there has been frustration regarding limited action on synodal proposals; post-synodal exhortations have been written by popes and often have little relationship to synodal debates; the synodal process involves participants listening to endless unrelated episcopal speeches; real discussion among participants is limited; the drafting committee often eliminates many proposals that emerge from the language groups; only propositions garnering 95% approval are passed on to the Pope. James Coriden, 'The Synod of Bishops: Episcopal Collegiality Still Seeks Adequate Expression,' *The Jurist* 64 (2004), pp. 120-121.



another.(LG 27,26,23) From this perspective, David McLoughlin considers collegiality as signifying the "renewal of the communal relational model of apostolic service focused in the local church but with worldwide implications in terms of communion." <sup>48</sup> He insists that: "like the trinity, the Church's reality lies in an essential orientation towards relationship. Our God is being-in communion."<sup>49</sup> For McLoughlin:

The focus of *communio* is the nature of God and our communion with and in God. The focus of faith is not primarily the church but is God and life in God. If we are led into *koinonia* with God in Christ we will necessarily be in *koinonia* with each other, so the initial vertical reference becomes fleshed out in the horizontal everyday reality of Christian sacramental life. <sup>50</sup>

McLoughlin observes that collegial structures are based on the renewed theology of *communio/koinonia* arising from the priesthood of all the baptised. This calls he finds, for collaborative practice, in which ministry is seen in terms of the relationship of the bishop and the priest to the varieties of service within the whole community. This resonates with the work of *Concilium*-related theologians such as Hans Küng, Edward Schillebeeckx, David Power and Thomas O'Meara, who using historical-critical methods demonstrate the starting point for all ministry is Spirit-filled, charism-endowed communities.<sup>51</sup>

This is highly significant as collaborative ministry is the milieu where most lay ministry is to be found. It is a model of ministry which encapsulates the Trinitarian thinking of Vatican II. Alongside collegiality, it is also a model which has suffered under the trend of increasing centralism in the years

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<sup>48</sup> David McLoughlin, 'Authority as Service in Communion' in Noel Timms and Kenneth Wilson eds. *Governance and Authority in the Roman Catholic Church: Beginning a Conversation*, (London: SPCK, 2000), p. 127.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.* pp. 128-129.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.* p. 130.

<sup>51</sup> Paul D. Murray, 'The need for an integrated theology of ministry' in 'Ministries in the Church', *Concilium* 2010/1 p. 49. see Hans Küng, *Why Priests? A Proposal for a New Church Ministry*, trans. John Cumming, (London: Collins, 1972); Edward Schillebeeckx, *A Case for Change*, trans. John Bowden, (London: SCM Press, 1981); David Power, *Ministries of Christ and His Church*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1969); Thomas O'Meara, *A Theology of Ministry*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

since the Council. For the same reason, although papal teaching has continued to support, in principle, the consultation of the faithful (LG 12), there has in reality been very little opportunity given for this. Nor has consideration been given as to how to develop the constitutive role of the Christian faithful in the development of tradition.<sup>52</sup>

Before turning to the distinction between lay and ordained ministry it is worth underlining the existence of collegial and collaborative structures and their ability to bring together lay and ordained ministry in response to local needs.

## ***2:3 The Distinction between Lay and Ordained Ministry***

### ***2.3.1 The Relationship of the Priesthood of the Baptised and the Priesthood of the Ordained***

Essential to *communio/koinonia* is a balanced relationship between the priesthood of all the baptised and ordained priesthood. Melvin Michalski's work has studied and summarised the concerns of the participating bishops during the debate that led to the final text of *Lumen Gentium 10*, as well as the related discussions that eventually fed in to *Presbyterorum Ordinis* and *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.<sup>53</sup> The crucial text in this discussion is *Lumen Gentium 10*, paragraph two.

***The common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood, though they differ in essence and not simply in degree, are nevertheless interrelated: each in its own way shares in the one priesthood of Christ.***

Three points can be noted: the use of the term "common priesthood" to describe the priesthood of the baptised, and "ministerial" or "hierarchical" to denote the priesthood of the ordained; the expression of the difference

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<sup>52</sup> Flannery (ed.) *Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Dei Verbum, 8.*

<sup>53</sup> Melvin Michalski, *The Relationship between the Universal Priesthood of the Baptised and the Ministerial Priesthood of the Ordained in Vatican 2 and in Subsequent Theology: Understanding "Essentia Et Non Gradu Tantum."*, *Lumen Gentium No. 10*

between the two in terms of “essence”; and the statement that the two priesthoods are interrelated.

### ***2:3:2 The Use of “Common” and “Ministerial” to Describe the Two Priesthoods***

Because the mission of Christ is shared by all the baptised, the use of the term “ministerial” to describe only the ordained priesthood came under some scrutiny in the Council’s discussions.<sup>54</sup> The aim of the bishops in using the term “common” was to emphasise that the priesthood of the baptised was communal, i.e. that one entered into the community of the faithful through baptism and was put into a relationship with others. Secondly, that the use of the word “ministerial” to describe the priesthood of the baptised would have been to narrow the definition of the baptised whose mission was primarily seen to be in the world. Thirdly, given that this section should deal with the organic unity of the Church and the interrelatedness of the two priesthoods, the emphasis should be on the priesthood of the ordained as one of service to the baptised.<sup>55</sup>

### ***2:3:3 The Expression of the Difference Between the Two Priesthoods in Terms of “Essence”***

Michalski states that much of the discussion, both on the floor of the Council but also in written submissions, centred on how to describe the relationship and the difference between the two priesthoods, given the desire of the Council to affirm the validity of the priesthood of the ordained, as well as that of the baptised. Broadly speaking, the question was whether the difference should be expressed as functional, gradual, sacramental or essential.<sup>56</sup>

The Council of Trent had defined the sacrament of holy orders as a valid sacrament, and thus a gift from God not from the community.<sup>57</sup> Defining the ordained priesthood in terms of degree (of this gifting) was a possibility.

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<sup>54</sup> Michalski, pp. 25-27.

<sup>55</sup> Richard Gaillardetz, ‘The Ecclesiological Foundations of Ministry within an Ordered Communion’, in Wood (ed.) *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood*, pp. 26-48.

<sup>56</sup> Michalski, pp. 21-28, pp. 39-45.

<sup>57</sup> Norman Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1990), pp. 742-74.

*Lumen Gentium* 21 as we have seen had already described the episcopacy as possessing the fullness of priesthood; by using such language the sacrament of orders could be seen as an expression of baptismal consecration.<sup>58</sup> However, this would not have defined the ordained priesthood as a separate sacrament, and would have courted the danger of seeing the ordained priest as a 'super Christian' suggesting the inadequacy of baptism. According to Michalski, Archbishop Jaegar, in his contribution to the discussion, suggested that the difference between the two priesthoods would be better expressed in terms that explained the unity between the two priesthoods rooted as they are in mission and in the celebration of the Eucharist, rather than using language of metaphysics.<sup>59</sup> Jaegar's contribution, as Michalski explains, highlights two important points. Firstly, the role of the Holy Spirit in calling and consecrating the individual in baptism and in the ordained priesthood is underlined. The difference between the two priesthoods is also founded on the Holy Spirit. The difference is in the appointing of the ordained priest as an official representative of the Church before God the Father. Michalski states that this point made by Jaegar envisaged coordination between the role of the Spirit and ecclesial delegation; the two go together to appoint the ordained priest to this particular role of representation. The language used by Jaegar in his representation and that of Bishop Jaramillo, who more explicitly used the term "sacramental" to describe the relationship between the two priesthoods, shows us that the idea of sacrament was already being expressed in relational and symbolic terms on the floor of the Council, denoting the dynamic action of the Triune God and the human response. However, the term that was finally used to describe the difference between the two priesthoods was "essence". Why did the Council opt finally for a word from the school of metaphysics when so much of the discussion had been around more relational terminology? The answer, suggests Michalski, lies in the Council's desire to affirm the reality of the action of God on the life of the

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<sup>58</sup> Michalski, p. 37.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 39-41.

individual, which changes them at their deepest reality.<sup>60</sup> The problem with Michalski's conclusion is that deep change leading to conversion and the orientation of the individual towards life-long growth in Christ is experienced also by those who are not ordained. Such change finds many different expressions in the church and the world. I would contend that the seventy percent of lay ministers who believe they are pursuing a life-time of service in the church and for whom the main motivating factor is a "response to God's call" also experience the reality of God's action in their lives and as a result are changed in their deepest reality.<sup>61</sup> This critical reality may suggest, following Michalski, that there is an argument for allowing the ordination of a more diverse group of people including women and married men.

### ***2:3:4 Treatment of the Two Priesthoods in Christifidelis Laici***

Following the Council and with some experience of growing numbers of lay ministers, *Christifidelis Laici* reflected renewed extensive discussion of the differences between the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood. There is discussion of "the clericalisation of the laity" and the fear is expressed of creating a "parallel service to that founded on the Sacrament of Orders" (CL 23). Article twenty two emphasises the uniqueness of the ordained ministry. It is pointed out that ordained clergy act "*in persona Christi Capitas*" (in the person of Christ, the Head). The difference in degree and essence of ordained ministry is mentioned once more and that apostles (defined here as the origins of the hierarchy) were chosen "to form and to rule the priestly people". Section twenty three continues to strongly express concern over the "confusion and equating of the common priesthood and the

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13. Michalski states that the report from the Theological Commission on the first draft of the schema that would become the final text made it clear that the language of metaphysics would feature in order to describe the reality of priesthood of the ordained; to show it was not something superficial or delegated by the community. See also Philip Rosato "Priesthood of the Baptised and Priesthood of the Ordained, Complimentary Approaches to their Interrelation", *Gregorianum* 68, 1-2 (1987), pp. 215-266. Rosato writes, pp. 219-222-, "The bishops at Vatican II considered themselves obliged, once cognisant of the various new insights they also wished to incorporate into their teaching on the interconnection between the two expressions of priesthood, to anchor them from the outset in the quintessential Catholic conviction that human involvement in the mystery of Christ invariably effects a change in the intrinsic constitution of human persons, and not merely a modification of their extrinsic interaction with the community of divine persons, with the communion of believers, with the temporal order, or with the consummation in the eschaton."

<sup>61</sup> Edward Hahnenberg, 'Theology of Lay Ecclesial Ministry' in Zeni Fox (ed) *Lay Ecclesial Ministry: Pathways Toward the Future*, p. 73.

ministerial priesthood” and over a loose interpretation of the concepts of “supply by necessity” and “situations of emergency”. It is emphasised that “the exercise of such tasks does not make the lay faithful pastors”. The discussion on states of life (CL 55) comes close to a dichotomized view of lay people and clergy and consecrated religious. The lay state “recalls” for the ordained and religious “the significance of the earthly and temporal realities in the salvific plan of God”. The ministerial priesthood on the other hand represents “the permanent guarantee of the sacramental presence of Christ the Redeemer”. Much of the discussion in these sections twenty-three and fifty-five appear to limit the organic description of the vine and branches found earlier in the document.

### ***2:3:5 Further Discussion of the Two Priesthoods***

In looking beyond official documents for clarification of the two priesthoods we turn first to Yves Congar. In the years before the Council, Congar had given lengthy consideration to the question of the priesthood of God’s people. He traced the role of the priest through the Old Testament, New Testament and in the Fathers of the Church; comparing the understanding of the priest as mediator with that of priesthood as sacrificial. He understood that the mediating role lay people play in the world demanded self-sacrifice and in this way that the sacrifice of both priest and laity together is united with the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass. For Congar, this factor indicated that the laity share in Christ’s priesthood in a “spiritual–real” manner through “the order of holiness of life” and “the order of sacramental worship”.<sup>62</sup> For Congar lay people therefore through their baptismal priesthood have both a sacramental role and an apostolic one.

In 1964 Congar published a revised edition of his study which reflected the development of his thought. This was followed in 1972 by an article on the subject in ‘The Jurist’<sup>63</sup> and later by his introduction to the

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<sup>62</sup> Yves Congar, *Lay people in the Church: A Study for the Theology of the laity*, (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1955), pp.194-233.

<sup>63</sup> Yves Congar, ‘My Pathfindings in the Theology of Laity and Ministries,’ *The Jurist* 2 (1972), pp. 169-188.

French edition of *Christifidelis Laici*. Finally he produced a series of essays on 'ministries' offering reflection on the respective roles of clergy and laity.<sup>64</sup> Paul Lakeland usefully identifies in Congar's expansive work four aspects of lay life.

1. The layperson is called to life in the world.
2. The lay person has a role in Eucharistic worship, actively bringing the world and its concerns before Christ.
3. The lay person can cooperate through Catholic Action in the work of the hierarchical apostolate.
4. The layperson is called through baptism and confirmation to a direct evangelisation of the world that is exercised independently of the hierarchical apostolate.<sup>65</sup>

One of Congar's enduring contributions to the development of ministry is his insight that all ministries are modes of service.<sup>66</sup> This led him to replace the clergy/lay divide with the more generic concept of ministry/modes of service. His vision of an entire ecclesiology was undoubtedly ahead of his time and is one to which we will return. Unfortunately this was never matched by an accompanying exploration of the theology of the laity.

Kenan Osborne writing thirty years on from Vatican II, in a different era from Congar, also reflects on the statement in *Lumen Gentium* ten. He questions whether "difference in essence" means that the share in Christ's priesthood is different or if the way of sharing is different.<sup>67</sup> In the first approach every Christian shares in the *tria munera* but only in a limited form, there are certain priestly, prophetic and kingly tasks which baptised-Eucharistic Christians cannot perform and that only ordained Christians can perform. This leads him to ask whether the *tria munera* of Jesus is an intrinsically divisible reality. If so, what does the ordained 'share' add to the call and commission to discipleship? Is a person who has both shares in the

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<sup>64</sup> Yves Congar, 'Ministères et laïcat dans les recherches actuelles de la théologie catholique romaine', *Verbum Caro* 18 (1964), pp. 127-148, 'Ministères et structuration de l'Eglise', *La Maison Dieu* 102 (1970), pp. 7-20, 'Quelques problèmes touchant les ministères', *Nouvelles Revue Théologique* 93 (1971), pp. 785-800.

<sup>65</sup> Lakeland, *Liberation of the Laity*, p. 53.

<sup>66</sup> Congar, 'My Pathfindings', p. 176.

<sup>67</sup> Osborne, *Lay Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church*, pp. 548-564.

*tria munera* 'better' and more like Jesus? He point out that this seems contrary to the thinking of Vatican II where *Lumen Gentium* emphasised the unity of the people of God (chapter two) and the universal call to holiness (chapter five). The second approach to the idea of "essential difference", he surmises could be that the way that Christians share in the *tria munera* is different. Therefore, all Christians share in the preaching and teaching ministry of Jesus but only the hierarchy in a way that is authoritative, all share in the priestly ministry but only the hierarchy are sacramentally effective, all share in leadership but only the hierarchy can assume official leadership. This seems to imply a quantitative rather than a qualitative difference which Osborne finds does not comply with other texts of Vatican II. This leads him to question if the emphasis on essential difference is a result of: "gospel criterion or a desire to maintain the social construct of hierarchical superiority?"<sup>68</sup>

He notes that the use of the *tria munera* which has raised so many theological questions and which so much has been read into seems to have been adopted without much discussion.<sup>69</sup> Osborne's analysis points to the need for further clarification in this area. It is unfortunate that because of its ambiguity, the post-conciliar emphasis on 'difference' has dominated discussion to the detriment of the exploration of the complementarity of lay and ordained ministry.

The exploration of the relationship between ordained and lay ministry is one of the core issues in this thesis. Effective lay ministry depends on an acknowledged place for lay ministry by clergy and on positive collaborative relationships between ordained and lay ministers. A second major consideration concerning the position of the laity arises from the way in which the relationship between the church and the world is viewed. The laity is seen in a particular way to live their vocation 'in the world'. This can enhance their value because of their missionary potential. However, if the primary way in which the world is viewed emphasises profanity, the laity can

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p.552.

<sup>69</sup> Its use was justified by an appeal to Eusebius of Caesarea. He affirms that in Christ all Old Testament anointings are brought to fulfilment. (Ecclesial History 1:3)



be regarded as of lesser worth because they are 'contaminated' by the things of the world.

#### **2:4 The Church in the World and its Mission**

The Second Vatican Council characterised the church as the 'sacrament of universal salvation'; insisting that all of the baptised, laity and clergy, have a responsibility toward the temporal order. This is in marked contrast to the previously preferred schema that posits two separate spheres of existence: the sacred and the profane. Rather in the thinking of the Council, as Bruno Forte asserts: "there is one sphere of existence with a complexity of definitive relations that make up history."<sup>70</sup>

This led to the maxim 'no salvation outside of the Church' being replaced by a recognition of the need for dialogue with unbelievers and those of other faiths and an acceptance that 'truth' and 'holiness' could also be found in other traditions.<sup>71</sup>

This move began in the years before the Council as thinkers such as John Henry Newman, Maurice Blondel, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Karl Rahner and Henri de Lubac sought to give meaningful expression to Christianity in a post-Enlightenment, modern, pluralistic, educated society and to appropriate the positive values of this society into the life of the Church. In different ways each of these theologians argued that God's grace is not extrinsic to human experience, understanding or culture but immanent in history, beckoning it to transformation and redemption.<sup>72</sup>

As the new thinking of the Council percolated down, Marie-Dominique Chenu noted that a number of people were of the opinion that the Council had too much accommodation to modernity and too little to say about God. To which Chenu replied:

There is something in this statement, but it is clearly somewhat ambiguous. It stems from a particular, explicit or implicit, conception of

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<sup>70</sup> Bruno Forte, *The Church: Icon of the Trinity*, (Boston: St. Pauls, 1991), pp. 54-55.

<sup>71</sup> Flannery( ed.) *Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Nostra Aetate, 1

<sup>72</sup> David Hollenbach, 'The Church's Social Mission in a Pluralistic Society', in *Vatican II, the Unfinished Agenda: A Look to the Future*, (eds.) Lucien Richard, Daniel Harrington, John O'Malley, (New York: Paulist Press, 1987) p. 117.

Christian doctrine as focussed on God as God, rather than on the Man-God Christ, upon God as involved in the history of humanity. Such a conception leads to certain dismissiveness towards the earthly setting in which the Christian 'economy' is worked out, coupled with an over-valuation of the supernatural which does not concern itself greatly with specific analyses of human situations, and for which such analyses are already seen as a contamination of doctrinal purity.<sup>73</sup>

This priority of the human and of humanity are summarised in Paul VI's final address to the Council where he claims "we too, more than anyone pay homage to man."<sup>74</sup> The words "*homo*" and "*humanitas*" occur more than two hundred times in the text of *Gaudium et Spes*. By the close of its proceedings even one of the most conservative Cardinals at the Council, Cardinal Colombo of Milan, proclaimed "Vatican II is the Council of Man".<sup>75</sup>

How did such a shift take place from the anti- modernist insistence on the profanity of human nature in a fallen world? For a theological exploration of this we turn to the work of Karl Rahner and his renewed emphasis on the Trinity and the Incarnation.

### **2:4:1 God's Self- Communication to the Human Person**

For Rahner, the Trinity is not primarily a theological concept but an existential reality: God with us. The Trinity as it reveals itself (the economic Trinity), Rahner believes, is the Trinity in itself (the immanent Trinity); otherwise there can be no salvation.<sup>76</sup> Rahner considers the incarnation as confirmation of this correspondence. He argues that the human nature of the divine Logos does tell us something about the Logos itself since this nature is not a mask or a mere instrument; it is not something created before the incarnation and merely assumed for the purpose of 'acting out' in history. There is a real relation between the humanity of the Logos and the divine

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<sup>73</sup> Marie-Dominique Chenu, 'A Council for all Peoples', in *Vatican II by Those Who Were There*, Alberic Stacpoole (ed.), (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986), p. 20.

<sup>74</sup> Paul VI, 7<sup>th</sup> Dec.1965

<sup>75</sup> Chenu, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>76</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, J Donceel. Trans., (New York: Crossroads, 1970) p. 21.

person. Thus the humanity of Christ is a real symbol of the Logos. However, while his humanity is revelatory of the logos, it is also revelatory of our place as daughters and sons in Christ and of the possibilities of the human person.<sup>77</sup>

For Rahner, in the work of salvation, God must somehow communicate himself in a personal way and this must correspond with who he really is.<sup>78</sup> The encounter in the life of grace between the Triune God and the human person is treated by Rahner in his grouping together of certain 'aspects' or features of God's self-communication, aspects which he uses ostensibly to explain the correspondence between the God of salvation (the God of scripture and our experience) and God as he is in himself.<sup>79</sup>

While Rahner principally uses these to demonstrate how the self-communication of God in history as Son and Spirit can be understood, by using these 'aspects' he is also presuming human engagement within a view of the world that sees history as an unfolding of God's purpose. In this way he attempts to link the biblical world view with the idea of the human person in development and growth. In Rahner's consideration, the self-communication of God can only be to the one who is capable of receiving his self-communication, namely the human person.<sup>80</sup>

This self-communication of God brings with it the possibility of acceptance in his creation of human subjectivity. Rahner goes on to state that the difference-in-unity between truth and love, must exist in God, otherwise it would not be self-communication but be of the order of creation, of a sign of God's presence rather than his being present to us as a relational being.<sup>81</sup> In this way, Rahner connects his anthropological perspective not only with the incarnation of Christ but also with the revelation of the Trinity. Because of our human experience we can grasp the self-disclosure of the God who creates and founds our human nature and personhood. Since human experience comes from our interaction with the world, it follows that the created order is, for Rahner, a place of graced encounter. He insists that:

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* p. 87.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.* pp. 87-88.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.* pp. 88-89.

<sup>81</sup> *ibid.* pp. 99-103.

“The order of grace requires the development of the natural order for its own expansion. Far from requiring the absorption or the neglect of the natural order, the metaphysics of grace and nature demand that both orders should grow together.”<sup>82</sup>

This view of the human person as the recipient of God’s self-communication<sup>83</sup> leads to respect for the human person and an emphasis on the equality of all and the rights of all. (GS 27, 28) This led the Council into the new territory occupied by the emerging social sciences. This is exemplified by *Gaudium et Spes*’ introduction which starts with a lengthy psychological and sociological analysis of the situation of humankind in the modern world. This is noteworthy because it is the first time a Council has introduced a document in this way and that it has referred its doctrinal and institutional position to the reality of worldly affairs. At the ‘nerve centre’<sup>84</sup> of the Council’s deliberations is the sense of a ‘new age’ of ‘progress. This led *Gaudium et Spes* to consider the Church’s social mission as concentrated on the healing and elevation of the dignity of the human person, the building and consolidation of bonds of solidarity in society and the endowment of daily human activity with a deeper meaning and worth. (GS 40)

## **2:4:2 A Renewed Understanding of Mission**

At Vatican II mission is a concept in transition. The period between the wars had been one of intense missionary activity. A series of encyclicals promoted mission as a task given to the whole Church, in particular, *Maximum Illud*<sup>85</sup>,

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<sup>82</sup> Karl Rahner, ‘The Order of Redemption within the Order of Creation’, *The Christian Commitment*, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), trans. Cecily Hastings, pp. 44-53.

<sup>83</sup> For Rahner God’s real offer of grace produces a “supernatural existential” in the human soul. This “existential” is a permanent modification of the human spirit which transforms its natural dynamism into an ontological drive to the God of grace and glory. ( *Theological Investigations*, vol., I, pp. 300-302, 310-315) Even the non- Christian and the atheist have an experience of grace in the love, the longings, the emptiness, the loneliness, which accompany a genuine loving commitment to true human values. (*Theological Investigations*, vol.,III, pp .86-89) It is noteworthy that Rahner’s critics have frequently complained of his failure to clarify the exact ontological status of his supernatural existential.

<sup>84</sup> Chenu “A Council for all Peoples”, in *Vatican II by Those Who Were There*, p. 20.

<sup>85</sup> Benedict XV, 1919

*Rerum Ecclesiae*<sup>86</sup>, *Evangelii Praecones*<sup>87</sup> and *Fidei Donum*.<sup>88</sup> The orientation of mission in these documents was the salvation of humanity by incorporation of all into the Church.

In contrast with this, Vatican II recognised the world as the setting for the Church's existence and self-understanding. This was accompanied by a changed emphasis from the 'missions' to mission and from evangelisation to development, humanisation, inculturation, liberation and to a preferential option for the poor.<sup>89</sup>

Faced with these new developments, Congar asked: "How would I define the new form that this Church takes?" He responded: "I would say it is that of the Gospel lived in the realities of human lives on earth or their 'temporal' experience. It is in that life that the Gospel is spread and is able to act in souls."<sup>90</sup>

It becomes obvious then that instead of being profane<sup>91</sup> the lay person living in society is pivotal not only to the work of the Church but to the Trinitarian and Incarnational nature of the Church.

### **2:4:3 The Place of the Laity in Mission**

Indicative of the Council's growing understanding of the role of the laity, in the final draft of *Lumen Gentium* paragraph thirty-one a significant change was made. This was the insertion of the phrase "search for the Kingdom of God" which implied an acknowledgement that God's kingdom was to be found in temporal affairs. This article in its final form emphasises the laity are "called by God" as 'leaven' in the world and for the world.<sup>92</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* forty-

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<sup>86</sup> Pius XI, 1926

<sup>87</sup> Pius XI, 1951

<sup>88</sup> Pius XII, 1957

<sup>89</sup> Lucien Richard, 'Vatican II and the Mission of the Church: A Contemporary Agenda' in *Vatican II, the Unfinished Agenda: A Look to the Future*, p. 58.

<sup>90</sup> Yves Congar, 'Moving Towards a Pilgrim Church', in *Vatican II, by Those Who Were There*, p. 148.

<sup>91</sup> Although *laos* is usually translated as people, God's people. Some Greek Old Testament translations use the word to signify the profane or unsanctified e.g. the ordinary bread not used for worship. There is a sense this meaning has also been transferred to persons i.e. the laity are seen as profane i.e. not directly connected with Christian worship. See Schillebeeckx, 'The Layman in the Church', *Vatican II: A Struggle of Minds and Other Essays*, (Dublin: Gill, 1963), pp. 35-36.

<sup>92</sup> See also LG33 and AA2.

three expands this thinking declaring that the secular character of the lay apostolate is the means by which the mission of the church is actualised in the world. The emphasis here is that the laity is called in a pre-eminent way to incarnate the church in the world. From this perspective, secular character actually enriches ministry, making it distinctive in the life of the church. It is a gift, not a hindrance, to full participation in the life of the Church *ad intra*.<sup>93</sup>

#### **2:4:4 Some Ambiguities and Criticisms regarding *Gaudium et Spes***

As we have seen in other conciliar texts, differences of opinion led to ambiguity in the final texts. This reflected both Paul VI's desire for compromise and the time restraints imposed on the Sessions of the Council. There is, for example, the insistence that the Church is necessary for salvation<sup>94</sup> and yet the assertion that those ignorant of the Gospel are also led to salvation.<sup>95</sup>

Similarly on the one hand "The Council can find no more eloquent expression of its solidarity and respectful affection for the whole human family, to which it belongs, than to enter into dialogue with it ". (GS 3) However, in 'perfect society' mode it then goes on to say "The Council will furnish humankind with the saving resources which the church has received from its founder". (GS 3)

The document as a whole was criticised by those who were fearful of its humanist and naturalist tendencies. To some extent in the years since the Council it is this group that has prevailed. Fundamental to the cultural move from modernity to postmodernity that we have experienced since the Council is a disillusionment with the promise of progress as a means to end poverty and bring peace. From our present perspective there can be little doubt that the Council, acting from the prevailing culture of its time, was overly

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<sup>93</sup> Aurelie Hagstrom, 'The Secular Character of the Vocation and Mission of the Laity: Toward a Theology of Ecclesial Lay Ministry', in Wood (ed.), *Ordering the Baptised Priesthood* pp. 167-172.

<sup>94</sup> The Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is mediator and the way of salvation. (LG 14)

<sup>95</sup> In ways, known to himself God can lead those who, through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel to that faith without which it is impossible to please him (Heb. 11:6) . Quoted in the text of AG 7.

optimistic about human progress. This has led to a certain withdrawal back to the dichotomy of the sacred and profane. For the laity and particularly for lay ministers this has been reflected in the emphasis once again on the essential difference between ordained and non-ordained ministry. Many of the pre-Vatican II boundaries between clergy and laity have been reinvigorated as evidenced in *Christifidelis Laici* and the 'Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests'.

Further ambiguity has only become obvious with developments since the Council such as globalisation, liberation theology and the hermeneutics of suspicion characteristic of post-modernism. Rahner famously rejoiced in the internationality of the Council Fathers; proclaiming the Second Vatican Council the Church's first official self-actualisation as a world church.<sup>96</sup> Yet, Tissa Balasuriya, critical of this consideration of Vatican II as truly representative of the world writes:

Vatican II's inadequacy was due partly to its lack of social analysis of what was going on in the world at the time. It had no sense of the struggles of the poor, the working class, of women, of oppressed racial groups. It did not deal seriously with racism and white supremacy, with sexism and male dominance, with classism and capitalist exploitation.<sup>97</sup>

While this is undoubtedly true it is also the case that the meeting of bishops at Medellin and the subsequent document it produced (1968), which emphasised solidarity with the poor and demands that the Church be actively involved in the reform of situations of injustice and oppression, were influenced by *Gaudium et Spes*. Once more though, this early consistency with Vatican II thinking gave way to a fearful withdrawal from the political arena as witnessed by the silencing of liberation theologians.

It is perhaps this latter experience which moves Comblin to reflect on whether the Council in its collaboration with modernity was assuming a

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<sup>96</sup> Rahner, 'Towards a Fundamental Theological Interpretation of Vatican II', *Vatican II, the Unfinished Agenda*, p. 10.

<sup>97</sup> Tissa Balasuriya, *Planetary Theology*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1984) p. 148.

position inspired by the gospel, or by the desire to regain the power lost in western society. He wonders if:

The problem is that they (the Council Fathers) were so convinced that the Church's cause was the gospel cause and that promoting the church meant proclaiming the gospel that they were not conscious of what really motivated them. There has to be a strong suspicion that the motivation of the conciliar majority was the same as that of the minority: this was the triumph of the church, the salvation of the church; the two sides differed over method but had the same objective.<sup>98</sup>

Given the many lasting fruits of Vatican II, it is difficult to agree entirely with Comblin's position. Nevertheless the papacies of John Paul II and Benedict XVI which have been characterised by a recentralisation of authority and control, together with the reactionary actions of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith have certainly moved to restore 'the triumph of the Church'. Unfortunately for the laity, the world became profane again. A place characterised by individualism, relativism and secularism.<sup>99</sup> This has been one of the barriers to the recognition of the lay vocation. While ordination can offer separation from the profanity of the world, lay people have to live in the secularity of the world. Yet, while official attitudes wavered there has been nevertheless, exponential growth in lay ministry. In order to accommodate this many theologians, in line with renewed historical understandings of Christian ministry, have recommended the expansion and diversifying of ministry.

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<sup>98</sup> José Comblin, 'The Sign of the Times' in Alberto Melloni and Christoph Theobald (eds.) *Vatican II: A Forgotten Future*, *Concilium*, London: SCM 2005/4, pp. 73-87.

<sup>99</sup> Many of Benedict's speeches refer to these, fear of relativism characterises John Paul's declaration 'Dominus Iesus' (2000).



## **2:5 Renewed Historical Consciousness: An Impetus for Diversity in Ministry**

Many authors set their discussion of lay ministry and of the Church's present situation within a historical framework.<sup>100</sup> A renewed historical consciousness has developed in recent decades leading to a greater recognition of the fact that aspects of the Church have constantly changed in tandem with its social, cultural and political milieu. This lens of historical consciousness has been used to explain diversity and make it acceptable.<sup>101</sup> Raymond Brown's work, for example *The Churches the Apostles left behind*,<sup>102</sup> is helpful in pointing out the multiplicity of models of the church in the New Testament and the strengths and weaknesses of each. His overview makes clear that from its inception the church had no uniform ecclesiology but had to adapt to local circumstances. The change in the church's ministry of leadership into an institutionalised sacral priestly office as a marked move away from its origins has also been well documented in recent studies.<sup>103</sup> Thomas O'Meara describes this as the "metamorphosis of ministry"<sup>104</sup>, Edward Schillebeeckx as its "sacerdotalising"<sup>105</sup> and Kenan Osborne as its "clericalisation".<sup>106</sup>

This has led to theological reflection in the years since the Council on how ministry could change to accommodate diversity in the present time. Yves Congar's insight, and indeed one of his most enduring contributions to the development of ministry, was that all ministries are modes of service.<sup>107</sup> This is discussed further in section 2:6.

Rahner chose to emphasise the incarnation, humanity which has "already in advance become ontologically... the people of the children of

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<sup>100</sup> Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, Höebel, *Laity and Participation: A Theology of being the Church*, Osborne, *Ministry: Lay Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church*, Haight, *Ecclesial Existence: Christian Community in History*, vols. 1 and 2.

<sup>101</sup> Haight, *Ecclesial Existence*, p. 4.

<sup>102</sup> Raymond Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1984).

<sup>103</sup> Thomas Rausch, 'Ministry and Ministries', in Wood (ed.), *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood*, p. 56.

<sup>104</sup> Thomas O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, (New Jersey: Paulist Press, Revised 1999), pp. 80-138.

<sup>105</sup> Schillebeeckx, *The Church With a Human Face*, pp. 144-147.

<sup>106</sup> Kenan Osborne, *Priesthood: A History of Ordained Ministry in the Roman Catholic Church*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), pp. 145-148.

<sup>107</sup> Congar, "My Pathfindings", p. 176.

God”<sup>108</sup> and the lay person as “someone who has a definite position within the one consecrated realm of the Church.”<sup>109</sup> This gives a necessary starting point for developing a positive theology of lay ministry. He reflects that:

In the Church before Vatican II there was really only one ministry, and now, there are others. Every believer is called to ministry. That the church has chosen at times in history a pattern of ordained ministries is important and yet does not preclude that variations and additions can come.<sup>110</sup>

In a similar note, but in a more precise manner, in his essay on the ‘Lay Apostolate’, Rahner argues for greater diversity insisting:

the teaching and discipline of the Church show that she is conscious of her absolute power of being able to divide the fullness of her hierarchical ministry according to individual functions and to make divisions even within a single function, and thus to make others share in this ministry in different degrees.<sup>111</sup>

He does not specify what this might look like in practice. Rahner does, however, suggest; that the term ‘cleric’ be extended to anyone who “habitually, professionally and officially is handed some aspect of this (hierarchical) power”.<sup>112</sup> This view may limit what could be described as strictly lay participation but does broaden the definition of clergy to include most full time lay ministers, many of whom are women. Putting aside the difficulties such nomenclature may incur, the concept of “degrees of ministry” could provide new opportunities in practice.<sup>113</sup> Although it does remain theologically problematic in so far as it returns us to Kenan’s question as to how the one priesthood of Christ can be authentically divided.

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<sup>108</sup> Rahner, ‘Membership of the Church according to the Teaching of Pius XII’s Encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*’, *Theological Investigations II*, pp. 82-88.

<sup>109</sup> Rahner, ‘Notes on the Lay Apostolate’, *Theological Investigations II*, pp. 319-352.

<sup>110</sup> Rahner ‘Reflection on the Concept of Jus Divinum in Catholic Thought’, *Theological Investigations 5*, pp. 221-240.

<sup>111</sup> Rahner, ‘Notes on the Lay Apostolate’, p. 331.

<sup>112</sup> Rahner, ‘Notes on the lay Apostolate’, p. 321.

<sup>113</sup> Höebel, *Lay and Participation* p. 168.

For Hans Küng the starting point is the difference between essence and historical form; while the former is unchangeable, the latter changes through history. This is obviously a useful insight for a church currently experiencing transition in ministry. In his volume entitled, *On Being a Christian*, Küng emphasises power as service. He says that there is no opposition between power and service only between the exercise of power as domination and of power as service.<sup>114</sup> In this context, Küng wonders if instead of using the term ‘priesthood’ it would be more useful to speak of a ministry of leadership or a ministry of presiding. He claims that: “still too few are aware that the gospel shows there is a great deal of freedom for the ecclesial community to structure its’ administrative ministry, and a great deal of scope for answering the varied needs of man today in our society”.<sup>115</sup> He points out a number of variables possible in the ministry of leadership based on historical discourse: it need not be full-time or life-long, it should not be a position of social elevation and need not require university training. It need not require celibacy or be exclusively masculine.<sup>116</sup> He does not reject the episcopal-church structure but suggests that “the presbyteral-episcopal church constitution must leave room, at least in principle, for other possibilities which existed in the New Testament Church.”<sup>117</sup>

Schillebeeckx notes that in many respects a great many people, members of believing communities and ministers, find their experience negative. All these complaints, he urges, have significance. He notes that for many Christians it has become clear that alternative practices are needed which demonstrate a clearer expression of the New Testament dictum of the priority of the community over the structure of ministry. Relating this to the growth of lay ministry, he asks if there should be a fourth recognised ministry alongside the diaconate, presbyterate and episcopate, bestowed by the community and its leaders on pastoral workers: by the laying on of hands and an appropriate epiclesis?<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Küng, *On being a Christian* p. 486.

