

on
EARTH
as in
HEAVEN

**Corresponding to God
in Philippine Context**

BRENDAN LOVETT

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*In memory
of those women and men in Mindanao-Sulu
martyred for the sake of the Gospel
who died that we might live.*

Claretian Publications is a pastoral endeavor of the Claretian Missionaries in the Philippines. It aims to promote a renewed spirituality rooted in the process of total liberation and solidarity in response to the needs, challenges and pastoral demands of the Church today.

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Preface

The core of this present work is a talk on basic pastoral strategy delivered to some of the diocesan priests of Mindanao-Sulu. My concern, and theirs, was with critical reflection on the pastoral efficacy of the Church for the life of the world. Of its nature, a talk does not lend itself to elaborate foot-noting, explanation of the tools being used, nor to the critical justification of such tools. It is also properly forbidden to range too widely from local context in a talk, even when the ideas have a much wider application. As a result of all this, I discovered that there was a significant difference between (i) the working paper which I elaborated as remote preparation for the talk and (ii) the talk itself.

This would present no difficulty if I were willing to simply publish the talk as it was given. But I feel that people have a right to the critical foundation—such as it is—behind the assertions in the talk and I experience an obligation to provide that.

Here is how I have resolved my difficulty. I have used the general introduction of my background paper as Introduction to the talk and I have placed the remainder of that paper in an Appendix. There is a clear structural parallel between the talk and the content of the Appendix so it will be easy for anybody who has an interest in doing so to explore further... although still only as far as the present writer can take them!

Although basically the same ground is covered in the talk and the Appendix, I do not think there is an undesirable degree of repetition. My reason is my fond belief that I have found alternative and more illuminating formulation wherever material is recapitulated (e.g. in the presentation of the nine levels of the scale of values). The advantage of multiple formulation for what is an unfamiliar and complex explanatory model is evident.

Finally, while it would be theoretically possible to have both the talk and background paper fused into one harmonious single book, an attempt at such fusion would call for time beyond that available to the present writer. That the world be spared such an attempt on my part may very well be evidence of benign Providence.

I am deeply indebted to Perla Yap and Breda Noonan who effected, respectively, the tape transcript and the initial editing of the present book.

Ozamis City, 1988.

Introduction

Over the last twelve years, enormous vitality and creativity were manifested by Church-related groups in the struggle for a just society in the Philippines. Under the oppressive pressure of martial law, a significant minority in the Philippine hierarchy (moving from one fifth to one third of the Catholic Bishops' Conference over the decade) and an even more significant minority of religious accepted the challenge of becoming a prophetic Church in the face of the growing oppression. Various task forces were created to counter the injustices being perpetrated. Ecclesial structures were creatively modified to make of the Church a space for authentic participation and a sacrament of community power. Such initiatives were instrumental in creating a climate in which secular movements centered on human rights had become quite vigorous by the time of the overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986.¹ There are indications of a dying-off of such creativity. It is a reasonable presumption that what sustained such groups was what was seen as a clear identification between the demands of their faith and a concrete path of witness to be followed out. If this was the inspirational force behind such effort, nothing short of the weakening of the identification could have undermined such groups. Confusion can attach to either the demands of faith or the concrete path of witness. Whatever the source, such confusion makes radical witness an impossibility.

This book will attempt to dispel such confusion by promoting a better understanding of the dynamics of the integral human good. The book falls into two main sections in keeping with the two possible sources of confusion mentioned above. Chapter One is devoted to illuminating the Law of the Cross under which the Church should operate. Chapter Two follows on the realization that living in accord with this Law demands insight into the dynamics of the integral human good and is devoted to clarifying these dynamics. Life under the Law of the Cross is actualized in the concrete mission of establishing the integral scale of values in human-earth and inter-human relations, establishing the appropriate relation between the social infrastructure and the cultural superstructure of society. This will serve to clarify the dynamics of historical salvation and the concrete paths to be followed in participating in such salvific process. Chapter Three elaborates on the implications of all this for being Church. It may help if I indicate briefly the nature of the advance which I am attempting to articulate in this book by relating it to present contexts.

Relation to Global Context

The situation to be addressed is global and this must provide primary context: almost every regional cultural matrix today is principally defined by global economic structural conditions. Within this context, the Philippines is to be understood as being on the periphery in relation to the dominant world system.² Nothing new in that. But what is new is recognition of the need to mediate, in very much more exact fashion than has been done, the demands of faith in relation to this context. This could never be done as long as we lacked the normative foundation for a critique of contemporary culture. Without an evaluative cultural hermeneutics we could not have a theology of culture which could be understood as the foundation of public policy. Developing just such normative foundations has been the contribution of Robert Doran who has furthered the life-work of the late Bernard Lonergan.³ We did not have the critical foundations we needed to spell out the demands of faith in the social order. Now we do. Here are some further connections.

Relation to Earlier Syntheses

Looking back to 1976 and the FERES Seminar in Baguio,⁴ it is probably not too inaccurate to see in that an important contributing moment to the creativity of the last decade. It provided many people with tools of social analysis which, when applied, clarified for them the structures of the world to which they felt themselves being called in responsibility. Now, in the context of the confusion named in the opening page of this introduction, a more nuanced and constructive tool seems to be called for. This tool would not compete with the earlier one in those areas where the earlier excels, viz. economic and political analysis of the system as operative. It would rather complement earlier analysis by the explicitation of what constitutes a healthy society, this again being the service provided by the model of the integral human good.

The need for such explicitation is often overlooked. But the presumption that everyone knows the shape of the good that we are struggling for, has led in the past and leads now to the structures of the very evil against which we are fighting dictating the shape of our own responses. Identification of evil cannot of itself show the appropriate creative response. As tended to happen with Marx, working with diseased social entities encourages us to promote the facts of the sick situation to the status of laws. We then find ourselves tied into struggling against evil on the level dictated by the evil and such reductionist strategies of combatting evil are self-defeating. The key strategy in the present work is outlining the levels and complex interactions of the integral human good. To the extent that it is successful, two things happen:

- a more accurate identification of the dimensions of the social evil to be overcome;
- a more effective strategy for redeeming the situation.

Central to this model is a re-appropriation of the true dynamics and centrality of human culture. The trivialization of this category or, alternatively, the confusion, surrounding it even by thinkers who attempt to take it seriously in revolutionary contexts, must be overcome. The recent comments of Ariel Dorfman, Argentine-born novelist and political columnist extraordinary, in relation to

the events in Chile in 1973 are revealing: "If there was a defeat in Chile, it was our political and cultural defeat in the sense that we were unable to create a language of dialogue, one which reflected what our country really was. I'm not against throwing bricks at Pinochet, but let's not delude ourselves into thinking that will correct the profound causes of the crisis, such as machismo for example. I like to see things in their everyday reality, discover those myths that hinder us, and those that we must create in order to purge ourselves, and cleanse ourselves."⁵

The Church in its social teaching has been trying over more than two decades to find appropriate categories to insist on the centrality of this factor in the pursuit of a just society.⁶ Pope John Paul analyzes culture from its location in the deepest level of the person to its national and global dimensions. All cultural advance is seen to be rooted in thinking and loving; it springs from freedom and needs a system free of coercion in which to develop. By contrast, advanced industrial culture is thoroughly ideological. It has evolved methods of controlling, bewitching and manipulating the masses either for the economic reason of profit-maximization or for purposes of political control. Persons are thereby made into non-persons and fidelity to Christ demands that the Church work to awaken them to their own plight and that of their societies, national and global.

What has blocked the reception of all such efforts by the Pope's audiences⁷ is the lack of an integrated model.

What happens is that despite clear condemnation of oppressive political/economic structures in all such papal or episcopal speeches or documents, the new stress on culture is seen as distracting from concern with such structures and the creative insight is rejected out of hand.

Relation to Developing Liberation Theology

The steady on-going work in liberation theology is a matter of critically grounding its original insights of faith and making sure that no charge of extrinsicism (i.e., employment of categories unrelated

to human historical experience) can be validly raised against it. Despite rhetorical flourishes to the contrary by some proponents⁸ the precious achievement of liberation theology is in elaborating the possibility of a dialectical relationship between reason and faith.

The methodical theology employed in this paper helps to ground the positive prescriptions for Christian praxis offered by liberation theology in the self-appropriation of the subject of such praxis. Such critical grounding will overcome any attack on liberation theology on grounds of arbitrariness.⁹ Without such critical grounding, it is impossible to grasp why God should prefer the poor, etc., because we will not see the correlation between biblical categories, e.g., the kingdom of God, and the built-in normative dynamics of our own search for truth and meaning in life.