<sup>115</sup> Hans Küng, *Why Priests?*, p. 54.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 54-60.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 492.

<sup>118</sup> Schillebeeckx, *Church with a Human Face*, pp. 209ff.

However, as Paul Murray demonstrates Schillebeeckx never ever properly engages the empirical reality of the contemporary church.<sup>119</sup> His approach continues to be highly theorized and to be based on the concept of an ideal church.<sup>120</sup> This criticism is reiterated by Nicholas Healy<sup>121</sup> whose concern is that generally the wide range of ecclesiological models prevalent in the last century<sup>122</sup> (which he describes as blueprint ecclesiologies) are insufficiently orientated to the living, rather messy, confused and confusing body the church actually is.<sup>123</sup>

This tendency is also apparent in the work of Küng, Rahner and Congar. It has been left to others to bridge the gap between the new ideas which they gifted to the church and praxis.

### **2:5:1 Expanding the Concept of Ministry**

Using Congar's division<sup>124</sup> of ministries/modes of service, Thomas 'O'Meara envisages total ecclesiology as a circular model with diverse ministries based on service in a community. He describes this model as "a circle with Christ and Spirit as ground or power animating ministries in community"<sup>125</sup> The circular model seeks to move from a dichotomised sense of clergy versus laity and expands ministry to include full-time lay professionals as well as those committed part-time or short-term to specific ministries. (see appendix six)

Edward Hahnenberg, building on O'Meara's work (see appendix seven) agrees that a model of diverse ministries within the community is a more fruitful starting point for a contemporary relational theology of ministry.

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<sup>119</sup> Paul Murray, 'Searching the Living Truth of the Church in Practise: On the Transformative Task of Systematic Theology', *Modern Theology*, 30, (2013), pp. 1-31.

<sup>120</sup> Paul Murray, 'The Ups and Downs, Highs and Lows and Practicalities of Ecclesiological Analysis with Edward Schillebeeckx', in Erik Borgman, Paul D. Murray, Andrés Torres Queiruga (eds), *Sacramentalizing Human History: In Honour of Edward Schillebeeckx (1914–2009)*, *Concilium International* (2012/1), (London: SCM Press, 2012), pp. 83–5 and 86.

<sup>121</sup> Nicholas M. Healy, *Church, World and Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>122</sup> Such as those of Avery Dulles in, *Models of the Church*, 2nd Edition, (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1988)

<sup>123</sup> Healy, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>124</sup> Congar, 'My Pathfindings' p. 176.

<sup>125</sup> 'O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry* p. 10.

He develops a relational approach to ministry centred round three sources: God, Church and Sacrament. This approach positively accommodates developments in collaborative ministry.<sup>126</sup>

### **2:5:2 A Chaplaincy Model**

In looking for a familiar approach to a concept of Church that is more fluid, personal and relational Paul Hypher turns to Chaplaincy. In his article entitled 'Church Fit for Mission', written for Mission Sunday 2009 and published in *The Tablet*, he suggests that:

In our present crisis, where new and extensive missionary institutions for Europe are unlikely to be available in the near future, the demands of mission now require that the Church should start using what I would call a chaplaincy model of ministry: one that takes the lived, taught, celebrated and shared gospel to where people are. ( Acts 2:43-47) .... Dioceses therefore need to develop new, vivid and manifold styles of 'chaplaincy', appropriate for a huge variety of predicaments and situations of marginalisation.<sup>127</sup>

Chaplaincy is a place where lay ministry and collaborative ministry has often flourished. The experience of ministry in a chaplaincy setting therefore may give insights for the further development of new modes of mission and ministry. Such a relational approach to ministry is essential for genuine collaboration between clergy and lay ministers and is a prerequisite for effective lay ministry as the case-studies in chapters five and six will demonstrate. The research also suggests that "taking the lived, taught, celebrated and shared gospel to where people are" is of particular necessity in post-modernity.

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<sup>126</sup>Edward Hahnenberg, *Ministries: A Relational Approach*, (New York: Crossroads, 2003), p. 35.

<sup>127</sup> Paul Hypher, 'Church fit for Mission', *The Tablet* 17/10/09, p. 17.

## **2:6 Deconstructing the Tradition**

While O'Meara, Hahnenberg and Hypher are seeking to position lay ministry within the tradition others see this as no longer possible. Many authors considering the position of the church in the postmodern world have suggested that we need a conscious move away from an institutional structure to one that is more adaptable to local needs.

### **2:6:1 Liberation Theology: Leonardo Boff**

Leonardo Boff writes from the Latin American perspective and from his experience of Base Ecclesial Communities. These he describes as “powerful and living forces” at the grassroots of the Church which need a new structure, a new ecclesial division of labour and a redistribution of religious power.<sup>128</sup> Since the development of lay ministry is happening at the grassroots there are parallels between the experience of Base Christian Communities and new models of ministry elsewhere. It is true that Boff envisages a role for the hierarchy but one that is redefined as functional and not as an ontological establishment of a superior class of Christian.<sup>129</sup> He emphasises ecclesial authority based on the tradition of equality (Gal. 3:26-29), fraternity that is opposed to qualifications such as ‘teacher’ or ‘father’ (Matt. 23:8-9) and service that is devoid of domination and pretension (Mark 10:42-45; Luke 22:25-27; John 13:14).<sup>130</sup>

From a Christological perspective Boff is critical of expressions such as “the Church is Christ continued” and the emphasis on the physical body of Christ as a comparative model for the Church as evidenced in the encyclicals, *Satis Cognitum*<sup>131</sup> and *Mystici Corporis Christi*.<sup>132</sup> He points out that in the New Testament the Risen Lord is described as possessing a glorious body or a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44)<sup>133</sup> For him, the Church is the

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<sup>128</sup> Boff, *Church: Charism and Power*, preface.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>131</sup> Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum*, 29<sup>th</sup> June 1896.

<sup>132</sup> Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi*, 29<sup>th</sup> June 1943.

<sup>133</sup> Boff, p. 149, this expression, *en pneumatic* occurs nineteen times in Paul's letters.

sacrament, sign, and instrument of the now living and risen Christ, that is, the Holy Spirit. The Risen Christ knows no limits and his body, the Church, cannot then confine itself to the limitations it has created itself. The mission of God is given to all, sacred power is given to all, all the baptised are actively part of the apostolic mission.<sup>134</sup> Boff's position highlights the freedom of the Spirit and leads us to question once more the distinction between lay and ordained.

Despite its cry for greater equality, the work of liberation theology is not without its critics. Rosemary Ruether expresses regret at the ambivalent relationship between liberation theology and the women's movement. She also criticises liberation theologians for overlooking ecumenism, ecology and indigenous spirituality, seeing them as less important than the struggle against poverty.<sup>135</sup> Nevertheless the ability of lay-led ministry to meet the needs of local communities is highly relevant to the Church today and vital in the extensive rural areas which compose much of Scotland.

### **2:6:2 Feminist Ecclesiology: Natalie Watson**

Engaging as a feminist ecclesologist Natalie Watson<sup>136</sup> suggests that the pertinent question is not whether women should leave the Church or stay in the Church? Instead we must ask: if it is possible to rethink what it means to be church within a theological paradigm which reconsiders the basics of Christian theology and practice in feminist terms?<sup>137</sup> She situates her argument in a feminist rethinking of the concept of theological eschatology. Eschatology, in this context, can no longer mean a theological discourse which deals with the next world, and the transcendent. It deals with the situation of this world and needs to be evaluated in terms of the need for

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<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>135</sup> Rosemary Ruether, 'Rift between Gutiérrez and Peru Women', *National Catholic Reporter*, 8/10/1996, p. 128.

<sup>136</sup> Natalie Watson, *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*, (Sheffield: Continuum, 2002).

<sup>137</sup> This position contrasts with Mary Daly's recommendation that women should follow her "exodus" from the patriarchal church or Rosemary Ruether's instance on the need for "Women's Church" since the present Church leaves no space for women's discourses of faith.

interconnectedness of the human and non-human creation and in terms of justice.<sup>138</sup>

In addressing the exclusion women can feel from sacraments, she finds herself in agreement with Mary Collins that “the Roman Catholic Eucharistic heritage is a rich, dense source of meaning and power for women.”<sup>139</sup> Acknowledging this, she seeks an affirming place for women in the Eucharistic assembly. In her search for this, Watson extends Susan Ross’<sup>140</sup> work, on the importance of theological anthropology, particularly embodiment, for the individual’s interpretation of sacraments. She applies this to the context of the ecclesial community. From this perspective she arrives at a new understanding of sacramental celebration as the enactment of Christ’s presence in the Church as the Body of Christ manifested in women’s and men’s bodies. We are Christ for each other. Being church, then, can mean being a community of liberated human bodies who celebrate their own lives in the image of, and essentially as part of, the life of the Triune God in this world.<sup>141</sup> Feminist ecclesiology seeks mutuality and connectedness, in this it resonates with the experience of lay ministry where the ‘ordinary’ people sharing pews are also consciously sharing their journey in faith.

### **2:6:3 The Church in Context: Nicholas Healy**

In his work advocating practical-prophetic ecclesiology, *Church, World and Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology*, Nicholas Healy<sup>142</sup> criticises blueprint ecclesiologies, as we noted earlier. First, he grounds this critique on the plurality of the New Testament. Secondly, he notes the important insight gleaned from Trinitarian theology that any perspective needs the “corrective

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<sup>138</sup> Watson, *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*, p. 7.

<sup>139</sup> Mary Collins, ‘Women in Relation to the Institutional Church’ (unpublished paper), Leadership Conference of Women Religious, 1991, National Assembly, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

<sup>140</sup> Susan Ross, ‘God’s Embodiment and Women: Sacraments’, in Catherine La Cugna (ed.), *Freeing Theology: the Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, (San Francisco: Harper, 1993) pp. 185-209.

<sup>141</sup> Watson, *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*, p. 81.

<sup>142</sup> Nicholas M. Healy, *Church, World and Christian Life: Practical-Prophetic Ecclesiology*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).



pressure” of another.<sup>143</sup> Thirdly, he cites Hauerwas’ criticism that modern theology has disengaged theoretical and practical reasoning.<sup>144</sup> Fourthly, he expresses concern that sinfulness is not recognised as a component of the church’s abiding fundamental reality but is only ‘skin’ deep.<sup>145</sup> He concludes that an alternative approach is needed.

He dismisses the pluralist assumption of liberalism as representing only one particular tradition of inquiry. Healy then turns his attention to inclusivist ecclesiology, asking to what extent it can help the church’s witness and its pastoral care within the present ecclesiological context?<sup>146</sup> He points out the danger inherent in inclusivist theologies, leading the spiritual and universal to be privileged over the concrete and practical. This, he finds, in turn risks losing the distinctiveness of the church’s and other tradition’s embodiments.<sup>147</sup> Healy concludes that inclusivist ecclesiology takes the modern, Enlightenment view that ‘otherness’ is bad and is a temporary stage towards universal harmony. This leads Christianity and liberal humanism to impose on others a view of themselves which is not compatible with their own self-understanding. Healy is also concerned that such approaches exclude the day-to-day messiness of church life and more pertinently make it difficult to acknowledge ecclesial sinfulness.

In his final chapter Healy presents his own preferred approach. He contends that a theo-dramatic horizon provides the church with a framework within which it can develop self-critical responses to the various challenges and opportunities of the present ecclesiological context.<sup>148</sup> He proposes that a practical-prophetic ecclesiology would assess experience using cultural analysis. He urges the church to develop its own theological form of cultural analysis: an ecclesiological ethnography.<sup>149</sup> In this horizon truth is discerned through debate and engagement with the other, since the pre-eschatological church needs the religious and non-religious bodies of the world to be

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<sup>143</sup> Nicholas Lash, *Believing Three Ways in One God*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993) p. 93.

<sup>144</sup> Stanley Hauerwas, *Sanctify Them in the Truth: Holiness Exemplified*, (Nashville, Abingdon: T. and T. Clark, 1998), pp. 19-36.

<sup>145</sup> Akin to Barth’s *scheinkirche*.

<sup>146</sup> Healy, *Church, World and Christian Life*, p. 130.

<sup>147</sup> *ibid*, p. 138.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

different from itself in order for it to find truth. He does not develop in any detail what such an ecclesiological ethnography would look like or in what way it might be used in practice.

Reflection on Healy's work has led Bradford Hinze<sup>150</sup> to offer some reservations about his presentation of practical-prophetic ecclesiology. He considers that Healy needlessly diminishes the communion motif, as open discussion of its meaning has the potential to give an emerging biblical and doctrinal frame of reference and notes Healy's failure to explore in any detail the Trinitarian character of ecclesiology. In tone Healy is harsh on dialogue and perhaps over emphasises debate. My own preference for enabling change would tend towards more hospitable, receptive and co-operative approaches. What makes Healy's work useful, however, is his ability to confront the issues of pluralism and relativism directly. His work acknowledges the value of different perspectives in the search for truth. This avoids any tendency to withdraw from the world and the secular realm.

### **2:6:4 Virtue Ecclesiology: Gerard Mannion**

An alternative approach for reframing ecclesiology in the light of postmodernity is offered by Gerard Mannion. The debates about postmodernity, he notes, return time and again, to similar themes; namely questions of character and virtue, both in terms of ecclesial institutions and of individual church leaders. Mannion concurs with other authors cited here that many contemporary models, paradigms and visions of the church have lost their true meaning, separated from their original contexts. What is required, he suggests, is an analogical approach, attention to genuine hermeneutical engagement and finally a virtuous approach to steer away from extremes. Mannion's proposition is that the *analogia ecclesiae* is a preferable alternative to any ecclesiology based on either/or, right/wrong, that seeks to impose uniformity. He rejects any ecclesiology that denies that difference

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<sup>150</sup> Bradford, Hinze. 'Review of Nicholas M Healy, *Church, World and the Christian Life: Practical Prophetic Ecclesiology*.' (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.) *The Journal of Religion* 83:2 (2003): pp. 299–301.

should be encountered, engaged and celebrated.<sup>151</sup> Mannion proposes that the practical and theoretical operation of *analogia ecclesiae* would constitute a 'virtue ecclesiology'. For in its actions and in its being the church should strive to bear witness to God's love for the world.

Mannion's work is centred on the consideration of whether and in what ways the recent revival of the debate concerning the virtues, particularly in moral philosophy, can help inform ecclesiology. The virtues find their basis in Aristotle's argument that nature never produces anything with no purpose and that the purpose of all existing things is to be fully themselves. Aristotle believed that to live a good life is to focus on excellence: that is on fulfilling one's purpose as well as possible. Applying this to the Church, he explains that virtue ecclesiology would look carefully at the motives behind planning, strategy, and structural organization, with a view to emphasizing the priority of love. The institution should never become the end in itself, the '*telos*', it must instead be driven by '*caritas*', by embracing and bearing witness to the love of God.

Paul Lakeland<sup>152</sup> notes that Mannion's ecclesiology is presented as an on-going dialogue in respect and love, precisely as we should expect from a community whose God is the loving dialogue of the Trinity itself. He contends that Mannion's proposals are "sensible, well-reasoned, and respectfully offered". I find, however, that Mannion leaves us, somewhat tantalisingly, wondering just what a MacIntyre-based virtue ecclesiology might look like in practice.

The importance of both Healy and Mannion's work lies in the alternative perspective they offer of an ecclesiology free of its current baggage. Mannion invites us to imagine a church based on the values of the gospel. Healy places the fullness of truth firmly in the eschaton and priorities the messy 'living in the world' among people of other beliefs and persuasions as the place of life and growth. Mannion's vision is devoid of the institutional

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<sup>151</sup> Gerard Mannion, *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007), p. 183.

<sup>152</sup> Paul Lakeland, 'Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time, by Gerard Mannion', (2008), *Religious Studies Faculty Publications*, Paper 32. <http://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/religiousstudies-facultypubs/32>, accessed 13/12/2013.

dichotomy between lay and ordained ministry, valuing only the attitude of service freely giving for the prioritising of God's Kingdom. Healy also challenges any institutional certainty and situates the mission of the church firmly in the world in the midst of the present challenges and opportunities. Mannion and Healy's work moves beyond the current fears and tensions. Although they do not offer us any concrete alternative structures for ministry they enable us to think in a new way. This is, I believe, necessary to any consideration of ministry in this time of rapid change.

Returning to the Whiteheads' model for pastoral reflection; church teaching and theological and pastoral studies form only one pole for reflection. The second pole is centred round culture. It is therefore important to include in the research, literature which focuses on both the Scottish and postmodern context of this dissertation. It is to this context we will now turn.

## Chapter Three: The Scottish and Postmodern Context

### 3:1 The Scottish Context

The present shape and situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland has been formed by the Reformation, many years as missionary territory<sup>1</sup>, Irish immigration and sectarianism. While the crises created by each of these situations have abated, tensions remain. Scottish Roman Catholicism is being challenged to find an identity in Scotland as the country is today. Yet, the defensiveness of living as a persecuted minority remains. Similarly, there are lingering divisions between the highlands and lowlands and differences between east and west-coast Catholics. It is therefore valuable to consider the historical background in more detail.

Alec Ryrie holds that the Reformation in Scotland stands as “the greatest discontinuity within cultural memory”<sup>2</sup> This discontinuity essentially stems from the manner in which the Reformation took place in Scotland: its suddenness and its violence have coloured not just Scottish religious life but all of Scottish society ever since. The condemnation of Roman Catholicism included the abolition of the Mass, the repudiation of the Pope’s authority and jurisdiction over Scotland, and the recognition of reformed preachers to baptise and celebrate communion.<sup>3</sup> In the light of this the founding of the *Pontificio Collegio Scozzese* in Rome in 1602, now Scotland’s only remaining seminary, was a welcome event in the life of Scottish Catholicism.

The creation of Propaganda Fide<sup>4</sup>, the work of the Scottish mission’s agent in Rome, Mr William Leslie, the creation of a prefecture apostolic for Scotland in 1653 and an apostolic visit carried out in 1677 authorised by *Propoganda Fide* led finally to appointment of Thomas Nicholson in 1694 as the first Vicar Apostolic. He was consecrated Bishop of *Peristachium* (Asia Minor) in 1695 but he could not reach Scotland until 1697. When he did

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<sup>1</sup> Scotland remained a mission territory under *Propaganda Fide* until 1908.

<sup>2</sup> Alec Ryrie, *The Origins of the Scottish Reformation*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006)

<sup>3</sup> Maria Christina C. Mairena, *The Restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in Scotland*, (The Catholic University of America, 2008), purchased through GRIN 1/8/2012

<sup>4</sup> The Vatican Congregation responsible for missionary work.

arrive, he took up residence in a 'butt and-a-ben,' a one-story, two-room cottage, at Preshome, Banffshire, which "for more than a century was to remain the strategic centre of Catholicism in Scotland."<sup>5</sup>

From 1727 there were two vicariates, the Highland and the Lowland and from the beginning each had felt discriminated against by the other. There was always a competition for funding from Propaganda and the few Catholic peers and gentry left after the disaster of the 1745 uprising. The Highland priests had no outside means of supplementing their income. Lowland priests on the other hand, could receive additional funding from regular collections taken on Sundays or from the rents of seats or entire pews in the chapel, for individuals or families. The lowland congregations counted among their number wealthier merchants, tradesmen, and professionals, rather than the crofters, small farmers, and fishermen of the Highlands. Other issues of contention were the consistent appointment of Lowlanders to be the superiors of the Scots Colleges abroad, and the difficulties Highlanders experienced attending required administrators' meetings.

These internal divisions within the Church remain in Scotland. Lowlanders, Highlanders, East Coast Catholics and the numerically larger Church in the West still have different perspectives on Catholicism.

The statistics based on the census information provided in James Handley's dated, though useful study of the Irish in modern Scotland, reveal that in 1841 there were 126,321 Irish-born in Scotland, out of a total population of 2,620,184. By 1851, in the immediate aftermath of the Famine, the number had risen to 207,367, out of a total Scottish population of 2,888,742.<sup>6</sup> Irish migration overwhelmed the material, human and spiritual resources of Glasgow's existing Church, which only had four priests in 1836. Scottish Catholics were unprepared for the sheer numbers of Catholic immigrants and even more unprepared for differing approaches to the same religion. Scottish Catholicism had spent the previous three hundred years endeavouring to be as unobtrusive as possible and in that time, "had

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<sup>5</sup> Anson, Peter Frederick. *The Catholic Church in Modern Scotland, 1560-1937*. (London: Burns, Oates, & Washbourne. 1937), p. 95.

<sup>6</sup> James Handley, *The Irish in Scotland, 1798-1845*. (Cork: The University Press, 1945.)

acquired something of the atmosphere of the Aberdeen or Banffshire Presbyterianism in the midst of which he/she [Scots Roman Catholics] lived. She/He was restrained in their pattern of devotion, without the spontaneous emotionalism of the Irish."<sup>7</sup> In contrast the Rev. Andrew Scott of Glasgow noted that the Irish members of his congregation were not only illiterate in general, but functionally illiterate in the most basic tenets of Roman Catholicism, and that their practices were either corrupt or superstitious or both.<sup>8</sup>

Irish Catholicism integrated over time and has 'flavoured' modern day Catholicism as indeed have other waves of immigration. Interestingly though, there remains a tendency even in the present time among the numerically smaller Catholic Communities in the East and North to 'get on with it quietly'. In contrast there is greater confidence to be found in the Catholic Church in the West, but generally less ecumenical engagement. This stems from a number of historical issues.

Nineteenth century Catholicism, across the world, developed a vast and complex system of parallel institutions<sup>9</sup> including youth movements, labour and business organisations and schools. The West of Scotland, under the auspices of its new hierarchy, was no exception to this and by 1900 Glasgow Catholicism had developed a "self-enclosed world which had duplicated every movement of Protestant and secular social service and charity."<sup>10</sup> For the Church, this provision provided Catholics with a 'Catholic' atmosphere and spirituality where they could grow in faith and importantly, protection from the Protestant society in which they found themselves. For others it looked like a 'Catholic ghetto'. In this segregated environment many Catholics, within their living memory, can name examples of job opportunities closed to them on grounds of religion. This pervasive racism was at its height between the Wars, no doubt fuelled by poverty and unemployment. At this

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<sup>7</sup> Andrew Drummond, and J. Bulloch. *The Scottish Church 1688-1843*. (Edinburgh: St. Andrews Press, 1973). p. 71.

<sup>8</sup> Christine Johnson, *Developments in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, 1789-1929*. (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984). p. 137.

<sup>9</sup> Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology*, (New York: Anchor 1960), pp. 233-234.

<sup>10</sup> Sheridan Gilley 'Catholics and Socialists in Scotland 1900-1930' in R. Swift and Gilley (eds) , *The Irish in Britain, 1815-1939*, (London: Pinter, 1989) p. 215.

time in the nineteen twenties there was an attempt by the Church of Scotland to defend 'Scottishness' at the expense of Irish Catholics. Two 'overtures' were presented to the Church of Scotland's 'General Assembly' in 1922. The first proposed restrictions on Irish immigration and on the Education Act. It complained "that Catholics had most abominably abused the privileges which the Scottish people had given them". The second warned that "The Irish Catholic aliens would soon bring racial and sectarian warfare to Scotland". Then the subsequent report found the Irish Catholic community "was alien in race and creed" and its presence had a "very sinister meaning for the future of our race."<sup>11</sup> In 1928 the Churches presented the case to the Home Secretary Joynson-Hicks and Scottish Secretary Sir John Gilmour. They claimed the Catholic Irish drew seventy percent of poor relief funds and that Scotland had become a "dumping ground" after the U.S.A. had reduced immigrant quotas. However the case was exaggerated and was dismissed by Joynson-Hicks. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland apologised for the campaign in 2001.

Over the years Catholic schools have also been a bone of contention. Before the Education Act of 1872 the Church of Scotland was the main provider of schools. In 1872 these schools were transferred to government control. The Church received no financial compensation or guarantee of religious instruction. The Catholics retained their schools until 1918 when Catholic schools were transferred to County Councils under favourable conditions. This meant local authorities bore the full cost of Catholic education, the Church could lease or sell school buildings as it chose, religious education was guaranteed and the church retained a veto on staffing. These arrangements put in place by Robert Munro, the Scottish secretary, were deemed by some to be 'Rome on the rates'. Some resentment about the 'rights' of Catholic schools still fuel the debate today about whether they should be retained or abolished.

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Rosie, *The Sectarian Myth in Scotland, of Bitter Memory and Bigotry*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), p. 100.



### **3:2 Sectarianism: Can it be Consigned to History?**

Today many would argue that such sectarianism is a thing of the past, at least outside of football rivalries and that any problems are localised. Raymond Boyle and Peter Lynch suggest alternative terms like 'prejudice', 'bigotry', 'dislike' and at certain times 'discrimination' would be a more helpful lexicon for such isolated instances.<sup>12</sup>

Steve Bruce, Tony Glendinning, Ian Patterson and Michael Rosie<sup>13</sup> have sought to substantiate the claim that sectarianism has all but disappeared in Scottish society. Their study makes extensive use of survey material, notably the Scottish Attitudes Survey (2001) and concludes that there is little or no evidence of effective discrimination against Catholics. They insist that we cannot simply transplant the concerns of the past into the present; present day religious animosity cannot be understood as the same as in the past, only less of it. It is qualitatively not just quantitatively different.

Michael Rosie defines sectarianism as a "social setting in which systematic discrimination affects the life chances of religious groups".<sup>14</sup> As a benchmark he compares educational levels and finds that among older Scots, Protestants are better qualified than Catholics at the level of higher education: 20% compared to 8%. For middle-aged Scots the figures show: 81% of Protestants have a post-school qualification, compared to 74% of Catholics. Significantly in the youngest age-group there is no difference, 83% of both Catholics and Protestants hold a qualification. From the statistical evidence he concludes that bigotry is not a reflection of structured patterns of religious division in Scottish society.

These authors argue that at the heart of the debate about sectarianism is a question about the place (or absence) of religion within a new, re-imagined, configuration of Scottishness. Seen as on the decline in Scottish society, (although very much alive and accepted in football), sectarianism has become a subject given little public attention. That changed

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<sup>12</sup> Raymond Boyle and Lynch Peter (eds.), *Out of the Ghetto? The Catholic Community in Modern Scotland*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1998) p. 197.

<sup>13</sup> Steve Bruce, Tony Glendinning, Ian Paterson, Michael Rosie, *Sectarianism in Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004) see also Rosie, *The Sectarian Myth in Scotland*

<sup>14</sup> Rosie, *The Sectarian Myth in Scotland*

briefly in August 1999 when James MacMillan, the eminent composer, gave a lecture on 'Scotland's Shame' at the Edinburgh International Festival. Scotland, in his view, was a land of "sleep-walking bigotry", where "visceral anti-Catholicism", disfigured the professions, academe, politics and the media.<sup>15</sup> For weeks following his talk, Scotland's broadsheets were crammed with letters for and against his forceful opinions.<sup>16</sup> Initial tabloid headlines took isolated comments from MacMillan's speech but delved no deeper. This task was left to Tom Devine in his edited book, *Scotland's Shame*.<sup>17</sup> The book reflects a variety of opinion. The first contributor, Andrew O'Hagan's reaction to MacMillan's speech is "good on you" and goes on to observe that "religion is everything in Scotland. It is washed and dried in Protestant values".<sup>18</sup> For Patrick Reilly, formally Head of the English Department at Glasgow University, "To ask if there is anti-Catholicism in Scotland is like asking: if there is a Frenchman in Paris?"<sup>19</sup> He contends that sectarianism exists in every level of society. The historian, Bernard Aspinwall offers a different perspective<sup>20</sup>. He finds that "too many popular writers and even some scholars who should know better present the history of religion in Scotland as a permanent Rangers-Celtic match". His repeated mantra is that "reality is always a little more complex", noting that there have always been exceptions to the stereotypes.

Summarising the arguments Tom Devine concludes that :

A modern, mature Scotland should seek to be inclusive and allow all Scots to search for an enriching multi-cultural pluralism which also remembers the Catholic-Christian heritage which for many centuries formed the cultural and religious backbone of this ancient nation.

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<sup>15</sup> James MacMillan, "Scotland's Shame", Speech at Edinburgh International Festival, August 1999

<sup>16</sup> Tom Devine, *Scotland's Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2000), preface.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Andrew O'Hagan, 'Into the Ferment', in Devine( ed.), *Scotland's Shame*, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> Patrick Reilly, 'Kicking with the Left Foot: Being Catholic in Scotland', in Devine( ed.), *Scotland's Shame*, p. 29.

<sup>20</sup> Bernard Aspinwall, 'Faith of our Fathers Living Still...The Time Warp or Woof! Woof!', in Devine (ed.), *Scotland's Shame*, p. 105.

The reality of this pluralism is deeply engrained in our other cultural reality: postmodernity.

### **3:3 The Postmodern Context**

As we have acknowledged, just as Vatican II sought conscious engagement with the modern world, the paradigm of modernity was itself changing.<sup>21</sup> This new era is commonly described as post-modern; a recognition that we have moved on from modernity but are not yet living in a time which has achieved its own delineation. James Fowler defines postmodernity as:

A broad development in contemporary thought that engages in deep on-going criticism of the Enlightenment, with its trust in the possibility of universal reason and its focus on meta-narratives such as belief in human progress and universal groundings for ethics, principles and standards.<sup>22</sup>

As Paul Avis notes, any comprehensive definition of postmodernity is inherently difficult because the cultural epoch that it represents is intrinsically un-conducive to stable definitions and clear distinctions.<sup>23</sup> This leads David Tracy to suggest that in reality there are postmodernities.<sup>24</sup> Undoubtedly postmodernity means living with explosive complexity and with a plurality of images all around us. Anne Hunt therefore suggests that “a newly differentiated consciousness is required to meet the contemporary need for meaning”.<sup>25</sup> Postmodernity then can be considered as more than a different way of thinking but as a different way of experiencing the world leading to a

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<sup>21</sup> As distinct from linear change, which is based on development from what is already in place, Sofield and Kuhn have developed the concept of a ‘paradigm shift’ to describe the profound change that has accelerated during the second half of the twentieth century. See Loughlin Sofield and David Kuhn, *The Collaborative Leader*, (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> James Fowler, *Faithful Change: The Personal and Public Challenges of Post-Modern Life*, (Nashville: Abingdon 1996) p. 15.

<sup>23</sup> Paul Avis, *Church Drawing Near*, (London: T and T Clark, 2003), p. 83.

<sup>24</sup> David Tracy, ‘Fragments: The Spiritual Situation of Our Times’, in John D. Caputo and Michael Scanlan (eds.), *God, the Gift and Postmodernism*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999) , p. 170.

<sup>25</sup> Anne Hunt, *The Trinity and the Paschal Mystery: A Development in Recent Catholic Theology*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1997), p. 162.

transformation of consciousness. As such postmodernity impacts every aspect of human living and Christian ministry is no exception. A number of examples were offered by participants, through the course of the research, of practical encounters typifying postmodern culture. I have collated these in appendix eight. These scenarios were used by participants to explain the changing nature and demands of ministry. All participants noted the time needed to deal with these individuals who often turn up without appointments. The examples demonstrate the increasing complexity of family life and the challenge of large numbers of people disengaged from the Church, who no longer have familiarity with the vocabulary of Christianity and its practices. They also show the openness and adaptability needed to be present to those from other cultures, from other faiths and with those who would not define themselves as 'believers' but who look to the Church for ritual and meaning. The situations exemplified in appendix eight are not new; secularisation as a consequence of modernity<sup>26</sup> has been a significant factor in ministry for some time. The six aspects of modernity, leading to secularisation, described by Avis as: toleration and relativism, urbanisation, privatisation of faith, increased geographical mobility, individualism, and growing competition in worldviews, would be familiar to most ministers.<sup>27</sup> Post-modernity, however, has intensified these aspects of modernity. This, Avis suggests, has led to relativism becoming an ingrained ideology, urbanisation becoming cultural homelessness and the privatisation of religion becoming mere ethical solipsism in which there is no reference point for moral values.<sup>28</sup> He contends that geographical mobility has become rootlessness, that the individual is now viewed less as a person with rights but as an "uncentred site for a series of fleeting sensations" and the sacred has become deregulated, in a 'free for all'.<sup>29</sup> It is this intensification that makes the encounters in appendix eight remarkable. Ministers find themselves responding to people, often in times of crisis, whose "horizon of

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<sup>26</sup> Paul Avis, *Church Drawing Near: Spirituality and Mission in a Post-Christian Culture*, p. 65.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 68-80.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

meaning”<sup>30</sup>is insecure. The meaning, purpose, direction and fulfilment that faith in God can bring, is simply unavailable to many people in postmodernity. Yet, it is well-documented that there is also within postmodernity a turn to the spiritual.<sup>31</sup> This means that when people from ‘outside’ the church encounter the church, the experience is ambiguous. This, I think, accounts for the feeling expressed by interviewees that these encounters were time-consuming and demanding.

### ***3:4 Implications of Postmodernity on the Role of the Lay Minister: Changed Mission***

Postmodernity has brought new challenges. As we have seen, for many this means the change from “religion handed down by tradition, formulated for a whole group and which is obligatory to practise, to a (free), private, optional religion, fashioned according to one’s own needs and understanding.”<sup>32</sup> As a result of this, in pastoral ministry many of the people ministers meet are either unfamiliar with Christian beliefs and practice or have only partially retained fragments of understanding. For those schooled in the Catholic tradition this often means some attachment to sacramentality. This may mean seeking baptism for a child, lighting a candle as a way of praying for an intention or having a ‘mass said’ for a departed loved one. This leads Paul Lakeland to ask the question: What is the mission of the community of faith in the postmodern world? In pursuit of an answer he turns once more to the

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<sup>30</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Josephine Nauckhoff, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), no. 125. Nietzsche’s madman suggests here that the “horizon of meaning” has been wiped away. I would suggest that for most people it has not been wiped away but is much less secure than in the past.

<sup>31</sup> In the year 2000, the BBC ran a series of TV programmes called *Soul of Britain*, intended to be a review of the spiritual state of the nation at the Millennium. The data for the programmes came from a national survey commissioned by the BBC along with a number of other groups. One of those bodies was the Spirituality Project at Nottingham University who inserted a set of questions in the survey asking people about their spiritual lives. The results showed that over 75% of the sample claimed that they were personally aware of a spiritual dimension to their experience. Cited by David Hay, ‘The Spirituality of Adults in Britain- Recent Research’, *Scottish Journal of Healthcare Chaplaincy*, Vol. 5, pp .4-9, 2002.

<sup>32</sup> Emile Durkheim, in W. Pickering, *Durkheim on Religion*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975) p. 96.

*tria munera*, the priestly, prophetic and royal character of the priesthood of all believers.

He suggests that “to call the church priestly is to highlight its mission to the world in which it must communicate the love of God in Christ to and for the world”. Here he emphasises the task is not to communicate that God loves the world, but to love the world for God.<sup>33</sup> Turning to the prophetic role of the Church he concludes that: “we need a discourse model of ‘communicative action’ based upon a search for consensus in which everything is open for discussion but no responsibility to speak the truth is surrendered”<sup>34</sup> He notes that in our rhetorically and hermeneutically conscious age reception is important. Therefore the truth is not there to be spoken as defiant proclamation but needs to be expressed in a manner in which it can be received as true. Royalty, he suggests, is best captured by the traditional Christological and ecclesiological symbol of kingship as servant-leader. This, he concludes, is vital when we are trying to negotiate a role for the Christian community in a radically pluralistic, political, cultural and religious world. It encapsulates the task of the church in the post-modern world:” to meet the world which is not church where it is, on humble terms of equality, and to link arms on what may turn out to be a very long-term commitment to building a worthwhile and sustainable future for the world”.

Lakeland then asks: what this means for the material practices of the church? He observes that on the whole, present ecclesial structures look inward, to the life of the faith community. But, he considers, the present ecclesiological picture demands the reversal of the relationship between outreach and ‘in-reach’. He sees the worship of the church and its inner life is subordinate to and instrumental to the central work of the church, which is to minister to the needs of the world. By this reckoning ordained ministers are “support staff” to this work which is to be conducted by all the baptised, but for the most part by the laity.<sup>35</sup>

Lakeland sums up this mission as the “compassionate outpouring of realistic affirmation”. This seems a somewhat vague aspiration. However

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Lakeland, *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997 ) p. 104.

<sup>34</sup> Lakeland, *Postmodernity: Christian Identity in a Fragmented Age*, p. 105.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.* p. 107.

Lakeland’s clear recognition that lay people have a vital and necessary role in postmodernity among those who have no Christian language or experience is a most useful insight and should act as a ‘driver’ for the development of lay ministry.

### ***3:5 The Present Situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland***

“Scotland has become more Roman Catholic than Protestant, with its congregations now outnumbering the Kirk for the first time since records began”, reported *The Scotsman* in 2008.<sup>36</sup> It reported a total of 215,000 Catholics going to church, in comparison with only 208,400 attending the Church of Scotland.<sup>37</sup> The article goes on to note that attendances at both churches – and all other Christian denominations – are falling however and that the researchers predicted that by 2015, the number of Scots going to church on a Sunday would fall below 10% of the population for the first time. The same research finds that Scotland is still the most religious part of the U.K. While total church attendance in Scotland for 2008 was 10.9%, in England it was 5.5%. In Wales, the figure was 5.8%.

The pattern of decline is shown by figures from the Catholic Directory<sup>38</sup> demonstrating decreasing participation in the life of the Church by Catholics over the last sixty years. (see Table One)

#### **Catholic Population in Scotland and Levels of Practise (Table 1)**

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Catholic Population	745,125	792,640	818,500	828,300	787,200	692,444	643,075
Scottish	5.96	5.201	5.234	5.1802	5.083	5.062011	5.222

<sup>36</sup> *The Scotsman*, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008

<sup>37</sup> The statistics in the Scotsman article come from research by the independent group ‘Christian Research’. See [www.christian-research.org](http://www.christian-research.org).

<sup>38</sup> *Scottish Catholic Directory*, (Glasgow: Burns), published annually

Population (Millions)							
Number of Baptisms	20,391	23,929	21,277	14,204	12,282	9,778	8,855
Number of Confirmations	16,773	15,542	24,333	16,795	9,288	10,825	5,907
Level of practise						32.2%	27.22%

Level of practice is a difficult entity to measure. The figures for 2001 and 2011 are taken from the count carried out in each Parish at each Mass on Census Sunday in November of each year and calculated as a percentage of the estimated Catholic population. (These figures are not available for earlier decades.) In our increasingly fast-paced society many people now count regular practise as coming once a month or once every six weeks. With greater mobility people easily switch between parishes depending on which Mass time suits on a given weekend. Despite these discrepancies it is obvious that churches are emptier than in bygone years, it is also clear that empirical measures such as numbers of baptisms and marriages celebrated in Catholic Churches show continuing decline as table two and three demonstrate.

**Number of Roman Catholic Infant Baptisms (Table 2)**

Year	Live Births in Scotland	No of Catholic baptisms	Percentage of Catholic baptisms
1951	90,639	20,391	22.5%
1961	101,169	23,929	26.4%
1971	86,728	21,277	24.5%
1981	69,054	14,204	20.6%
1991	67,024	12,282	18.3%
2001	52,827	9,778	18.5%



2011	58,592	8,552	14.6%
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The number of children who are baptised in Roman Catholic Churches in Scotland has continued to decrease. The figures in table two, however, do not take account of the numbers of baptisms of older children and adults even though this trend is growing year on year.

### **Numbers of Catholic Marriages (Table 3)**

Year	No. of Marriages Registered in Scotland	No. of Catholic Marriages	% Catholic Marriages	% Church of Scotland Marriages	% Civil Marriages
1951	41,470	6262	15.1	57.3	17.3
1961	40,562	6940	17.1	55.7	18.7
1971	42,500	6930	16.3	46	30.8
1981	36,237	6197	14.5	40.1	39.1
1991	33,762	3911	11.6	38.9	43
2001	29,621	2050	6.9	38.5	38.8
2011	27,524	1788	6.5	22.5	51.7

Table three again delineates a pattern of decline in the number of Catholic marriages in Scotland. The marriages denoted here as ‘Catholic’ are marriages which have taken place in a Catholic Church in Scotland. Often only one partner in the marriage is a baptised Catholic. In our pluralistic society most marriages are not between two Catholics.

Alongside the falling percentage of practising Catholics, recent years have seen falling numbers of clergy and consecrated religious as the study below demonstrates.

### **Table 4 Profile of Ministers Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh**

The table below is a compilation of information from one Scottish Diocese, the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh. All eight Scottish dioceses show the same trends.<sup>39</sup>

	1951	1961	1971	1982	1991	2001	2011
No. of secular priests active in Parishes	152	178	186	152	115	75	62
No. of priests attached to Parishes run by Religious Orders	79	86	76	73	61	34	27
Priests serving in Parishes from overseas	1	0	2	2	4	2	19
Permanent Deacons			0	0	0	1	3
'Parish Sisters'			0	0	0	20	10
No. of lay people employed in a Pastoral Role in Parishes			0	0	0	3	9
No. of Institutes of Consecrated Life (Men)	14	17	16	14	15	12	14
No. of Religious Brothers				40	23	12	6
No of Institutes of Consecrated Life (Women)	28	31	29	46	40	26	16

<sup>39</sup> Sources: The Catholic Directory and Cardinal Keith O'Brien's quarterly newsletters. I have chosen this diocese because information was readily available regarding parish staffing.

No. of Religious Sisters				371	252	167	59
No. of Clustered Parishes					10	25	58
Estimated number of Catholics	108,340		124,800	130,000	120,600	114,862	127,074
Estimated level of practise						32.2%	27.2%

### ***3:6 Comments on Statistics for Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh for the period between 2001 and 2011***

These statistics come from the Catholic Directory.<sup>40</sup> The figures are collected annually through the completion of a questionnaire sent to Parish Priests. In terms of ministry, the figures in no way reflect the vast numbers of lay people who make a vital contribution to Parishes on a voluntary basis. Overall, however the figures do give an indication of how ministry is delivered. In 2001, one hundred and thirty three individuals are named as Parish Ministers<sup>41</sup>. In 2011, despite a 12.8% increase in the estimated number of Catholics, the number of parish ministers has decreased to one hundred and ten. The nature of these ministers has also changed with twenty priests and ten sisters fewer than in 2001. The number of deacons has increased from one to three, Lay Ministers from three to nine and most significantly, foreign priests from two to nineteen. The increase in the number of priests from overseas reflects a deliberate attempt by the diocese to ‘fill gaps’ in parishes<sup>42</sup>. The other response the diocese has made is the clustering of parishes. The figure of fifty-eight given above does not include parishes that have merged or closed but is indicative of parishes that remain canonically separate but share a priest with at least one other parish.

<sup>40</sup> *Catholic Directory for Scotland*, (Glasgow: Burns)

<sup>41</sup> I am using the term here to include priests, parish sisters, deacons and lay pastoral assistants.

<sup>42</sup> In 2011, this group of priests comprised, 9 from Poland, 5 from Africa, 3 from Malta, 1 from the Philippines and 1 from India.

Across Scotland the last decade has seen similar changes in the number and profile of ministers. Over this decade the number of deacons has increased by 45%, the number of religious sisters working as pastoral assistants in parishes has declined by 39%. The number of priests from overseas made up 1.5% of parish clergy in 2001 but 31% in 2011. The number of secular priests, in the same period, has declined by 25%. At least 28% of all parish priests are currently aged over seventy<sup>43</sup>. While the overall statistics show a 7% drop in the number of Catholics across the eight Scottish dioceses they also show a 20% drop in the total number of named ministers. The statistics show that unlike the United States, much of Western Europe and many English dioceses, the Catholic Church in Scotland has been reluctant to embrace the option of lay pastoral assistants. There may be a number of reasons for this including a fear of stepping out of the clerical system and a dearth of quality adult education.

### ***3:7 Training for Full-Time Ministry***

Dedicated facilities, for those training for ministry have up until now been available only to priests and consecrated religious. The Institutions listed below are Diocesan Seminaries and in the following section are Houses of Formation run by Religious Orders.

The table below does not account for all the needs of individual students. It should be noted that following the closure of Scotus College in 2009, three students in 2011 were at St Patrick's Maynooth, one at Ushaw and one at Venerable Beda College, Rome.

**Table 5 Institutes and Colleges: Training for Ministry**

	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011

<sup>43</sup> Ordained prior to 1965.

The Pontifical Scots College Rome	28	49	27	16	25*
Institute Catholic, Paris	3	0	0	0	0
The Royal Scots College Valladolid	25	21	14 (moved to Salamanca)	9	<b>Closed</b> as a seminary
GLASGOW: St Peter's Cardross	49	33	45  (moved to Bearsden and renamed Chesters College)	21  (combined with Gillis and renamed Scotus College)	<b>Closed</b>
EDINBURGH: St Andrew's Drygrange	39	35	17  (renamed Gillis College and moved to Edinburgh)	See Scotus College above	<b>Closed</b>
St Mary's College, Blairs	137	141	<b>Closed</b> 1986		
St Vincent's Langbank	116	<b>Closed</b>			

**Houses of Study and Formation run by Religious in Scotland**

There were ten additional places of study for ministry in 1971: St. Joseph's Missionary College, Lochwinnoch (Mill Hill Fathers), St. Joseph's House of Study, Glasgow (Mill Hill Fathers), St Patrick's Buchlyvie (St Patrick's Missionary Society), Brothers' Juniorate of the English Province of the Society of Jesus, Acre Rd, Glasgow (The Jesuits), Xaverian Missionary House of Studies, Glasgow (Xaverians), Xaverian Missionary Juniorate, Coatbridge (Xaverians), Xaverian Missionary College, Dumbarton (Xaverians), Montfort College, Barrhead (Montfort Fathers), House of Studies, Glasgow (Marists), Marist Brothers' Juniorate, Dumfries (Marists).

Ten years later, in 1981, nine Houses of Formation and Study are listed. These are St. Joseph's Missionary College, Lochwinnoch (Mill Hill Fathers), St. Joseph's House of Study, Glasgow (Mill Hill Fathers), St Patrick's Buchlyvie (St Patrick's Missionary Society), Xaverian Missionary House of Studies, Glasgow (Xaverians), Xaverian Missionary Juniorate, Coatbridge (Xaverians), Montfort College, Barrhead (Montfort Fathers), House of Studies, Glasgow (Marists), Vocation Centre, Kilwinning (Sacred Heart Fathers), Vocation Centre, Midlothian (White Fathers).

Six of the above remained in 1991. By 2001 there were no Houses of Study belonging to Religious. Ten years later in 2011 there is no remaining dedicated Catholic Higher Education College<sup>44</sup>. Equally there is no Seminary provision within Scotland - all seminarians are sent to the Scots College in Rome.

These statistics show an on-going decline in full-time Ministers in the period since Vatican II. This has been accompanied by a diminishment in training and resourcing of ministry in the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. As can be seen from the above table, one facility after another has been merged and closed. At the same time any move to offer formation and training, with a view to widening models of ministry (for example to prepare for team ministry, episcopally-recognised lay ministry or chaplaincy) has failed to gather any momentum.

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<sup>44</sup> St Andrew's College is now an Institute within the Education Faculty of Glasgow University.

### ***3:8 Challenges for the Catholic Church in Scotland***

The first challenge for the Church comes from secularism and the pattern of decline that all religious institutions are currently facing. The second challenge for the Church is to ask: who will minister to this increasingly diverse group of people in her name? Who will be the bearers of the charisms of the Catholic Community to our needy society in Scotland in the coming years? The statistics suggest it will not, for the most part, be priests or Religious. Diocesan clergy and Religious will undoubtedly play an important role but they alone cannot provide the inspiration or the workforce needed for ministry and mission. The Church must surely look for this to new ministers, to dedicated lay people: Catechists, Chaplains, Deacons and Youth Ministers. In order to meet the needs of our disparate and fragmented society such a variety of ministers is needed.

This leads to the third challenge: How are these new ministers to be trained, formed, refreshed and renewed in their ministries on a regular basis, professionally supervised and spiritually directed? This question is especially pertinent when our only Catholic institution offering training for ministry is in Rome and is not open to lay people.

The tensions of living with these challenges are evident in the 'witness' of the research participants. Their lived experiences form the third pole of this study and are explored in the following chapters four, five and six.

## **Chapter Four: Diocesan Interviews**

### ***4:1 Summary of Responses***

In the initial phase of the research I aimed to find out what training was available for lay people and to identify situations where lay ministry was working effectively for further study. I connected in total with personnel from seven of the eight Scottish Roman Catholic Dioceses. This amounted to eleven initial interviews with people who had a position of seniority in their respective dioceses and whose role involved promoting adult education and pastoral resources. Interviews with diocesan personnel took place between October 2011 and May 2012. Interviews with parish sisters took place between March and June 2013. It seemed these would be the most appropriate cohort to engage with in order to research the extent of lay ministry across Scotland. These individuals' job titles varied and their roles were described as: Director of Pastoral Resources, Advisor for Parish and Pastoral Resources, Director of Adult Formation, Adult Education Co-ordinator, Vicar-Episcopal for Christian Formation or Director of Catholic Education. Two of the dioceses are largely composed of rural parishes, three are mainly situated in the more densely populated Central Belt and two have a combination of some large towns and considerable rural areas. This diversity is evident in the approach to adult education taken by the dioceses. Rural areas benefited from distance learning programmes and had a greater openness to ecumenical involvement. In contrast the larger population centres were able to sustain longer training courses with more face-to-face contact. In spite of the significant economic and geographical differences I found that the same issues had resonance across all of the dioceses.

Beneficially participants from seven of the eight Scottish dioceses contributed to the research representing a wide range of perspectives. In the remaining diocese I had an initial conversation with the priest who had responsibility for adult education. Soon afterwards he resigned after significant disagreements with the bishop. Since the bishop in question was himself due to retire this situation was unresolved during the research period and it seemed best not to pursue further research in that diocese.



The remaining participants from the seven dioceses were comprised of six priests, three lay women, one lay man and one religious sister. Meetings took place in the diocesan offices or parishes where the participants worked. I e-mailed interview questions in advance so that the participants had time to think about them if that was helpful to their personality type. This approach also relieved participants of anxiety as to the content of the interview and allowed conversation both to flow and deepen during the actual meeting. The interview questions are available in appendix one. The tables below summarise responses to the interview questions. The intention here is to offer a brief overview and comparison of the responses, more detailed comments from the participants are discussed later in the chapter. In four of the seven dioceses where I conducted interviews, I interviewed two people as the brief for adult education/formation and pastoral development was shared between them. This arises because each diocese has its own historical structure and approach to adult education. I have referred to each diocese by the letters A-G. In those dioceses where there were two interviewees I have combined their responses in the material summarised in Table Six and Table Seven. In one diocese I met both participants together; in the other three dioceses I met each participant separately. It would have been my preference to conduct all interviews one-to-one but in this particular case one participant was preparing to go on sabbatical and had considerable time constraints. Table Six summarises responses to questions one to three. These were: In your experience how has parish ministry changed? How has the diocese changed? Is there or has there been a diocesan pastoral plan in recent years?

**Table 6 Summary of Responses from Interviewees based in Seven of the Scottish Dioceses to Questions 1-3**

Diocese	Changes in Parish Ministry	Diocesan Changes	Diocesan Planning
A	Priests seem more fearful of new things,	Many more foreign priests, elderly	No formal plan but the Bishop is trying to

	lay people are professional in other areas but know little about faith.	priests and Deacons	move younger priests into the City
B	People are more apathetic, there was more involvement 30 years ago. You deal with more people with no faith base.	There are no Religious left in Parishes .There are constant mergers. There are a good number of 80 yr. olds running Parishes.	No Plan, but a lot of energy is going to maintaining the system
C	People are weary of constant change and reshuffling of priests	Constant clustering and re-clustering of Parishes, many foreign priests who don't understand our way of working	No plan, everything is a local arrangement which changes with the priest. Council structures just aren't working.
D	There is less energy, we just tick over	A lot of our priests are old, we have few Religious now	No plan, but the Bishop wants to promote the New Evangelisation – but it's a bit airy-fairy
E	There are so many old priests and gaps in what parishes offer	We've had mergers and closures every year but nobody knows what will happen until it happens.	No plan. Local is the answer. Local and Ecumenical

F	The big thing is the reduction in priests. The Sisters have all left too. There are huge numbers of people on the edge.	People are moved more often because of parish mergers which isn't good for a parish.	No plan. We have put all our energy into "Make do and mend".
G	People don't just come for the sake of it anymore, they need to feel connected, it's hard because everything depends on the priest and they have 4 or 5 parishes normally.	We have filled gaps with foreign priests and retired priests but it doesn't work anymore.	Actually things have gone back since the re-organisation of the deaneries. It seems the church is afraid to go forwards.

As Table Six demonstrates the same issues were raised repeatedly across the seven dioceses. These centred round the declining numbers of priests and the responses made by dioceses to ensure as many parishes as possible had a 'named' priest. This has meant encouraging priests to remain as parish priests beyond the normal retirement age of seventy-five, actively recruiting priests from overseas and welcoming priests from abroad who want to pursue further studies in Scotland. There has also been "constant re-shuffling" of existing priests as parishes are clustered. At this point priests appear to have been stretched to the limit. The interviewees described "weariness", "fear" and a "lack of energy" as symptomatic of this situation. Another area to highlight is the uniform lack of pastoral planning. This appears, to the respondents, to be the result of all the energy of bishops and their vicars general being channelled into strategies of 'fire-fighting' and maintaining the system. This mode of constant crisis management has

obliterated any aspiration of diocesan consultation, of envisioning the future mission of the diocese or of forward planning for future mission.

The responses to the remaining interview questions, where much commonality emerged, are given below in Table Seven. Question four asked: What are the pastoral needs you experience in parishes/dioceses? The responses to this question are summarised under the heading of ‘Meeting Pastoral Needs’. Question five was: How extensive is lay ministry in the diocese and what sort of things do lay people do? Question six was: What training/resources etc. are available to lay people? Question five was an important question in ascertaining situations of lay ministry for further research but only a few dioceses it emerged had parishes with recognised Lay Ministers and these were local rather than diocesan arrangements. As a result the tabulated answers below focus on questions four and six since all the dioceses had concerns about meeting pastoral needs and some experience of training lay people in this regard.

**Table 7 Summary of Responses from Interviewees based in Seven of the Scottish Dioceses to Questions four-six**

Diocese	<i>Meeting Pastoral Needs</i>	<i>Lay Ministry and Lay Training</i>
A	There is a lot of filling gaps “ineffectively” so a lot of needs are just not being met.	Some courses run through Maryvale <sup>1</sup>
B	We need to train and energise people to go out. It would be lovely to have more priests but you have got what you’ve got.	We’ve had various short term programmes but nothing has worked.

<sup>1</sup> Maryvale Institute, Birmingham.

C	Right now it is about lay people and offering them formation opportunities.	We've built up networks of catechists but there is no way forward without good leadership
D	We need much much more adult education	LIMEX <sup>2</sup> was great but we don't have it any more, we haven't replaced it with anything.
E	We need to be better at inviting and paying for people to access prayer and formation opportunities.	The problem is there are no openings for people. We had a Pastoral Ministry Course but it died a death. People think they are experts from watching EWTN <sup>3</sup> .
F	We need pastoral assistants to co-ordinate catechists etc. We need bishops with vision.	There have been some things people could go to but not for a certificate or anything; nothing formal. The last bishop didn't want to train lay people.
G	We need more adult education to discuss and find other ways of dealing with the current reality.	We have some training for catechists but nothing across the diocese.

A further area, as demonstrated by Table Two, where there was a unanimous response across the dioceses was the need for “much much more adult formation”. The present lack of energy among increasingly stretched priests has led to the felt-need for more lay ministry in order for parishes to function. This in turn has led to a need for training and formation opportunities for lay people and to lay people having to take more personal responsibility for their own faith development. Yet all the dioceses struggled to provide on-going adult education.

Much of the material which emerged in the informal conversations around the interview questions also covered common ground. I found in the material five consistent themes which people spoke of with passion. The first

<sup>2</sup> LIMEX is an extension programme from the Loyola Institute for Ministry in New Orleans.

<sup>3</sup> Eternal Word Television Network.

of these was the current situations faced by parishes. The participants spoke from the experience of active involvement in parishes. They spoke warmly about individual parishioners and with a deep care for the Community. The second were issues which arose related to clergy but which impact directly on people and parishes. The third theme I have summarised under the heading: 'We had hoped that...' (Luke 24). This covers the many aspects of the conversations which reflected a sense of disappointment and disillusionment. This was an unexpected aspect of the research which coloured all the interview material and resulting conversations. I have come to see this as a key component of the 'snapshot' of the Scottish Roman Catholic Church at this time which forms the heart of this dissertation. The fourth theme reflects the interest of the dissertation, namely lay ministry and the fifth raises the issues of planning for the future. To preserve anonymity research participants will be identified by a letter when direct quotes are used in the ensuing discussion of these themes.

#### ***4:2 The Parish and Changes in Pastoral Ministry***

The parish is central to Catholic life and for most Roman Catholics in Scotland it is the place where their faith is actively lived out. All the interviewees, although engaged with ministry at diocesan level, were also actively engaged in and spoke at length about parishes. All six priests who participated in the research were also parish priests. (This is a further response to the declining number of priests. Priests are expected to combine parish ministry with a diocesan job.) Two central issues emerged in discussion about parish life. The first is the impact of declining numbers of priests and consecrated religious and the other is the growing number of people with little church background who approach the church for funerals, sacramental preparation for children and in times of pastoral need.

All participants referred with regret to the closures of parishes, religious houses and retreat centres. As one priest commented:

Visitors ask me how many priests work in the parish I am in; actually this question does not make sense anymore. The question has to be the other way round: how many parishes does each priest have?<sup>4</sup>

Another participant expressed her regret in this way:

All the priests round here are so old. The sisters have gone too. The convent was lovely, we had lovely parish days and courses there but it is empty now too.<sup>5</sup>

The work of parish sisters was consistently referred to. As one parish priest noted:

Take this parish, when I was a curate here there were two priests and three sisters and the sisters did the bulk of the visiting and the baptismal preparation, they were a sort of 'catch all' for people who were on the fringe of society. They were very kind to a lot of them, they visited them, they gave them time. They defused a lot of situations; they kept the priest up to date with what was happening. Now I am here alone and have responsibility for three parishes, the school and the hospital.<sup>6</sup>

Combined with this sense of loss is the growing experience of ministering to those who no longer practise.

Two of the priests described their day to day experience of this as follows:

This morning I was up visiting this lad who had lost his mother, now he is completely lost, he has no faith base, he doesn't know what a

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<sup>4</sup> Participant R

<sup>5</sup> Participant J

<sup>6</sup> Participant K

church is never mind a church service and yet having to start back from where they are- inevitably means time and more work.<sup>7</sup>

The second reflected:

We've only four Catholic schools in the diocese, none down this way so sacraments are a big issue for parishes. You can't do too much or parents won't come, so many of them are disengaged. In fact this week we've had two funerals of mothers and the families were totally disengaged – how does that happen in one generation?<sup>8</sup>

Despite the many people who no longer come regularly to church participants insisted that “Mass attendance has been pretty stable”.<sup>9</sup> Most noted significant numbers of Filipinos, Indians and Poles were swelling the numbers in some parishes.

A number of participants referred to the apathy they experience in parishes and the difficulty there is in some places getting people to commit to membership of parish pastoral councils and other parish groups and committees. One interviewee commented that:

Whether a parish flourishes or not will depend on how engaged people are in acting, in being involved and that varies. I would have to say that probably thirty years ago there was in my experience a lot more involvement than there is now, people were excited to be readers and Eucharistic ministers.<sup>10</sup>

This is a cause for concern when the need for lay involvement is so pressing. It may also be a reflection of the lack of energy available for pastoral leadership and a result of ageing congregations. Three participants from dioceses with large rural areas noted the considerable difficulty in running diocesan events. They insisted that, “Local is the answer and that anything we do we do ecumenically”.<sup>11</sup> One added humorously, “It's different here

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<sup>7</sup> Participant K

<sup>8</sup> Participant H

<sup>9</sup> Participants H, K and P

<sup>10</sup> Participant L

<sup>11</sup> Participants H and S



from Glasgow; they think they are being ecumenical if they work with the Catholic Church down the road!”<sup>12</sup>

Reflecting on the declining numbers of priests and consecrated religious, another participant urged that “We need a different way of thinking that everybody has a call to service somewhere in the community. Lay pastoral assistants have to help that to happen.”<sup>13</sup>

The key teaching of Vatican II about the priestly, service-orientated ministry of all the baptised and any confidence in charisms given to all the faithful seems to have been overlooked in the discussion of how to fill gaps in parish ministry. The above participant recognised the ‘call to service’ that is given to everyone but feels that before we can activate this for the up-building of the community we would need “a different way of thinking”. If the Roman Catholic community in Scotland had ‘received’ the teaching of Vatican II, surely a different way of thinking would be possible; in fact it would be the normative ‘default’ position. Which begs the question: why this has not happened?

The level of contact with people disengaged from the church was at one level surprising. Participants described this contact as occurring most often when a family member dies or when sacraments are sought, particularly those marking a significant stage in life such as infant baptism and first communion. Additionally participants described ministering to the ‘unchurched’ in hospital, prison and university chaplaincies, when people came to the door seeking assistance in a time of crisis and when people came seeking prayers and blessings. All those involved in parish ministry noted the considerable time needed for these encounters.

This experience leads Kevin Kelly to suggest that instead of sending out missionaries to preach the word of salvation to the pagans, we need to send out humble listeners.<sup>14</sup> As Braxton points out when God breaks into adults’ lives, it is rarely in church: it is rather in the human experience of illness, health, joy, sadness, moral search, sin, success, disappointment,

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<sup>12</sup> Participant H

<sup>13</sup> Participant R

<sup>14</sup> Kevin T Kelly, *From a Parish Base : Essays in Moral and Pastoral Theology*, (London: D.L.T. ,1999) p. 155 see also Pope Frances, *Evangelii Gaudium*, “Often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others.” (46)

love, divorce, death.<sup>15</sup> It is in these every day events that the pastoral presence of the Christian community can move people towards grace and growth. Yet “humble listening” requires quality time. This is difficult to offer when numbers of ministers are decreasing.

#### **4:3 Issues Related to Clergy**

A number of issues related to clergy arose in the interviews and these have had a strong impact on the Church given the dominance of clerical leadership.

As we have seen, a concern consistently referred to was the increasing age of priests and the number of priests who have continued in parish ministry beyond retirement age to ‘help out’, as one participant put it: we have a number of eighty-year olds running parishes, we have an eighty-one year old running the diocese.<sup>16</sup>

A strategy across all the dioceses has been to invite foreign priests to minister in parishes in Scotland. One priest described how “the bishop visited Poland and had meetings with bishops of the Indian hierarchy to literally beg for priests”.<sup>17</sup> At the present time the impact of this policy is being felt in all dioceses. Many respondents were concerned that these men were ‘filling gaps’ but were not in tune with Scottish culture. They were said to be “afraid of doing anything” and not to be “really into adult formation”.<sup>18</sup> One respondent described in detail how a parish which had previously been considered one of the liveliest parishes in the diocese now had no groups meeting regularly at all. Children’s Liturgy, RCIA<sup>19</sup> and lay-led sacramental programmes had all been stopped by the incoming Polish parish priest. In place of these there was daily rosary<sup>20</sup>, exposition<sup>21</sup>, ‘divine mercy’<sup>22</sup> and

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<sup>15</sup> Edward Braxton, *The Wisdom Community*, (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1980) pp. 28-36.

<sup>16</sup> Participant K

<sup>17</sup> Participant H

<sup>18</sup> Participant J

<sup>19</sup> Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults

<sup>20</sup> The full Rosary is made up of four sets of five mysteries. The meditation on each mystery is accompanied by the praying of the Lord’s Prayer, followed by ten ‘Hail Mary’s and one ‘Glory be...’.

<sup>21</sup> In Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharist is displayed in a monstrance, typically placed on an altar.

other devotional practices. Another described how when an Indian priest arrived:

He got rid of the pastoral assistant, a marvellous woman who knew the community well; he doesn't want any one doing anything now, not even Eucharistic ministers. A lot of people don't want to go to that church anymore and that's okay for them, but who is looking after the sick and housebound?<sup>23</sup>

Three of the priest respondents mentioned that "it is a time when priests feel under threat, a time of change".<sup>24</sup> One added that it was also a time when "the needs of the people are so horrific".<sup>25</sup>

A number of participants felt they and others had been affected by recent scandals and had experienced some hostility when openly wearing clerical dress. During the research period for this thesis Cardinal Keith O'Brien was forced to resign after admitting to instances of 'inappropriate behaviour' and there was considerable press attention given to a number of instances of historic child sexual abuse. Many of the people I met with over this time volunteered other examples not in the public forum, of priests 'forming homosexual cliques', 'suffering from alcoholism' or 'conniving' together to block change. Many of these key people at the heart of the church in Scotland felt let down and betrayed by clergy especially those in leadership.

One respondent described the apathy he has experienced among clergy:

Now more and more we have guys who have been in country parishes for twenty years or more, for some of them it was their first parish and they just refuse to move, they don't want to come to the big city parishes. These guys are able and were in their forties and fifties

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<sup>22</sup> The Chaplet of Mercy is recited using ordinary rosary beads of five decades. On the large bead before each decade: Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, of Your Dearly Beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world. On the ten small beads of each decade, you say: For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

<sup>23</sup> Participant S

<sup>24</sup> Participants H, K and M

<sup>25</sup> Participant M

and could have been offered a bigger parish but they did not want it. They have found their level and they want to stay there. Guys are just closing down.<sup>26</sup>

Priest interviewees also noted the experience of harassment from some ultra-conservative groups particularly through the bi-monthly publication, *Catholic Truth*. This publication claims to “offer a unique insight into the current crisis in Catholicism with an emphasis on the Scottish perspective.” The tone is vicious and urges readers to complain to the Vatican about priests. The publication aims to return to anti-modernist decrees of Pius X and the Latin Mass. One respondent described being “spied on”<sup>27</sup> and another of feeling “persecuted”<sup>28</sup> by correspondents from this publication.

Priests suggested one lay respondent are currently the “squeezed middle”. They find themselves caught in the midst of constant change. Some have enabled local pastoral developments and flourished within their own local area. Some have become apathetic or have sought refuge in clericalism. As one lay participant, with a senior position in the diocese, commenting on her struggle to engage priests noted: “There has been an on-going lack of quality clergy formation. There is still very much the boys club which means in the diocese there are two different sets of pastoral imaginations.”<sup>29</sup>

If lay people are unhappy with changes to their parish or with their priest they tend to drift away quietly. The lack of forums for genuine engagement means this is the only route available to them. Many priests also feel ‘at sea’ and undervalued because of a lack of consultation regarding diocesan decisions.<sup>30</sup> This is also experienced in an imbalance between the bishop’s pastoral presence in his diocese and his anxiety to ‘fill gaps’ in compliance with the Roman model of an ordained parish priest or administrator for each parish. Conversations with interviewees suggest a lack of consultation at every level amounting to a lack of faith in the *sensus*

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<sup>26</sup> Participant K

<sup>27</sup> Participant H

<sup>28</sup> Participant T

<sup>29</sup> Participant L

<sup>30</sup> Participant T

*fidelis* of people and clergy alike. It is often said that in the past missionaries went from Europe and now missionaries are coming to Europe.<sup>31</sup> What we exported was the white Euro-centric, centralised, pre- Vatican II model of church this is what we are getting back from the African and Indian priests now running our parishes. This model is just as culturally irrelevant to Scotland in 2016 as it probably was to Africa and India in the first place.

#### **4:4 " We had hoped that..."**

There was a palpable sense of disappointment among all interviewees. The reasons for this included problems arising from shortages of priests, poor decisions by bishops, the current sense of stagnation and the lack of any plan to move forward. One participant described his disillusionment over a consultation process about parish closures and amalgamations:

We had all the consultation about closing parishes. There were these residential weekends in the Pastoral Centre for people to get to know each other. The bishop thought it would be a good idea to get us all together to have a wee hooley. (People paid their own money to go and the weekends were really well-supported) The people decided unanimously to move from twelve to six parishes rather than having a second round of closures later in the day. The bishop then did something completely different (to please certain of his priest friends) and that made people feel alienated. There was a fall out, the vicar general retired and then moved on to greater things (laugh) and that's when the arse was knocked out of it.<sup>32</sup>

There was also disappointment at the lack of diocesan support for new initiatives. This is typified by the following example:

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<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, Scotland's bishops have claimed the nation is now a 'mission country' which invites the help of clergy and religious from the developing world, *The Glasgow Herald*, 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2015.

<sup>32</sup> Participant P (The Vicar General had to leave the diocese when he was found to be in two long-term relationships with different women.)

The last parish I was in had nothing like the financial resources of this one, what I wanted after the sisters left was a catechist and I reckoned if I and one or two of the other parishes combined we could pay half the salary of a catechist. If we could have got a bit of support from the diocese and found the right person we could have done something but the bishop was just not interested.<sup>33</sup>

The poor response to adult education programmes was a further cause of disappointment. This is undoubtedly connected to the direct involvement of the interviewees in adult education. Training and formation was cited by the majority of participants as a necessary driver of change. The lack of training in recent years is therefore seen as an obstacle to much longed-for renewal. A number of respondents referred back positively to the 'Renew'<sup>34</sup> programme which had run twenty or thirty years ago describing it as life-giving.

Generally adult education programmes have lasted for a few years and then folded. Two participants spoke about LIMEX, in the words of one "LIMEX was great, it changed my life but we don't have it any more."<sup>35</sup> Another respondent lamented: "I had hoped Scotus<sup>36</sup> could be a resource for lay ministry but there you are! We had hoped to team up with St Mary's Twickenham".<sup>37</sup>

One of the difficulties cited by most participants was that there are no openings for people when they completed a course of pastoral study. The mismatch between the pastoral need for adult education and the repeated failure of programmes to meet that need is a matter for serious consideration. Some possible insights into this are offered in the participants' responses. These suggest the lack of energy and enthusiasm among priests, the lack of formation of priests for collaborative ministry and the lack of real pastoral openings and responsibility available to lay people have contributed

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<sup>33</sup> Participant K

<sup>34</sup> RENEW is a parish renewal program begun in the Archdiocese of Newark in the 1970s under Archbishop Peter Gerety. Promoted through the RENEW International Office it spread to hundreds of dioceses overseas.

<sup>35</sup> Participant N

<sup>36</sup> Scotus was the National Seminary based in Bearsden near Glasgow, it was closed in 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Participant H

to the lack of success of these programmes. It appears that no matter how appropriate the course material may be the cultural environment within the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland has discouraged both priests and lay people from actively seeking and participating in programmes of study and formation.

The conversation topics covered consultation, planning for the future and adult education. Underlying the discussion of these fairly innocuous topics was a sense of hopelessness linked with a feeling of powerlessness to bring about change. This raises a number of questions requiring further analysis. What has happened to create such an impasse? Why do so many people in senior positions in dioceses feel disempowered?

#### **4:5 Lay Involvement**

The pattern that emerged from the interviews was that most parishes had considerable lay involvement but that there were very few employed lay ministers whose role carried a recognised level of authority, leadership or collaboration.<sup>38</sup> One interviewee noted there are “some hotspots where lay people are involved”<sup>39</sup> and another that there are “pockets”<sup>40</sup> where lay ministry is growing.

One interviewee described the catechist’s course that runs in her diocese and how the lay people who participate in the course “find the workload in the parishes just grows and grows”. Given the demand for these trained lay people, it is a poignant reflection of the church’s attitude to lay ministry in Scotland that she also warns people: “It’s not America, you don’t expect to get paid around here”.<sup>41</sup>

One respondent noted that: “The bishop didn’t encourage training for lay ministry; he didn’t envisage lay ministry in parishes because he felt it would confuse the role of the priest.” He added that in his own experience: “I don’t

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<sup>38</sup> These are cited in *Co-workers* definition of Lay Ecclesial Ministry.

<sup>39</sup> Participant H

<sup>40</sup> Participant L

<sup>41</sup> Participant N

see that really and I think there is a need for pastoral assistants, there is a desperate need for trained people to coordinate all the catechists and groups.”<sup>42</sup>

Interviewees recognised the need for lay involvement and thought that at one level, bishops generally encouraged it. However while ‘helping out’ in the parish was encouraged, any ‘professional’ level of lay ministry was controversial. It introduced the familiar fear of confusion between the role of the priest and the lay minister. Yet these diocesan priests and employees all recognised the “desperate need for trained people”. Here we return again to the need to better understand the place of lay ministry in the differentiated but unified Body of Christ which is the church

#### ***4:6 Planning for the Future***

One respondent summed up a feeling that emerged across all the dioceses stating “We definitely need something but it is hard to say what, we are very parochial and very different from East to West”<sup>43</sup>

Given the “need for something” and the current impasse it is of concern that these key people in dioceses do not seem to be aware of any diocesan plans. One interviewee explained, “The diocese is quite parochial, everyone is doing their own thing. The bishop doesn’t have a plan generally he supports the idea of being in communion with each other.”<sup>44</sup> Another noted: “We’ve put all our energy into reorganisation and making do and mend; we need new bishops who will bring some new vision and not just fly the flag for Catholicism.”<sup>45</sup> Another participant commented that “At the moment there is no way forward without good leadership and intentional training and retraining of priests. Everything is a local arrangement which means it changes with the priest there is no continuity.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Participant R

<sup>43</sup> Participant R

<sup>44</sup> Participant S

<sup>45</sup> Participant R

<sup>46</sup> Participant L



The preponderance that was found of "local arrangements" and "people doing their own thing" appears to be a symptom of the lack of diocesan planning. New vision is longed for, as are the intentional training and planning processes to realise it. 'Communion' was espoused by one bishop as a concept but how it should be interpreted and modelled in diocesan structures was unclear.