In the recent third volume of his projected five-volume christological study, Juan Luis Segundo argues strongly that the exclusive use of a political key in christology by liberation theologians has led to an inadequate understanding of the dynamics of salvation in history. This in turn has led to an inadequate praxis and consequent discouragement.¹⁰ The model which is being developed in this paper should make clear both the necessity and the inadequacy of a political key to christology as the core of our faith. If it succeeds, it should help to release in people resources of faith for a struggle which is complex and historically without end. This is, after all, what is needed.

Relation to Appropriate Evangelization

This last point refers to a recent suggestion by Francois Houtart to the effect that what is crucially needed in the Philippines at the present time is appropriate evangelization. The rather obvious point here is that the Gospel has to be preached in relation to the concrete historical experience of unfreedom/sin. Any analysis of our contemporary situation which falls short of adequacy must lead in turn to alienating evangelization, a misplacing of the ground of hope, and the resultant disillusion of people in the long term. My point is that only integral evangelization reaches this level of adequacy.

Proximate Context of the Talk

The dioceses of Dipolog, Ozamis, Pagadian, Iligan and Marawi (D.O.P.I.M.) have worked together over the years to refine their pastoral vision and their thrust. The focus on which they have agreed in recent years has been building basic ecclesial communities as the primary means of living out their preferential option for the poor. The present book is dedicated to exploring both the theology and spirituality of such a focus.

Preparatory to the 1987 annual meeting in Iligan, a D.O.P.I.M.-wide survey was undertaken and the results of this survey, in its initial phase, were available to the assembled group. The salient parts of the survey were those which touched on people's attitudes to the basic ecclesial communities. The survey results indicated that some 12.5% of respondents find their self-understanding as Christians in belonging to and participating in such communities. Many of the younger priests present expressed dismay at how few people supported or identified themselves with such communities. They felt that so much time and effort had been placed into promoting the basic communities that higher figures were to be expected. This feeling of dismay is inappropriate.

What is needed here is historical perspective. Of course, there has been a lot of talk in recent years about this new way of being Church and it is true that what began as a pastoral strategy in the Latin American Churches has received endorsement from the highest level of Church authority. This has been true for the past ten years. But official owning of the preferential option for the poor and of the pastoral understanding of being Church that accompanies that option still leaves everything to be done. It is undoubtedly a miracle of God's grace when the Church can identify the direction in which it should go. But it is a miracle of grace of a different order of magnitude for the Church to actually implement this option and pastorally follow the direction which it has identified.

What is at stake here is the reversal of pastoral practices and assumptions that have the institutional weight of centuries behind them. This reversal does not happen easily or quickly. In truth, there

are very few local Churches in our World Church that have even made a beginning on this transformation of ecclesial reality that is involved in the implementation of the preferential option for the poor through the development of basic ecclesial communities. Within this perspective, that the communities have already established themselves to such a significant extent in the young dioceses of D.O.P.I.M. is ground for real joy, not for discouragement.

I attempt to provide further encouragement in the following theological reflection. If we get God right, if we come to see where God stands in this world and how God is acting in this world, then we are most of the way towards knowing how we should respond. If we fail to identify what God is doing in history, then I do not think any spirituality can work.

Our salvation consists in being taken up into the dynamics of the Mystery operative in history. It is through interpersonal relations that this shared life becomes linked directly with the elements of the *human good*. The love of the Father is for the Son *as human* in the coming of Jesus. To effect our salvation God must heal our loneliness *and* transform and integrate the human good of order into a finite yet supernatural good of order. So what follows falls into two main parts but the division is not to be stressed. I move from a biblical reflection on what God is doing in history to a more detailed concentration on the shape of the integral human good that is to be served in response to God's action in history.

Footnotes

1. The detailed story of the gradual radicalization of a significant part of the Catholic Church in the Philippines was contained in necessarily fugitive documentation. Readers outside the Philippines may get some sense of the developments through perusing the widely-available series of bulletins and dossiers emanating from Pro Mundi Vita in Brussels, beginning with Bulletin No. 30 "Philippines" (1970) and following up with Asia-Australia Dossiers No. 4 "The Philippines: Five Years of Martial Law" (1977), No. 17 "Church and State in the Philippines" (1981), No. 21 "People's

Movements" (1982), No. 23 "Authoritarianism and Development" (1982), No. 34 "Local Church and Militant Lay Participation" (1985), Nos. 37/38 "People Power and Kilowatts: the Unfinished Revolution in the Philippines" (1986). For a balanced overview of the relative radicalization of the Church in the Philippines in the period from 1965 to the mid-80s see Parig Digan, *Churches in Contestation: Asian Christian Social Protest* (New York: Orbis Books, 1984), especially pp. 106-119. Helpful coverage of Church-State relations in the first three years of martial law is given in *Marcos and Martial Law in the Philippines*, ed. David A. Rosenberg (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989) Appendix 13: the five chapters of this volume provide excellent background to the changing stand of the Church. Useful background is also provided by Alfred W. McCoy, *Priests on Trial* (Ringwood, Australia: Penguin Books, 1984) and in his brilliant contributions to *Philippine Social History*, ed. McCoy/de Jesus (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1986). For analytic coverage of the Church's participation in the actual events of February 1986, see Arevalo, Lambino, Carroll et al. *The "Miracle" of the Philippine Revolution: Interdisciplinary Reflections* (Manila: Loyola House of Studies, 1986). Rather more critical evaluation may be found in the compilation *Religion and Society: Towards a Theology of Struggle*, ed. Battung/Bautista (Manila: FIDES, 1988) pp. 79-106.

2. Cf. For a brief summary argument, my *Life Before Death* (Quezon City, Claretian Publications, 1986), chs. 2 and 3. Also, most recently, Samir Amin, "Democracy and National Strategy in the Periphery" in *Third World Quarterly*, Oct. 1987, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 1129-1156. Amin argues that the price to be paid for democracy in peripheral states is the abandonment of the project of the 'national bourgeoisie' in favor of a 'popular national' project.

3. The main writings of Doran to which reference will be made below are *Psychic Conversion and Theological Foundations: Towards a Reorientation of the Human Sciences*, (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press 1981); "Suffering Servanthood and the Scale of Values" in *Lonergan Workshop*, Vol. 4, 41-67, 1983; "Educa-

tion for Cosmopolis" in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 137-157; "From Psychic Conversion to the Dialectic of Community" in *Lonergan Workshop*, Vol. 6, pp. 85-106. Cf. also Darrell J. Fasching, "Theology and Public Policy: Method in the Work of Segundo, Ellul and Doran" in *Method*, Vol. 5, No. 1, March 1987, pp. 41-91.

4. Cf. Francois Houtart et al. *Religion and Development in Asia: A Sociological Approach with Christian Reflections*, (Baguio: FERES, 1976).

5. South, Oct. 1987, p. 97. Cp. Richard Falk, "Opening for Peace and Justice in a World of Danger and Struggle," IFDA Dossier 62, Dec. 1987, pp. 17-36.

6. Cf. Paul Surlis, "The Relation between Social Justice and Inculturation in the Papal Magisterium," *ITQ*. Vol. 52, No. 4 for a useful analytic survey of the whole development.

7. Perhaps with the possible exceptions of the Inuit and Australian Aboriginal peoples who occasioned the most recent efforts in this direction and who still had sufficient cultural integrity to know exactly what he was driving at.

8. E.g., Jon Sobrino, *Christology at the Crossroads*, (New York: Orbis Books), pp. 221-222, 349-350, 370.

9. A. Fierro, *The Militant Gospel*.

10. *The Humanist Christology of St. Paul*, (New York: Orbis Books), pp. 145-182.

Chapter 1

The Mystery For Us

Human Society Under God/The Failed Israelite Project/The Servant

In order to gain insight into God's action in history, we turn to the Bible. Everybody is familiar with the trajectory of the biblical narratives. I suggest that what above all else is needed to understand these narratives is a sense of the world as being governed by dominative power. Dominative power is the power of empire. It is the power to push people around, to eliminate your enemies, the power to assert yourself as great and to be feared. It is central to the logic of empire and the world has been shaped as far back as anybody can remember by this logic.