The issues arising under these five headings will be returned to in Chapter Seven: 'Findings and Analysis'. These initial interviews with diocesan personnel identified four parishes which had at least one employed lay minister and which were recognised as active and growing. Two of these situations I went on to research in greater depth and the material generated from them forms the case-studies in chapters five and six. Time did not allow extensive study of all four parishes. However a further unexpected dimension arose in the diocesan interviews, which was the strength of feeling about the loss of the role of 'parish sisters'. This refers to the group of consecrated women religious from a number of different congregations who have been active in Scottish parishes over the last thirty years. It seemed a fruitful diversion to briefly explore their role and experience and to note that their work has often paved the way for lay ministry.

#### ***4:7 Parish Sisters***

The work of parish sisters gave priests and parishioners an experience of collaborative ministry, of women in a leadership role and an alternative to the highly clericalised model of ministry previously experienced in the Scottish Roman Catholic Church. A tangible sense of loss was expressed by interviewees that group after group of sisters have left because of declining numbers and individual sisters becoming too elderly and infirm to carry on.

It proved difficult to find sisters to interview, there are only a few parishes now who still have a parish sister. The sisters tend to be elderly and have often taken up parish work after retirement, usually from teaching or nursing. The age range of the three sisters I spoke with was between seventy-two and eighty-five. There are no younger sisters to replace them. The work they do can be done by lay people but the particular quality of care

and commitment brought by the sisters is missed in parishes. This is particularly so given that all the parishes in which these sisters have been working are now clustered and share a priest with two or three other parishes. None of these parishes have any obvious plan to 'fill the gap' left when the sisters go. Sisters were often at the interface between priests and people and their departure will leave a need for the renegotiation of the relationship between priests and parishioners.

#### ***4:7:1 The Role of Religious Sisters***

The sisters described their involvement in catechetics, Eucharistic services, organising retreats and pilgrimages, in liaising with local schools and with ecumenical groups. Over the years each of the sisters had also given considerable time to pastoral visiting. This has often given them a depth of connection with people that priests do not have.

Sister E, for example, noted :

Fr D is in and out quickly. People want a visit and to be listened to. Sometimes people prefer me doing funerals because I've visited and had more contact with the families. They tell you things they are not ready to tell the priest – you hear a lot of sad stories.

Sister P, expressed a similar concern,

It is terrible people die alone in the nursing homes and everything. The priest comes to anoint them but he is gone as quickly as possible. I just go and sit with them a few hours when that happens. I say it is OK I'll take my book and I say prayers.

Most of all, however, they have brought a quality of pastoral presence to the parishes. As sister E put it "I do a lot of being around really when the priests are less able to do that."

Their pioneering ministry has not been without difficulty. They have all suffered from frequent changes of priests, priests imposing their authority

and doing things their own way, a lack of diocesan support and a lack of pastoral planning at parish or diocesan level.

Sister T described her experience as follows:

In the ten years I have been here I have worked with seven priests, each wanted to be in charge and wanted me to have a different role. The church in Scotland is really clerical, you know. Now Fr. K let me do a scripture study group, Fr. M had a good business head but did not want the scripture, he wanted the curate to do that (well anyway he left and left the priesthood and all that). Then an administrator was appointed to look after the parish but he was an alcoholic and nothing happened. Then Fr. F came. He is not pastoral to the people at all.

At the time of writing two of these sisters are finishing their ministry in their respective parishes and will not be replaced. Sisters have been an important link between priests and people. They are generally more trusted than lay people. A number of Scottish bishops have recently invited new religious orders from overseas to come to Scotland. It remains to be seen how this will work in practice.

## **Chapter 5: Case Study One**

### ***5:1 Background and Description***

#### ***Introduction***

In order to examine closely what contributes to flourishing lay ministry it seemed important to conduct a more detailed study of a parish with a full-time lay minister. This parish was chosen because of its vitality, I hoped that in exploring what made this a lively parish I would observe good practice that would be transferrable to other parishes. In practical terms it was not too far away which allowed me to spend a maximum amount of time there during the study period. I was given open access by the parish priest who was himself energised by the projects introduced by the lay minister and was enthusiastic about the research project.

#### ***Methodology***

The case study is a snap-shot of parish ministry over a six month period in the autumn of 2012 and the winter of 2013. The lay minister in this situation had responsibility in the parish for youth-work alongside more general pastoral work. For the period of the study I participated regularly in meetings of the youth group and young adult group and in school events. I attended as many parish events as possible and attended a number of meetings of youth leaders and the parish pastoral council. During the period of study the parish held a 'mission' which gave me the opportunity to participate in small groups. I collected newsletters and other relevant literature in order to gain as much background understanding as possible. I interviewed both the parish priest and lay minister near the end of the study period and both gave permission for these interviews to be recorded. On many occasions I was able to have lunch with them and I found these informal conversations filled in many of the gaps that observation and formal interviews would have been unable to fill.

#### ***Background***

At the time of the study Tony, the lay minister, had been working in the parish for three years. He had been involved as a student in university

chaplaincy and had been a volunteer youth leader at a local parish. This had been a time of growth in his own faith and had enabled him to gain an understanding of youth ministry. He had studied education and became a teacher. After his probationary year he struggled to get a full-time teaching post and was doing supply teaching at the time Fr. Jim invited him to work in the parish. Tony had met Fr. Jim a number of times. Fr. Jim was a friend of the Catholic university chaplain at the university Tony had attended and had occasionally covered for the chaplain when he was away. The post was funded initially by the parish and by the diocese.<sup>1</sup> It is currently funded by a trust.

The parish, Parish A is situated in a medium-sized town with a population of 43,000. Traditionally the town has been a prosperous market town and is surrounded by a number of large and wealthy estates. In recent times a large insurer, a whiskey supplier, a transport company and the regional council all have had their main base there and are sizeable employers.

This town was at the heart of the reformation in Scotland and John Knox's preaching in 1559 in the church and the riots which followed were significant catalysts for the events of 1560. Two hundred and forty years later, in 1799 the Old Statistical Account numbered only 34 Catholics in the town. Irish immigration through the 1820's and the Catholic Relief Act of 1829 increased the number of Catholics to around five hundred and led to the need for a new church. There is a certain pride among some parishioners in Parish A that their church is one of the oldest Catholic churches in Scotland, having been opened in 1831. The church was given the same name and dedication to Our Lady that the pre-reformation church in the town had had. At the present time the parish is home to a thriving Catholic community. Sunday Mass attendance averages nine hundred and the catholic population is estimated to be about three thousand. There is a broad spectrum of social and educational backgrounds among parishioners. The present parish priest has been there for five years. The full-time lay minister, Tony, has been working here for three years and his work is

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<sup>1</sup> The diocese had had a one-off fundraising initiative where a professional company had been employed. Part of that money was allocated for youth work.

focussed primarily on young people. He works with primary school children through holiday clubs and sacramental preparation. For young people at high school he runs a youth group, trips away, musical productions and the Caritas Award Scheme.<sup>2</sup> He runs a young adult group and has had involvement in establishing chaplaincy at the local higher education college. A significant number of the young people in the parish are Polish and a part-time lay minister has just been appointed who is also Polish. There is also a sizeable Indian Community in the parish.

At the beginning of the research the parish team consisted of Fr. Jim and the youth worker, Tony. Throughout the research period in which I have been actively involved in the parish there has been constant change: the retired parish priest has moved out, the part-time youth worker has started, a deacon joined the team for six months prior to ordination and then moved on, two Polish priests have come to live in the parish and the parish priest was asked to take on, in addition to the parish, a significant diocesan job looking after education.

When Fr. Jim was appointed five years ago to the parish the then parish priest, Monsignor McKillop was seventy-eight and due for retirement. However, by arrangement with the bishop he continued to live in the parish house and to assist in the parish. This led to tension and a difficult living and working situation for Fr. Jim and Tony. It also caused division in the parish between those who supported Monsignor McKillop and the old regime and those who shared enthusiasm for Fr. Jim's new initiatives. Four years later after repeated requests the bishop finally agreed to move Monsignor McKillop.

### ***5:2 Introducing the Case***

My first impression of Parish A was of an austere granite building situated on a street with no surrounding garden or grounds. The door was opened to me by an elderly housekeeper and the furnishings in the house were heavy, dark

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<sup>2</sup> The Caritas award was introduced by the Scottish Catholic Education service in 2011 and is offered to S5 and S6 pupils.

and Victorian. However, in the hall at the back of the house there was the sound of young people. The normal weekly youth group were in; some were doing craft, some working on the youth newsletter, some were strumming instruments and some were playing war hammer. There was plenty of laughter. The evening included a two course meal and some prayer and reflection. About seventy young people were present. The majority of adult leaders were in their twenties and thirties. The weekly youth group is just the 'tip of the iceberg', three or four different groups use the hall, Parish House and meeting space every day. There is a constant turn over in the car park. What has contributed to the flourishing Community in evidence here?

### ***5:3 Beginning Collaboration***

When Fr. Jim arrived he wanted to inject some new life into the parish.

He explained at that point:

I didn't really know what I wanted. We really needed someone and then Tony turned up. He had gone for one or two jobs and just missed out. I nabbed him with a full-time contract. I knew there was a need for outreach among the young and I knew I could not do it. I didn't really expect much to happen however he had a programme and put structures in place and things began to grow and his own abilities and personality were a big part of that. It just seemed that the right people have been in the right place.

An employment contract, however, was not the most salient marker of the relationship between Tony and the parish community. Tony described how he was commissioned at Sunday Mass for the work he was to do with young people. He reflected: "I was standing there and I just felt so strongly just a love for all the people then afterwards everyone congratulated me and gave me cards and things even though I had not done anything".

When he first came to Parish A, Tony described the situation as a "blank canvas – where there no expectations". Over time he has enjoyed seeing the youth group grow and seeing adults growing too. He says "Now there is an expectation that the youth group will be there and I think we are

ambitious. We have Primary Seven children who are keen to come and hungry to come. So there has been a build-up of energy and expectation that has been highly rewarding.” A hundred Sixth Year pupils have completed the Caritas Award over the last two years and all have done a service project in the parish, this Tony has noticed gives “a buzz about the place and young people are here often”.

When asked what has enabled his ministry to be effective, Tony emphasised the role of the parish priest who “has been supportive and accommodating”. He also had a sense of “loads of things just coming together”, particularly the Catholic primary and secondary school moving to a shared site and looking for a connection with the parish. He also valued the attitude of many parishioners which he described as “positive and celebratory”. He has found that even those not directly involved in the youth project often hand in a donation or a thank you card.

The youth project was set up to run across the two parishes in the town and in a third neighbouring parish on the outskirts. Tony, the employed youth minister, supervises and organises training for the volunteer leaders. He works collaboratively with Fr. Jim, meeting informally for lunch every day and formally on a weekly basis. Fr. Jim acts as Tony’s ‘Line Manager’. Tony also has professional pastoral supervision from an outside supervisor. Building open and positive relationships has been a key priority in this parish.

#### ***5:4 The Conversation has Moved On: A Total Ministering Community***

Fr Jim described the growth that had taken place in the parish since the youth project got underway:

I think it has been part of the hope injecting feeling. Sunday was a good example of that, take any Sunday, there is actually a bit of life about the place and that is in no small measure because something is happening for youth, yes there are detractors who don’t want to spend any money, the moaners, but by and large when I came here all people talked about was who was dead and dying but now the conversation has moved on. Its encouraged other groups like the pastoral care group, like groups to go away on pilgrimages, nothing



necessarily to do with the youth project, they have been encouraged, more people have joined the cleaners and the flower arrangers.

It is clear that the parish is flourishing there are many groups, organisations, social events and trips and Masses are well attended. Eamon was one of the young adults who helped run the youth group. His story was typical of many people's experience of their growing involvement in this parish.

### *Eamon's Story*

Eamon is twenty years-old. He had been an altar server when he was at primary school but since then had stopped attending Mass. When the youth project started Eamon was a student at the local college. He met Tony at an open day event at the college and they got talking about football. Tony invited him along to the young adults group. The first time he went along the group were planning activities which would help them to connect with the local community. Eamon suggested an inter-church football league, which is now thriving and which Eamon administers. He also helps regularly with the youth group. He described how being involved has improved his relationship with the church and church-goers. He observes that being involved with the youth group:

Kind of leads you on and you meet other people and I was asked to do P.P.C. and it made me want to do that. Even when we went to Rome this summer, obviously, we went with the youth group but the adult group were there too. It made me, like, get to know them and we started talking about other stuff in the church. I think it's just meeting people that help you.

All of the nine young adults involved in a leadership role with the youth group agreed that because they feel part of the church they could see themselves involved in other roles in the church in the future.

In order to co-ordinate all this activity the parish has an active parish pastoral council which meets monthly. The members of the council represented a cross-section of the parish and included young people and members of the Polish community. The chairwoman described how:

We have been working on a five- year plan. We put out a survey over a couple of Sundays and are just beginning to analyse the results. We will then have a parish meeting and set our goals for the next five years. The process has actually been very energising.

The parish pastoral council appeared to have an 'ownership' of the growth that has taken place over recent years. It is clear that their role in the process of intentional visioning and planning has been vital.

### ***5:5 Why Has Lay Ministry Been Effective in this Parish Situation?***

In answer to this question Tony suggests that "what has made it possible at that level is the parish priest's hard work and determination, also there is a team of volunteers who support the project".

For his part, Fr. Jim noted:

I've had to stand firm and put out the message "no surrender" and that is beginning to embed.

Personally I don't think money is the problem, people don't want to spend money, to give salaries, they think people should still work for nothing so the whole model has to change. I've said to them quite definitely here in the future the way the parish will be ministered to in the future will be a mixture of things; you will have priests, deacons, volunteers and part time and full time salaried staff.

Fr. Jim clearly envisages a less clerical model of church in the future where there is greater diversity in ministry and ministers.

### ***5:6 The Difficulties***

When asked about difficulties, Tony had also been surprised by the brutality of parish and church politics. He recognises that "some people have been

here for a long time and are not going to be moved. I've clashed with a few people whose lack of vision makes me despair."

Another difficulty has been the situation with the old parish priest, Monsignor McKillop. Tony found "that was a difficult period because I was still left with responsibility for the young people and for the work, the conflict between the two parish priests was really hard to manage." Similarly Fr. Jim felt that one of the difficulties has been "All that nonsense with Monsignor McKillop (the former parish priest) and a weak ineffective bishop who couldn't resolve the problem" However when Monsignor McKillop moved out of the house the situation became less acute.

Fr. Jim also thought that people didn't like the whole idea of professionalism he explained that:

there have been one or two people who have walked away, people who were quite heavily involved in the parish, now whatever the personalities, they saw themselves as quite heavily involved in the parish and along comes this different set up and structure and salaries, it didn't sit well with a lot of folk and they try to put pressure on you to drop it or they try to take positions to blackmail you into taking positions against it and you have to say, "no-surrender", the youth project is here to stay one way or another and I have found funding for it but you are paying too whether you like it or not. We've also done big fabric projects, physical things people can see, but at the end of the day this is here to stay in one shape or form.

Another difficulty Fr. Jim cited was the lack of interest in outreach and mission among parishioners. He gave the example of the group who were planning the parish mission who had been adamant that it was not going to be an outreach mission but 'something for themselves'.

### **5:7 The Future**

The project is thriving at the moment, but what is needed for it to continue? Tony feels now the structures are in place someone should be able to take it

over. He feels he himself will move on in the next year or two. He explains that “there is no career progression here because the area of need in the pastoral situation is so great there is no room to move on or to move up, it is difficult, you are there because that is where the area of need is at that particular time and you are responding to that.” He hoped that by “winning over the people in the church”, that the project would survive any change in parish priest.

Fr Jim explained that in order to make it sustainable he was “keen to set up the youth project as a separate entity.” However, he added, “the problem is that we would need the cooperation and recognition of the diocesan authorities. Certainly when I first floated it to the retiring bishop he was not keen at all.”

### ***5:8 Positive Attitudes***

I have been very struck in my time around this project by the positive attitude of those involved. Tony, the youth worker, has a great deal of energy and a desire to reach out to young people. Fr. Jim has persevered despite difficulties with the diocese and with some parishioners because he believes that collaborative ministry and lay ministry is life-giving and the way forward. The youth leaders are positive about their experience. All those actively engaged in this parish have a sense of purpose and of vocation. This was described in phrases such as; “it just seems the right place to be just now”, “people seem able to be here”, “lots of things have just come together”, “it’s like feeling part of the family”.

### ***5:9 Positive Relationships***

Tony and Fr. Jim have an obviously strong relationship. They share meals and share the events of each day. They are honest with each other and there is plenty of good humour and teasing. Fr. Jim is confident in his own role as parish priest. The same sense of community is also present among the youth leaders who say that meeting new friends has been a key part of the group for them. I have found the parish welcoming and found people open. I was touched equally by the quality of sharing at times during the parish mission

and by the willingness of people to contribute to the community. I found this exemplified by the support parishioners give to parish events. It is indicative of this that some quite elderly Scottish parishioners were the first to volunteer to learn some Bollywood moves on the Indian Night!

### ***5:10 New Connections***

Tony like many young people of his generation experienced the separation of his parents when he was young. A number of the youth leaders spoke about their own similar experience of family breakdown. This is the milieu in which many young people have to grow in faith and it is different from the experience of most clergy. Tony has a girlfriend and hopes to get married. He is familiar with the difficulties of finding a job and looking for affordable housing and mortgages in a way clergy are not. While most people understand his situation as a lay person Tony finds some people in the parish think he must be training to be a priest because he is working in the church. As Tony jokes “they must think I’m on the longest pastoral placement in history!”

### ***5:11 Training for Lay Ministry***

Tony has not been able to access any ministerial training that would meet his needs. He has benefitted greatly, however, from one-to-one monthly pastoral supervision. His initial ‘training’ in youth ministry has been through hands-on experience in university chaplaincy and parish. This apprentice model of learning and growing into ministry is not new; it is what curates have always done. Tony’s situation is not common however in Scotland. There are few parishes with an active outreach to young people and often inadequately resourced higher education chaplaincies.

### ***5:12 Some Contradictions***

#### ***5:12:1 The Pennies of the Poor***

Parish A is in the words of the parish priest “quite well off” and probably “the best off parish in the diocese”. The parish is situated in the centre of the

town and takes in a large council housing scheme as well as areas of expensive housing. However the people I met in the course of my time participating in the parish were all comfortably- off and middle class. During the parish mission the preacher spoke at length about the church having been built on the “pennies of the poor” so that the Eucharist could be celebrated once more after the Reformation. People seemed to like the emotive appeal and tone of his talk. However that is not the present reality. Nor it is the reality of the Roman Catholic Community in Scotland, which is made up predominantly of well-educated people.

### ***5:12:2 No Surrender – We Will Collaborate***

The parish operates collaboratively. Many people are involved in decision-making structures through PPC, fabric committee, finance committee etc. Day-by-day the parish team is meeting, consulting and evaluating together. Yet the parish priest says of the youth project, “I had to stand firm and put out the message “no surrender” and that is beginning to embed.” He has had to use his leadership position in quite an authoritarian way to change the culture to one that is more open and collaborative. People are not clamouring for change but for the most part appear to be thriving on the emerging model of ministry they are experiencing in Parish A.

### ***5:12:3 Despite the Diocese***

The presence of the former parish priest had caused constant tension and division within the parish. Only after three years and repeated requests to the bishop had he finally been moved and even then he is still living locally. There has not been any support from the diocese in terms of training or in planning for the future of the project. This seems to be an example of something new and positive developing despite the bishop rather than through any diocesan vision or planning.

### ***5:13 Short-term Issues***

In the short-term (which may be a good number of years) Fr Jim and Tony have brought a vision of collaborative ministry. They and the rest of the parish team work well together, meeting formally and socially. Many parishioners have been drawn into active participation in the parish. A new vision has been communicated successfully to the wider parish. This has involved persistence and planning. There is much useful learning here for other parishes. This would include the importance of listening to people, planning, working with an effective parish pastoral council, the importance of constant communication of plans, events and activities through announcements, newsletter, e-mails, websites etc., the need to intentionally create community through social events, outings, small groups and the need to offer opportunities for people to grow in faith through study and small sharing groups.

### ***5:14 Long-term Issues***

In order for this project to survive long-term without Fr Jim and Tony carrying the vision there needs to be a fundamental change in the parish's ecclesiology. This would be demonstrated by renewed confidence about lay ministry and the mission given to all the baptised, in contrast to the fear of going-out to others, exemplified by the desire for an inward looking parish mission. It is difficult to know if it is respect for the priest's judgement and authority that have led parishioners to accommodate the new collaborative model or a genuinely changed perspective regarding the role of the laity.

A further difficulty lies in the lack of support from the diocese. At this level the factors that appear to be enabling lay ministry in the parish i.e. collaboration, positive, open attitudes, consultation, dialogue and intentional planning and visioning are missing.

### ***5:15 Conclusion***

This parish has become more lively and vibrant in recent years. Many young people are actively involved. Parish groups and activities are flourishing. Yet this parish has also been subject to many of the realities of the Scottish church: changes of priests, dioceses that are not working to any pastoral plan, the arrival of foreign priests. The fact that the lay minister and parish priest have had a vision and a plan has meant that despite this progress could be made. It would have been impossible for the parish priest to maintain the vision without the support and collaboration of the lay minister. Many people in the parish are gradually 'owning' the move to collaborative ministry for themselves but given the lack of support at diocesan level it is difficult to foresee whether or not the projects will survive longer term.



## **Chapter Six: A City Cluster**

### ***6:1 Introduction***

The second case study was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, it is a well-established project that has been in existence for fourteen years. Secondly, the project runs across three clustered parishes, a situation which is now normal in Scotland. The lay minister on the parish team in this case is a middle-aged woman which is also common. These three parishes over the years have slipped into an effective way of working together and there is much good practice here which could serve as a model for other parish clusters. In practical terms this parish was also within easy travelling distance which allowed me to maximise the time I could spend there.

### ***6:2 Methodology***

The case-study is a snap-shot of parish ministry over a six month period in the spring and summer of 2013. During this time I attended as many services, meetings and events in the cluster as possible. I interviewed the two parish priests, the lay pastoral assistant and one of the parish sisters, the second parish sister who works in the cluster was in hospital and away from parish work for all of the time of the study. I collected newsletters and other relevant literature in order to understand the context of the three parishes as fully as possible.

### ***6:3 Introducing the Case: Three City Parishes***

As in many cities the area surrounding the three parishes that participated in this study (Parish B, Parish C and Parish D) has gone through multiple changes. A short ten minute walk to the west of the city centre brings you to Parish B. The well maintained solid stone houses all with several high spec. cars on the drive suggest that this is a prosperous area of the city. Many of the properties in the area date from the nineteenth century and have large leafy gardens. Some of these remain family homes but others are divided into flats. This has encouraged many young professional people to move into

the area. The parish was opened in 1958, during a time of growing Catholic congregations in the city.

Continuing west for about a mile you come to Parish C. Parish C opened in 1951 to serve the burgeoning Catholic community living in one of the city's new, large schemes of council housing built after the Second World War. This constituency provided a stable parish community for many years. However major developments of new housing have gone up in the vicinity of the parish in recent years. Parish C and Parish D also find themselves in proximity to the new general hospital serving the city. This has led to an influx of Filipino and Indian workers in the last few years.

Travelling north for another mile or so brings you to Parish D. Parish D is also situated in a post-war council housing development. This area largely consists of flats. In recent decades there had been a lack of investment in the area however a major regeneration project is now underway. Mass was originally celebrated in this housing scheme in a school annexe but in 1972 a former scout hall was purchased and converted into a church. In addition to its more traditional congregation Parish D also hosts a large community of mainly Indian Catholics who follow the Syro-Malabar rite. An Indian priest of the Syro-Malabar rite comes to the parish three days a week to serve this community.

### **6:4 Forming the Cluster**

A diocesan review<sup>1</sup> published in 2001 advised that in response to the shortage of priests more parishes would be required to merge or cluster. In response to this in 2003 Fr. Kevin, parish priest of Parish B, looking to the future and profoundly aware of the number of parishes that had been merged or clustered without preparation, voiced the need to prepare for the three parishes to work together. He did this in the expectation that the time would come when there would be only one priest serving all three parishes. Surprisingly, to date, this has actually never happened. There has always been a second priest in the cluster. Fr Kevin has remained in Parish B

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<sup>1</sup> Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh- *2002 and Beyond, Together in Hope.*

throughout while the second priest in the cluster, resident in Parish C has changed four times in the intervening ten years. Currently the second priest is from overseas.

Fr. Kevin explained that the proposal made by himself and the other priest in Parish C that the parishes should cluster was based on two fundamental principles:

- We needed to plan for a future with a diminishing number of priests
- We thought it very important to respect the right of each faith community to exist and remain distinct.

He continued:

Our proposal was that the three parishes should continue to exist, retaining their own traditions, but that the three should become intentionally interdependent. Up until that point we had increasingly been highlighting the need to share as many resources as we could. We proposed that from now on we should consider the priests to be resources and so we would be shared.

Both Parish B and Parish C already had a religious sister working in the parish and Parish D had a lay pastoral assistant. The move to clustering meant that these three women also became part of the pastoral team now serving the cluster. An interesting dimension of this move to team ministry was the inclusion of the former parish priest of Parish D. He had left the priesthood some years previously and married but was still resident in the parish. He was described by the pastoral team as “a great resource for the cluster”.

Fr. Kevin ten years on remains very positive about the cluster. He notes that :

It may seem fanciful but I would suggest from our experience that clustering addresses the two principles we set out as our starting points: *the diminishing number of priests and the right of faith communities to continue to exist.*

I would contend that the side benefits are even greater.

- The morale and well-being of the priests
- The spirit of collaboration between priests, pastoral team members and parishioners across the cluster
- The cementing and bedding-in of parish structures
- The energy created around being stakeholders rather than passengers
- The benefits to the three communities in sharing preparation for sacraments of initiation and healing; bereavement support; marriage preparation and on-going faith formation
- The emergence of a strong and effective pastoral council

Agnes, the lay pastoral assistant in Parish D insists:

Actually, I dreaded clustering but now I think it is the best thing ever. We've all kept our own identity. We had lots of meetings, losing a Mass was hard we only have an evening one now. There was a lot of hurt but I think we've lost and gained but we've definitely gained more.

### **6:5 Parish Activity**

There is a notable sense of openness and of welcome in the parishes. This may flow from the planned and expressed intention that the parishes will

work together. The parishes are also committed to on-going faith formation. Over the time I was involved in the research there was a thriving programme of adult education including a Saturday morning series on Vatican II, regular house groups and a talk by Bill Huebsch.<sup>2</sup> Although there were some participants from each parish these sessions were primarily supported by parishioners from Parish B, the more middle class of the three parishes. Many of the participants were retired professional people but there were some young couples and a few students at the Vatican II series.

The parishes have an active ministry to the homeless through the work of the Sisters of Mercy and the Jericho Benedictines. This area of outreach came from the house groups' study of the resource "Just Church"<sup>3</sup>. This work is most actively supported by Parish D, the least prosperous of the three parishes.

#### **6:4 The Syro-Malabar Community**

The Syro-Malabar community meets in Parish D twice a week for the Eucharist, there is catechesis for children on a Saturday morning and a weekly prayer meeting. There were about one hundred at these Eucharists compared to about fifty people attending the regular Saturday Vigil Mass at Parish D. The Syro -Malabar congregation were all Indian and primarily made up of young families. This was in contrast to Parish D's ordinary congregation which was largely made up of elderly people who had lived in the area for a long time and consisted of only a few children and young people. For the most part the two communities do not mix except at the Indio-Scottish nights which are organised twice a year. The worship of the Syro-Malabar community is much more devotional than would be normal in Parish D e.g. the novena to St Anthony<sup>4</sup> and rosary processions. The nine day novena to St Anthony is a major event in the community calendar. In addition to Mass and the prayers of the novena each day there were a

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<sup>2</sup> Bill Huebsch is Director of the on-line Pastoral Centre at Twenty-third Publications.

<sup>3</sup> Produced by Church Action on Poverty and available at [www.justchurch.org.uk](http://www.justchurch.org.uk) accessed 4/9/2014

<sup>4</sup> A novena (from Latin: Novem, meaning Nine) is an act of pious Roman Catholic devotion often consisting of private or public prayers repeated for nine successive days in belief of obtaining special intercessory graces.

number of other events. This included the raising and blessing of the community's flag, First Communion<sup>5</sup>, Blessing of Couples<sup>6</sup>, a procession with the statue of St. Anthony accompanied by much drumming, an evening of traditional dance performed by the children and young people and large quantities of Indian food. The events were filled with vibrant colours. The two priests from the cluster concelebrated and a handful of parishioners attended. Much of the liturgy was in Malayalam.

### ***6:7 Lay Ministry in the Cluster***

The parish co-ordinator, Agnes, in Parish D is a married woman with grown up children and a number of grandchildren. She has lived for thirty seven years in the parish where she now works. There is no resident priest in the parish. Agnes organises Communion services, she liaises with families and undertakers when there is a death. She looks after the fabric of the church and the sacristy and sets up for services. She does the rotas for readers, children's liturgy, Eucharistic ministers, teas/coffees etc. She also does a lot of pastoral visiting. She takes an active part in the weekly meeting of the pastoral team and in particular she keeps the team informed about the needs of Parish D. Without a resident priest, she forms the link between the pastoral team and the parish. She notes however that she feels "the diocese doesn't know about her" and she relies on the two priests on the pastoral team to pass on information from the diocese.

The pastoral team meet once a week and other meetings are held through the week to plan liturgies and events. Meetings are generally held in Parish B and C in the presbyteries. Once a month in each parish in the cluster there is a meeting after Sunday Mass which is open to everybody and which gives an opportunity to talk about what has been going on in the cluster. Agnes explained: "If anyone thinks something should be happening, then that gets fed back to the PPC." Twice a year the team have a residential meeting to plan and evaluate and to socialise. There was considerable amusement as they recollected some of the places they had been for this

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<sup>5</sup> First Communion is the occasion when children, usually aged seven or eight, receive communion for the first time.

<sup>6</sup> Prayers of blessing for married couples and their families.

meeting which had ranged from a stately home with a butler to a cottage with no running water.

After many years as parish co-ordinator Agnes is established in the role and grounded in the community whom she serves. However it took her many years to grow confident in her ministry. She described how she started doing cleaning. Then she helped the sacristan, after that she explained:

I was asked to go to the deanery meetings and relay back to the parish, then I got sent on a course, 'Integration of Life and Faith' and I got more and more involved. I was dragged out from doing the flowers, cleaning etc.! Fr. F asked me to be parish coordinator at the parish assembly seven years ago and it was unanimous. People said it should have happened years ago.

As regards remuneration she commented:

The courses I went on I paid for, the 30 week one I did was £20 a week. Fr. F put me on e-mail because I was doing all the parish administration. It cost £14.99 a month, the next priest came and said that was too much so I just had to carry on and pay that myself. Then when Fr. H came, we were clustered by that time and because we had no priest here and I was asked to be parish co-ordinator, he said "who does the cheques for your salary?" He was shocked I didn't get paid. He said the Sisters get paid, then he started paying me something.

Overall Agnes is positive about clustering. She relayed her experience of sharing at a parish ministry course in Dublin:

Twice we were over in All Hallows on courses. The priests were really reluctant about clustering. We were able to say it worked; it was good you got totally different homilies. It seemed like priests didn't want lay people involved and thought they were taking their jobs.

In the middle of the room they had boxes and each box had written on it some aspect of parish ministry, lay people had to take out what they

could do- that just left a few boxes for what only priests could do.  
Everyone was surprised by that especially the priests!

Agnes' experience as parish co-ordinator in a parish with no resident priest meant that she was surprised that other people especially priests did not realise how much lay people can do. She recognises however that her role is only possible because the "priests allow it".

Talking about the future, Agnes had noticed a parishioner who she thought had the gifts to be a pastoral assistant she noted:

I see it in May now. I see me when I was starting off. She'll do anything behind the scenes but she needs confidence – that's what training can give you. She is always in cleaning, but doing that she just was there with people a lot and she has taken to it like a duck to water. She doesn't know how competent she is. She is shy and I was thrilled when she was able to share at the reflection evening. It's just saying to her "you can do it". She is a wee dab hand. She is coming to Vatican II and lapping it up. It is hard for people like her to get the right kind of training. There is training for catechists but that is not really all pastoral assistants do. It's my number that is on the noticeboard because we don't have a resident priest. Really you are on 24-hour call.

Agnes seems to be suggesting for May that the best way to learn is by growing more involved in the parish and becoming an apprentice. This is obviously only possible in a flourishing active parish. Even in the cluster where the exceedingly thick weekly newsletter bears witness to much more pastoral activity than the average parish, Agnes insists that what the parish needs is more people and more resources.

### **6:8 Short-term Issues**

After twelve years the cluster is embedded and the parishes are used to collaboration and team ministry. This experience is valuable for the many parishes currently being asked to cluster. Agnes, the two parish sisters and indeed Fr. Kevin are all past the normal age of retirement. To continue to flourish the team will have to actively recruit and train younger members. Yet



within the diocese, as we have noted, training is not easy to access or to finance.

### ***6:9 Long-term Issues***

The cluster is a local initiative and has been maintained by the energy of the priests who have been there over recent years. Presently Fr. Kevin is the only remaining priest of the group who first decided to cluster the three parishes. As such he is the embodiment of the original vision. With little diocesan ownership of the project the future is uncertain as and when he retires. Parish B, in particular, because of its city centre location has attracted people from a wide geographical area who like Fr. Kevin's openness and his relatively liberal viewpoints e.g. on ethical issues. This group, when change comes, are likely to choose to travel to another parish in order to find a like-minded priest. This would be less true of Parish C and D, but it may be that they would struggle to maintain the present level of lay involvement without the dominance of this 'liberal' group of people in Parish B.

In these chapters, four, five and six, I have aimed to allow the participants to speak and been as faithful as possible to the original transcripts of interviews.<sup>7</sup> In chapter seven I have taken the key findings in the research and offered further analysis with the aim of addressing the thesis questions.

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<sup>7</sup> Albeit with the awareness, that it is I who have chosen and selected material from interviews.

## **Chapter Seven: Findings and Analysis**

### ***7:1 Positive Indications from Case Studies***

It is not possible in the confines of the present research project to deepen reflection on all of the rich and extensive material drawn from the interviews and case-studies. However, a number of issues have arisen repeatedly which seem to be indicative of both the present reality of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland and of the challenge of establishing lay ministry as stable, ordered and recognised. There is also much positive learning to be found in the case-studies which have been chosen as examples of parishes where the work of lay ministers has contributed to parish flourishing. With reference to the Whiteheads' model of pastoral reflection, detailed in chapter two, this analysis draws on the lived experience of the participants, reflection on the Tradition and on awareness of the present cultural reality. The questions addressed by the thesis are: what is the place of lay ministry in the changing reality of Scottish Catholicism? What factors make for effective lay ministry? And what would need to put in place to enable the further development of lay ministry? In pursuit of answers, I turn first to the positive indications from the case-studies that lay ministry is highly effective given the right environment.

#### ***7:1:1 Openness and Positive Attitudes***

The single key characteristic shared between the parishes represented in the case-studies is an open and positive attitude. In the first case-study Fr. Jim knew "he wanted something" and was open to working with Tony without fully knowing what would develop. In the second case study the priests and pastoral teams of three separate neighbouring parishes were open to becoming "intentionally interdependent", knowing that would mean change.

This is resonant with the working party of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales' report which noted that collaborative ministry does not

just happen but “must be chosen and consciously pursued from conviction.”<sup>1</sup> The report asks “those involved to be willing to change.” If collaborative ministry is to grow, it insists, the whole culture of pastoral life needs to be more positive about change and newness.<sup>2</sup> Ministry is a constant part of the Spirit's gift and presence in the church. Therefore, when confronted with the present changing situation, wisdom and discernment are needed. Discernment without openness, trust and hope is impossible. This research demonstrates that there are, in the Scottish Roman Catholic Church, individuals with these attributes and in their environs ministry is flourishing. The church as a whole has much to learn from these people and communities.

### **7:1:2 Positive Relationships**

Positive relationships characterised the ministry teams represented in the case-studies. Each team met formally each week and regularly socialised together. There was evident good humour and plenty of laughter. Importantly, they knew each other's limitations and strengths and accepted them. This praxis of community in turn enabled the parish community to be a place of welcome and acceptance. These attributes are alluded to in the introduction to *The Sign We Give* which asserts that: "we are convinced that the manner and style of relationships in the Church are part of the sign it gives and, for this reason, we must develop patterns of collaborative ministry as a key feature of Church life to come."<sup>3</sup>

Collaborative ministry, the bishops argue, depends on mutual trust and recognition, the development of a shared vision and decision-making in a spirit of dialogue.<sup>4</sup> Given the general lack of pastoral planning, either at parish or diocesan level, found in the research it is interesting to observe that, in contrast in the case-studies, both parish teams had a five-year plan

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<sup>1</sup> Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Report from the Working Party on Collaborative Ministry, *The Sign we Give*, (Chelmsford: Matthew James, 1995), p. 28. It should be noted this report pertains to England and Wales and not Scotland. It reflected a growth in lay ministry at the time of writing. This growth has not been uniform or continuous in England and Wales either in the period since 1995. Nevertheless the report offers helpful reflections and guidelines for practice.

<sup>2</sup> *The Sign We Give* p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, forward.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid* p. 34.

which had come about as a result of consultation and which was 'owned' by the parish pastoral councils of the respective parishes.

In canon law: "A parish is a certain community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular church, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor (*parochus*) as its proper pastor (*pastor*) under the authority of the diocesan bishop." (Can. 515 §1) This is understood to mean that the pastoral care of a parish is ordinarily entrusted exclusively to a priest. As a result, collaboration is only possible if the priest actively desires it. The bishops, through the document *The Sign We Give*, encourage and justify the shift of priests towards shared responsibility for pastoral care.<sup>5</sup>

The document insists that if the primary task of the priest is to enable communion to grow, rather than "to run the parish", the relationships he develops will be central to his ministry. It is through the quality of relationships that he will most effectively invite people to make full use of their gifts and energy in ministries and other activities. He must also be able to let go of responsibilities and entrust to others various aspects of parish life and mission. In himself, he needs to be confident about a different kind of priestly identity with its source in the Trinity and its nature found in the "interconnection of relationships"<sup>6</sup> which make up church communion. This is priesthood in which the "fundamentally relational dimension"<sup>7</sup> is decisive. As a servant of communion, he "builds up the unity of the church community in the harmony of diverse vocations, charisms and services."<sup>8</sup> Fr. Jim offers a good example of this when he describes how working as a collaborative team has created openings for people to get involved. So, although in Parish A, the full-time lay minister works primarily with young people there are also more cleaners and flowers arrangers now! In both case-studies the role of the priest is vital in initiating collaboration and supporting and sustaining it. Each priest involved understood 'communion' as a 'relational' ecclesiology.

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1992, paragraph 12.

<sup>7</sup> Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter to Bishops of the Catholic Churches on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*, 1992, paragraph 12.

<sup>8</sup> *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, paragraph 16.

## **7:2 Total Ministering Community**

The importance of the inclusion of all the baptised in ministry and mission is expressed by the Emerging Models project<sup>9</sup> in terms of the ‘total ministering community’. The project hosted more than five hundred people in regional leadership gatherings throughout the United States between November 2004 and November 2006. The aim of the process was to identify leadership structures that would provide a benchmark. Participants had been identified by their dioceses as thought leaders in the field and most represented parishes with diverse models of leadership. While the aim of the symposia was to identify a handful of emerging structural models and defined roles of parish leaders, the project found little consistency and uniformity among these emerging models. It appeared that the surprising diversity was influenced by the economics, geography and demographics of the local situation. Instead of new models what emerged were a ‘set of practices’. Prominent among this set of practices was the concept of a total ministering community. The project found:

What is emerging is an organic whole, where the roles of pastor, staff and parishioners are critical, independent, and unique. The Spirit is calling all the baptised to participate in providing a welcoming Eucharistic community. Pastoral leaders believe the future of parish leadership is in total ministering communities. This emerging model of leadership is rooted in the belief that the baptised have been initiated into a community of faith as disciples. They are called to care for and support one another and are sent out to the world as evangelisers.<sup>10</sup>

Engaging with people and inviting them to share in ministry is a key role played in parishes by lay ministers. It is notable that all ten youth group leaders I spoke with in Parish A emphasised that because they had had a positive experience of the church, they would be more likely to get involved in other areas of parish life both now and in the future. Similarly, one of Agnes’ roles in Parish D is to compile the rotas for Eucharistic ministers, teas

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<sup>9</sup> Marti R. Jewell and David A. Ramey, *The Changing Face of Church*, (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2010).

<sup>10</sup> *The Changing Face of the Church*, pp. 78-79.

and coffees after Sunday Mass, children's liturgy, readers and welcomers. I observed that she was constantly inviting people to join these groups. Furthermore, in the parishes which participated in the case-studies new groups or task-forces are emerging regularly e.g. Parish A connected with an orphanage in Romania recently and a group was formed to take the project forward. Clustered Parishes B, C and D, in response to a Lenten study course, formed a group to work with the homeless.

In their discussion of total ministering communities, Jewell and Ramay found that good conciliar structures can expand the ministry and mission of the parish:

The ability to create a total ministering community calls for a mind set in which the Pastor and Pastoral Team see the community working together as a whole to bring about the mission. It is equally part of the mind set to be aware of the many different component parts of the parish and to find ways to include everyone. The Parish Pastoral Council plays a significant role in ministering communities and is often considered as having a constitutive role in the life and direction of the parish.<sup>11</sup>

Declining numbers of priests presents a challenge to the growth of 'total ministering communities'. Agnes relayed her experience of an exercise she took part in at a course on parish ministry held in Dublin. A whole set of boxes were placed on the floor each representing an aspect of pastoral ministry within a parish such as visiting the sick, planning, catechesis etc. The task then given was to take away those boxes which represented functions that lay people could fulfil. She reported, that to the surprise of many, very few boxes were left in the middle of the floor showing the relatively few functions reserved to priests. However these ministerial tasks reserved for priests are hugely significant to the Catholic Community because of their sacramental nature e.g. presiding at the Eucharist, celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation, anointing the sick and conferring confirmation. As priests become fewer more are becoming 'sacramental ministers' where they have little or no involvement with the parish other than

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<sup>11</sup>Jewell and Ramay, *Changing Face of Church*, p. 80.

celebrating sacraments. As one parish co-ordinator put it ‘this is all unchartered territory.’<sup>12</sup> Close collaboration with lay ministers has been found to be an important means of keeping priest and community connected.<sup>13</sup>

### **7:3 Intentional Parish Planning and Visioning**

It is significant that each parish which participated in the case-studies has a mission statement, a five-year plan that has arisen from parish assemblies and active parish pastoral councils working to both the mission statement and the five-year pastoral plan. The Emerging Models project found that participants who demonstrated a ‘more confident view of the vitality of parish life’ also stressed the importance of their current and future pastoral planning and visioning processes. They found that pastoral leaders described different, but not dissimilar approaches to pastoral planning and visioning. Their organisational processes almost always placed the pastoral council in a visioning and planning role and often resulted in increased lay involvement on various task forces and boards. These processes also often included the formation of new structures and new approaches to teaming and providing needed support both within and beyond the parish.<sup>14</sup>

Lay ministry emerges from the community for the mission of the community. It cannot emerge if the parish and diocese has no coherent sense of community, no opportunity to envision its priorities for mission and no forum to recognise the emergence of new ecclesial vocations. The present prevailing culture in the Scottish Roman Catholic Church appears to hinder intentional planning and visioning. It may be as suggested by the diocesan interviewees that all the energy has gone into “make do and mend”.<sup>15</sup> The well-known proverb warns that ‘without vision the people perish.’(Proverbs 28:18) The recurrent description of priests, ‘just shutting

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<sup>12</sup> Ruth Wallace, *They Call Him Pastor*, (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), p. 211.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, see also Ruth Wallace, *They Call Her Pastor*, (Albany: State University of New York, 1992).

<sup>14</sup> *Changing Face of the Church*, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> Participant R

down'<sup>16</sup> suggests the inversion of this proverb - where people feel their hopes have perished they can have no vision.

### **7:4 Vocational Recognition**

I was struck by the amazing consistency among the participants' stories. Some feel they were called, others speak of gradual movements towards ministry, a few were even gently coerced, but all express their sense of vocation, or responding to a need in the community and a willingness to serve God. Uniformly, they stressed the importance of relationship, a tangible relationship with Jesus and with their parishioners.<sup>17</sup>

These words of Carole Ganim ring true to my own experience of Lay Ministers.<sup>18</sup> Her publication, *Shaping Catholic Parishes: Pastoral Leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* came about following a series of regional symposia held by the Emerging Models team. At each symposium, people listened to speakers, told their stories and tried to capture and evaluate what was happening in parish ministry. They worked to understand the underlying issues and spiritual and societal forces influencing the church and its people. They found one key defining feature of lay ecclesial ministry was its vocational dimension.

Unsurprisingly, the same importance of vocation emerges in this research. Tony felt drawn when he was at university to seek out the Catholic Chaplaincy and to ask to be confirmed. He grew in faith and ministry through his involvement with the parish and the chaplaincy where he was part of the student chaplaincy team, ministering to other students. The presence of the Spirit can be gleaned again when he talks about his current ministry as the feeling "he is in the right place" and his recognition of "the many needs" that call him to act.

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<sup>16</sup> Participant K

<sup>17</sup> Carole Ganim (Ed), *Shaping Catholic Parishes: Pastoral Leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2009) p. xiv.

<sup>18</sup> I interviewed five lay ministers for my Masters research and a further three for an earlier module of the DThM. All spoke of a sense of vocation.



Agnes at first sight describes herself as one who was coerced! She describes how she “was taken out of cleaning”. However, her journey too has involved gradual growth – through being a Eucharistic minister, attending courses, becoming increasingly involved in the life of the parish and finally being commissioned as parish co-ordinator.

In considering the valuable witness given by lay ecclesial ministers, Hahnenberg compares the postmodern expectation of choice with vocation. He notes that choice encourages agency and intentionality while vocation taps into the deepest sensibility of the quest – integrity, identity and itinerary – but in a way that resists self-absorption.<sup>19</sup> He notes the prophetic value of vocational commitment in the postmodern world. He understands that: “to speak of call is to acknowledge a caller, to see that God’s gracious initiative precedes all of our projects and our plans, that our individual journeys have a goal.”<sup>20</sup> From this perspective it is clear that lay ministers such as Tony and Agnes, living among families and neighbours, gave valuable witness to God’s action and presence in the local faith community.

An ecclesial vocation, however, needs to be recognised by the individual and also by the community. As Jean-Marie Tillard observed, reception requires a ‘recognition’ by the individual and community in which, in some sense, what is received is already ‘known’, however implicitly, by the receiver/receiving community.<sup>21</sup> In the case-studies, Tony and Agnes grew into their current roles in the community through on-going faithful involvement in the church. Tony was ‘commissioned’ for the work he does with young people at Sunday Mass. Agnes was asked to be parish co-ordinator in the context of a parish assembly. The proposal was accepted unanimously by the parish who then prayed for her and for her ministry. This concurs with early Christian history which reveals a variety of church ministries and many ways in which individuals were commissioned to active service.

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<sup>19</sup> Edward Hahnenberg, *Awakening Vocation: A Theology of Christian Call*, (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2010), p. xiv.

<sup>20</sup> *Awakening Vocation*, p. xiii.

<sup>21</sup> Jean-Marie Tillard, in B. Laurel and F. Refoule (eds), *Initiation a la Pratique de la Theologie*, (Paris: Cerf, 1982), 1, pp. 165-6; idem, ‘Reception - Communion’ (n. 1), p. 312.

### **7:5 Local Arrangements: Disconnection between Parish, Diocese and Universal Church**

However, both Agnes and Tony's ability to live out their vocation and their commissioning by the community to do so are local arrangements and dependent on the parish priest. A change of priest could see both Agnes and Tony's roles disappear overnight. In order to give stability to these lay ministries they would need to be first valued and then recognised and authorised by the bishop. The bishop with jurisdiction for Parish A was described as "not keen at all" and in Parish D Agnes described the diocese as "not knowing about her". In contrast, *Co-workers*, in its receptivity to expanding the *ministerium*, insists that the bishop should be involved in three ways in the authorisation of lay ministers.<sup>22</sup> Firstly, the bishop must ensure that those who are given these roles have the appropriate education, formation, experience, and ecclesial recognition to meet the needs of the community, regardless of whether the lay ecclesial minister is a paid staff member or a volunteer. Secondly, the appointment of a person to a specific position should be done in writing and should include the rights and obligations attached to the position or office, any limits on the exercise of authority (e.g. budget reviews, prior permission for certain actions), relevant employment and personnel policies, any limitations on the term of the appointment and any special delegation to perform functions proper to the ordained. Thirdly, *Co-workers* emphasises that at certain points in the authorisation process, public prayer and ritual can be significant for the lay ecclesial minister and for the community, highlighting the new relationships that the person is beginning in the life of the community. In this way *Co-workers* offers a pathway that allows for the expansion of lay ministry which could usefully be adopted in Scotland and elsewhere.

### **7:6 Reaction to 1997 Instruction**

In contrast to bishops in the United States<sup>23</sup>, bishops in Scotland were made wary of developing lay ministry by the *1997 Instruction* from the Vatican.

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<sup>22</sup> *Co-workers*, p. 55.

<sup>23</sup> Paul Lakeland notes "The U.S. Bishops very sensibly sent the document to a review committee, which never issued a public report." *The Liberation of the Laity*, p. 128.

This asserted that "It is unlawful for the non-ordained faithful to assume titles such as "pastor", "chaplain", "co-ordinator", "moderator" or other such similar titles which can confuse their role and that of the pastor, who is always a bishop or priest."<sup>24</sup> The response in Scotland was to downplay the roles which were already filled by lay ministers e.g. school chaplains were renamed as chaplaincy co-ordinators and university chaplains as lay chaplains in order to highlight the fact that they were non-ordained.

The *Instruction* also insists:

The ordained priesthood is absolutely irreplaceable. As an immediate consequence of this there is the necessity for a continuing, zealous and well-organised pastoral promotion of vocations so as to provide the church with those ministers which she needs and to ensure a proper seminary training for those preparing for the sacrament of Holy Orders. Any other solution to problems deriving from a shortage of sacred ministers can only lead to precarious consequences.<sup>25</sup>

However, such dichotic distinctions between ministries as found in this document, insists Hahenberg, is the wrong place to begin.<sup>26</sup> On the contrary, he suggests the present diversity represents one of the great gifts of the present time. Similarly, in sharp contrast to the 1997 *Instruction*, O'Meara suggests that ordinations should be enhanced not diminished, expanded not reduced.<sup>27</sup> This is possible, he suggests, because the original constitution of Jesus and his Spirit gives adaptability and diversity. In a similar vein, Schillebeeckx argues that, *ius divinum*, the divine institution includes and makes possible a historical growth of various forms and divisions.<sup>28</sup> Congar also reflects on what the usage of the expression 'divine right' signifies in terms of ministries and whether it applies to their existence or to the distinctions between them? He concludes:

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<sup>24</sup> Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests*. (1997), Article 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Edward Hahenberg, *Ministries: A Relational Approach*, p. 204.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas O'Meara, *Theology of Ministry*, pp. 215-216.

<sup>28</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, 'The Catholic Understanding of Office in the Church', *Theological Studies* 30 (1969), p. 570.

Does not history oblige us to envision the idea, proposed by some, of a 'divine right' submitted to historicity, and so, in a sense 'reformable'. Does the church have greater freedom in ordering its ministries than traditional sacramental theology might at first suggest?<sup>29</sup>

Fears for the clericalisation of lay ministries only exist if we continue to operate out of a duality/dividing line model of church and ministry. It is paradoxical that the Church in Europe and America has seen the emergence of so many new ministries in recent years and so few ordinations. This leads Jacques Dupuis to wonder:

Does not in the last analysis the priest's function in the church community raise a more difficult question than does simply being a member of God's people? And has not our own time been marked by an identity crisis of priests rather than lay people? The solution will not lie in holding fast to distinctions which have resulted in dichotomies and fictitious opposition (clergy-laity, spiritual-temporal, church-world), but in rediscovering the 'total ecclesiology' of the communion of all the baptised and of their common participation in the mission of the church – an ecclesiology in which what unites all disciples of Christ in the church will prevail, without denying it, over the distinctions between charisms, functions and ministries.<sup>30</sup>

While there is still much work to be done to properly understand the relationship between lay and ordained ministry, the rediscovery of a 'total ecclesiology' would certainly contribute to a helpful balance.

In preference to 'total ecclesiology' the Scottish bishops have chosen the 'safer' route of inviting foreign priests in large numbers to staff Scottish parishes. These men were described by interviewees as "afraid"<sup>31</sup>, "terrible"<sup>32</sup>, "not wanting anyone else doing anything"<sup>33</sup> and as "not understanding Scottish culture".<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Yves Congar, 'Ministères et structuration de l'église,' in *Ministères et communion ecclésiale*, (Paris: Cerf, 1971), p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Jacques Dupuis, 'Lay People in Church and World: The Contribution of Recent Literature to a Synodal Theme,' *Gregorianum* 68 (1987): pp. 389-390.

<sup>31</sup> Participant J

<sup>32</sup> Participant S

The Scottish Roman Catholic Church is not alone in being overshadowed by Rome's fear of innovation and change. Paul Lakeland observes that often the institution of the Catholic Church behaves like a corporate giant, with head offices in Rome and branches throughout the world, staffed by local managers called bishops.<sup>35</sup> The tension in the relationship between the local and universal church is illuminated in a well-recorded debate that ensued between Cardinal Kasper and the then Cardinal Ratzinger.

### ***7:7 The Debate about the Relationship Between the Local and Universal Church***

In his article, 'On the Church',<sup>36</sup> Cardinal Walter Kasper took issue with the position of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) expressed in the 1992 letter on *Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion*.<sup>37</sup> This letter, intended to correct some interpretations of Vatican II's position on the Church as a communion, stated that "the universal Church is ontologically and temporally prior to the local church". Kasper wrote that the position criticized by the CDF letter, namely, the local church as a self-sufficient subject, and the universal Church as a federation of local churches, is rightly rebuked by the letter, as it is "a position no Catholic theologian could earnestly represent."<sup>38</sup> But, in his view, the response of the CDF was excessive. In asserting the ontological and temporal priority of the universal Church over the local church, the CDF goes far beyond Vatican II, amounting he considers to a "departure (*Verabscheidung*)" from the council's teaching, "more or less to a subversion (*Umkehrung*)" of Vatican II's position. He considers that the position taken by the CDF is "a theological attempt to restore Roman centralism . . . a process which appears to have already

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<sup>33</sup> Participant N

<sup>34</sup> Participant P

<sup>35</sup> Lakeland, *The Liberation of the Laity*, p. 100.

<sup>36</sup> Walter Kasper, 'On the Church', *Stimmen der Zeit*, December 2000.

<sup>37</sup> Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 'Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion', (*Communio-Notio*), 28<sup>th</sup> May 1992, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_28051992\\_communio-notio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_28051992_communio-notio_en.html), accessed 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012.

<sup>38</sup> Kasper, *op.cit.*

begun.”<sup>39</sup> In a word, “the relationship of the local church and the universal Church has been thrown out of balance.”<sup>40</sup> Kasper’s position is that the universal Church is not ontologically and temporally prior to the local church, but the mystery of the Church is such that the universal Church and local churches exist simultaneously. For Kasper, when one is in the local diocese one is already in the universal Church. One does not step out of the diocese in order to enter the universal Church.<sup>41</sup> A return to *Lumen Gentium* would seem to concur with Kasper’s position. It states: “in these communities of the altar, though they may be often small and poor, or dispersed, Christ is present through whose influence the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church is constituted. It is in and through these local churches that the one unique Catholic Church exists.” (LG26)

A rediscovery of the appropriate relative autonomy and fullness of the local church, under the auspices, of the bishop could allow for the authorisation of different ministries in response to local needs. This would surely be useful in Scotland where there are many rural communities, island communities and inner-city communities all with different needs. Pope Paul VI made some provision for this in *Ministeria Quaedam*.<sup>42</sup> . This document aimed primarily to de-clericalise the minor orders of porter, exorcist, lector, acolyte and sub-deacon. These lay ministries were clarified as being ‘installed’ not ‘ordained’ ministries. The minor orders reformed by *Ministeria Quaedam* have had little general use. This may be because they are restricted only to men. The emergence of a much greater diversity of lay ministry than *Ministeria Quaedam* ever imagined has left the document feeling outdated. However Paul VI also invited the consideration of other ministries in the documenting stating:

i. In addition to the offices common to the Latin Church, nothing prevents Episcopal Conferences from petitioning the Apostolic See for others whose

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Kilian McDonnell, ‘The Ratzinger/Kasper Debate: The Universal Church and the Local Churches,’ *Theological Studies* 63 (2002), pp. 227–50.

<sup>42</sup> Paul VI, *Ministeria Quaedam*, Discipline regarding First Tonsure, Orders and Minor Subdiaconate, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1972, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu\\_proprio/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_motu\\_proprio\\_19720815\\_ministeria-quaedam.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/it/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu_proprio_19720815_ministeria-quaedam.html), accessed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

institution in their region, for special reasons, they judge to be necessary or very useful.

ii. Ministries can be entrusted to Christian laypersons with the result that they are not to be considered as reserved to candidates for the sacrament of orders.

According to this document a person could be installed as a minister for a certain aspect of church life e.g. as a catechist. This could have some relevance to lay ministry as we experience it today. However, early responses by bishops' conferences were ignored by Rome and all subsequent development stalled.<sup>43</sup>

Lay ministry is a localised grassroots movement from the 'base'. As such it probably cannot be appropriately directed by centralised authority in Rome but can benefit from the oversight and support of the local bishop. This requires the local bishop to use what power is available to him in canon law (such as canon 517.2) without anxiety about the approval of Rome.<sup>44</sup> There was a general move to appoint conservative bishops through the pontificates of John Paul II and Benedict XVI.<sup>45</sup> The theological stance of these bishops gave considerable weight to papal and curial missives. Pope Francis, on the day of his election, indicated his desire for a more collegial relationship between pope and bishops. He did this by presenting himself primarily as 'Bishop of Rome', one of the oldest papal titles.<sup>46</sup> He has since spoken of the need for decentralisation and of strengthening episcopal conferences. (EG 16, 32) This gives grounds for hope, that in response to local needs, there could, in the future, be room for further development of lay ministry.

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<sup>43</sup> Following the 1988 post-synodal exhortation *Christifidelis Laici*, John Paul cited the desire of participants at the Synod that "the *motu proprio Ministeria Quaedam* be reconsidered, bearing in mind the present practise of local churches". This study has never been completed

<sup>44</sup> This canon states that if because of a dearth of priests, the diocesan Bishop has judged that a deacon or some other person, who is not a priest, or a community of persons, should be entrusted with a share in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish, he is to appoint a priest, who with the powers and faculties of a priest, will direct the pastoral care of the parish.

<sup>45</sup> See Wall St. Journal, 'The Bishops' Theological Divide', 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-bishops-theological-divide-1442775603> accessed 31st December 2015.

<sup>46</sup> The title is used in the writings of Gregory the Great, in the Decree of Union of the Council of Florence, in the First Vatican Council and in *Lumen Gentium*.

### **7:8 Overcoming Theological Barriers to Change**

Across the seven dioceses where I conducted interviews with diocesan personnel there was a sense of paralysis. All participants clearly expressed the opinion that the present situation was untenable. As Michael Hornby-Smith found through his reflections on the findings in *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices* there is a sense of shock that the existing system which was rooted in a particular model of the sacred priesthood is in danger of collapse. He points out that:

There are long historical accretions of deference, status, obedience and loyalty which may be regarded as characteristic features of the church of the pre-Vatican II era. The older cohort of priests and laity have been socialised into these expectations. Responses to the shortage of priests – are all likely to face considerable resistance because of the profound shift of latent theology involved.<sup>47</sup>

Many participants expressed a sense of loss at the withdrawal of religious from Scotland and the closing of convents and religious houses. There was also a sense of sudden bereavement that change has taken place so quickly. As one participant put it:

I think back to my mother's and father's generation- the churches were full and there were folk visiting folk if they didn't come to Mass. My mum knocked doors for years as part of the Legion of Mary, the priest too. OK he was a monitor but at least there was a sign of care. People don't feel confident in the church or the clergy now and I'm sure that is the feeling of disenchantment and hopelessness with their lives and the church, the drip, drip, drip and all the scandals and everything has taken its toll and Catholics, by their very nature, just drift away.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Michael Hornby-Smith, 'Sociological Reflections on the Diocesan Studies', in Timms (ed), *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, p. 66.

<sup>48</sup> Participant L



Shock and disbelief have undoubtedly contributed to the current paralysis. The pre-Vatican II model of priesthood owed much to post Reformation theology. While in patristic and medieval times there had been a breadth of viewpoints about ecclesiology, the counter-Reformation only offered one.<sup>49</sup> In the period between approximately 1600 and the year 1940, Catholic ecclesiology had one dominant model for describing and understanding the nature of the Church. That model was the secular political society, the State, the model that Robert Bellarmine defined as:

The one and true Church is the community of men brought together by the profession of the same Christian faith and participation in the same sacraments under the authority of legitimate pastors and especially of the one Vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman Pontiff.... The one true Church is as visible and palpable as the Kingdom of France or the republic of Venice.<sup>50</sup>

While this model retained visible leadership through the counter-Reformation period, it fostered what Yves Congar has called a "hierarchology"<sup>51</sup> rather than an ecclesiology. With this went a corresponding over-emphasis on authority and a corresponding lack of lay involvement in the life and mission of the church. This post Reformation model emphasises the ontological change undergone in the person of the priest at ordination. As Pius XII writes:

Now the minister, by reason of the sacerdotal consecration which he has received, is truly made like to the high priest and possesses the authority to act in the power and place of the person of Christ himself (*virtute ac persona ipsius Christi*).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> One notable exception to this was the work of Johan Adam Möhler and the Catholic Tübingen School.

<sup>50</sup> Robert Bellarmine, *Of Controversies of Christian Faith Against Heretics Today*, 1586.

<sup>51</sup> Yves Congar, 'Laicat au Moyen Age', *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, 9 Paris, 1974), p. 90.

<sup>52</sup> Pius XII, encyclical, *Mediator Dei*: AAS, 39 (1947) 548.

However, for many theologians this model is ahistorical, universal and essentialist.<sup>53</sup> This has prompted considerable research in recent years on presbyteral identity.

### **7:8:1 Searching for a Meaningful Presbyteral Identity within the One Priesthood of All the Baptised**

Vatican II's emphasis on the priesthood of all the baptised has raised questions about the distinctiveness of the ordained priesthood. This has, in turn, as we have seen led to a reactionary return to the post-Reformation understanding of priesthood. The collaborative, open, relational conditions found in the case-studies, which allow lay ministry to thrive, have no place in this Tridentine understanding of ordained priesthood. Therefore for lay ministry to be effective and to develop it is essential to explore alternative conceptions of ordained priesthood.

This need, together with the shortage of clergy and the subsequent threat to the availability of the Eucharist in the West, prompted Edward Schillebeeckx to write his book, *Ministry: A Case for Change*.<sup>54</sup> Schillebeeckx states that during the first millennium it was the community that held primacy over the individual. The ordained were very much at the service of the community, albeit that the ordained priesthood was seen as a gift from God. The term "apostolic" was applicable primarily to this community and the ordained ministry was at the service of this apostolicity.<sup>55</sup> The ministry of the ordained found its roots in the gift of the Holy Spirit given in and through the community. A person could not be ordained without the purpose of serving a local or particular church. It was from this conjunction, the gift of the Spirit within the ecclesial context and the needs of the Church; that ministry was

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<sup>53</sup> Wood, *Ordering the Baptised Priesthood*, p. 176.

<sup>54</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: A Case for Change*, (London: Kerkelijk ambt, 1981 ), pp. 1-73.

<sup>55</sup> Frances Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops: The Development of Episcopacy in the Early Church*, (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2001), pp. 144-170. Sullivan draws a comparison between the views of two contemporary Church Fathers, Irenaeus and Tertullian. Irenaeus stressed the ministry of the bishop as safeguarding the apostolicity of the church whereas Tertullian understood apostolicity as primarily a mark of the church as a whole.

recognised and the relationship between Christ and the ordained was established.<sup>56</sup>

Schillebeeckx goes on to say that from the beginning of the second millennium a stricter connection was made between the Eucharist and the ordained in such a way as to emphasise the power of the ordained to consecrate the bread and wine. This had the effect of separating the ordained from the rest of the community. The authority of the ordained was seen as derived from Christ in a direct way, for example, in the ordained priest's role in speaking the words of Christ at the consecration in the Eucharist.<sup>57</sup> The Second Vatican Council attempted to steer a course between, on the one hand, the ecclesiological and pneumatological foundation for ministry and on the other, a purely Christological basis. However, it is only within an ecclesiological perspective, Schillebeeckx believes, taking into account the changes that have taken place in ministry according to the needs of the church, that balance can be found.<sup>58</sup>

Reactions to Schillebeeckx came from, among others, Gisbert Greshake and Jean Galot.<sup>59</sup> In his work on the ordained priesthood, Greshake maintains that it is God, not the community, who is the direct origin of ministry and he questions Schillebeeckx's reading of the New Testament in this regard. The early church, Greshake states, did accept the authority and ministry of the apostles and their successors as coming from God himself. The symbolic relationship between Christ and the minister reproduces, Greshake believes, the dialogical relationship between the Father and Son, who is generated and sent by the Father, returning to Him in the work of salvation. However, Greshake's emphasis on the Father and the Son seems to exclude the vital presence of the Spirit-filled community.

Jean Galot's starting point comes not only from a dispute with Schillebeeckx but also with a certain dissatisfaction with the teaching of

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<sup>56</sup> See also Canons 15 and 16 of the Council of Nicea and Canons 6 and 10 of the Council of Chalcedon, Norman Tanner, *Decrees of Ecumenical Councils: Nicaea 1 to Latern V*, Volume 1, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1990).

<sup>57</sup> Schillebeeckx, *Ministry* p. 70. See also Power, *Representing Christ in the Community and Sacrament*, pp. 99-102.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>59</sup> Jean Galot, *Theology of the Priesthood*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985) and Gisbert Greshake, *Ser Sacerdote*, (trans M. O. Gaztelumendi), (Salamanca: Sal Terrae, 1996).

Vatican II. This council did not, Galot believes, provide a synthesis for all three functions attributed to the ordained priesthood, namely sacrifice, preaching and pastoral care.<sup>60</sup> His basic premise is that the ministry of the ordained, as laid out in Vatican II and in most of the church's teaching, is traceable to and finds unity in Christ himself. For Galot, the characteristic that provides the unity and harmony between the various functions is that of shepherd. The image of the shepherd, he believes, expresses the dynamic relationship between the ordained and the people of God, and emphasises pastoral care and leadership in sacramental rite and the preaching of the word.

Schillebeeckx did not, of course, envisage the present reality where many priests now serve a number of parishes and are increasingly 'sacramental ministers' without significant pastoral presence in a parish. Pastoral Assistants often, in reality, have oversight of parish ministries such as children's groups, Eucharistic ministers and pastoral visiting. Similarly, to fulfil his desire to connect sacramental ministry with sustained pastoral presence and the work of building up the community, Galot's position would require much more ordained ministry. Since ordained ministry is only open to single men it is difficult to know how many present lay ministers would seek ordination if ordained ministry was to be opened up to women and married men. It is therefore difficult to know whether the present structure is under pressure to accommodate an expansion in collaborative ministry or ordained ministry.

The debate over the nature of ordained ministry and whether the ordained act principally in the person or role of Christ or directly in the name of the church, and therefore indirectly in the name of Christ, has dominated theological discussion of the priesthood in recent years.<sup>61</sup> It has been partly characterised by the opposition between, on the one hand, the concept of the ontological identity of the ordained, which holds that at the level of being the ordained priest is changed and configured to Christ and, on the other, a

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<sup>60</sup> Galot, *Theology of the Priesthood* pp. 135-142.

<sup>61</sup> See Wood, 'Presbyteral Identity within Parish Identity', in *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood*, (ed.), Susan Wood, see also Paul Philbert, 'Issues for a Theology of the Priesthood: Status Report', pp. 29-36 and Benedict Ashley, 'The Priesthood of Christ, the Baptised and Ordained' in *The Theology of the Priesthood*, (ed.), Donald Goergen and Ann Garrido, (Minnesota: Collegeville, 2000), pp. 139-164.

functional conception of the ordained priesthood, which sees the ordained as exercising a function or an expression of the gifts of Christ in the Spirit already given to the Church. I will look at three theologians in particular who have sought to integrate the two perspectives, namely David Power, David Coffey and Paul Murray.<sup>62</sup>

### **7:8:2 Power: *in Persona Christi* and *in Persona Ecclesiae***

The key question for Power is the role of the ordained priest in symbolising the salvific presence of Christ in the church and in worship. The question turns on the use of the phrase *in persona Christi*. Powers states that this phrase was first bound up in the spiritual exegesis of the early Christian writers in ascribing particular words of scripture to a given person.<sup>63</sup> He refers to the use of the phrase in 2 Corinthians 2, 10 where Paul interprets his ministry of forgiveness as acting in the person of Christ. This use was adopted by medieval theologians and applied more specifically to a wide variety of sacramental rites with the intention of guaranteeing the action of Christ in the liturgy.

The use of the term *in persona Christi* by Aquinas has been much discussed, Power believes and he seeks to clarify the meaning that Aquinas gave to it. He maintains that Aquinas intended the phrase to mean “to have power from Christ and to act in such a way that one’s acts were the acts of Christ.”<sup>64</sup> Aquinas had inherited from Augustine the idea that the sacrifice of Christ brings the person into communion with God and that the actions of Christ, symbolised in the liturgy, bring the church into communion with God, uniting the Church with Christ in his offering to the Father. The context for the words of consecration, in which the ordained acts in the person of Christ, is the life of grace and communion as realised in the church.<sup>65</sup> It seems clear to

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<sup>62</sup> David Power, ‘Representing Christ in the Community and Sacrament’ in Donald J. Goergen ed., *Being a Priest Today*, (Minnesota: Collegeville, 1992), pp. 97-123, David Power, ‘Priesthood Revisited: Mission and Ministries in the Royal Priesthood’, in Susan Wood (ed.), *Ordering the Baptised Priesthood*, pp. 87-121. David Coffey, ‘The Common and Ordained Priesthood’, *Theological Studies*, 58, (June 1997), pp. 209-236. Paul D. Murray, ‘The Need for an Integrated Theology of Ministry within Contemporary Catholicism: A Global North Perspective’, *Ministries in the Church*, (ed.) Susan Ross, Maria Clara Bingemer, and Paul Murray, *Concilium*, (2010/1), pp. 43-55.

<sup>63</sup> Power, ‘Representing Christ in the Community and Sacrament’ in *Being a Priest Today*, p. 98.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

Power that Aquinas also understood the ordained to act *in persona Ecclesiae* when leading the church in worship and expressing the devotion of the church in union with Christ. This analysis, Power believes, integrates the understanding of the phrase *in persona Christi* with the phrase *in persona Ecclesiae* in Aquinas' thought.<sup>66</sup>

The problem, according to Power, was that Aquinas' view of the ministerial priesthood allowed for two distinctions not prevalent in an earlier age:<sup>67</sup> namely, a distinction between the instrumental acts of the ordained from other acts of ecclesial worship and a distinction between the actions and prayers of the ordained from those of the church as a body of believers. Earlier writers had situated the actions of the ordained in the context of leadership of the community, while in the East the role of the Spirit was emphasised as constituting the assembly and uniting it with Christ in worship. Because of the distinction made by Aquinas, theology during the period that followed him tended to isolate the acts of the ordained from the rest of the church. Theology in the West pursued a policy of 'nailing down' the specific actions and words of the ordained, connecting them with Christ in an almost exclusive way. Medieval theology thus separated the 'descending act of God in Christ from the ascending act of Christ in the church'. Eventually, Power states, even the phrase *in persona Ecclesiae* seemed to have the same effect.<sup>68</sup> For the last eight hundred years there has been a need, Power maintained, to regain the connection between the representative role of the ordained acting both in the name of Christ and in the name of the church. Reconnecting these actions: *in persona Christi* and *in persona Ecclesiae*, places the priest firmly in the community of all the faithful not above or apart from it. This allows for a more nuanced development of the relationship between the ordained priesthood and the priesthood of all believers.

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 102-103. Power draws attention in particular to the writings of Cyprian, Augustine and John Chrysostom.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115 also Edward Kilmartin and Robert Daly, *The Eucharist in the West: History and Theology*, (Minnesota: Collegeville, 1998), p. 79. In the face of uncertainty and the movement of peoples, Kilmartin maintains that western theology came under the influence of a world-view that promoted a sense of "thingly realism" as opposed to a symbolic understanding of reality.

### ***7:8:3 Power : The Relationship between the Ordained Priesthood and the Priesthood of all Believers***

Power considers the priesthood of Christ and the church as used in scripture, tradition and by the reformers.<sup>69</sup> He concludes that the message of the Letter to the Hebrews is that through Christ's obedience and suffering he fulfilled his mission to establish the New Covenant.<sup>70</sup> His once-and-for all sacrifice is contrasted with the continual sacrifices of the temple. According to Power, the text of 1 Peter 2, 4-10 refers to the whole people of God; the whole church is anointed by the Spirit to form the household of God.<sup>71</sup> Power maintains that these texts are not about cult and worship but alliance and covenant.<sup>72</sup> In the patristic era, Power argues, the activity of Christ the redeemer and the life of the church in imitation of Christ were symbolised in the Eucharist.<sup>73</sup> It is against this background that the relationship between the priesthood of the ordained and the priesthood of the baptised should be understood. Orders and ordination are affirmed in the structure of the church but it is the emphasis upon the one priesthood of the church that should dominate.<sup>74</sup> From this basis, Power argues for a broadening of the application of the term 'order' to other ministries that aid the church in its nature and mission: in short, every service that emphasises the kenotic and pilgrim nature of the church's life.<sup>75</sup> For Power, the quality of service, possessed by the church itself in its basic orientation, is manifest in the various ministries that exist in the church, expressing the church's nature and mission in a public way. This recognition and valuing of diversity in ministry is essential for the growth of lay ministry. An expansion of 'orders' could give recognition and stability to lay ministries such as parish co-ordinator, chaplain, youth worker and allow these positions to be reliably included in

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<sup>69</sup> Power, 'Priesthood Revisited', pp. 92-107.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*, p. 99 speaking of the writings of John Chrysostom, "in the bread and wine, over which the Bishop prays, and through these signs, Christ's sacrifice and priesthood are represented and made present, so that all may share in them and have access to the Father which Christ gained through his death. It is this point that provides the foundation for speaking of the royal priesthood of the church."