Exodus

The story begins with some victims of the power of empire, an oppressed people in Egypt. God is discovered as the One who wills their liberation. And this God is discovered in the movement *out* of the order of empire. Out to what? That was a problem. What you come out to is the desert, of course. In the desert you don't know what is going on. In the desert there are no signposts. There is the risk of creative choice. Directions must be chosen. This is the risk of freedom where the *people have to take responsibility for an*

alternative shaping of the world. On practically every page of the Book of Exodus you will find documentation of the people's monumental reluctance to accept this vocation. It calls for enormous creativity to overcome their internalized bias towards the oppressive and death-dealing power of empire and the slave comforts it undoubtedly provided: this is the theme of return to the flesh-pots of Egypt.

The Trajectory

Recent scholarship¹ tends to see the period 1250 to 1000 b.c.e. as the period when the people tried most successfully to organize their society in an alternative fashion. But whatever the promise of this initial period, it did not last. The shape of the failed Israelite project was reversal to the power of empire. Instead of struggling to shape a society under the liberating God, the people gave in to the temptation to emulate the militaristic structuring of the surrounding societies. The people of God are surely meant to be a powerful people: such is the story which begins badly with David and then gets progressively worse. The nation proceeds to tie itself into a succession of power alliances with resulting misery for the populace. Already, under the Davidic monarchy, oppression was institutionalized in the land. By the time of Solomon, conditions are evocative of the times in Egypt in terms of enslavement of the population. But this enslavement is now at the service of the national security and the aggrandizement of the state.

The prophets draw attention to the perversion of destiny that was involved.² But the process was inexorable. Total collapse came in the sixth century and the people were carried back to unqualified slavery. This time it was to Babylon, not Egypt. Things seem to have come full circle.

But to say that is to neglect the most important aspect of the story. This aspect is the learning process whereby, slowly and painfully, the people came to grasp just what it might mean to correspond to God in history. They learned that it calls for unremitting effort if people are to stay free. In particular, it calls for

enormous creativity if the cultural bias towards the death-dealing power of empire is to be successfully resisted. And this enormous effort did not seem to be possible. Out of this quandary came a new and amazing understanding of who God is in history.

The Servant

During the Exile, an anonymous poet whom we refer to as Second-Isaiah articulated this new and altogether surprising vision in a series of poems which collectively are referred to as the Songs of the Suffering Servant. They are without parallel in the literatures of humankind. The Servant is the figure of those who correspond to God in history. As opposed to the dead-end politics of the power of empire, the Servant refuses to meet evil with evil. The Servant does the unthinkable thing. He shows that the way forward is for the people to take on their own shoulders the burden of historical evil and creatively turn it around. The cost of this is what causes people to turn their heads away from the appearance of the Servant.

What is at stake here is nothing less than God's solution to the mystery of evil. There is a divine solution to the mystery of historical evil and it is crucially important for the Church to identify with it. Failure to do so can leave people nourishing their psyches on the destructive omnipotence fantasies of Rambo-style imagery, leading to nothing. Psychic resources, the images which orientate us to and in life, shape the limits of our creativity. To feed ourselves on models of destructive vengeance is to be forever trapped into the logic of what we hate. It is to become what we hate.

But it clearly is no easy thing to take seriously this central revelation of who God is for us; this same God who is inviting people to correspond to the Mystery in history. The shape of God's solution is the capacity to absorb evil without retaliation in kind. This is the truth of God in history. As the deepest truth of the Universe, it is the only way forward. Apart from it there can be no hope for people or for our world. Somebody has to believe in this. The Songs of the Servant suggest that the people called by God should find

their destiny in this role. The Church only exists in order to embody this divine solution to historical evil.

Under the logic of empire, the people subscribed to the image of a God who would kill all their enemies. It would be wrong to underestimate the extent to which people still subscribe to such an image of God, explicitly or implicitly. Simply discover who the enemies of the people are and kill them: then we can start to build a good society. Such a stand can receive no support from Judaeo-Christianity's central revelation of what God is trying to do in our world. The Servant (symbolizing the People) has to carry out his ministry *within* a world shaped by the warring powers of empire. That is precisely what makes his ministry so incredible to us. The mission of the Servant is not to be lived out in a world where evil has been abolished: it is to be lived out in a world of continuing evil. If the Servant is not prepared to carry out his mission under these circumstances, *there will be no historical salvation*. So it is that the Song says the Servant is subject to ridicule. The Servant is looked upon as ridiculous, pathetic, absurd, because, seen in terms of any category of human meaningfulness available to our cultures, what he is called to do is ridiculous, involving as it does his own suffering and death. The amazing life-giving truth of God is manifest in the way the poems (songs) came to subvert the culture. People came to recognize in this story of representative suffering the longed-for dynamics of their own healing. In the living of the Servant who stands only for life, never death, who does not condemn and refuses to retaliate with evil to the viciousness of the people, they saw how a space for life could be opened up for everybody, a space for peace. But despite this recognition of the truth of the songs, they remained songs. There was, somehow, a shortage of singers.

Jesus

Recognizing the life-giving truth of God for us in these songs and yet not knowing how to realize this truth, the people held on to their hard-won insight as a precious part of their tradition. It be-

came part of the Hebrew Bible, the most important part for a few. The significance of the coming of Jesus is that he gave flesh and blood shape to the songs. The claim above that the high-point of the Bible is to be found in Deutero-Isaiah, means that Jesus did not bring a new message, he realized the message. He alone could sing the song and make it credible truth for us. True faith in the Mystery in history is shown in the one who alone can fulfill the task of the Servant.

The Church

In accordance with this Christology, the Church is simply the body of people who choose to follow the path of the Servant for the life of the world. The Church is the movement within history of those willing to suffer for the sake of life, confronting evil and injustice — the Servant never turns his face aside, no matter what the opposition — until justice be established on the earth.

In terms of explicit formal teaching, it was not until 1971 that the Church articulated that the stand for justice was a constitutive dimension of preaching the Gospel. The implications of that statement are still only being tested out in the wider Church because they are quite enormous. There can be no Christianity, no salvation, no true Christian community apart from people struggling against historical injustice for life. If we can come to believe in God revealed in Jesus as the Mystery struggling to further life despite all evil and are prepared to stand where God stands in and for this world, then the next important issue will be the determination of just where and how life is being threatened in our world.

Efficacy in God's World

To struggle for life in a sinful world involves a revolution in our customary sense of what is efficacious. To live from faith in the God of life is to do the right thing, regardless of historical consequences. To live from faith in some other god is to do the right thing if it looks like it is going to work out. The efficaciousness of God's action in history as reflected in the life of Jesus is hardly to be measured by

our everyday sense of what efficaciousness means. This received moving illustration in Roland Joffe's recent movie, *The Mission*. The dramatic tension in the movie turns on the response to be given to an historical dilemma. The Jesuits responsible for the Paraguayan Reductions are warned that persistence in their policy of protecting the Guarani people from slavery may well lead to the suppression of their Order back in Europe. Suppression would mean an inability to help anybody in the future, it would mean being incapable of being efficacious for any people in the future. The Portuguese and the Spaniards are in full agreement in their desire to enslave the Guarani. In order that the Jesuit Order may survive, the people whom the Jesuits were striving to serve must be sacrificed.

The historical irony is that, in sacrificing the poor, the very thing the Jesuits were trying to avoid happened anyway. Following the logic of expediency did not save them: the Order was suppressed. Their action made no difference to their own fate: it made an enormous difference to the fate of the Guarani who were slaughtered and enslaved.

So the issue is to be able to determine what is really efficacious in God's world. Attention to the action of Jesus, the Servant of the Mystery, indicates that what is efficacious is the promotion of life even in the face of death. To arrive at this point is very important but it is still not the end of the search. What still needs to be unpacked is what is contained in the phrase 'promotion of life'. It may seem both easy and obvious to determine how life is to be promoted and sometimes it is: in the presence, for example, of individual cases of human hurt and need. But the destruction of life on a truly vast scale is due to structural determinants and knowing how to counter those is neither easy nor obvious. It calls for an explanatory model of the human good which will enable us to orientate ourselves to the promotion of life under all historical circumstances.³

Let me summarize the argument so far. We have come to see that to follow the path of the Servant, to participate in God's redemptive action for the healing of the world, is to learn to overcome evil with good. Loving our enemies is undoubtedly

central to the Gospel message. It is what gives identity to the movement called Church. But the only thing that can enable people not to return evil for evil is to be sustained by a focus which is *other than the evil suffered*. If our focus is historical evil, we will invariably be corrupted by that which we are opposing; we will become what we hate. There is only one way to avoid this: our focus in the struggle must be, not the enemy to be overcome, not the evil to be fought, but *the good to be furthered*.