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.* pp. 112-115.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.* pp. 113-115.

long term pastoral planning. Many theologians support such a recognised position in the structure of the church for lay pastoral workers.<sup>76</sup> Others fear the ‘professionalisation’ of lay ministry would create a new ‘elite’. Power’s insistence on ministeriality as a quality of the whole community<sup>77</sup> is a useful corrective to this perspective.

### **7:8:4 Coffey: Integrating a Pneumatological Approach**

Coffey believes that there is an assumption in the council documents of *Lumen Gentium* and *Presbyterorum Ordinis* that, while the priesthood of the ordained has a direct christological reference, the priesthood of the baptised has only a specifically ecclesiological reference. This assumes that the priesthood of the ordained represents Christ the Head in a direct way to the community. However, as Coffey, points out, the representation of Christ as Head is in fact an ecclesial function, for the headship of Christ can only be exercised in the church. Therefore, both priesthoods are essentially related to the priesthood of the church. The priesthood of the ordained can only be understood as christological, therefore, in an indirect way. In describing the priesthood of Christ, Coffey attempts to integrate two approaches to christology: a descending logos christology and an ascending spirit christology.<sup>78</sup> He maintains that if we look at the priesthood of the church in terms of its own participation in Christ’s *pasch*, in returning to the Father, both the priesthood of the baptised, united in faith to Christ, and the priesthood of the ordained, as official witnesses to faith, coordinate as functions of the priesthood of the church, whose goal is union with God.<sup>79</sup>

Like Power, Coffey concludes that the priesthood of the ordained finds meaning therefore only within the context of the priesthood of all believers. He emphasises that the role of the ordained is as “official witnesses”. The “official witness” is to bring correction, direction, completion and orientation to

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<sup>76</sup> E.g. Congar talks of the recognition of different “modes of service”, Schillebeeckx about a fourth recognised ministry of pastoral leadership

<sup>77</sup> David Power, *Gifts that Differ: Lay Ministries Established and Unestablished*, (New York: Pueblo 2nd edition, 1985) p. 61.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 214-223.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 223-229.



the faith of the community.<sup>80</sup> In contrast to the public dimension of ordained priesthood, he concurs with Chantraire<sup>81</sup> in asking whether “personal priesthood” is a preferable term to “common priesthood” when referring to the laity, since their divine daughterhood or son-ship is personal to each individual.<sup>82</sup> Here I find Coffey’s definition useful for its clarity but that ecclesial reality is more ambiguous than allowed for by him. The ordained surely also have a “personal priesthood” and some lay people are, and have been throughout history, powerful “witnesses” to Christ and recognised as this by the faith community.

### **7:8:5 Hahenberg: A Relational Approach to Ministries<sup>83</sup>**

Hahenberg suggests that insights from Trinitarian theology emphasising relationality offer new understandings of the diverse ministries we experience in the Church today. He notes that recovering the insights of earlier Trinitarian doctrine, Catholic theologians like Walter Kasper, Elizabeth Johnson, Catherine La Cugna and others<sup>84</sup> have suggested reframing all of reality in the light of the Trinity. Hahenberg asks how this language of relation, flowing from the relationship of the Trinity, illuminates ministry? He notes that pastoral ministry increasingly involves a network of relationships. This leads him to suggest that ministry is a relational reality, and theology must respond to this fact.<sup>85</sup> He notes that: “Early Trinitarian doctrine teaches that divine substance, the very nature of God, is not ontologically prior to relationship; *ousia* is not prior to the divine persons. Personhood, which is constituted by relationship, is the ultimate category.”<sup>86</sup>

From this he concludes that “we become our true selves in living in right relationships with others”.<sup>87</sup> Hahenberg continues: “In an analogous

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* p. 227.

<sup>81</sup> Georges Chantraire, ‘Synodalité, expression du sacerdoce commun et du sacerdoce ministériel?’ *Nouvelle revue théologique* 113 (1991), pp. 340-62.

<sup>82</sup> Coffey, ‘Common and Ordained Priesthood’, p. 35.

<sup>83</sup> Edward Hahenberg, *Ministries: A Relational Approach*, (New York: Crossroads, 2003)

<sup>84</sup> Hahenberg, *Ministries*, p. 91.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* p. 93

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*

way, I would like to suggest that ministers are not primarily isolated individuals whose relationships of service are secondary or nonessential to their existence as ministers". He understands that in fact one becomes a minister by entering into and being established in relationships of service.<sup>88</sup> He points out ordination is the prime example of a new ecclesial relationship, giving the ordained person a new 'place' in the relational community that is the church. He suggests that a relational approach overcomes the dichotomy between substance ontology and a functional view of the ordained. In this model the ordained cannot exist in an "isolated self-identity"<sup>89</sup> but nor can their particular unique place in the community be denied. This approach also allows Hahenberg to offer a place to lay ecclesial ministers, as people who also have a new place and a changed relationship to the community.

Richard Gaillardetz, like Hahenberg, recognises that in practice full-time lay ministers with leadership responsibilities are relationally "repositioned" within the Church. Their roles are characterised by a certain stability of function, which he considers to constitute an ordered ministry.<sup>90</sup> This concept of 'ordered ministries' is also the one preferred by Susan Wood. She considers it a more appropriate term than 'lay ecclesial minister' which she finds only emphasises the dichotomy between lay and ordained. She accepts however that: "much more work needs to be done to clearly identify what distinguishes sacramental orders from other ordered ministries". The promise of these analogies of 'relationship' and 'repositioning' is a model of ministry that can accommodate diverse ministry and ministries. Nevertheless the recurrent difficulty remains: differentiating the position of the ordained.

### **7:8:6 Modes of Ministry**

Paul Murray, for this reason, has questioned the relational ontology focussed on specific forms of pastoral service proposed by Hahenberg, Wood and

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<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *ibid.* p. 95

<sup>90</sup> Susan Wood, 'Convergence Points towards a Theology of Ordered Ministries', pp. 256-269 and Richard Gaillardetz 'The Ecclesiological Foundations of Ministry within an Ordered Communion' pp. 26-52, in Wood (ed), *Ordering the Baptismal Priesthood*.

Gaillardetz. He considers that the value of the priestly ministry of those who “through requirement, regulation, ill–health, or retirement find themselves incapable of functioning as parochial pastoral leaders”, is overlooked in the relational ministry model.<sup>91</sup>

He notes that the dynamic of Catholic Christian life comes from the initiating and continual “draw” of the Spirit rather than a merely functional orientation. This leads him to suggest:

We have to recognise how deeply attached Catholicism is to the visual, the bodily, the sacramental as the showing forth, the tangible and formal representing and so making available for deeper appropriation, of that which is already the deep reality of things.<sup>92</sup>

He finds this exemplified in sacramental rituals, revered sacramental things, hallowed sacramental places, and holy sacramental people. From a Scottish perspective, the Celtic tradition describes such encounters and places that give us an opening into the magnificence and wonder of God’s presence as ‘thin places.’ A thin place is where the veil that separates heaven and earth is lifted and one is able to receive a glimpse of the glory of God.

Respecting this understanding Murray proposes that the way ahead is in viewing:

The appropriate distinctiveness of ordained ministry as consisting in its being the authenticated, visible, public witness to and sacramental performance of the ministry of Christ in the entire spirit-filled, charism-endowed church in such a fashion as defines the vocation and being of the ordained before God. The distinctiveness of the ordained priesthood is to be viewed as lying in neither being an essentially different kind of priesthood to that of the laity, nor in its being a higher quality version of the same priesthood, but in its being a fundamentally different *mode of exercise* – public, official, representative – of the one priesthood of Christ in which all the baptised share.

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<sup>91</sup> Paul D.Murray ‘The Need for an Integrated Theology of Ministry’, *Concilium* 2010/11, pp.43-55.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* p. 51.

He suggests that the one priestly ministry of Christ is present in the church in two modes. Far from being a theology of ministry that might alienate or disempower the laity, Murray insists, the sacramental-representational account reflects back to the church what it most deeply is so as to draw all more deeply into the living of it.<sup>93</sup>

This model has the advantage of retaining the common matrix of the *Christifidelis* while accommodating the different 'feel' of ordained and non-ordained ministry. If lay ministry was viewed as a different mode of exercise, rather than a lower quality of ministry or a threat to ordained ministry, there would surely be grounds for a greater incorporation of it into the ministerial structure of both parishes and dioceses. It allows for the distinction between for example, Tony's ministry as a youth worker, where he offers fully-committed service but on a short-term basis and the life-long commitment to ordained ministry made by Fr. Jim. However, many lay ministers understand their ministry to flow from a life-long vocational commitment. Is it sufficient to see their ministry as a 'different mode of exercise' or does there not remain the need to find a way to give sacramental expression to their depth of commitment and service? Two options would seem available for this. It is possible that all those (female or male, married or single) whose experience is of life-long call to lay ecclesial ministry should be ordained to either the diaconate or presbyterate. Alternatively, as Bernard Sésboué suggests we need a "new ministerial form" in the church to accommodate this emerging vocation.<sup>94</sup>

### **7:9 The Ministerial Identity of Religious Sisters**

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<sup>93</sup>Murray, 'The Need for an Integrated Theology of Ministry', p. 52.

<sup>94</sup> Bernard Sésboué, 'Lay Ecclesial Ministers. A Theological Look into the Future' *The Way* 42 no.3 (2003), pp. 58-72.

He writes: We are now encountering a phenomenon that cannot but be authentically and officially ecclesial, a reality of the Church in the fullest sense: male and female Christians are putting themselves forward to help the Church in its properly pastoral role, and are doing this on the strength of an official mandate from the bishop. They are offering themselves for this task out of Christian conviction, out of a desire to serve the Church and to give it new ministerial form. p. 69. One sign of the fruitfulness of this structure is that it is calling forth a new form, a form which has much promise. p. 72.

There was sadness and a sense of loss expressed throughout all of the dioceses at the closing of convents and the departure of religious sisters. The work many of the sisters did in the past, educating the poor and providing health facilities, are now done by lay people – and done well. Pride in the achievements of the Catholic schools and agencies, was particularly evident in the diocesan interviews. In retirement many sisters moved to parish ministry. As non-ordained ministers, the work they undertook in parishes can easily be transferred to lay people. I suspect therefore that much of what people miss about the sisters is, as Murray describes above, their sacramental value, their dedicated service and the witness of their apostolic ministry.<sup>95</sup> My experience of meeting with parish sisters in the context of this research was that they truly held the people (of the parish) in their hearts and spoke of them with love and concern. Many lay women and men in ministry are also ‘sacramental persons’ within the communities they serve but they do not have the authentication and public visibility of priests and consecrated religious.

As evidenced in the nuances of the above discussion, theologically, lay ecclesial ministry is stretching the church to reconsider the role of the ordained, laity and consecrated religious.<sup>96</sup> We had become comfortable with one model of priesthood and indeed of ministry. Yet this is proving inadequate for the complex demands of our time. It is vital that we continue to work on both a theology of all the baptised and on a renewed understanding of ordained ministry.

### ***7:10 Overcoming Psychological Barriers to Change***

Studies of flourishing parishes suggest that a parish grows when all the baptised work together and grow in their appreciation of diversity. In Scottish culture a sense of community has been retained in most localities and there

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<sup>95</sup> He sees religious life in terms of authenticated witness to the diaconal dimension of every Christian’s calling.

<sup>96</sup> Edward Hahnenberg, ‘The Holy Spirit’s Call: The Vocation to Lay Ecclesial Ministry’, National Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry, St. John’s University, Collegeville, MN (August 1, 2007), available at <https://www.csbsju.edu/.../2007Symposium/8.Hahnenberg-SpiritsCall.pdf>, accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2011.

is generally friendliness and a welcoming attitude to strangers. This however, has not translated into flourishing parishes. Interviews with diocesan personnel suggested that the predominant mode in which Scottish parishes are operating is apathetic and lacking in growth. What is behind this? Why is ministering together at all difficult?<sup>97</sup> Hahnenberg concludes it is because:

It masks a mess of complicated issues that touch on institutional structures, psychology, patterns of socialization and socializing, the exercise of authority, theological vision, and so on. The fact is that even though our theology rejects it and pastoral experience does not bear it out, there are still many who see raising lay ecclesial ministry as lowering the ordained. That is how it *feels*. Again, we run into the human condition, that self-centeredness that follows from our fallen condition. Here we do not need a theologian, we need a therapist. We need psychologists, those schooled in group dynamics and organizational change, pastoral practitioners, and others to help us negotiate the historic ministerial shift through which we are passing. Together we can, we must, discover a spirituality and practice of collaboration.<sup>98</sup>

In their seminal study of collaborative ministry Sofield and Juliano found that, just as Hahnenberg suggested, “most individuals who are confronted with change show a certain degree of resistance.”<sup>99</sup> Their primary recommendation is that in order for collaboration to be successful, time must be spent identifying what stands in the way. Table eight shows the attitudes and behaviours they identified as obstacles to collaborative ministry.<sup>100</sup>

### **Table 8 Obstacles to Collaborative Ministry**

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<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Loughlan Sofield and Carroll Juliano, *Collaborative Ministry: Skills and Guidelines*, (Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1987) p. 25.

<sup>100</sup> Sofield and Juliano, *Collaborative Ministry*, p. 26.

Attitudes	Behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitiveness</li> <li>• Parochialism</li> <li>• Arrogance</li> <li>• Burnout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hostility</li> <li>• Unwillingness to deal with conflict</li> <li>• Unwillingness to deal with loss</li> <li>• Learned helplessness</li> <li>• Failure to share faith</li> <li>• Lack of commitment or training</li> <li>• Failure to integrate sexuality</li> </ul>

I found that many of the comments recorded in the interviews with diocesan personnel demonstrate attitudes and behaviours which easily fall into the above categories referred to by Sofield and Juliano. Interviewees<sup>101</sup> spoke of disenchantment and apathy, disordered relationships, priests feeling under threat, folk just closing down and people feeling used as a buffer. Others noted that getting time off was almost impossible and that they felt bad if they were away. Commenting on the difficulties in finding a way to move forward interviewees observed that firefighting and make do and mend has become normal, that there is meanness, an unwillingness to let go and that everyone is just doing their own thing. Others concurred that certain groups of priests strangle everything. Some observed that you have to bypass the priests to get anything done and that all the bishops had got sick and fed up.

In the light of this spirit of communal desolation<sup>102</sup> it is unsurprising that new models of ministry have failed to emerge.

### **7:10:1 Identity Depletion**

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<sup>101</sup> Participants H, V, P, M, K, J, S, R, L

<sup>102</sup> For a definition of desolation see David Fleming S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Literal Translation and A Contemporary Reading*, (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Resources, 1978), paragraph 317.

Given the constantly increasing commitments of priests there is little energy for change. Throughout this dissertation there are repeated references to this decreased energy, twenty-five in all. This points us towards the likelihood of “identity depletion” as a significant contributing factor in the current sense of paralysis in the Scottish Roman Catholic Church. Douglas Davies suggests that identity depletion “would include life circumstances where a sense of meaninglessness and hopelessness begin to pervade a person’s life or even the life of a community, and where otherness becomes malevolent and reciprocity constricted.”<sup>103</sup> He notes that in such circumstances the commitment of a group to its survival may be challenged, with no energy left to seek further resources or even to seek help.<sup>104</sup> Of its nature identity depletion is accompanied by a decrease in vitality.<sup>105</sup> Identity depletion is often associated with bereavement and the loss of a partner who helped generate the self-identity of his or her spouse<sup>106</sup> and can be accompanied from a sociological perspective by a ‘reduced’ standing in the community. Postmodernity and its suspicion of formally valued institutions such as the church, falling numbers of priests and consecrated religious, reduced and ageing congregations and the constant merging and clustering of parishes have all contributed to the sense of loss and indeed bereavement in the Catholic church in Scotland. Clergy, in particular, experience a sense of having a reduced ‘standing’ in the community. The ‘hotspots’ identified in this project have significance far beyond their own local remit here. While much of the church has ‘no energy left to seek further resources’ they are potential sources of vitality for the whole Church. Recognition and approval of the diverse ministry in these ‘hotspots’ by bishops would enable other parishes to explore this possibility.

Identity depletion is further evidenced by the fact that the majority of priests, as Noel Timm’s seminal study on priesthood found, do not find time

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<sup>103</sup> Douglas Davies, *Emotion, Identity and Religion: Hope, Reciprocity, and Otherness*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 68.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> Colin Murray Parkes, Joan Stevenson-Hinde, and Peter Marris, *Attachment across the Life Cycle*, (London: Routledge, 1991) pp. 2-3.



for on-going formation and training.<sup>107</sup> In Scotland the National Conference of Priests and Permanent Deacons of Scotland, a body which ran an annual conference and resourced support groups for priests, has just been disbanded.<sup>108</sup> This runs contrary to Timm's findings that:

The only way of respecting all the people who are living in the midst of the current tension, people, bishops and priests, would seem to be the way of dialogue. In the short and medium term dialogue is incredibly unproductive as far as the task to be performed is concerned. It calls for meetings to take place, for diaries to be compared, for decisions to be reached over a much longer period of time. We owe it to the future to make dialogue part of the present. In seeking to draw nearer to the truth and to enjoy the freedom that this gives, priests themselves also have a responsibility to allow themselves to be ministered to by people, the bishops and their fellow priests. In many cases we have to learn this from the start, for in some respects the image of the priest is of the one who is invulnerable, who needs nothing from anyone and who has everything to give.<sup>109</sup>

Time for reflection, on-going dialogue, spiritual conversation and the willingness to be ministered to are all deemed by Timms, as essential. Stephen Cotterell compares this process to God giving a new heart to his people. (Ezekiel 36:26) Their old heart of stone will be removed. He explains:

I am interpreting a heart of stone as a thick skin; a way of living that is impervious to the influence of others. We cannot feel people's pain because we never listen to what they have to say. We have become entirely self-absorbed and self-referential. Our attitudes harden. Perhaps we have been hurt once too often. We stop listening and we

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<sup>107</sup> Noel Timms, *"You Aren't One of the Boys": Authority in the Catholic Priesthood*, (Chelmsford: Matthew James, 2001) p .ii.

<sup>108</sup> This group accountable to the Bishop's Conference was disbanded November 2014

<sup>109</sup> Noel Timms, *"You Aren't One of the Boys"*, p. 177.

stop learning. We stop changing. All of a sudden we have atrophied. What we need is a change of heart.<sup>110</sup>

Pope Francis speaking to the Curia similarly urges conversion from “mental and spiritual petrification”.<sup>111</sup>

Despite its urgency, in order to avoid the present paralysis turning to atrophy, the time for reflection and discernment deemed so necessary by Sofield and Juliano is just not given to priests or parishioners. There is a palatable sense of ‘having been hurt once too often’. Yet across the Scottish dioceses there is no or limited consultation about the clustering of parishes and the sharing of priests or around the additional tasks given to priests of school and hospital chaplaincy. As one priest said “It’s just the norm. If the guy next to you goes you know you’ll be getting that parish too – even if you already have two or three.”<sup>112</sup> This type of situation has led Michael Himes to state his concern over the “psychological brutalisation of the diocesan priest.”<sup>113</sup>

## ***7:10:2 The Pressurised Environment***

### *The Squeezed Middle*

In keeping with the overall research findings and Himes’ comments above, one lay respondent noted, “priests are the squeezed middle”.<sup>114</sup> On reflection, this same analogy could be extended across the entire Scottish Roman Catholic Church. The recipients of ministry, lay ministers and parish sisters and priests are all working in a ‘squeezed’ and pressurised environment.

### *The Recipients of Pastoral Ministry*

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<sup>110</sup> Stephen Cottrell, *Hit the Ground Kneeling: Seeing Leadership Differently*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2008), pp, 70-7.1

<sup>111</sup> Pope Francis, Speech to Curia, 22/12/2014, [https://w2.vatican.va/.../francesco/.../speeches/.../papa-francesco\\_201412](https://w2.vatican.va/.../francesco/.../speeches/.../papa-francesco_201412), accessed 6/1/2015.

<sup>112</sup> Participant M

<sup>113</sup> Michael Himes, ‘Panel Discussion’, in Richard Miller (ed), *Lay Ministry in the Catholic Church: Visioning Church Ministry through the Wisdom of the Past*, (Missouri: Liguore, 2005), p. 107.

<sup>114</sup> Participant W

As parish sisters described; when visiting, priests are often “in and out quickly”. The specific examples given were with respect to the sick, the dying and the bereaved. However schools, nursing homes and parish groups also complain that they have little contact with the parish priest. The experience of those preparing for marriage or baptism is similar. Priests are not able to be as pastorally present in the wider community as they were in the past. Yet, it is in hospitals, schools, nursing homes and through pivotal events such as marriages, baptisms and funerals that those ‘on the edge’ of congregations most readily engage with the church. The main focus of priestly ministry, given that on average a Scottish priest serves between three or four parishes<sup>115</sup> is sacramental ministry to the existing congregation. Even for regular Mass-goers the more time consuming aspects of ministry such as compassionate listening, spiritual direction and faith formation are in extremely short supply.

#### *Lay Pastoral Ministers and Religious Sisters*

Both lay ministers and parish sisters described their experience of constantly changing parish priests each of whom made different demands and expected to “do things their way”.<sup>116</sup> The two religious sisters who knew they were moving at the time of the research expressed regret at having been asked by their leadership teams to leave parish ministry. The fact that there was no sister able to replace them exacerbated the situation for them. One sister lamented: “I just don’t know what will happen to the people”.<sup>117</sup>

#### *Priests*

Priests also suffer from the weariness of constant reshuffling referred to in the diocesan interviews. Frequent moves make it difficult to build friendships and supportive structures. It becomes more difficult to build up trust – an

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<sup>115</sup> Catholic Directory for Scotland, 2014 (On average one priest serves 3.4 Parishes)

<sup>116</sup> Sister P

<sup>117</sup> Sister E

essential ingredient of collaborative ministry. It also leads to apathy: why should someone put energy into something when they don't know what the next annual round of changes will bring? The growing imbalance between sacramental ministry and community-building activity is changing the operative model of priesthood. This is happening with no discussion or training and with no checks and balances.

### ***7:10:3 An Alternative: Abundance?***

Is there an alternative? Surely the church is called to witness to God's abundant generosity! As the Whiteheads have pointed out :

Too many roles have been absorbed into the person of the priest creating an artificial sense of scarcity, while charisms abound among the laity – we hear continually of the shortage of priests but never about an abundance of gifted lay people.

The church, for its survival, must surely move to a healthier position where collaboration, diversity and co-responsibility are encouraged and celebrated. This could be enabled by better pastoral planning and the better use of existing conciliar structures.

### ***7:11 Lack of Planning and Dysfunctional Councils***

Open channels for communication and dialogue which could address many of the current difficult issues already exist in the church in the form of diocesan councils, councils of priests, parish pastoral councils and bishops' conferences. However as one interviewee lamented; "the council structure does not work". Her comment referred initially to diocesan and parish structures but on reflection she added "there is the same problem in the whole church". This is serious because collegiality and conciliarity are pertinent issues which affect the whole manner in which the vision of the church is shaped and put into practice. The lack of effective structures for

envisioning and planning is therefore, both a theological and an organisational issue.

The renewed theology of *koinonia/communio*<sup>118</sup> found in Vatican II is underpinned by Trinitarian theology and according to David McLoughlin, “is fully capable of expressing unity in diversity and of seeing pluralism as necessary to express the sheer richness of revelation in Christ.”<sup>119</sup> The embodiment of this theology of *communio*, it was anticipated, would be found in renewed conciliar and collegial structures. As we have seen, these structures have floundered in the years since the council. However, renewed use of diocesan councils, councils of priests and deanery councils could create a forum to develop a coherent vision of the church for the future.

### **7:12 Seminarians**

Entering into all these difficult realities are small but consistent numbers of seminarians. A number of interviewees were critical of the current seminary provision in Scotland where all training for the priesthood takes place in Rome.<sup>120</sup> Much of the criticism centred round the lack of pastoral experience offered to the students. The current three or four week placement in August, a time when many parish activities have finished for the holidays, seemed inadequate to many of the participants. This lack of experience is exacerbated by the fact that generally these young men have very little time as assistant priests, often just one year, two at the most, before assuming the responsibilities of parish priest. This present system does not provide or prepare seminarians for collaborative ministry or team ministry. It is also questionable how prepared seminarians are for the reality of the current period of change and transition. In his analysis of *Pastores Dabo Vobis*;<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup>David McLoughlin, ‘Authority as Service in Communion’, in Noel Timms and Kenneth Wilson (eds.) *Governance and Authority in the Roman Catholic Church: Beginning a Conversation*, (London: SPCK, 2000) p. 129.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>120</sup> Participants H, J, L, S, V, Sister P, Sister T.

<sup>121</sup>John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis, On the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day*, (1992) available at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_25031992\\_pastores-dabo-vobis.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_25031992_pastores-dabo-vobis.html), accessed 14/1/2014.

Timothy Costello highlights the human element in the formation of candidates for the ordained priesthood.<sup>122</sup> In particular, he calls attention to human maturity, a much needed facet for priestly ministry. His research takes him into the field of human development. He concludes that the recognition of maturity takes place in a situation where the person is known over a period of time. If the suitability for candidates for ordination rests, in part, on the assessment of human factors and if the authority of ministry is recognised by the church precisely in the exercise of the office in the power of the Spirit, then the process of the formation of candidates necessarily involves the community which is most affected by the ministry of the ordained.<sup>123</sup> The specific charism for ministry is revealed in and recognised by the church community in the lives of individuals. The lack of a pastoral year or other extended period of parish experience, means this element of discernment is absent in the current system.

We also see increased conservatism among seminarians. Sr Katarina Schuth in her research on seminaries found that many students:

Come with a rigid and narrow understanding of their faith and often have the support of people outside the seminary who agree with their positions. These students tend to challenge any thought that does not agree with their perceived notions of church teachings.<sup>124</sup>

Since she also finds that the “difference between a vibrant parish and a moribund one is the personal and pastoral quality of the parish priest”<sup>125</sup> this lack of openness is of concern.

Frank Kewin and Rob Repicky from their study of the present reactionary turn conclude that what we are experiencing is a turn to the neo-conservative. They surmise that what appears to protect the authority of the church actually uses the façade of traditional conservative spirituality as a prop to further its agenda of individual salvation rooted in fear and

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<sup>122</sup> Timothy Costello, *Forming a Priestly Identity*, (Rome: Analects Gregoriana, 2002), pp. 118-119.

<sup>123</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> Sr Katarina Schuth, *Seminaries, Theologates, and the Future of Church Ministry* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2000) p. 10.

<sup>125</sup> *ibid.*, p. 11.

competition. It is salvation at the expense of, to the exclusion of, and on the backs of, the morally, economically and socially marginalised.<sup>126</sup>

In terms of lay ministry these future priests emphasise the distinction between clergy and laity and will not work from a collaborative model. These seminarians will be in positions of authority in the near future. For some of these men, authority is synonymous with control. However, the root of the word authority<sup>127</sup> means 'to augment potential', to make more of. Genuine authority therefore expands potential, making power more abundant and allowing and encouraging others to develop their gifts and to put them at the service of the community and its mission. Since this model of leadership is needed for the church of the future Richard Gaillardetz concludes:

The church is going to have to start looking at the wisdom of the whole model of forming people for ordination to the presbyterate by locking them away in a monastic-style facility for five or more years. My view is that seminarians should spend their whole time in a parish community while doing and negotiating other things and constantly having their work and their insights tested among the people of God. The resistance to training clergy and lay people together is clearly based on the sort of latent fears about the loss of clerical power and status that Schoenherr<sup>128</sup> suggested.<sup>129</sup>

In Scotland the absence of a seminary in Scotland further distances seminarians from parish praxis. The lack of a place of Catholic study in Scotland also inhibits those who seek to train as lay ministers.

### **7:13 Contradictions and Ambiguities**

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<sup>126</sup> Frank Kewin and Rob Repicky, 'When Left is Right, a Generational Paradox', in *The Way Supplement* 98 (2000), pp. 134-142.

<sup>127</sup> [www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=authority](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=authority), accessed 7/11/14

<sup>128</sup> Richard A. Schoenherr, *Goodbye Father: Celibacy and Patriarchy in the Catholic Church*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Schoenherr is an American sociologist who regards the present situation of the church as an institutional crisis which involves the inevitable loss of priestly control over the sacramental tradition and has encouraged a disturbing "protestantisation of the catholic church".

<sup>129</sup> Richard Gaillardetz, 'Panel Discussion' in Miller(ed), *Lay Ministry in the Catholic Church*, p. 106.

### **7:13:1 A Crisis of Identity**

Throughout the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland contradictions and ambiguities are evident. Archbishop Keith O'Brien stated in 2002 that "Every parish must be willing to cater for its own pastoral needs and missionary outreach, locally and abroad, whether or not there is a resident priest within the boundaries of that particular parish."<sup>130</sup> The report 'Together in Hope' went on to recommend that:

- Adult faith formation be prioritised and funded
- There needs to be a 'joined up' approach to consultation and strong and defined lines of communication with priests, deaneries and parishes
- We need to work together in a very real and collaborative way.<sup>131</sup>

Yet in spite of the rhetoric about adult faith formation, consultation, planning and collaboration there is little evidence a decade on that there has been any significant shift of diocesan resources to lay formation and training for pastoral roles. This is a contradiction between a promoted model of church and the operative model. This leads McLoughlin to note the call for an ecclesiology of orthopraxis rather than simply orthodoxy. Such an ecclesiology he finds "walks the walk" rather than "talks the talk" and focusses on service.<sup>132</sup>

In contrast to this aspiration, the Queen's Study<sup>133</sup>, found a "crisis" of identity in the dioceses studied.<sup>134</sup> They found that "constraints of time and other

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<sup>130</sup> Archbishop Keith O'Brien, Pastoral Letter, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2002

<sup>131</sup> Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, 'Together in Hope', Reports from Archdiocesan Organisations presented to Archbishop O'Brien, November 2002 and recommended by him to all the Archdiocese, see minutes of Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, APC 1 and APC 2.

<sup>132</sup> McLoughlin, 'Authority as Service in Communion', pp. 134-135.

<sup>133</sup> This study was edited by Noel Timms and published as *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*.

The study of aspects of authority and governance at the level of diocese and parish originated through the first Authority and Governance conference at Astley Bank, Darwen to pursue the experience of Catholics at parish level and the diocesan and parochial use of human and material resources. Who disposes of the latter, and what cords and discords can be heard in the voices of parish priests and 'their' parishioners. In 1996 an interdisciplinary group was set up with expertise in philosophy, theology, psychiatry, social welfare and church and business administration working from an independent ecumenical base i.e. the Queen's Ecumenical Foundation for Theological



resources often resulted in a short-term, short-cut ecclesiology which in reality is an absence of any coherent self-understanding and self-identity.” They found that in practice, this “blurred” vision or total absence of vision had four detrimental effects.<sup>135</sup> The first of these was “the prevalence of a functional rather than visionary model”. They found that there was no sense of overall vision but the desire that the diocese should be fully functional and meet its obligations. This was not based on any model or forward plan. Expecting active priests to take on ever increasing workloads and looking for priests from overseas to take on parishes were cited as typical approaches. As one respondent in the Queen’s Study put it, “it’s just filling gaps”. The second effect the Queen’s study noted was the prevalence of a “make do and mend” attitude to running the dioceses. As difficulties arose the response was continual fire-fighting. There was found to be intransigence and a lack of energy among clergy and laity. The feeling was that this is as good as can be expected and people were sitting back waiting for the bishop’s initiative. The third effect was that in dealing with competing claims between the financial and pastoral it appeared repeatedly that institutional priorities rather than pastoral ones took precedence. Many dioceses had successfully overhauled their finances in the light of increasing demands from the Charity Commission and all had employed lay people as financial directors. The dioceses were also prepared to pay these people a competitive salary. However, no priority had been given to the resourcing of pastoral ministry. The fourth effect was the clash between operative versus promoted ecclesiologies. The Queen’s study found that there was a sense that even positive statements about collaborative ministry seemed to emerge

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Education in Birmingham. To address the topic direct studies were carried out forming the basis for this report and papers were commissioned. The background to the project is set out in “From Confrontation to Conversation”. (A brief consultation document available from the Foundation) The aims are to assist the Church address the complex problems of authority, governance, relationships and participation in contemporary Britain and, where appropriate, adapt pastoral policy and practice. A conversational method was adopted which aimed to be open, generous and respectful and drew on the experience of bishops, priests, theologians and ordinary lay Catholics. About 1000 people were consulted. A particular effort was made to include in the group- divorced people, those married to Christians of other denominations, ethnic minorities, priests and religious no longer active in ministry and women i.e. those who experience the authority of the church more acutely.

<sup>134</sup> Noel Timms (Ed.), *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, p. 81.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 93-97.

“serendipitously” from the need for parish clustering rather than any plan and that this would not be the chosen ecclesiology of the diocese if it were not for the shortage of priests and religious.

Unfortunately, one response to this lack of clear purpose and identity within the church has been to retract from the promise of Vatican II. The example of this given below is one of many.

The *New Catechism of The Catholic Church*<sup>136</sup>, paragraph 857-860 addresses the issue of lay ministry. CCC857 describes the foundation of the church in three ways-

1. The Church was built on and remains on the foundation of the apostles.
2. The Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit, has retained and continues to hand on the teaching of Christ.
3. The Church continues to be taught, sanctified and guided by the apostles until Christ’s return “through their successors in historical office: the college of bishops assisted by priests, in union with the successor of Peter, the Church’s supreme pastor.”

There is no indication here that the people of God through baptism and confirmation have any role at all in the apostolate or ministry of Jesus. As Osborne<sup>137</sup> suggests, this recent Catechism by re-emphasising the role of the hierarchy as the prime successors of the apostles, has contributed to the ‘ambiguity’ and ‘mixed signals’ in the post-conciliar church.

Nor, in this period of world-wide change, is the Catholic Church immune from the effects of globalisation. These, Osborne believes, are both positive and negative for the church.<sup>138</sup> On the positive side the idea of the universal church is strengthened. The downside is that local expressions of church are often sacrificed. The recognisable character of presbyters and bishops has helped the Catholic Church to ‘market’ the ordained as a ‘brand’. This is obvious and visible at events such as World Youth Day and is

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<sup>136</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994) p. 199.

<sup>137</sup> Kenan Osborne, *Orders and Ministry: Leadership in the World Church*, (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006) p. 175.

<sup>138</sup> Osborne, *Orders and Ministry*, pp. 19-20.

promoted by television channels such as EWTN.<sup>139</sup> Osborne states that so successful is this marketing that even failures of those in ministry only serve to underline the stereotype.<sup>140</sup>

In one survey when polled about what gives them most satisfaction, ninety percent of those presbyters asked replied that it was administering the sacraments and presiding over the liturgy, with a close second that of preaching the word.<sup>141</sup> Coming third, nearly twenty percent less, was involvement in people's lives. At a time when fewer and fewer people in the West are identifying themselves through the celebration of the sacraments, presbyters still define themselves largely in sacramental terms and less, perhaps, as an accompanier or fellow pilgrim. The issue of self-identification was covered in the same work. It was found that those ordained before the 1960's and those ordained after the 1990's had the strongest sense of identity. Particularly those who have been ordained most recently tend to see their ministry in sacramental terms.<sup>142</sup> This may be the result of increased conservatism among the younger cohort of priests. It may also come from the lived experience of being 'sacramental ministers'.

### **7:13:2 Ambiguity in Ecclesiologies**

"One clear fact emerges from all the parish and diocesan studies, it is the crisis of identity of self- understanding, of ecclesiology, which exists in the church universal, is reflected in microcosmic forms in each diocese and each parish in the study."<sup>143</sup> This finding from the Queen's Study throws light on the variance between aspirational and operative ecclesiologies in the research findings at both parish and diocesan level. Gerard Mannion describes this as "the sound of ecclesiologies clashing".<sup>144</sup> To some extent this is a direct result of Vatican II. *Lumen Gentium* tried to satisfy both

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<sup>139</sup> Eternal Word Television Network.

<sup>140</sup> Osborne, *Orders and Ministry*, p. 107. Roman Catholics want their priests to conform to an image.

<sup>141</sup> Dean Hoge and Jacqueline Wenger, *Evolving Visions of the Priesthood, Changes from Vatican II to the Turn of the Century*, (Minnosta: Liturgical Press, 2003), pp. 19-45.

<sup>142</sup> Hoge and Wenger, *Evolving Visions of the Priesthood*, pp. 61-78.