Only people whose psychic energy is nourished by a vision of what life was meant to be and who are so in love with that vision that they can sustain literally anything in struggling for life, only such people can walk the path of the Servant.

Footnotes

1. Cf. N. Gottwald, *THE TRIBES OF YAHWEH*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1979).

2. Note that the prophets in one important respect belong to what we would call the old model of being Church. They talk to the kings: they do not primarily talk to the people, urging them to take their destiny into their own hands. The prophet is himself culturally so much a part of the power culture that, even when criticizing the system, he mirrors it back to itself. We priests tend to resemble the prophets: our mode of intervention contradicts the desired goal of liberation.

3. Incidentally, an explanatory model of the human good is not a matter of having answers. It is characteristic of ideologies to claim to know the answer. The Church has not got any answers which the people themselves have not got. What the Church exists to promote is the dynamics that enable people to create the right answers.

Chapter 2

Corresponding to God

Furthering the Integral Human Good

The desire to correspond to a God who overcomes evil in history by furthering life forces us to investigate just what it is that furthers life. The answer is by no means obvious and that is why I ended the last section by raising the issue of efficaciousness. Ever since Machiavelli,¹ political thought and practice in the Western world has been governed by expediency. The calculations of expediency signal despair in regard to the efficaciousness of doing what is morally right. Centuries of such practical despair bequeath a legacy that is difficult to discard. The idea that evil is to be overcome by furthering the good is an almost incomprehensible idea in a world long dedicated to responding to evil on terms dictated by the evil.

But even when the Gospel injunction is accepted, we are still faced with the challenge of discerning just what it is that furthers life. The human good is made up of many levels of value. Any one level, or even all levels, may be handled descriptively without providing an answer to our search. What is needed is an explanatory matrix of the human good; that is, understanding the complexity of the human good as a structure implicitly defined by internal relations. Only this move from description to explanation enables us to see how levels of value relate to each other within the integral human good.

The Scale of Values

The complexity of the human good involves nine irreducible levels of value. This sounds rather a lot and it may help to give a simple diagram and name the levels.

NINE LEVEL STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN GOOD

Religious

Personal

Cultural

Social

Vital

Zoological

Botanical

Chemical

Physical

from above
Conditioning
and Enablement

superstructural

infrastructural

political

economic

technological

from below
Differentiation and
Creativity

Genuine movement
between levels
occurs only through
personal relations

Authenticity on one
level requires
authenticity of the
next higher level.

Physical Value

I have slipped more data into my diagram than is justified at this point but it has the advantage of preparing people for the starting-point. If it is true that "differentiation and creativity flow from below upwards," then the 'bottom' level of value is the appropriate place to begin. And appropriation of this first level is crucial. Human beings are the point where the emergent process of the universe comes to consciousness. This means that who we are is the consciousness of the universe. To fail to identify ourselves with the twenty billion year old story of our emergent universe is to remain incapable of ever approximating to the human good. The very first step in moving towards the integral human good is being reconciled to and glorying in the story of the universe as our foundational truth. Nor is this step to be taken for granted: for quite some time now many of us have been living out consumerist productive values which are simply not sustainable on our Earth. Our self-understanding has been at the expense of the Universe! It is no wonder that we find ourselves in trouble. Objectively, our mode of life is a denial of belonging to the earth, a refusal to accept the human condition as limited. This vitiates any alleged spirituality we may lay claim to.

Chemical Value

When a star goes supernova, all the non human-made elements of the periodic table are created. To reflect on ourselves at this level of value is to be challenged again to accept the truth of the emergent universe as our own truth. The agreed age of our Earth is some four billion years. The life-forms which emerged are to be understood at one level as the achievement of exquisite balances of chemical processes. Central to the emerging life processes was the determination of mediated combinations of chemical elements. In these mediated combinations, most elements came to enter into the life process. What we call poison are combinations — or straight elements — which fall outside these time-tested compatibilities. Failure to respect the delicacy of this balance is failure to realize that only organically mediated elemental compounds can qualify as true

food for human beings. Nature does not feed people monosodium glutamate! If people feed it to themselves, they should not be surprised to end up in depression. What we eat — even whether we exercise — determines our emotional life. Even more basically, every living thing depends on air and water and sunlight. If these are poisoned, then all life becomes poisoned.

Botanical Value

In the emerging story of our planet, each breakthrough lays the foundation for the subsequent level of life. Life's greatest laboratory is surely the tropical rain-forest and very few researchers doubt that most of the data which we need in order to preserve and enhance life on our Earth is contained in these forests. Yet at the present time such forests are being irreparably destroyed at the service of unbelievably obtuse short-term commercial values blind to the true riches to be had by preserving these forests. The issue of survival in our time is increasingly coming to be recognized as that of preservation of the forest, not nuclear wipe-out. Continued destruction of the forest at present rates will bring an end to all life long before we get to press the nuclear button. But people in the United States will have to change their addiction to hamburgers if the devastation of the rain-forests of Central America and the Amazon is to stop. Just as people in Japan and Europe will have to place their aesthetic delight in hardwood veneers in subordination to much more fundamental life values. Even down to twenty years ago, some subsistence-economy tribal people in Mindanao had more than 42 different types of domesticated food in their diet, all grown in their swidden or garden. Through hunting and gathering in the forest, they exploited a further 62 kinds of wild food.² Market pressure world-wide is ensuring that the marvellous variety of foods that agricultural genius has developed is being wiped out in our generation. Only the varieties that meet market specifications of appearance and shelf-life can be sold. But good fresh food is doomed under this criterion of long shelf-life. So it is that people are being encouraged to purchase food treated with preservatives. The latter are chemical additives which have no place in the billion-year experi-

ment of emerging plant life. There is reason for grave concern at the effect on the chemical constitution of human beings of such chemically processed "goods".

Already, in parts of Mindanao, people have seen the effects of deforestation and are taking a stand in defense of their forests. They have experienced severe flooding and traced the problem to the loss of the forest cover. The upland forest can absorb torrential rain and release it gradually to the lowland in a sort of 'sponge'-effect. Destruction of the forest has catastrophic effect on the precious topsoil. The lush fertility of a tropical ecology can be deceptive. In such an ecology, within forty-eight hours of planting a seed, some signs of life already make their appearance. By contrast, in temperate zones, people have to wait many weeks for any sign of life. This striking phenomenon can cause people to imagine that the fertility of the tropics is inexhaustible. This is a dangerous illusion. As McDonagh stresses,³ in geological terms, the Philippines is a new country and its ecology is fragile by comparison with lands of older geological formations. Prior to the depredations of the Europeans, the Central Plains of North America were, in soil terms, the richest place on Earth with a topsoil depth of some 16 feet. In the Philippines, we can rarely speak in terms of a topsoil depth of 16 inches. Due to the farming methods used in North America over the last century, one half of this richness of soil has been lost and emergency steps are only now being taken to save the rest. Clearly, the introduction of agribusiness-style production would spell the death of the Philippines and its people. Apart from erosion, the soil can lose its fertility through inorganic chemical fertilizers, through being poisoned by means of chemical pesticides, and through salinization brought about through excessive irrigation.

Further important insight into the human good to be gained at this level of value relates to the diversity of plant species. The minor issue here is the destruction/loss of local varieties of seed in favor of commercially desirable high-yield hybrid varieties. The latter are notoriously vulnerable and do not breed true. The major issue is the wipe-out of millions of years of nature's crucial survival experiments under most demanding climatic conditions that is involved in the an-

nihilation of the tropical rain-forests. We are destroying the gene pool of successful wild varieties of plants at exactly the same time as we are placing the world at risk, foodwise, through reliance on climatically highly vulnerable hybrid varieties.

Zoological Value

Most people are in touch with the fact that the beauty of life comes from the variety of life-forms. The beauty of life and the truth of life coincide. Life comes to be only as a web of life, as interconnected life forms which can only survive through symbiosis. We simply do not know just how many species there are exactly. But we do know that there are no superfluous species. And we do know that species emerge only once. If a species becomes extinct, it is gone forever. The process of emerging life is irreversible.

Beauty lies in the balance between species. Any species multiplied to excess becomes a horror. Science-fiction movies are full of this kind of stuff, indicating that deep in our sub-conscious the awareness is there. It is only through the checks and balances governing emergent life that life remains beautiful. Take away all such checks and a single virus would multiply all the way to the moon in 24 hours! Through the destruction of habitat, we have been eliminating species at an ever-increasing rate with each decade of this century. Nobody knows what this may mean for the continuation of human life. Everybody knows that sooner or later destruction of the web of life must mean the end of human life. Reverence for life in all its manifestations — all being interconnected — is a condition of our survival. We can only hope to relate in a truly human way towards each other if we have a respect for life which goes beyond the human to embrace all the creatures that together constitute the possibility of our emergence into life and the sustaining ground of our continued existence on this planet.

We are so anxious to stress our difference and superiority to the animals. Of course, there is a difference. The Book of Genesis says that we are the animal who names all the other animals. But this needs to be unpacked. Precisely in what does human vocation and

dignity lie? What do people add to the universe? Just this: that now it can reflect on itself. We exist to enjoy and appreciate the wonder of the whole process, the unconscious grace of things. Unfortunately, although we are the universe come to consciousness, we seem to have become consciousness against the universe. Instead of nurture, we have opted for rape.

Vital Value

Since vital values are those of health and strength, grace and vigour, they are furthered by good food, shelter, and adequate nurturing. But what constitutes good food can only be understood through the levels of ecological value already considered. Although human beings come directly into focus only at this level of value, it should be clear by now that they have been indirectly in focus in all that preceded and that it is truly levels of the integral human good that we have been reflecting on up to this point.

No great insight is needed in order to grasp that meeting vital values is foundational to all further levels of value of the human good. If people do not get fed, they die. But enormous numbers of people in our world do not get fed. Or they get inadequate nutrition. The reason for this is not to be understood at the level of vital value. It has to do with the project of the rulers of our world being a project of death. We have paid some attention to the pre-human dimensions of this evil in reflecting on earlier levels of the scale of values. At the human level, this evil manifests itself in the creation of the poor, the wretched of the earth (Fanon).

Short of dying, inadequate food supply leads to human emergence with diminished faculties. The future of the human family is being programmed today throughout our world by the undernourishment of hundreds of millions of children. The significance for the future is horrific. The humanity of the future will not be able to call on the creativity it needs because human resources will have been irreparably impaired in childhood. Everybody will pay the cost of present failure to feed the children of the world adequately. Adults can sustain something close to starvation levels for quite some time

and still make a come-back. Deprived of needed food for even 48 hours at early stages of their development, children will already begin to undergo a process of lasting damage. The effects of consistent malnutrition cannot be remedied at a later stage of life. There are many forms that death takes and some are slow. Since the food is available, we can only look to a human project of death to understand our situation.

Every level of value in the scale is dependent on authenticity at the next higher level for its realization. There is mutual conditioning up and down the scale. So this brings us to social value.

Social Value

Social value is the value of systemic order. People are social beings and their recurrent needs can only be met through human promotion of the good of order. But promoting the good of order involves multiple inter-related systems. Social value subdivides into the values of technological system, economic system, and political/legal system. The important point to bear in mind is that the good of order is defined through reference to the recurrent human vital needs that are to be met.

a. *Technological Value:* We need tools and so technology is a permanent human necessity. At first blush, the issue of technology might seem to merit little reflection — it is only a matter of tools. The oversight here is in regard to the structuring effect of a given technology on our world and on our minds. Technology now environs our humanity and reverberates within it. It is accurate to say that we live in a technological age: "worship of the machine" names the priority given to "technological fixes" as response to all the crises of our times.⁴ There has been an enormous enhancement of power through the development of modern technologies, but it is power that is necessarily concentrated in the hands of the powerful, the organizers of the process. It has the inevitable shape of power against the people. Any technology which operates outside of local people's control undermines their creative capacities: they serve it instead of it serving them. In reflecting like this,

we are looking at technological value as foundational to higher levels of value. But we must also look to the first four levels of the scale of values in order to be able to judge what is intelligent technology and what is not. The speed of ecological destruction in our times is directly related to the decay that sets in with mechanical repetition, our much-prized capacity to do over and over again the very things that are proving most destructive to the well-being of the planet and its peoples. Realizing appropriate technological value is an outstanding task in our times.

b. Economic Value: The systemic value in focus here is that of an order of production and distribution which can ensure that the vital needs of a total population will be met in a sustained and recurrent fashion. An economic system which only meets the needs of some of the population fails to realize economic value and is to be judged a failure. Economic value is defined in relation to vital value. It is not defined in terms of profit, or prices, or market forces.

Clearly, we are involved here in normative definitions. We are not describing what is actually operative in our world. But it is only this insight into integral human good — how levels truly interrelate — that enables us to creatively critique and understand what is wrong in our world. Profit maximization as an unqualified goal will inevitably lead to technological choices in production which are inimical to the human good. Agribusiness, which is displacing small farmers all over the globe, is not agri-culture: it is agri-destruction. Industrialization as hitherto practiced is not a sustainable option on this planet. A break with the dominant world-system is a priority for all countries on the periphery. To continue to play according to the rules of the dominant system means death to the majority in such countries. Bioregionalism, the concentration on building biologically self-sufficient and sustainable areas that can feed their own populations, is the only viable strategy for the future.

c. Political Value: In the last few sentences of the preceding section, the value of political system is already hinted at. Economic systems of production and distribution are mindless. All kinds of factors can drastically affect the workings of an economic system, even imponderables like weather. Political value is the value of a sys-

tem which ensures that, in fluctuating circumstances, the economic system will continue to meet the vital needs of a total population in sustained and recurrent fashion. Just as the meaning of economic value is not to be found within economics, so the value of political system is to be defined through relation to the other levels of value. As with economic value, the gap here between our normative definition and what really transpires in our world is all too obvious. Instead of the political order controlling the economic order in the interest of meeting the vital values of the whole population, economic interests use politics to further their interests. I leave comment on the nature of this gap until the development of the next higher level of value, the cultural.

Cultural Value

By this stage in my presentation, the reader will be well accustomed to the difference between the explanatory definitions we are developing in the attempt to clarify the integral human good and the connotation the same terms carry in everyday discourse. Everyday meanings of words reveal the meanings that are actually lived out in a society. In everyday usage, what is referred to as "cultural" has a decidedly marginal position. Even when its importance is stressed, it is thought to refer to certain circumscribed habits or practices. People talk of "cultural objects," with the obvious implication that there are non-cultural objects of a presumably different (higher) order of reality. Our talk reflects an achieved displacement of cultural process from the center of our societies.

Cultural value is realized in human beings having a world through the meanings they create in mediating the real. Human-kind subsists in many cultures. What does this mean? It means that the richness and actuality of being human is realized in a multiplicity of enormously creative achievements, each unique and irreplaceable, whereby the givenness of cosmos is changed into the significance of world.

But all of these alternative ways of understanding things and ourselves are not welcomed as potentially enriching. Under the

massive drive of industrial-consumerist culture, all alternatives are denigrated as "primitive," "tribal," "archaic," or any other term that will justify their repression and deny their right to exist. The monocultural imperialist drive of the economic world-system continues to devastate the humanity of peoples. It needs to destroy cultures in their deepest meaning as processes — processes in which people think for themselves and decide for themselves what is desirable and what is truly significant. It is this true meaning of cultural process that cannot be furthered in a world ruled by market forces.

A people's right to determine their own destiny is surely integral to their freedom. When determining one's own destiny is reduced to the right to consume in the same pattern as others consume, we have made a travesty of freedom. When the demand that we be respected as a nation means being accepted by other nations as having become the same as them, we no longer know the meaning of true nationalism. But all the revolutionary theories of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have this failure in common: the failure to appreciate the centrality of culture in the liberative process. The key to understanding these theories is to grasp their pre-occupation with economic and political evils. This pre-occupation is understandable but it is not to be condoned. They concentrate on the inversion of political system by economic system in societies under the modern world-system. They fail to advert to a second inversion that has been occurring, without which the displacement of politics could not have happened. This is the displacement of culture. A human world demands that people should use a political system to mediate their decisions about the shape their world should have to the economic system. The double inversion of the scale of values means that, in fact, economic interests use the political system to convince the people that they need just what the economic system is producing. Failure to convince leads to repression of the people by the political system, justified by the invocation of "national security." Faced with oppressive political power, it is understandable that some people think the appropriate strategy must be the take-over of political power. But to take over a dominative apparatus is always a Pyrrhic victory; it

is to inherit the disease. The party which claims to speak for the people fails to promote the heart of the human good, cultural action for freedom.