<sup>143</sup> Timms (ed.), *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, p. 81.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.84-8.

ecclesiological positions at the Council, namely those who supported a primarily hierarchical model of Church and those who preferred scriptural imagery and a more thematic treatment of the Church's character. The document does this by including both approaches. For this reason, Hermann Pottmeyer asserts that Vatican II was essentially a transitional council, clearer about what it was moving away from than what it was moving towards. He suggests that to this day "the work of Vatican II remains a building site"; a work still to be completed.<sup>145</sup>

As a result, much of the discussion of post Vatican II models of the Church has centred round the debate between those who want to continue and to extend the work of the Council and those who see the work of the Council to be complete and only in need of dissemination. In 1985 the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops determined that communion was the dominant image of the Church at the Council and should serve as a "key to ecclesiology". Both John Paul II and Benedict XVI actively promoted this model based on their interpretation of Vatican II. It emphasised communion in the community of the whole Church ordered by the College of Bishops in unity with the Bishop of Rome at its head.<sup>146</sup> Cardinal Ratzinger asserted that communion is the best model arising from Vatican II and the one most representative of the mind of the Council fathers. He dismissed the concept of the 'people of God' as having only been introduced as an ecumenical bridge and recommended that "the concept should now be purified" on the basis of the tradition of the faith.<sup>147</sup> In contrast, Francis has chosen the people of God as his preferred definition of the Church.<sup>148</sup> He understands the church as dynamic and engaged in interactive mission to and dialogue with the world. This is a vision that is continually renewing and reshaping the Church.<sup>149</sup> Pottmeyer continues his analogy of Vatican II as a work in progress; comparing it to the construction of St. Peter's Basilica in the

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<sup>145</sup> Hermann Pottmeyer, *Towards a Papacy in Communion: Perspectives from Vatican Councils I and II*, (New York: Crossroad, 1998) p. 110.

<sup>146</sup> Noel Timms( Ed.), *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, p 91.

<sup>147</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism, Politics*, (Slough: St. Pauls, 1987) p. 28

<sup>148</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 111, He describes the Church as "first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrim way towards God".

<sup>149</sup> Rahner, Schillebeeckx and Küng all ascribe to this vision.

sixteenth century. Construction took place around the existing church. Four pillars were raised up but these remained incomplete until the church could raise the necessary funds to finish the task. Pottmeyer surmises:

Alongside the old edifice of nineteenth and twentieth century Vatican centralisation arise the four mighty supporting columns of a renewed church and a renewed ecclesiology: the church as the people of God; the church as sacrament of the kingdom of God in the world; the college of bishops and ecumenism. While the building erected by centralisation awaits demolition, as the old St Peter's did in its day, the four supporting pillars of a renewed church and renewed ecclesiology wait to be crowned by the dome that draw them all into unity.<sup>150</sup>

In the meanwhile, these four pillars remain a source of hope for many since the enduring impact of Vatican II has been, as George Lindbeck suggests, where it breaks new ground, not simply where it reiterates the teaching of the ages.<sup>151</sup>

Others would suggest that the unified edifice that flows from Pottmeyer's image or indeed from Ratzinger's *Communio* model is no longer desirable. Natalie Watson, for example, speaking as a feminist ecclesologist, concludes that the four traditional marks of the Church:

One, holy, catholic, and apostolic should be reinterpreted as a church which celebrates diversity, is committed to a vision of justice and equality, a church open to all and to the whole of creation and a church which seeks to embody the vision of the earliest Christian Communities.<sup>152</sup>

The move towards prioritising diversity over a unified whole is a hallmark of post-modernity. As we sit on the cusp of the transition from modernity to

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<sup>150</sup> Pottmeyer, *Towards a Papacy in Communion*, p. 110.

<sup>151</sup> George A. Lindbeck, *The Future of Roman Catholic Theology: Vatican II – Catalyst for Change*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970).

<sup>152</sup> Watson, *Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology*, p.113

post-modernity it is clear that we live in a time where there is a growing philosophical ambiguity underlying the church's thinking.

### **7:13:3 Ambiguities in Philosophical Understandings**

The years since Vatican II have seen the move from modernity to post-modernity. This has been a time of change in the philosophical ideas underpinning western culture and society. This in turn has created a lack of synchronisation between the hermeneutical lens used by many in postmodern culture and the day-to-day practices of the church based on magisterial statements made in a pre-modern or modern era. Kenan Osborne<sup>153</sup> and Louis-Marie Chauvet's<sup>154</sup> work on sacramental understanding is pivotal to the issues that surround current debates on ministry. How we understand sacraments affects how we view initiation and authority for ministry.

### **7:13:4 This New Hermeneutical Lens and its Challenge to Faith Communities**

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to establish whether Osborne and Chauvet's reading of modern philosophy is well-founded. Their work, however, illuminates the depth of the ambiguities we are currently experiencing within a church which defines itself sacramentally. Their work suggests that the philosophical system, which has underpinned magisterial teaching and permeated thinking about sacraments and ministry for centuries, has outgrown its usefulness. Human consciousness has undergone a seismic shift and what was established tradition is now being subjected to a new hermeneutical lens. The traits of postmodern thought which emerge through the eyes of these authors are: a re-interpretation of the notion of being; the suspicion of any over-arching narrative to explain existence; and the limited and historical nature of self-perception. Both

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<sup>153</sup> Kenan Osborne, *Christian Sacraments in the Post-Modern World: A Theology for the Third Millennium*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1999) pp. 54-68.

<sup>154</sup> Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament, A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1995).

authors emphasise a move away from the fascination with discerning the stable or fixed point in sacramental theology and the promotion of the essentialist nature of sacramental celebrations. This leads Chauvet to describe Christ's sacramental presence as a continual coming-to-us, for us and pointing us beyond to the other. For his part, Osborne considers the *haecceitas* of sacraments renders them revelatory events. This leads him to conclude that to "speak (of ordination) as though we have some all-encompassing view may have been considered possible in a former logos-dominated, subject-object dichotomised episteme, but such an episteme is, for the third millennium sacramentality, no longer viable."<sup>155</sup>

Given such changed priorities it is perhaps unsurprising that part of the experience at this time is of an ambiguity in ecclesiologies. The ambiguity within the Second Vatican Council's documents are greatly amplified by the fact that the Council marked the Catholic Church's first real tentative engagement with modernity precisely at the moment in which modernity itself was beginning to give way to postmodernity.

The development in the Council's theology of revelation<sup>156</sup> has, for example, been superseded by contemporary understandings of religious truth by critical theory, feminist interpretation, and liberationist thought.<sup>157</sup> These exemplify a 'hermeneutic of suspicion' which asserts that much of what is appealed to authoritatively as 'tradition' may be hermeneutically distorted. For example, some feminist scholars want to challenge the way in which the received tradition may be ideologically distorted by patriarchal and sexist assumptions about women and men.<sup>158</sup> This in turn leads to a reframing of, for example, the question of women's ordination and who can or cannot be ordained.

Post-modernity with its emphasis on relationality, on local initiatives and its appreciation of personal and collective history dismantles the

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<sup>155</sup> Osborne, *Christian Sacraments in the Post-Modern World*, p. 192.

<sup>156</sup> E.g. the acceptance that other faiths also contain truth and holiness, *Nostra Aetate 2*

<sup>157</sup> See Graham Ward, *Theology and Contemporary Critical Theory*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2000); Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992); Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition), (New York: Maryknoll, 1988).

<sup>158</sup> Richard Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent*, (New York: Orbis, 2008) p. 217.

institutional resistance within the Catholic Church to lay ministry. The Church has never been immune to the cultural constructs of any historical era. Post-modernity is a tidal wave still gathering momentum and it is not possible to predict how it will develop or how it will affect the structures and practices of a global institution like the Roman Catholic Church. But as attitudes change there is no doubt that ministry will change too.

### ***7:14 Is There an Alternative Perspective?***

Organic growth is evident in parishes A, B, C and D; where ministry is growing through collaboration between priests and lay people. This is characterised by openness to change and an investment in positive relationships. However, while there are good local initiatives, the overall impression given by the interviews with diocesan personnel, is that the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland is in a period of stagnation. All energies have been directed towards maintaining the status quo. As one interviewee suggested “we have filled gaps with retired priests and foreign priests – but that just won’t work anymore”. We are coming to the end of the viability of short-term solutions. For some this feels like facing the abyss. Others see in the looming crisis the possibility of a movement of the Spirit calling for greater participation, consultation and involvement.

Taking this latter perspective Anthony Philpot concludes:

It is high time for some reflection on all of this, in the light of the Gospel, starting with the resurrection, and the appearances of Jesus afterwards. The risen Christ was different. He was not a resuscitated corpse. The coming church, whose shape we cannot fully discern, will be new. It will be a resurrected, sobered, mature church, humbler, realising that all is gift. The church will be purified, by God's unmerited kindness, from much of the baggage which has encumbered it in our lifetime. So the process in which we are engaged is an authentic one. It is a Gospel process. This should give us great hope. <sup>159</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Anthony Philpot, The Church will Rise Again, *The Tablet*, 3/10/1998



Co-responsibility and lay ministry are a necessary part of this renewed church. This is not because of insufficient priests but because the church of the future will need this maturity to address the needs of mission and ministry in postmodern Scotland. From this perspective it is possible now to return to the first two thesis questions which asked: what is the place of lay ministry? and what are the factors that make for effective lay ministry?

### ***7:15 The Place of Lay Ministry and Factors which make for Effective Lay Ministry***

The case-studies in this research project confirm the findings of 'Emerging Models' that lay ministers contribute to parish flourishing. Authenticating this experience, Bernard Sesboüé concludes that lay ecclesial ministry is emerging from a continuum where new poles of ministry are constantly generated to give the church the new ministerial forms that it needs.<sup>160</sup> Importantly, lay ministry offers a new shape and a viable alternative to the sole clerical model of ministry the western church has operated with since the Reformation. This is advantageous because sociologically the clerical model has been seriously undermined both by changed attitudes in postmodernity and by scandals and is increasingly irrelevant to most Scots. Theologically, lay ministry restores the participatory role reserved for all the baptised in the one priesthood of Christ. Furthermore, if we truly believe that "the manner and style of relationships in the church are part of the sign it gives"<sup>161</sup> then genuinely collaborative relationships are vital to show the unity available to all in Christ. From a practical perspective the greater variety of ministers and ministry, available through increased lay involvement, offers a fortuitous and timely response to "the huge variety of predicaments and situations of marginalisation"<sup>162</sup> experienced by people today poised on the edge of seismic change.

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<sup>160</sup> Bernard Sesboüé, 'Lay Ecclesial Ministers. A Theological Look into the Future', *The Way* 42/3. (2003), pp. 57-72.

<sup>161</sup> *The Sign We Give*, forward

<sup>162</sup> Paul Hypher, 'Church Fit for Mission', *The Tablet* 17/10/09, p. 17.

The research produced two complementary sets of findings. The case-studies pointed to a number of factors which contribute to effective lay ministry. They demonstrated the need for an open and positive attitude to collaboration and the need for a deliberate effort to be made to build positive hopeful relationships. Lay ministry flourished in parishes where the gifts of all were recognised and used. This led to the recognition of a breadth of ecclesial vocations. Increased lay involvement led to a wider, negotiated shared vision and to intentional pastoral planning. This process of visioning and planning was time consuming but deemed valuable. Parish pastoral councils were seen to play an essential role in this process.

In contrast, the lack of lay ministry in Scotland appears to be because of the theological and psychological barriers to change which are still to be overcome. A way has still to be found of living with contradiction and ambiguity in this time of transition. Structures for dialogue and adult education are needed to enable this.

## Chapter 8: Recommendations Arising from the Research

All participants in the research were ministers and all spoke with warmth and respect of those to whom they ministered. They easily identified their work with those in need in the parish, on its fringes and beyond, as the work God had sent them to do. Those mentioned in the research included the bereaved, the sick, families who were disengaged from the church, families in crisis, teenage mums, people in financial difficulty, the lonely, the dying, young people and children. These are the real people who are at the heart of all ministerial activity. The recommendations which follow have ministry to these people at their core.

### ***8:1 “We must admit our fears and address our ambiguities”***

In order to enable further development of lay ministry, ministry needs to be viewed through a different lens. If today finance was available to appoint lay ministers to every parish in Scotland it is likely that their ministry would fail. We need a new vision, new wineskins, for lay ministry and collaborative ministry to grow. First, we need a change of culture. As Bishop Gregory Aymond insisted:

First, as we strive to live out lay ecclesial ministry in the church, we must admit our fears and address our ambiguities. The first response to change is always no. Lay ecclesial ministry calls us to think in new ways and to meet the needs of the pastoral church today. I believe that the Spirit is leading us to let go and to think in a prophetic way, and certainly that will cause fear. We together in our conversation and in our work certainly must remain faithful to Christ and to His mission in the Church, but we can think differently and creatively. To do so, we must pray. We must have conversation. We must try new models, and then we must assess these models. Fear does create tension, but our

fear surrounding ministry, and many other issues in the church, cannot paralyze us. And just as importantly, it should not polarize us.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Aymond begins his address with the call to “admit our fears and address our ambiguities”. We have to accept our difficulties. Then we can discern how to move forward.

We also need to address the tangible sense of paralysis about how to move forward. We need an honest appraisal which takes account among other things of the issues raised by Cardinal Keith O’Brien’s forced resignation. Professor Thompson who taught at Scotus from 2001-2006 described the entire episode as “symptomatic of a crisis of governance in the Catholic Church in Scotland brought about by overbearing clerical control, secrecy and lack of accountability.”<sup>2</sup>

All participants acknowledged the clerical culture which dominates the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Andrew Greeley in his book *Priest: A Calling in Crisis* and Donald Cozzens in his book *Faith That Dares to Speak* both highlight ‘clerical culture’ as a significant problem for the present and future of priesthood. Cozzens notes that many priests still live in a separated caste-like system, presumed ontologically different from the laity. For some, this has led to considerable interpersonal dysfunction, and Greeley would add, a severe lack of professionalism in executing the priestly duties of preaching, teaching, presiding and sharing the sacraments.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the difficulties, the Catholic Church in Scotland is rightly proud of work done in safeguarding in recent years.<sup>4</sup> Attitudes have changed and

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop Gregory Aymond, ‘The Movement of the Spirit: Challenges and Reasons for Hope’, Working in the Vineyard of the Lord, National Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry, St. John’s University, Collegeville, MN, August 1, 2007

<sup>2</sup> Elena Curti, ‘Mired in scandal’, *The Tablet* 9/3/2013

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Greeley, *Priest: A Calling in Crisis*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) and Donald Cozzens, *Faith that Dares to Speak*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> The eight Scottish dioceses each have a Safeguarding Advisor, a Safeguarding Team, a Risk Assessment Team, and a system for the management of Sex Offenders. There are also Authorised Listeners to support survivors. Each parish has a Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator (PSC) who is a volunteer who looks after the administration of safeguarding (In 2011 - 96% of parishes had at least one PSC).

Each diocese asks parishes to complete an audit form towards the beginning of the year and these are collated by the diocese and forwarded to the Office of the National Co-ordinator where the annual Audit presented to the Bishops’ Conference is collated.

the abuse of children is not tolerated and can no longer be hidden. In this area we have moved on from “clerical control, secrecy and lack of accountability”.

Pope Francis at the opening of the Synod of Bishops urged cardinals and bishops boldly to speak their mind without fear or favour. “Let no one say, “This can’t be said, they will think this or that about me,” he told the synod fathers. “It is necessary”, he maintained, “to say everything that in the Lord we feel must be said: without regard to station or status, without timidity.”<sup>5</sup> Is it unreasonable to hope this spirit of openness might encourage a more honest conversation within the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland about our fears and ambiguities?

### ***8:2 Time for Discernment and Contemplative Conversation***

We need an evangelising strategy that reaches out to those searching for growth and to those who have ‘disengaged’ from the Church<sup>6</sup>. This includes those bereaved sons and daughters referred to in the research who do not know, for example, how to plan a funeral and who find themselves “totally lost” when dealing with death.<sup>7</sup> The experience of ministering to these people reveals the complexity of people’s lives. As Rowan Williams acknowledges:

We need to push away the notion of church as simply something to which people sign up in one go and in one way. And we are discovering, sometimes discovering the hard way, just how complex, how varied, people's journeys are towards the heart of church because those are journeys towards the heart of God's purpose - if my starting point here is right. And journeying towards the heart of God's

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<sup>5</sup> Christopher Lamb, *The Tablet*, 9/10/2014 , Greeting of Pope Francis to the synod fathers during the first general congregation of the Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Monday, 6 October 2014, available at [/w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/october/documents/papa-francesco\\_20141006\\_padri-sinodali.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/october/documents/papa-francesco_20141006_padri-sinodali.html), accessed 16/1/2016.

<sup>6</sup> Participant H.

<sup>7</sup> Participants L and P.

purpose is really quite a long business; in fact it's one you never come to the end of. Literally, never.<sup>8</sup>

The spiritual journey takes time. It is through every day events that the pastoral presence of the minister and the community can accompany people to grace and growth. Such encounters that require a pastoral presence and meaningful conversation take time. Pastoral planning and visioning processes must allow ministers (lay and ordained) time for individuals. Developing vision also requires time. It arises, advises Stephen Cottrell, through both conversation and contemplation.<sup>9</sup>

There is a need according to Cozzens, to call the church to “contemplative conversation” rather than noisy discourse.<sup>10</sup> This contemplative conversation is vital to lead us into experiences of true communion with each other.

### ***8:3 Hold Total Ministering Communities as Our Ideal and Develop the Role of Pastoral Assistants in Enabling and Maintaining Such Communities***

Thriving parishes owe their growth to their desire to engage and enrich their congregations and to equip them for mission. Such parishes have vibrant liturgies, engaged staffs, significant programming and active parishioners.<sup>11</sup> Murnion suggests, from his research, the following as facets of a vibrant parish centred on a shared vision and mission: a welcoming community; liturgy; prayer and spirituality; evangelisation; a caring community; compassionate outreach; fiscal health; lay ministry; lay pastoral leadership; lifelong formation; communications; facilities; vocations promotion; and outreach to youth and young adults. This is laid out diagrammatically in appendix nine.

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<sup>8</sup> Rowan Williams address at ‘*Changing the Landscape: Making the Mixed Economy Work*’, 6th May 2011, Oxford, available at <https://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/.../changingthelandscape2011-rowanw.>, accessed 16/1/2016.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Cottrell, *Hit the Ground Kneeling: Seeing Leadership Differently*, (Oxford: Church House Publishing, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Donald Cozzens, *Faith That Dares to Speak*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> National Pastoral Life Center, *Facets of a Vibrant Parish, Parishes and Parish Ministers: A Study of Parish Lay Ministry* (Philip J. Murnion, National Pastoral Life Center, 1999).

Many Scottish parishes would feel they are under-resourced and that they could not be expected to operate well in all of the above areas. Despite this, Parish A and the clustered parishes B, C and D referred to in the case studies have assimilated into their practice all of the above facets to some extent. While the church in Scotland will never have the resources of the church in the U.S. it is possible with some “pastoral imagination”<sup>12</sup> to apply the learning from the considerable research carried out there to the Scottish context. The ever-increasing need to cluster parishes can create new opportunities; e.g. a viable number of young people to consider starting a youth group. Similarly, where parishes share a priest, one or more presbyteries become vacant and can be sold or rented. This can give an income which could be invested in parish development and in salaries for parish staff.

The contribution of lay ecclesial ministers is noted in Murnion’s study as “improving and energising parish ministries”. This occurs, suggests Pat Brennan by “lateral ministry”.<sup>13</sup> Lateral ministry refers to an empowerment model of ministry. In this approach the trained or educated person does not vertically hand down ministerial services, but rather spends significant time raising- up ministry leaders, who will work with a ministering community. This concurs with one of the roles of pastoral assistants envisaged by interviewees; which was “co-ordinating and training catechists and leaders for all the groups”.<sup>14</sup> The model envisaged by lateral ministry has the aspiration that after training parish groups could then continue through the ministry of trained parishioners but with the support and supervision of the pastoral assistant. The aim of this process is to create total ministering communities.

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<sup>13</sup> Brennan, *Mission Driven Parish*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>14</sup> Participant, R.

## **8:4 Renewed Commitment to On-going Formation for Both Lay People and Priests**

How is it possible to lay foundations for the church of the future? In addition to the vital need for listening and discernment, the research finds that there is little opportunity for education and on-going formation for both lay people and priests. Yet this is our best hope in working through the theological and physiological barriers that are currently hindering growth.

### **8:4:1 Discernment and Training: Lay Ministers**

The lack of recognition of lay ministry by the church has led to arrangements being made between lay ministers and priests on a private individual basis. Yet lay people have authority to minister through baptism: “an ecclesial happening which links a baptised person irrevocably to the community”.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, ideally, lay ministry which puts the lay minister into a significant leadership role, such as pastoral assistant, needs discernment by the parish and diocesan communities. As, therefore, Power<sup>16</sup> suggests, “the proper place for discernment and approval of ministries is within local or particular communities of the baptised”. Just as for ordained ministry, the community needs a process for discerning lay ministries and claiming and celebrating them. In the Diocese of Albany, for example, there is now a year-long discernment process run by the pastoral office for those considering entering full-time lay ministry for the first time. The programme runs over five weekends and throughout the year the candidate undertakes supervised ministry in a parish and is connected to a spiritual director. This discernment year is very similar to that offered to candidates for priesthood in Scotland.

The research found that all interviewees had taken part in some level of training but again there was no formal formation offered or mechanism in place for on-going training and support. This need was recognised in the section ‘Formation for Lay Ecclesial Ministry’ which makes up about one third

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<sup>15</sup> Ziola Diaz, *Together in God's Service: Towards a Theology of Ecclesial Lay Ministry*, (Washington: USCCB 1998), p .54.

<sup>16</sup> David Power, *Gifts that Differ*, p. 45



of the USCCB document *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. The bishops write that:

Lay Ecclesial Ministers, just like the ordained, need and deserve formation of high standards..... we encourage dioceses and academic institutions to seek creative ways of providing opportunities for the preparation and formation of Lay Ecclesial Ministers.<sup>17</sup>

None of the Scottish Dioceses has any obvious route for someone to follow who wants to train for lay ministry. The experience of training and formation is patchy and it seems dependent on the priest in a given parish what information about training is made available. There is no seminary or Catholic college or university in Scotland. However, there are good theological faculties at the secular universities which could be a resource for training. At the present time in the Archdiocese of Glasgow there is a training course for catechists in conjunction with Glasgow University. The established financing of this course means the parish pays a third of the cost, the diocese a third and the catechists a third.<sup>18</sup> Some dioceses have also used resources from the Maryvale Institute<sup>19</sup>. These courses are adapted for distance learning and therefore accessible to those who live in remote areas. Some interviewees had found these materials helpful but others found that they had “a narrow theological focus.”<sup>20</sup>

The elements present in the Diocese of Albany programme include discernment, parish experience and educational and formational opportunities. Between the secular universities, retreat centres and the existing opportunities for training in counselling and facilitation it would be possible to provide these elements in Scotland. In practice there would need to be a co-ordinating body, such as a Centre for Catholic Studies to bring these resources together. Given the size of Scotland, a Centre such as this would have to operate nationally and would therefore have to have the

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<sup>17</sup> USCCB, *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> At the present time the personal contribution made by the Catechist is £465 per year. The course runs for two years.

<sup>19</sup> Maryvale Institute, Birmingham, details of courses available at <http://www.maryvale.ac.uk>

<sup>20</sup> Participants J and S.

support of the bishops. It would be one way to preserve present good practise and to deepen and consolidate it for the future.

In advocating such a Centre I do not want to devalue the model that emerges from the case-studies of an apprenticeship, 'learning on the job', model of training for lay ministry. As referred to in the methodology section, Paul Murray usefully suggests ecclesiology is the study of "living truth of the church".<sup>21</sup> This analogy allows for both theological and empirical expression. The apprenticeship model is hugely valuable. However, applying the above analogy to training for lay ministry would suggest that empirical experience alone is impoverished without some theological awareness.

#### **8:4:2 Discernment and On-Going Formation: Priests**

A further need that came to light in the research process was the lack of quality on-going formation that has been available for priests in recent years.<sup>22</sup> This reality appears to be at odds with the 'National Statement on On-going Formation' from the Bishops' Conference of Scotland.<sup>23</sup> The introduction to the document explains the principles behind the statement:

Having considered the matter at some length the Bishops' Conference of Scotland believes that a commitment to on-going formation needs to be clearly present in the lives and ministry of the priests of Scotland. On-going formation is not time-off from the parish but a way of making ministry more faithful, more effective and more fruitful. There is always a natural tendency for priests to regard their professional on-going formation as something personal and something not to be shared. However, experience has shown us the sometimes heavy price that we have to pay when priests work in isolation; neither self-regulating nor regulated by their Ordinary.

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<sup>21</sup> Paul Murray, 'Searching the Living Truth of the Church in Practise: On the Transformative Task of Systematic Theology', *Modern Theology*, 30, (2013), pp. 1-6.

<sup>22</sup> Participants J, K, R and V.

<sup>23</sup> [priestsforScotland.co.uk](http://priestsforScotland.co.uk) accessed 30/11/2014.

The document goes on to note that “Initiatives in on-going formation should seek to help the priest face new experiences and cope with transition”.

The “changing environment” and “increased workload” experienced by priests referred to in the recommendations resonates with all the responses throughout the research. Real change, however, will need a process that is demanding we cannot have occasional gatherings or Days of Recollection and feel on-going formation has been done. We need the kind of on-going formation that brings about conversion and can produce renewed vision.

### ***8:5 Valuing the Sensus Fidelium Leading to Inclusive and Intentional Pastoral Planning***

The vigorous use of conciliar and collegial structures offers an opportunity for greater consultation and for the *sensus fidelium* to be included in discernment and decision-making. This honours the yearning in the Catholic Church for ‘ordered communion’ as does active and intentional pastoral planning. One model, demonstrating the usefulness of a consultative process, can be found in the ‘Living Church’ process in Down and Connor diocese in Ireland.<sup>24</sup> I believe this kind of process, in conjunction with formation opportunities for lay people and priests, would be necessary to ‘grow’ lay ministry. It simply is not possible just to insert pastoral assistants into the present situation other than in ‘hotspots’ where the conditions are right. These conditions are an open priest who wants to work collaboratively, a pastoral plan and an active parish council. Few parishes at present have these in place. Even those that do so know that the role of pastoral assistant is limited to the tenure of the priest who has chosen to work in this way. Without recognition of lay ministry by bishops this will not change.

### ***8:6 Areas for Further Research***

Vatican II redefined the role of the laity and of bishops but left the role of the ordained priest unclear. More work is required here to ensure a permanent move away from the clergy/lay dichotomy while valuing the role of the ordained.

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<sup>24</sup>see [www.livingchurch.org](http://www.livingchurch.org)

Marie Le Chauvet and Kenan Osborne's work point to the prospect of new insights from post-modern philosophy regarding the sacramental and symbolic life of the church. There is still much exploration to be done in this area.

### **8:7 A Humbler Church**

Here we turn again to consecrated religious and notice why they are so missed in parishes. Perhaps it is indeed because they showed us the sacramental people we are each called to be. Sandra Schneider reflects on the difficulties religious experienced in the period of transition following Vatican II. She describes how many left but –

The ones who stayed were tested by fire. They experienced a deep purification of any sense of spiritual superiority (to say nothing of arrogant certainty), of elitism, of corporate power and influence, of favoured status or mysterious specialness in the church. They had to find the taproot of their vocation in the core of their spirituality, face to face with the one to whom they had given their lives.

Towards the new millennium, for this cohort of women, serenity began to surface from the darkness. Even secular sociologists, but especially the laity, have recognised that the joy and counter-intuitive confidence, the capacity for work and suffering, the whole-hearted commitment to their own spiritual lives and to the people to whom they minister must be rooted in something, someone, much deeper and more central to their lives than anything temporal or material.<sup>25</sup>

One of the sisters who participated in this research opined that: "there needs to be a re-energising of priests. We religious went back to our roots and all that after Vatican II but priests were not renewed after Vatican II".<sup>26</sup> It may be that only now are priests and indeed laity having the same experience of

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<sup>25</sup> Sandra Schneider, 'Why We Stay(ed)', *Ministries in the Church*, Ross, Susan, Bingemer, Maria Clara, and Murray, Paul D., *Concilium*, (London: SCM, 2010/1) pp. 119-131.

<sup>26</sup> Sister E.

being “tested by fire”. If we do not continue to avoid the present difficulties by retreating into clericalism and dualistic thinking, the current experience may lead to a humbler, more contemplative church. After all the ability to repent and renew is in the church’s DNA. This would be a church more able to respond to postmodernity; to walk with the vulnerable, engage in dialogue and extend solidarity and community to all.

## Conclusion

The dissertation has aimed to assess and examine the place of lay ministry in the changing reality of Scottish Catholicism; to look at the factors that make for effective lay ministry; and to ask the question: what would need to be put in place to enable the further development of lay ministry?

I had initially expected the research to focus on appropriate training for lay ministers but I quickly found there are few lay ministers in the Scottish dioceses and little by way of formal training available. A number of reasons have emerged why this should be so. Some of these are practical and related to finance and congregation size, however the main reason lies in the clerical nature of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. This has its roots in the post-reformation church which longed for and valued the sacraments through years of scarcity. It was also the model of Church that was recognisable from 'home' to vast numbers of Irish and other immigrants. More recently it has been a response to the conservatism of John Paul II and Benedict XVI's papacies and the increased conservatism of younger clergy. Clericalism also prevails as a refutation of Vatican II and the pervasive fear that emphasis on the common priesthood of all, inevitably means a devaluing of ordained priesthood. The church, in recent decades, has also experienced decreasing numbers of clergy, consecrated religious and indeed practising members. It has been affected by increasing secularisation alongside most mainstream churches in the developed world. However, alongside this I have also found in the Scottish church a surprising and tangible sense of paralysis and fear. It is evident that some priests "have shut down".<sup>1</sup> I was also struck by interviewee's comments about clergy and bishops who have behaved 'inappropriately', the detrimental effects of clerical cliques and the prevalence of alcoholism. While this has not been the place to focus on these issues there has undoubtedly been, in some quarters, poor leadership in the church in Scotland over recent decades. This has made it difficult to muster the considerable theological and psychological resources needed for change to occur. We need a re-formation of the church in Scotland to re-energise both

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<sup>1</sup> Participant K.

clergy and laity and to overcome the present barriers to collaborative ministry.

While the recommendations in chapter eight focus on praxis, it is also essential that we continue to work with the ambiguities identified in chapter seven i.e. ambiguity in ecclesiologies (7:13:2) and ambiguities in philosophical understanding (7:13:3). Here it is useful to return briefly to the work of Noel Timms<sup>2</sup> and Gerard Mannion.<sup>3</sup>

Noel Timms' research completed for the Queen's project was carried out between 1998 and 2000. It included findings from two Scottish dioceses and four English dioceses; in contrast the research for this thesis is based on findings from the eight Scottish dioceses. Noel Timms' research proved a valuable backdrop throughout my research. It is noteworthy that the findings of the Queen's project continued to resonate strongly with the participants in this research, even those not familiar with the Queen's project. Much of the same language was used by participants as is found in Timms' report, with regard to dioceses 'fire-fighting' and 'just filling gaps'. The statistics in chapter three demonstrate that the difficulties arising from operating with a predominantly clerical model have, in reality, intensified in the intervening years as numbers of clergy have continued to fall. Yet my research findings (2011-2014) and the findings from the Queen's study (1998-2000) concur in their major findings. Dioceses continue to operate from a functional rather than visionary model; there is a 'make do and mend' attitude to diocesan planning; institutional and financial considerations take precedence over pastoral considerations and there remains a clash between operative and promoted ecclesiologies. In the same fifteen-year period the demographic has changed with levels of practice falling and more people, who identify as 'Catholic', becoming disengaged from the church. My research finds this is adding to the already pressurised environment in which ministers, lay and ordained, work.

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<sup>2</sup> Noel Timms (ed.), *The Authority and Governance Project, The Queen's Ecumenical Foundation for Theological Education, Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices in the Roman Catholic Church*, (Chelmsford, Essex: Matthew James Publishing Ltd, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Gerard Mannion, *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time*, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2007).

Many of the conclusions<sup>4</sup> arrived at by the Queen's report are also demonstrable in my research. In particular, my research echoes the conclusion that there remains huge resistance to the rhetoric of 'collaborative' ministries and that:

The huge costs of educating a small number of seminarians in comparison with the limited funding available for lay-formation were rarely addressed. The outcome was a combination of non-decisions and short-term reactive responses to short-term crises rather than pro-active strategic planning for a probable future, 'an aspirational church not marked by strategic thinking'.<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, my findings agree with the Queen's report's findings that parishioners show more individual autonomy than in the past leading to "a complex process of negotiation between lay people and clergy".<sup>6</sup> Despite this, the Queen's report and my own research findings concur that, in the last analysis, lay people remain powerless in the face of decision-making by the parish priest.<sup>7</sup> This became particularly obvious when there was a change of priest. Another point of agreement is the unexpected weakness of the relationships between the diocese and the parishes. This disconnection between parishes and dioceses is reflected in the fact that priests are not 'matched' to the pastoral needs of a particular parish. The dioceses are happy to have a gap filled and do not appear to care what aspirations of the existing parishioners may be squashed in the process.

The Queen's study found that there was only a 'peripheral awareness' regarding the declining number of priests and of the need to prepare ordinary Catholics for an increasingly prominent role for lay ministries and leadership. My research differs significantly here from the Queen's project. I found people were highly aware of the difficulties presented by declining numbers of clergy and experienced this as a painful reality. For this reason all

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<sup>4</sup> Concluding reflections from 'Findings from the Parishes', Timms (ed.), *Diocesan Dispositions and Parish Voices*, chapter 5, pp. 146-149.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 147.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 148.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 148.



participants in my research cited the urgency of adult education and formation. Diocesan respondents also noted a number of initiatives over the years which had not fulfilled their promise. This seemed in part because there were not openings for lay people who had completed courses to develop their ministry. This need returns us to the learning from the 'hotspots'.

Remarkably a small but significant number of priests have successfully implemented new approaches to ministry, working alongside Lay Ministers. Two of these formed the 'hotspots' examined in the case-studies. From these it became obvious that an open and positive attitude was needed by all as a prerequisite for effective change. The existence of a pastoral team, where each person is living out their unique vocation, together with effective structures such as a parish plan and an effective parish council was seen to enable the formation of a total ministering community. The case-studies demonstrated a different and emerging model of collaborative ministry which could be developed more widely without upheaval if there was a willingness to do so.

I believe that the adult education needed for this could be delivered in Scotland, with the requirement for few additional resources. This could happen through collaboration between the universities and the work already being done under the auspices of religious orders. The Jesuits are already running training courses in areas such as 'Spiritual Conversation' and 'Leading Groups in Prayer'; the Xaverian-run 'Conforti Institute' offers courses for teachers and Youth Ministers and the Marist-run, 'Kinharvie Institute' offers training in facilitation and working with groups. A number of the Scottish universities have well-recognised and established theology departments. In order to mobilise and root this collaboration and to give it visibility, I believe that we would benefit from a Catholic Study Centre. As we noted in chapter three, the story of the past three decades has been one of diminishment; of Catholic colleges, seminaries and places of study closing one after another. This has been allowed to happen without any discernment about resourcing training for future ministry in Scotland. We are now reaching a critical point where we cannot fulfil our needs for ministry and equip ourselves for mission without theologically-educated and pastorally-

prepared lay people. The place and role of a Scottish Catholic Study Centre requires further research but the need for such an initiative is obvious from my research findings and the priority given by participants to increasing the availability of adult education. However, it is also clear that training opportunities for lay people and providing lay people with openings for ministry must proceed contemporaneously. This is impossible, in any sustainable way, without the involvement of bishops. It would be vital that they too were involved in the research conversations about the creation of a Catholic Study Centre.

Such a Centre would have to offer courses in a way that was flexible and appropriate for the needs of parishes. As we have seen, even though Scotland is a small country, geographical and cultural differences have a considerable impact. While a feasibility study, with regard to Scotland, would be a necessary next step in moving this project forward, there are models from elsewhere which are helpful. Albany diocese in the United States<sup>8</sup> offers training for parish service through the Kateri Institute.<sup>9</sup> Their literature states that:

Through its Foundations for Ministry Certificate and Leadership for Ministry Certificate tracks, the Institute remains committed to the holistic formation of participants within the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions. The Institute offers women and men the opportunity to explore how God and the community may be calling them to ministry within their parishes, deaneries, and regions of the diocese.

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<sup>8</sup> Albany is an example of a diocese that has been working with Lay Ecclesial Ministers for some thirty years and now has well documented training and support structures in place. I used this diocese as an example of good practice in my Masters dissertation (Edinburgh University, 2007). The then Bishop, Howard Hubbard had been the chair of the USCCB committee which produced *Co-workers*. He details his approach to lay ministry in Howard Hubbard, *Together in God's Service, Towards a Theology of Ecclesial Lay Ministry*, (Washington: USCCB, 1998). In 2007 the diocesan offices in Albany provided the following statistics - there are 176 Parishes in the diocese and 101 priests. There are 22 Parish Life Directors i.e. lay persons responsible for parishes with no resident priest, 5 Campus Ministers also attached to parishes, 198 Pastoral Assistants and 78 Youth Ministers, giving a ratio of priests to full time lay ministers of 1:3, (Office of Evangelisation and Catechesis and Co-ordinator of the Formation for Ministry Programme, telephone interview 1st June, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.rcda.org/Offices/ministry\\_formation/Kateri\\_institute.html](http://www.rcda.org/Offices/ministry_formation/Kateri_institute.html), accessed 27/10/2009.

These courses are three-years long, run one Saturday a month and are offered in a number of regional centres. Participants would normally have their fees paid by their parish and some scholarships are available. Further studies are available through St. Bernard's Institute for Theological and Ministerial Studies.<sup>10</sup> It offers a graduate studies program consisting of a sequence of graduate level courses leading to Master of Arts (Theological Studies), Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies or Master of Divinity degree, and a non-degree Graduate Certificate. Lectures, workshops and seminars are also offered, both on-site and as part of the 'St Bernard's On the Road' programme.<sup>11</sup>

Closer to home, the diocese of Down and Connor in Northern Ireland, is running two courses to train lay ministers each lasting two years with input one Saturday a month. The first level course is entitled, 'Pathways', and is a basic introductory course, open to all. This can be followed by the Certificate in Christian Thought, a course validated by St Mary's University College, Belfast.<sup>12</sup> These courses are run in three locations in the diocese. The expectation is that parishes would contribute to the fees of participants but some diocesan bursaries are also available.

From these examples it would seem that two levels of formation are required. The first is a programme that is accessible to all in parish ministry and the second is the opportunity for higher level study, more specifically aimed at those who have some pastoral experience and feel called to more visible and sustained service in the church. Both of the above examples emphasise the need for regional centres. Funding for initial training came primarily from parishes. Regarding funding for Masters Programmes, Albany diocese paid one-third of participants fees, the parish one-third and the individual paid one-third. There were also a number of bursaries available.

I would envisage a Catholic Study Centre in Scotland being located in the Central Belt but operating with regional centres in other areas. Like the Kateri Institute or the current programmes in Down and Connor, first-level

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<sup>10</sup> Opened as a Roman Catholic Seminary in 1893 and restructured into an Institute for Theological and Ministerial Studies in 1981.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.stbernards.edu>, accessed 3/4/2012.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.drumalis.co.uk/Pathways.aspx>, accessed 20/6/2015.

courses would need to be appropriate for people from different backgrounds and be focussed on parish ministry. For those looking for further studies, the Centre would have to work with the universities, perhaps offering modules on Catholic theology and tradition to complement existing Masters Programmes. Seminars and workshops could also be offered to enrich existing courses elsewhere, e.g. to those in more remote places who have been using distance-learning material from Maryvale. Scotland is small and such a centre could only be effective on a national level with bishops, religious orders and universities working together. This co-operation alone would, I believe, be a driver for change.

The roles lay ministers fulfil in Scotland as chaplains, pastoral assistants, youth workers and catechetical co-ordinators are also essential harbingers of change. These people often find themselves on the front-line as priests now serve on average three or four parishes. One pastoral assistant observed: "It's my number that is on the noticeboard. It is a 24 hour job."<sup>13</sup> It is also evident from the research that lay ministry is vital, not only because of the decreasing numbers of priests and consecrated religious but because collaboration in ministry allows for a style of mission more equipped to address the fragmentation of postmodern living. The research found that an increasing proportion of both priests' and lay ministers' time is taken up by those who are disengaged from the church. Points of connection for this group of people centre round personal crisis, death and bereavement and the desire for sacraments. Statistics show levels of practise to be approximately twenty percent among those who identify as Catholics. This suggests eighty percent of people, who identify themselves as Catholics now occupy a space on the margins of the church.<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Healy, observing this pattern that congregations have not only active members but those who exist on its margins, proposes that congregations should expand to consider

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<sup>13</sup> Participant H.

<sup>14</sup> The Bishops' Conference of Scotland website cites a figure of 185,608 for average weekly Mass attendance in Scotland based on figures from the 2010 Catholic Directory. The 2011 Census numbers 841,000 people in Scotland who identified as Catholic. See the following websites: <http://www.bcos.org.uk/CatholicScotland/tabid/57/Default.aspx> and <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid/Religion/RelPopMig>. Accessed 27/6/2016.

these larger ecclesial forms.<sup>15</sup> He, as we have seen, urges a move to a practical-prophetic ecclesiology prioritising the concrete reality of the church in preference to idealised blue-print models of church. This is exemplified for him by the fact that congregational life demonstrates a plurality of ways of living and thinking as a Christian. Given this concrete situation, he suggests, it could be considered that present doctrine is distorted by an assumption that the Holy Spirit works to bring conformity rather than rich complexity and experimentation.<sup>16</sup> Pope Francis agrees. In *Evangelii Gaudium* he writes:

Differing currents of thought in philosophy, theology and pastoral practice, if open to being reconciled by the Spirit in respect and love, can enable the church to grow, since all of them help to express more clearly the immense riches of God's word. For those who long for a monolithic body of doctrine guarded by all and leaving no room for nuance, this might appear as undesirable and leading to confusion. But in fact such variety serves to bring out and develop different facets of the inexhaustible riches of the Gospel.<sup>17</sup>

Many of those on the margins are people who have grown-up with postmodernity.<sup>18</sup> This, suggests Michael Paul Gallagher, has two different faces. One he calls "the postmodernity of the street" and in terms of spiritual diagnosis he finds it a powerful source of cultural desolation today. He names three wounds of the postmodernity characteristic of our time as: a wounded imagination, a wounded memory, and a wounded sense of

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<sup>15</sup> Nicholas Healy, 'Ecclesiology and Practical Theology', in *Keeping Faith in Practice: Aspects of Catholic Pastoral Theology*, (eds.) James Sweeney, Gemma Simmonds, David Lonsdale, (London: SCM, 2010), p. 127.

<sup>16</sup> Nicholas Healy, 'Ecclesiology and Practical Theology', in *Keeping Faith in Practice: Aspects of Catholic Pastoral Theology*, p. 126.

<sup>17</sup> Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, paragraph 40. See [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html), accessed 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Postmodernism, a movement of the late 20th Century, was first called by that name in 1979 by French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard. He noted a change of approach in the worlds of science, art and literature. <https://www.reference.com/world-view/did-postmodernism-start-3f48fd62fe247de0>. Accessed 1/8/2014.

belonging. For him these are indicators of desolation, in its spiritual sense.<sup>19</sup> Here the faith community is surely called to recognise this as a new form of 'poverty' and to reach out in love and charity, offering a community to belong to and being in its relationality an aide-mémoire of God's covenant with humankind.<sup>20</sup>

The other face of postmodernity, Michael Paul Gallagher describes as a postmodern sensibility of 'searching'. In this he suggests that the 'modern' paradigm of rationality is 'being unmasked like the emperor with no clothes'. There is, as a result, room again for the prophetic, cosmological and mystical.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, David Tracy notes positively that in postmodernity there seems to be a genuine hunger for something beyond ourselves. In his view the post-modern sensibility is retrieving a sense of God that is relational, ethical-political, prophetic and disruptive.<sup>22</sup> Here again the faith community has a multitude of resources, both theological and spiritual, to offer these 'searchers'.

Increasing plurality within congregations and diffuse boundaries in regard to parish membership are issues recurring throughout this research. Positive relationships and openness to the new possibilities that arise from such diversity characterise ministry in the 'hotspots'. However, given the highly clerical nature of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland there would be a considerable attitudinal shift required to embrace the less centralised conceptions of church envisaged by Gerard Mannion and Nicholas Healy. Nevertheless, the case-studies do demonstrate a shift in the direction advocated by them. In these situations the local church was fulfilling its purpose as well as possible, as a beacon of love and charity, as advocated

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<sup>19</sup> Michael Paul Gallagher, 'Christian Identity in a Postmodern Age: A Perspective from Lonergan' in Declan Marmion (ed.) *Christian Identity in a Postmodern Age*, (Dublin: Veritas, 2005), p. 146.

<sup>20</sup> The Hebrew word, זָכַר, *zakar*, to remember occurs many times in scripture, As Alistair Stewart-Sykes comments "...such is the nature of the remembering that not only does it enable the individual to feel as though she/he were a participant, but it ensures that the blessings appropriated in the events of history are made authentic for the present." See Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *The Lamb's High Feast: Melito, Peri Pascha and the Quartodeciman Passover Liturgy at Sardis*, (Brill, Leiden, 1998), p. 49.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Paul Gallagher, 'Christian Identity in a Postmodern Age: A Perspective from Lonergan' in Declan Marmion (ed.) *Christian Identity in a Postmodern Age*, p. 146.

<sup>22</sup> David Tracy, 'The Post-Modern Re-Naming of God as Incomprehensible and Hidden', *Cross Currents* 50, 2000, pp. 240-247.

by Mannion's 'virtue ecclesiology'. Equally the local church was negotiating and experimenting with new responses to its ethnographic reality as urged by Healy. Despite these elements of recognition, I find that both Mannion's 'virtue ecclesiology' and Healy's 'practical-prophetic ecclesiology' is difficult to concretise. In this way it reflects the post-modern culture from which it emanates. The lack of structure in Mannion's and Healy's proposals means that there would have to be wide ownership of their ideals and strong local leadership in order for their vision to survive and move forward. The research found that there was considerable difficulty in sustaining even good initiatives at local level when there are constant changes of priest, in line with diocesan policies of 'filling gaps'. Laity and priests have been both theologised and socialised into their respective roles for several hundred years. I found in reality that even more 'liberal' Catholics were looking for a priest-led extension of ministry. There is much work to be done to give lay people local leadership.

In order to achieve this, Gerard Mannion advocates an ecclesiology that puts pastoral needs and community enhancement at the forefront of the priorities and policies. He supports a model of authority and leadership based on collaboration and service leading to an increased appreciation that the community of the faithful, as a whole, is the legitimate bearer of authority. In order to achieve this, he calls for 'conversation' and the building and maintenance of partnerships, both within and without one's own Christian and religious and existential traditions. This ecclesiology offers a healthy alternative to clericalism promoting, as it does, both collaboration and the principle of subsidiarity.<sup>23</sup>

In this time of diminishment an alternative response is offered, Gerard Mannion suggests, in the macro-ecumenism spoken of by David Tracy. He describes this as: "a path that could lead the church in our times beyond the very post-modern poles of foundationalism and relativism".<sup>24</sup> Helpfully,

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<sup>23</sup> Gerard Mannion, 'Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: A New Paradigm for the Roman Catholic Church', *New Blackfriars*, Volume 85, (May 2004), pp. 304–328.

<sup>24</sup> Gerard Mannion, *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time*, p. 225. For David Tracy such a journey demands that one "must try to hold together three virtues that would normally be kept apart: the virtue of self-respect and self-dignity maintained by all those who never leave their tradition the virtue of a radical openness to other and different traditions; the virtue of

Mannion points out that in this time of plurality and cultural change; “the churches can and must live with a great deal of disagreement.”<sup>25</sup> In this time of flux, he proposes virtue, as a way of looking carefully at the motives behind planning, strategy and structural organisation, with a view to emphasising the priority of love.<sup>26</sup> This usefully moves the focus away from any lay/clergy dichotomy and indeed from other internal tensions

Dialogue and an acceptance of unresolved tensions are essential elements of engagement with postmodernity. For this reason I would like to return to Paul Hypher’s excellent suggestion that dioceses need to develop new, vivid and manifold styles of ‘chaplancy’, appropriate for a huge variety of predicaments and situations of marginalisation.<sup>27</sup> This could meet the need for the ‘macro-ecumenism’ called for by Tracy and Mannion, and echoes with my own experience of diversity in university chaplaincy. Within the chaplaincy we could accommodate those who were committed to growth in faith and looking for opportunities for service, those who came as ‘seekers’, those who came in times of trouble and crisis and those who came to ‘enjoy’ and engage in the social life of the community. Chaplaincy ministry demands ‘presence’ and ‘availability’ and these require quality time. This is exactly what I have found to be lacking in the present ‘squeezed’ reality of the Catholic Church in Scotland. I would contend that a prolific increase in lay ministry is required in order to offer a ‘chaplaincy’-style outreach from our parishes to those on the margins. Lay people, living as we do alongside those disengaged from the church, are in a unique position to understand the complexities and pressures of every-day life experienced by people in this time of rapid cultural change.

My preference for collaborative ministry, inevitably, leads to a redefined role for both the lay minister and the priest. The lay minister is living her baptismal vocation and carrying out a ministry she has been commissioned to do by her local Catholic Community. The priest is living his

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ethical universality with a sense of justice by all who insist upon the communality of the human.” See David Tracy, ‘Beyond Foundationalism and Relativism: Hermeneutics and the New Ecumenism’, in chapter 12 of David Tracy, *On Naming the Present: God, Hermeneutics and the Church*. (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), p. 138.

<sup>25</sup> Gerard Mannion, *Ecclesiology and Postmodernity: Questions for the Church in Our Time*, p. 227.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*.

<sup>27</sup> See section 2:5:2 of this thesis.



vocation as both a baptised and ordained Christian. Both the lay minister and the priest assume a recognised position in the community. The Vatican has reacted to the growth in lay ministry with repeated assertions as to the distinctiveness of priestly ministry. For the most part they need not have bothered the two case-studies show that the lay faithful understand well and instinctively the roles of both ministers. Lay ministers are welcomed by the community exactly because their life circumstances are just like everyone else. Priests, on the other hand, receive love and generosity from communities, recognised by those communities for their life-long commitment. One priest interviewee shared the warmth he experienced during the Papal Mass in Bellahouston<sup>28</sup> when he saw the joy with which people were greeting priests who had served in their parishes in by-gone years. Using Paul Murray's description I have described this recognition of priestly ministry as having its root in priests' role as "sacramental persons"; representing to the Church and the world what the Church already is. (see 7:7:7)

Nevertheless, the fact that priests are men and most Lay Ministers are women begs the question: Are we, in fact, just holding our finger in the dike so as to postpone our dealing with the discipline surrounding who may be ordained?<sup>29</sup> There remains a question, requiring further exploration, regarding the balance between expanding lay ministry and re-thinking ordained ministry to include women and those who are married. I believe that in reality both of these options are needed in envisioning the church of the future.

Growth in all human organisations can be envisaged as cyclical, demonstrating peaks and troughs. The research points to the fact that at the present moment the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland is in a trough. The recommendations in chapter eight are made from that perspective. These recommendations fall into the four categories used in priestly formation and recommended by *Co-workers* as useful also for the formation of lay ministers.<sup>30</sup> These are human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual. At a human

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<sup>28</sup> September 2010

<sup>29</sup> Ganin, *Shaping Catholic Parishes*, p. 151.

<sup>30</sup> See *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Plan for Priestly Formation, and Directory for the Ministry and Life of

level trust and openness is needed. Spiritually, a process of healing, conversion and renewal is called for. Pastorally, a visioning and planning process is required. Intellectually, engagement with postmodern thought, quality training and on-going formation programmes are needed.

In the short-term the urgent need is the re-energising of priests through quality on-going formation and focussed diocesan planning. This, I believe, is the area of work requiring most attention before lay ministry can grow in Scotland. Lay ministry, as we have seen, is itself an instrument of renewal. In Scotland there is work to do before that instrument is sharp and effective. However, all the indications are that we do have enough good people and the necessary practical resources to move upwards from the trough – if, we should choose to do so.

## Appendix One

### Interview Questions for Diocesan Personnel

**In your experience how has Parish ministry changed?**

**How has the Diocese changed?**

**To your knowledge is there or has there been a diocesan pastoral plan in recent years?**

**What would you identify as the key pastoral needs in your parish/diocese?**

**How extensive is lay ministry in the Diocese? What sort of things do lay people do?**

**What arrangements are there for Chaplaincy?/ Youth Work?**

**What training/ resources etc are available to lay people?**

## Appendix Two

### **Information sheet**

The aim of the research is to explore lay ministry in the contemporary Scottish Church and to look at the factors needed for lay ministry to be effective. We have undergone many changes in the Church in the last decade, which have resulted in smaller numbers of priests and Religious and the greater involvement of lay people.

Many see lay ministry as the work of the Spirit and the fruition of Vatican II's recovery of the images of the People of God and the Priesthood of all believers. My interest is centred round parishes and the growing role of lay people as Catechists, Youth Workers and Pastoral Assistants. I also am seeking to explore what training and formation is appropriate for such lay ministry.

I may ask you if the conversation can be recorded to help my records but this will not go beyond me and those who are supervising and assessing my work at Durham University. I shall anonymise the records so that nobody other than me will know the identity of any individual or Parish and all information relating will remain confidential. I shall take all necessary steps to maintain the security and confidentiality of any data you provide and to comply with relevant data protection legislation.

If you have any questions or concerns about this project please do ask me and I will do my best to answer these. You may also contact my supervisor, Professor Paul Murray, Department of Theology and Religion, Abbey House, Palace Green, Durham, DH1 3RS, tel: 0191 334 3947. It will be necessary, to comply with the University procedures, to ask you to sign a consent form regarding the conversation.

If you have any queries at all please feel free to ask.

Thank you very much indeed for helping me with this research.

## Participant Consent Form

TITLE OF PROJECT: The factors leading to effective lay ministry in the contemporary Roman Catholic Church in Scotland.

RESEARCHER: Catriona Fletcher

I confirm that I have read the Participant Invitation Letter. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the study, have received enough information about the study and have received satisfactory answers to my questions.

I consent to participate in the study and I further consent to audio tape recordings being made of the interviews. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time and without having to give a reason for withdrawing. I understand that I will not be identified in the final written thesis and that the information relating to me will remain confidential.

I understand that information gained during the study will only be used within the context of a Doctor of Theology and Ministry thesis and that if further use of this information is required at a later date for a different project, then consent will be sought for that further use. I understand that the information I provide will not be stored in any way that makes it freely available to any party beyond the researcher responsible for conducting the project and the academic staff responsible for supervising and assessing the piece of work.

I understand that if I have any questions or concerns about this project I may contact the researcher and/or the academic member of staff responsible for supervising the project whose details are in the Participant Invitation Letter.

Signed ..... Date

.....  
Name (IN BLOCK LETTERS)

.....  
Address.....

.....  
Post  
Code.....Telephone.....

Email  
.....

**Consent Form for the Parish Priest of Parishes consenting to take part in the Case Study**

TITLE OF PROJECT: The factors leading to effective lay ministry in the contemporary Roman Catholic Church in Scotland.

RESEARCHER: Catriona Fletcher

I confirm that I have read the Participant Invitation Letter. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss the study, have received enough information about the study and have received satisfactory answers to my questions. I will share this information with Parish Council Members and any other appropriate individuals and groups within the Parish.

I consent to the Parish participating in the study.

I understand that we are free to withdraw from the study at any time and without having to give a reason for withdrawing. I understand that the Parish will not be identified in the final written thesis and that the information will remain confidential.

I understand that information gained during the study will only be used within the context of a Doctor of Theology and Ministry thesis and that if further use of this information is required at a later date for a different project, then consent will be sought for that further use. I understand that the information we provide will not be stored in any way that makes it freely available to any party beyond the researcher responsible for conducting the project and the academic staff responsible for supervising and assessing the piece of work.

I understand that if we have any questions or concerns about this project we may contact the researcher and/or the academic member of staff responsible for supervising the project whose details are in the Participant Invitation Letter.

Signed ..... Date

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Name (IN BLOCK LETTERS)

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Address.....

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Code.....Telephone.....

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### Appendix Three

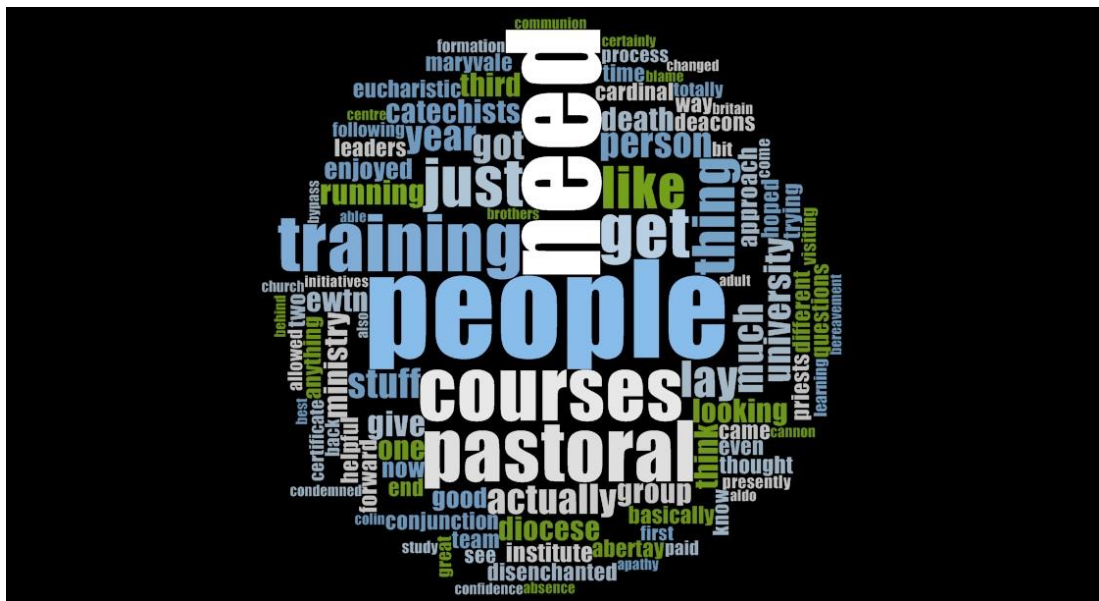
## Word Frequency Across All Interview Transcripts When Analysed Using Nvivo 10

Word Frequency Query

priests	become	closing	lay	bishop	weekends	well	anything	change	everyone	families	friends	gaps
				energy	make	going	bit	clergy	lot	new	now	polish
	get	diocese	just							problem	thing	weariness
people				foreign	lack	asked	broken	deacons	many			
	parishes	large	formation	think	quite	fill	catholic	disenchant	friend	really	adult	suffered
									sisters	prefer	arrangem	

Appendix Four

Word Cloud Generated by Nvivo Using Transcripts of Responses of Diocesan Interviewees to the Question: “What are the Key Pastoral Needs in your Diocese/Parish?”





## Appendix Five

### COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL SCHEMA OF LUMEN GENTIUM OF 1962 AND THE FINAL VERSION OF 1964

#### *Original Schema of 1962*

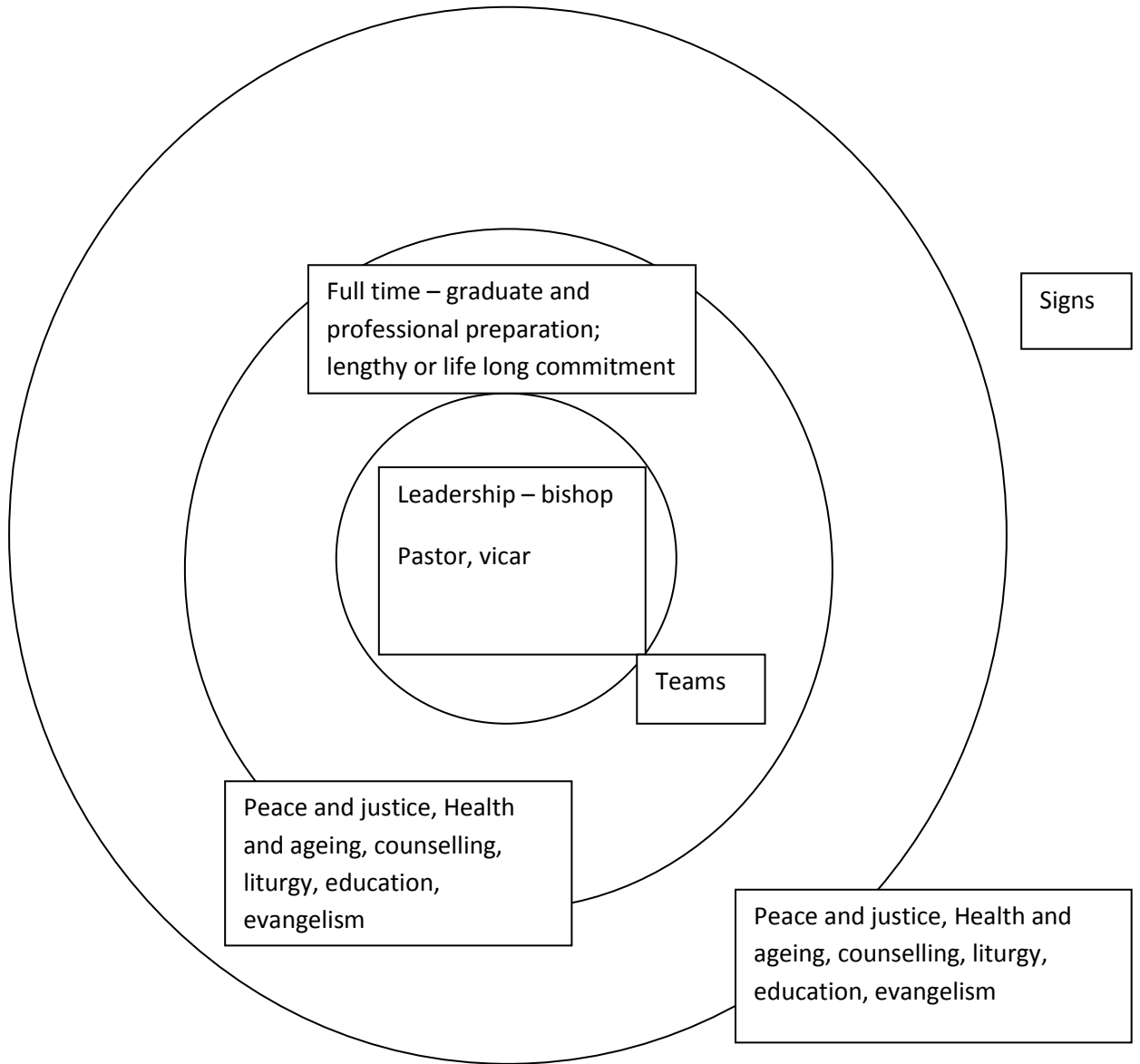
1. On the Nature of the Church Militant
2. Membership in Church and its Necessity for Salvation
3. Office of Bishop, as Highest Degree of Ordination
4. On Residential Bishops
5. The States of Evangelical Perfection
6. Concerning the Laity
7. Magisterium
8. Authority and Obedience in the Church
9. Relationships between Church and State

#### *Final Schema of November 1964*

1. The Mystery of the Church
2. The People of God
3. The Hierarchical Constitution of the Church and particularly the Episcopate
4. The Laity
5. The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church
6. Religious
7. The Eschatological Character of the Pilgrim Church and Its Union with the Heavenly Church
8. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church

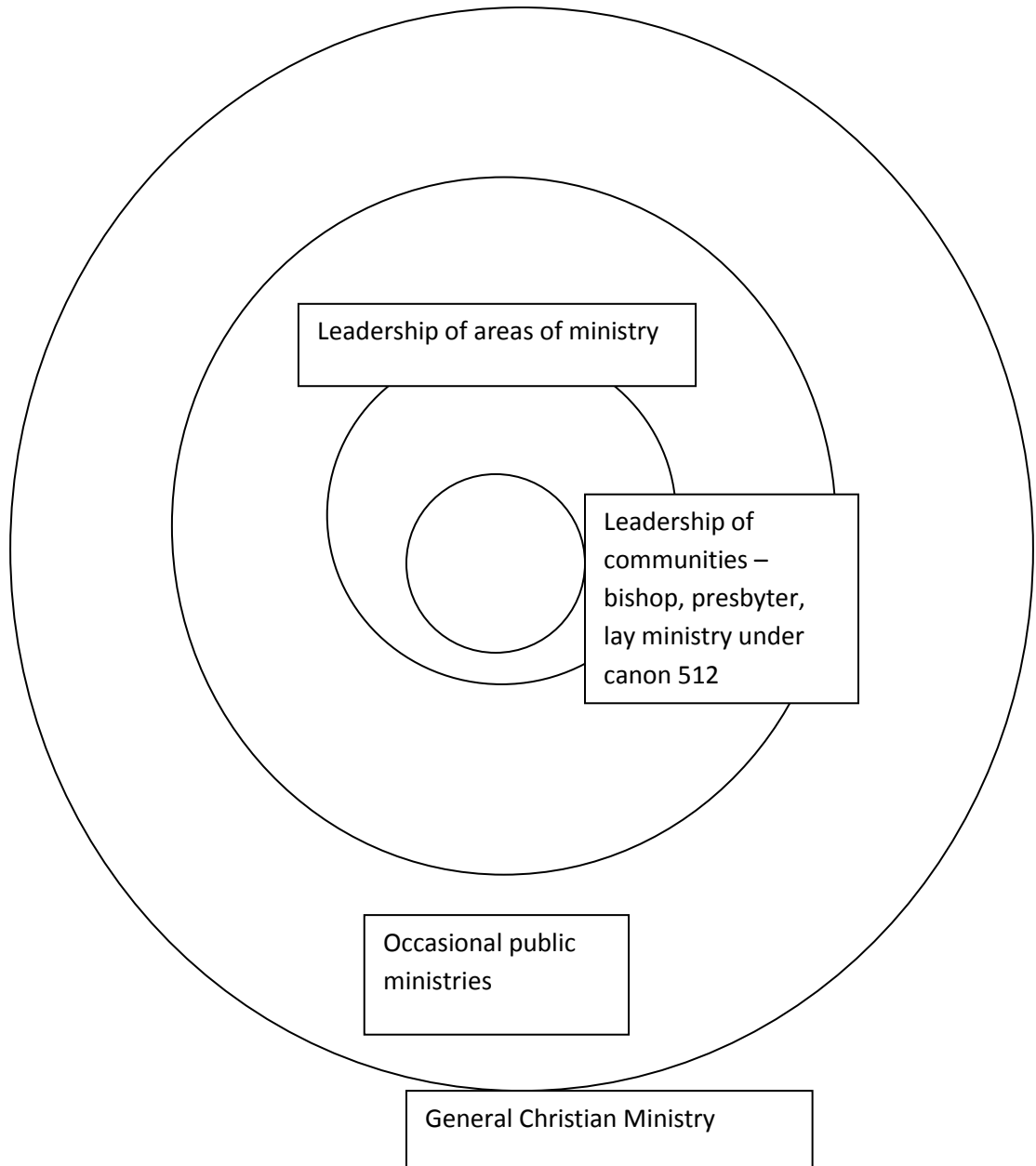
**Appendix Six**

**O'Meera's Model showing diversity and interconnectedness in ministry**



**Appendix Seven**

**Hahnenberg's Model showing diversity and interconnectedness in ministry**



## **Appendix Eight: The Postmodern Challenge, Scenarios Given in Conversation with Participants**

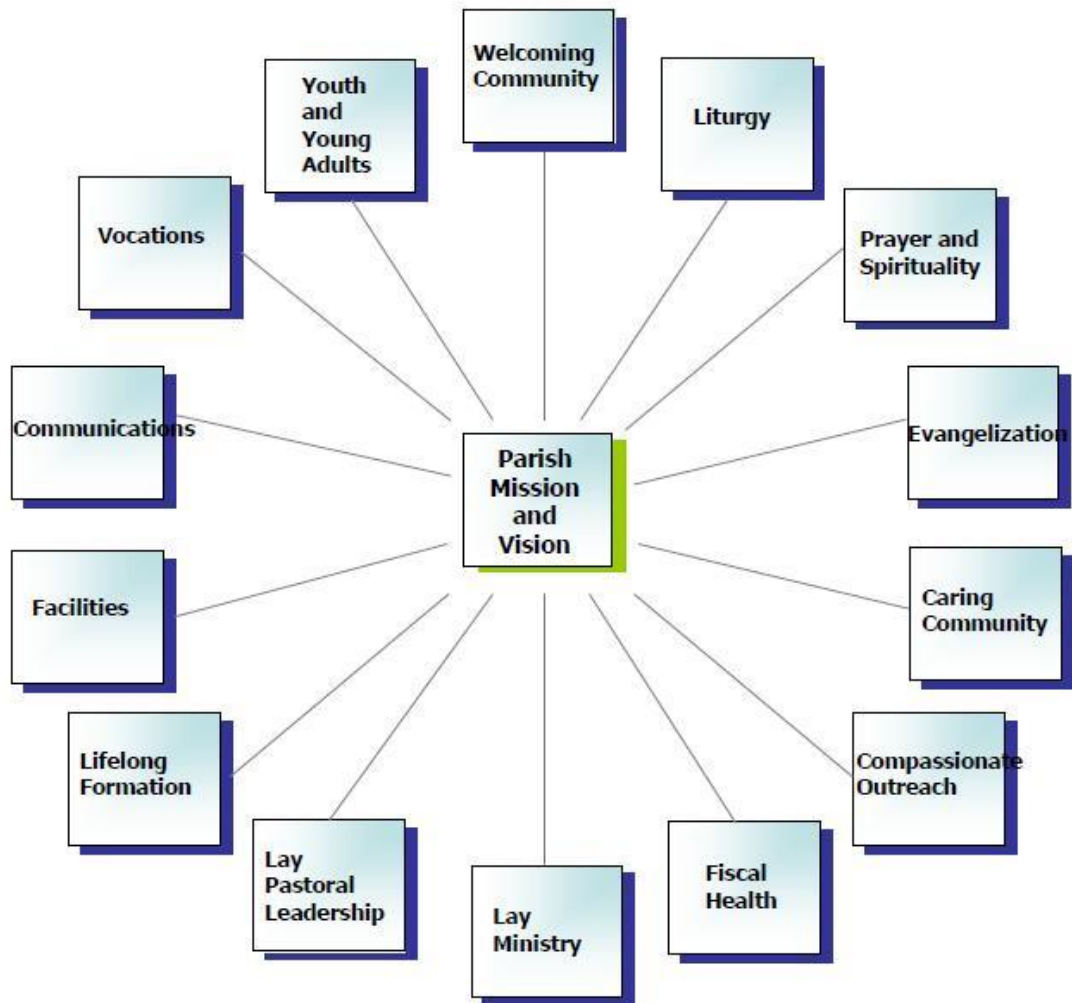
A young woman, Jane comes seeking baptism for her new baby, in conversation it emerges she has another child with a previous partner who lives elsewhere with his father and comes to stay with her every second weekend. She would like him to be Confirmed and to receive First Communion. His dad and his dad's new partner are not Catholics. Jane does not come to Mass at weekends because that is when she works.

An elderly lady who has been a faithful parishioner and daily Mass goer dies. She does not have a Funeral Mass or a Christian Service because her family who are disengaged from the Church do not know how to approach the Church to organise it. Some of her elderly friends in the Parish are very upset because they believe it would have been really important to her to be "buried from the Church".

A student from Thailand from a vaguely Buddhist/ Hindu background comes to the Presbytery and asks the priest to visit and pray in his flat since he thinks there is some "evil" presence there which is disturbing him and his friends.

A young man dies tragically after using illegal drugs: for some months after his death his friends linger round outside the Church often lightening candles at a Cross in the grounds putting together their own 'liturgy' to mark his loss.

## Appendix Nine: Facets of a Vibrant Parish (Philip Murnion)



Parish Vision and Mission	The parish has articulated a clear vision and mission based on Catholic teaching. Parish members are enthusiastic about their faith. They engage in ministry as an expression of their baptism.
Welcoming Community	Newcomers, strangers, and returning members feel at home. They speak of the hospitality, support, and joy they experience within the parish community.
Liturgy	The celebration of Eucharist is the summit of the sacramental life of the parish. The quality of music and preaching enhances "full, active, and conscious" participation in the liturgy.
Prayer and Spirituality	The daily lives of parishioners reveal that their relationship to God and neighbor is at the core of their prayer and spirituality.
Evangelization	Parishioners look for ways to help people to know God both in word and through the witness of loving action.
Caring Community	The parish is built on relationships wherein people care about each other, respect differences, and recognize the dignity of all.
Compassionate Outreach	Parishioners extend ministry to many: the poor, the sick, the vulnerable, the homebound, the troubled, the bereaved, the lonely, and the alienated.
Fiscal Health	The parish meets its expenses, plans, and gives generously to help people beyond the parish boundaries.
Lay Ministry	Opportunities to use God-given gifts for others abound. Youth and children volunteer service for others. Adults of all ages are involved in service, formation, and building a more just, moral, and peaceful society.
Lay Pastoral Leadership	Professionally educated ministers enhance the staff with their knowledge and skills. Their contribution keeps improving and energizing parish ministries.
Lifelong Formation	There are organized formative opportunities provided for all. The faith formation program is well grounded in Scripture and Tradition. It spans early childhood, growing children, youth, and adult commitment through senior years.
Facilities	A master plan is in place that ensures the upkeep and safety of grounds and buildings, anticipates growth and future needs, and manages the cost of maintenance and investment.
Communications	We foster a parish community that understands its gospel mission, is mutually supportive, and well informed about parish life so that all feel welcome and empowered.
Vocations	The parish strives to cultivate vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious vocations and at the same time makes everyone aware of their role in life of the Church.
Youth and Young Adults	Youth, young adults, and their families find the parish community a supportive place to be. They feel part of the parish and use their gifts. Lifelong faith formation is provided and becomes something they value.

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