The answer to Lenin's question: What is to be done?, is to restore people's power of judging and deciding, people's control over the political process and, through this, control over the economic process. Our present situation is marked by the breakdown of the integrity of human valuation. Political system, serving economic interests, functions to control cultural value in favor of those interests. In such a situation, restoring the primacy of cultural process is an essential and primary moment in furthering the good. With each step in the elaboration of our explanatory model, what it means for the Church to live at the service of life is being clarified. What should be emerging is the perception that promoting the power of community, creating a space within which people are inspired together to creatively name and control their lives and their world, is the heart of the Church's action as a healing presence in the world.

Personal Value

Personal value is realized in the authenticity of people. Personal value is the condition of possibility of cultural value being realized. It is creative people who realize value, in themselves and in their milieu. In doing this they are an invitation and inspiration to others to do likewise. In loving and being loved, people promote themselves and others to ever deeper levels of creativity and appreciation.

Structural change can make it easier for people to be creative and authentic but it can never supply for creativity. Personal value is realized in people being responsive to the built-in demands to be attentive, intelligent, rational, responsible. This seems to some to be too obvious to mention but it is easily forgotten. Every time we try to manipulate people, every time a program is imposed on people for implementation, we fall into the trap of forgetting that cultural value can only be realized to the extent that people are participating intelligently and freely.

Personal value is only manifest in and through cultural activity and, perhaps, that is why it is so easily overlooked. But in the absence of personal value, the culture degenerates into a slum. If I am not in touch with my own life of feeling and with what is going on in my psyche, if I am not striving to understand how those psychic dynamics relate to wider historical causes, I cannot promote healing, either my own or that of a wider society.

Destructive historical patterns of relationship to the natural world wreak havoc in the human psyche. We live to a significant extent from psychic power. So, if we are not in touch with our own life of feeling, we will not be in a position to bring forth the responses that make for a furtherance of life.

But where are we to get the resources to sustain this demand for authenticity in our living every day of our lives in the face of the frequently vicious reactions such authentic living elicits in a world reluctant to change?

Religious Value

Religious value consists in being loved unconditionally and results in the capacity to love without restriction. It is the experience of being infinitely cherished that makes possible the personal authenticity that can overcome evil with good and promote the healing of the world. It heals our loneliness and restores our original dignity and, in this way, promotes us to freedom for life. So religious value manifests itself in a capacity for loving. We speak of a movement of enablement from the top down through the scale of values, beginning at this level of value. Religious value does not have to be explicitly named in order to be operative in people's lives. But nothing else can enable us to bring forth the creativity that consistently promotes life in a world where sin is not to be eliminated but transcended.

There may be, for example, a crisis in the land at the level of vital value, resulting in undernourished children. As our diagram has it above, authenticity at one level is conditional on authenticity at the next higher level. Our problem in effective distribution of vital values

may give rise to questions which if pursued would lead to new technological, economic and political institutions at the level of social values. For these institutions to be promotive of a good of order that is truly worthwhile, they have to respect the integral dialectic of community: they cannot simply be imposed on people. But the development and implementation of new technological, economic and political institutions may well prove to be impossible short of a transformation of the cultural values informing a society's way of life. And if some or many people have been finding their identity in patterns of consumption not to be sustained under the new institutions, only their experience of affirmation at deeper levels of their humanity can free them enough to embrace the needed changes in the service of life.

My limited example in the last paragraph helps to indicate how the levels of value condition each other. Religious value is manifested wherever people of explicit or implicit faith are responding with love to life. And the response is typically dictated by where in the scale life is being threatened at any given time. So it is that the threat of ecological disaster constitutes the key challenge to authentic religious faith in our time. Our faith in the God of Life is shown by our standing for life wherever victims are being created. Religious rituals dissociated from such witness are alienating for people. The Eucharist cannot be celebrated apart from a community committed to the struggle for life. Apart from such a community it would have no meaning.

Such is my sketch of the scale of values which go to make up the integral human good. It has taken me so long to do this that our original purpose may bear repetition. We wanted to clarify what it might mean to correspond to God in history. Reflection on the biblical account of what God is doing in history led to the divine strategy of overcoming evil with good. Getting deeper into what it might mean to "do good" is what led to our investigation of an explanatory model of the integral human good. And I began by insisting that the dynamics of salvation in history are being illuminated by this investigation. Salvation has to do with wholeness, integrity. Integrity means living out in our lives the truth of life as it comes to

us from the hand of God. Violation of any level of life means that the truth of life is violated in its integrity. The critical foundation for the Church's option for the poor is provided by our reflections. The Church has no other place to stand but in solidarity with victims. This is how it follows in the path of the Servant. But our model provides the further service of indicating how to respond creatively to the plight of victims.

Footnotes

1. A much-maligned man: unlike those who came after him, he never called evil good, even when he advised the Prince that it might be expedient to do it.

2. Cf. Stuart A Schlegel, *TIRURAY SUBSISTENCE*, (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979), pp. 166-167.

3. *TO CARE FOR THE EARTH*, (Quezon City: Claretian Publications /London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986).

4. "Power is a central problem of the technological age..." The passion for mastery led to advances in science, exploration of distant lands, conquest and enslavement of peoples throughout the globe, and development of techniques for mass production and distribution of goods. The struggle for mastery pitted the strong against the weak, generating disparities of rich and poor, conflicts between metropolitan centers of power and dependent satellites. Thus, distributive justice becomes an intractable problem for a technologized world." Gibson Winter, *LIBERATING CREATION*, (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

Chapter 3

Implications For Being Church

The Centrality of Culture

The single most important clarification to be gained from our explanatory model is the key position to be accorded to cultural process in the promotion of the integral human good. I would like to draw attention to a sustained movement in the development of the social teaching of the Church which leads to a similar conclusion.

Paul VI and Developing Social Teaching

The final document of the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, incorporated the work of cultural anthropologists and ethnologists into its section on culture. No definition was offered but a series of complementary descriptions which manage to cover both the classical understanding of culture and the modern empirical understanding.¹ But this conciliar teaching is optimistically innocent of the histories of deliberate cultural destruction by colonizers.

When Paul VI wrote *Populorum Progressio*, he recognized that "the social question has become world-wide" and saw the need for structural change. He did not as yet see in cultural analysis the integrating social role. His later *Octogesima Adveniens* is unintelligible unless read as response to the documents of the Latin American bishops at Medellin. Faced with the concrete analyses of

the bishops and their discernment of the demands of faith in those circumstances, Paul's response is to disclaim having a universal solution. Now the local church is entrusted with the task of discovering its own authentic witness.

In this same document, Paul shifts his emphasis from economics to politics, stressing the power-dimension of economic problems. But he goes on to place politics within a wider cultural-religious matrix from which the deeper issues of life and its meaning are more appropriately addressed.² And he ends³ by stressing the need for utopian imagination for creative thinking about social issues beyond the ideologies of technological capitalism and bureaucratic socialism.

Then in 1971 came *Justice in the World*, a document which is to action on behalf of justice and peace what Chalcedon was to Christology. Its sixth paragraph stated that working for social justice in all its forms is seen as "a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel" and placed such action alongside preaching and liturgical celebration as necessary dimensions of the church's mission. Such action is thus seen as intrinsic to their correct understanding. Finally, in 1975, with *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, the tentative shift from politics to culture present in *Octogesima Adveniens* becomes definite. The 1974 Synod had spoken of inculturation of the gospel among people of different cultures. Paul now relates evangelization to the Reign of God as the only absolute. He gives equal prominence to witness and preaching. He integrates the concept of liberation into his social theology. The need is for the evangelization of culture and cultures and it has to be achieved right to their very roots.⁴ What has become clear to Paul is that structural change is needed and is impossible without creative cultural change.

The social teachings of John Paul II are already enormous in extent. For present purposes it is enough to stress that the theme *faith and culture* is central and gives rise to a subsidiary preoccupation with inculturation.

I cannot help but see this development as reflecting a search for an ever more adequate grasp of the integral human good. And it

reaches in its own way the same conclusion as that articulated in our explanatory model: the centrality of the cultural.

Cultural Process and Human Survival

The truth of the economic values which we have been embracing for a few centuries now confronts us in two monstrous facts: the increasing impoverishment of the majority of the world's population and looming ecological catastrophe. The facts are related. An economic system geared to meeting the wants of some is proving itself incapable of meeting the needs of the many. The inanity and perversion of this same system is revealed in its non-sustainability. So why not change it? It so happens that the level of addiction to what the system produces is so high that our revolutionary theorists tend to conceive their task as that of ensuring that these "goods" will be (impossibly) had by all. The insight that is needed is that the consumerist path at present defined by the so-called developed nations as humanly desirable is dehumanizing and stupid. The insight is to be had through reflection on the fact that such a path has revealed itself as incompatible with living on this our earth. It is also incompatible with living with our fellow human beings since it can only be had at the expense of the majority of them.

The level of change that is needed at the structural level calls for — and is impossible without — cultural creativity of a truly revolutionary order. People must come to reject craven respect for bigness: small is beautiful, meaning that only the scale that integrates perfectly with the dynamics of our earth is worthy of admiration. What savages our earth is stupidity and must be proclaimed as such. People must come to see and live by the perception that our cultural disease, the cult of maximization, of accumulation of possessions, finds its significance in death, the death of people and of our life-systems. But if such cultural creativity is the sine qua non condition of the needed structural change, promoting the conditions of such cultural creativity must take precedence in any truly revolutionary movement.

Taking over political power avails nothing unless people gain effective control over their own destiny. Nobody speaks on behalf

of the people. People speak for themselves or not at all. And people only express themselves through participation in the cultural process whereby the meanings and values without which they cannot live are subjected to criticism, validation, correction or improvement.

Relevance to Preferential Option for the Poor

The first phrase of the D.O.P.I.M. vision statement makes the option for the poor the key to authentic pastoral practice. Since much misunderstanding still attaches to this phrase, some preliminary clarifications may help in attempting to show how our exposition above validates this option.

One possible misunderstanding hears the word option as demanding a choice between people, a preference for some to the exclusion of others. This is to confuse the recipients of the message, those to whom it is addressed, with the content, which is the intended focus of the phrase. The option for the poor is about what gospel is to be preached to everybody. The issue is not about talking only to the poor: the issue is about there being only one Gospel. And this Gospel is good news to the poor and bad news for those who insist on finding their identity in being rich. In a world of structural evil, God is partisan. God is on the side of the poor and, if we fail to make this quite clear to everybody, we have betrayed the truth of God in history.

Another total missing of the point lies in romanticizing the poor. This tendency needs to ascribe all kinds of qualities to the poor to justify God's partisan stand. They are portrayed as somehow more virtuous, "simpler," less immoral or less guilty than the rich. But the sole ground of God's stand turns on the truth of oppression, not on the morality of the oppressed. Oppression is what kills life and the God of life must stand with the victims of oppression in their struggle for life. There is a moral judgment involved here but it is not that passed on individuals, either rich or poor. The judgment is that passed on the morality of two conflicting causes. There is the cause of the rich and powerful and there is the cause of the poor. A judgment has to be passed and a decision made:

which of these two conflicting historical causes is to be supported? Everything else will hinge on our answer.

A third misunderstanding places its focus on lifestyle. The option for the poor is taken to mean living with the poor and like them. Clearly, to take our stand on the historical cause of the poor and to live this stand consistently will have inevitable and deep consequences for our style of life. But the focus is once again lost when the meaning of the preferential option is confused with its consequences. And this confusion does not lead to authentic living. Fidelity to the truth of life is what grounds authentic solidarity with the historical cause of the poor. The issue of lifestyle is taken care of by sticking with the poor in their struggles and continually supporting their cause.

In clearing up possible misunderstandings of the preferential option, I hope to have conveyed the essential meaning of this option. I claimed earlier that the explanatory model of the human good does the Church the service of critically grounding its preferential option for the poor. The model enables us to see how the creation of victims at any level of the scale of values undermines the authenticity of all other levels. The total inter-connectedness of each of the nine levels means that life can only be furthered by solidarity with victims. There is no other conceivable way. Perceiving this in the light of our explanatory model removes any trace of arbitrariness from the stand which the Church has accepted as its own.

However, there is one quite radical observation that must be made. The language of the option for the poor inevitably has us who make this option in focus. We are the acting subjects. What the Bible is concerned with is people's own option for their liberation. It is indicative of a certain alienation in our being as Church that we find ourselves talking about our option for the poor rather than about that which is of concern to God — the poor's option for their own cause. Once we achieve this corrective change of focus, the meaning of the Church's option for the poor appears as follows: being a Church that facilitates the emergence of people who take responsibility for their own lives, their own history, their own faith; a Church which is genuinely the space where freedom, growth, and

authenticity for human beings become possible. Neither an authoritarian nor a dominating Church can achieve this.

This final corrective reflection on the meaning of option for the poor leads us on to consider the validating light thrown by our explanatory model on the other phrase of the D.O.P.I.M. vision — "...through the building up of basic ecclesial communities."

Cultural Value and Basic Ecclesial Community

The task of the Church is the promotion of healing and creating in history. The scale of values of the integral human good enables us to see the central place of cultural value in this task. So, only a Church which, in and through its own dynamics, furthers the realization of authentic cultural value embodies the shape of salvation in history. In the light of the explanatory model, a Church based on basic ecclesial communities is not just a possible way of being Church: it is the only authentic way to be Church. I shall develop this point in the concluding reflection on basic communities below.

An Integral Spirituality

The fiercely atheistic revolutionary movements of the last two centuries were fired to a significant extent through reaction against what they saw as alienating religiosity. In the light of the scale of values, it becomes possible to name more exactly the ground of dissatisfaction. Along with the whole classical tradition, the Church was constantly stressing the importance of religious, personal and cultural value. With their emerging insight into structural determination and its effect on vital values, the revolutionary thinkers tended to locate all human problems at this level. Since the Church could not articulate the manner in which religious, personal, and cultural value relate to social value, the Church's reiteration of the primacy of these values was seen as avoidance of the real issues of life and history and therefore as — possibly unwitting — collusion with the evil of the world: religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, it gives expression to the oppression but does not

challenge it. The response of the revolutionary thinkers was to classify religious value as alienation, overlook personal and cultural value, and strive mightily to enact solutions to the evil of history exclusively through the levels of economic and political value. Such a response cannot avoid doing violence to the very people it is trying to serve and emancipate.

Until such time as religious value is understood and lived in relation to all other levels of value, Christianity will not merit a hearing in our world. Short of this achievement, we will be left with the dualism almost automatically associated with the word "spirituality" at the present time; the dualism which led Tom Berry to say that what we really needed was "earthuality"! There is only one gift of Life and it must be appreciated in its integrity. The God of Life cannot be worshipped in a world whose systems create death. If we are addicted to the very processes which are bringing death to the poor, we are carriers of the disease and cannot liberate anybody. In our world, worship of the living God is manifest in creative struggle against everything that makes life and love impossible. Integral spirituality reveals itself in cultural creativity, the capacity to initiate alternatives to system-dominated values.

Standing where God Stands

If we are not to die horribly, forced to 'nuke' one another in our attempts to preserve control over the limited and fast-vanishing resources of a planet that we never learned to cherish, we must learn to stand where God stands in this world. The issue of spirituality in our times is identifying where God stands in our world. We need to correspond to the Mystery in history. In the light of the integral human good, it is possible to assert that God stands wherever life is being victimized. In the light of the crucifixion of Jesus, it is impossible to deny that God is primarily identified with all the crucified of history. Crucifixion is an on-going story: it is not over yet. Therefore, to be in touch with the living God as Jesus was is to seek out the victims, identify with their cause, and support them in their struggle for life.

The issue is whether it is the historical project of the rich which shapes our minds and values, our sense of what is desirable, or whether our allegiance is to the historical project of the poor, the struggle for suppressed and crucified life. Again, it is not a matter of concentrating on the negative rather than the positive: it is, rather, seeing death in what has been masquerading as positive; it is acting out of a true love of life that enables us to see clearly what it is that furthers life for all. The figure of Jesus is not a sad figure. Nobody would have been enthralled by him, nobody would have left secure, respectable living and risked following him if he did not embody a joyous freedom of life, a freedom which found an echo in themselves, an echo which told them that this was what they most deeply wanted to be. The difference between people struggling without faith and people struggling from faith is the presence of the dimension of creative joy in the latter. Those who struggle from faith are not governed by the logic of the negativity, the evil, they are fighting. They are governed by awareness of the beauty, the worthwhileness, of the life they are struggling to promote. As long as we are enslaved to consumerist values, any suggestion that we need to change our way of life is bad news to us. Our attention tends to focus on what we have to give up, the things to which we are addicted. No creativity or joy is possible here. Only the insight of faith can bring liberation by putting us in touch with what we really, at the deepest level, want. The insight of faith shows us that our own integrity as human beings demands that we will be able to look other people in the eye without having to turn aside our faces from their misery, torture and hurt. It is life in me that demands that I do not relate to other people in dehumanizing ways, in patterns of dominative power. If we could but listen to our own psyches we would know where our happiness and fulfillment lie.

The heart of joy is knowing you are part of the direction of the movement of life. Joy is not to be attained through forgetfulness, a chemically engendered 'high'; such escapes merely reap later depression. The joy of discipleship consists of knowing that you are in touch with the movement of life, knowing that you are moving towards healing and integrity.

The Gospel promises that no-one can take this joy from us. It is, therefore, in no way dependent on the actual response of other people to us in the world. If people fail to respond well to us, this cannot interfere with the joy of knowing that you are on the path of freedom, life, and integrity.

The Acts of the Apostles provides a striking picture of people transformed by such joy. Prior to the death and resurrection of Jesus, the apostles are portrayed as fearful and socio-centric people, that is people whose lives are controlled by what the wider society will think of them, controlled by the gaze of others. Set free for living by the crucified love of Jesus, they manifest a cheerful single-mindedness in the pursuit of the truth of life that is impervious to the frequently murderous response of others. The lesson is that if we wish to experience true joy in our lives we must simply cherish life in its integrity.

To cherish life in its integrity is to experience real joy because the goodness of the Giver, the goodness of the gift, and the goodness of ourselves is known in and through the experience of the integral gift. Even in the normal context of struggling for this integrity, the experience is given that it is Life itself that empowers us, the power of God promoting people to freedom for the life of the world. The central Christian symbol for celebrating the meaning of our lives is the Eucharist. The preferred formulation of this symbol in the Johannine communities was "my flesh for the life of the world". Apart from serving life in its integrity, we can know no peace or joy.

Concluding Summary

My whole concern has been to provide critical foundations for the particular self-realization to which our local Church has committed itself. I maintain that a coherent formulation of how faith relates to social reality validates our chosen path in D.O.P.I.M. The shape of salvation in history lies in overcoming the sin of the world. A model of the integral human good enables the concrete shape of this sin to be identified. The Church promotes salvation by over-

coming historical evil. We analyzed the evil as the growing impoverishment of people and traced that back to the derangement of the cultural process, the structurally induced denial that people be allowed to creatively shape their own destiny. The way of being Church must embody the opposite process to this historical evil.

Standing with the victims is the first and lasting step. But the only way that the Church can live out solidarity with the poor is through the basic ecclesial communities. We have inherited a structure from the past, enshrined in the Church's law, which is called the parish. There is no hope of the gospel being authentically appropriated by the poor in our contemporary situation through the received geographical structure called the parish. It belonged to a world where the cultural vitality of human communities made its limited structures tolerably effective. At present, the revitalization of the power of communities to control their lives is the only process in and through which the liberating message of the gospel can be effectively heard by the impoverished majority.

This, I suggest, is where the deepest challenge to the spirituality of the priest, the Christian leader, enters in. It is the challenge of kenosis (Phil. 2:5), self-emptying that the others may live. Commitment to the basic community model of being Church involves abandonment of the pastoral model where the priest is at the center of everything, delivering services and being affirmed by the people for doing so. Dying to such a pastoral model is very costly to us. If our goal is to enable people to appropriate the Gospel as their own, the priest cannot have the central role in the dynamics which effect this. The priest makes himself marginal to these central dynamics by promoting the group of people who have to think about and appropriate the gospel in relation to their own lives. Without the support of the priest, the groups will certainly die in the initial stage, so the priest is essential. But these communities do not revolve around sacramental practice in the way the parish revolved around sacramental practice. Accordingly, in order to be the priest the people need, I need to die to a priestly identity which turns on sacramental practice.

It is not sacramentalization that promotes the life of the communities: it is appropriation of the Word of God as their gospel, as good news for the poor that enables them to name, understand and gain control over their lives and their world in the power of the God who is on their side. The Church furthers salvation through this transformative power of community. And because it is their appropriation of the Gospel that matters, I have to let go of another cherished image of what it means to be priest — that I will be the one to tell people what the Gospel means. To serve the Gospel truly in our situation is to open up a space where people can discover for themselves its life-giving truth by reflecting on their lives in the light of the Gospel. The servant of the community makes available to people as much data as he can from tradition and contemporary knowledge but he does this to facilitate people thinking for themselves about their lives.

It is wrong to say that the dynamic of faith is reflection on the Gospel in the light of our contemporary situation. It is, rather, a reflection on life in the light of the Gospel: the Gospel as the hermeneutics of the very lives we are living. Thereby, the true significance of people's lives is illuminated in terms both of the evil that oppresses and the truth of the God of Life who stands faithfully with people in their struggles to further life.

Committing ourselves to being Church in this manner is the meaning of the D.O.P.I.M. thrust. It is not without its dangers. Those who profit from present political power structures recognize every manifestation of community power as dangerous to their position and present control. They are not mistaken in seeing the basic ecclesial communities as having huge relevance to politics. They are mistaken in thinking that this means a politicization of the Church. What they are witnessing but failing to comprehend, and much less welcome, is the realization of cultural value effected in and through the appropriation of God's liberating word. This autonomous power of community is resented by all those on both the Right and the Left who do not trust people's capacity to determine their own destiny and who insist on control. If we do what truly needs to be done in our contemporary situation, we will please

neither faction. And so our popularity, if not our lives, may be at risk in some quarters. The very people who have found us "congenial" up to now may no longer find us so if we commit ourselves to this vision of God who has always been on the side of the victims. But popularity ratings pale into insignificance when placed beside the rather more important issues of knowing that our lives are historically worthwhile in promoting the lives of others and knowing that we are responding to the truth of the life that is in us and to the Giver of Life in our times.

Postscript on Celibacy⁵

Q. *It would seem that your presentation of what it means to be Church is contradicted in practice by the discipline of celibacy: instead of being "a space within which freedom is nurtured in a maximal fashion," it would appear to be a place where restrictions are placed on people's freedoms.*

A. The question covers a number of distinct issues. It is best to tackle them one by one and I begin by talking about the value of celibacy in itself. This is both difficult and necessary because of the dearth of good theological reflection on this topic. Much of what has been written is vitiated by the confusion of purpose and effects. Even in magisterial treatment of this topic, the attempt is made to justify the option of celibacy and this is typically done by drawing attention to the manner in which it enables people to do other things. This results in functional treatments of celibacy — celibacy is said to be a value because it enables people to "be available for others" or "pray more." These arguments do not work. It is impossible to prove that the qualities or tasks referred to are not being equally well achieved by people who are not celibate. It is impossible and fatal to try to give a functional justification of the value of celibacy. Fatal because to attempt to give a functional justification is to betray the deepest meaning of this gift.

The deepest meaning of celibacy is scandalous to functional thinking. The truth of celibacy consists in this: that some people, understandably few, are so affected by the wonder that God is — Boundless Generosity, Unending Acceptance and Affirmation, Forgiveness and Freedom — that *they literally do not need anything more*. In other words, the typical patterns of insecurity and emotional need which play such a role in most people's lives do not dominate in theirs. Of course, many other people know about the love of God also, but they are not affected in the same way by the knowledge. That is why we speak of gift in relation to the very few who are affected in this way. Authentic celibacy is rare but wonderful. When people see a priest or religious consuming a lot, cluttering up his life with expensive things, building security all around him, they tend to say that this is understandable because he has to compensate. Their compassionate judgment misses the point. Their judgment on such a person should be that he is simply not celibate because if he were he would not need to compensate. Authentic celibates are so happy to be alive in God's world that their deep needs are already met. Such people are striking witnesses to the Mystery in history and what they witness to is a truth that everybody needs to be in touch with — the marvel of the truth of God for them. If there are authentic celibates in the world, then the whole world is enriched enormously because all people need to have their deepest need met.

In married life and friendship people support one another and confirm one another's value and worth. This is normal and great. But no person was meant to be the fulfilment of another's unending desire and relationships deteriorate when people demand of others that they be the fulfilment of their desire. People are meant to support each other in the truth of their unending desire and that makes for authentic relationship. Only the universe and the Mystery at its heart can meet a person's true need. People can be sacrament of the truth of the Mystery for each of us. This happens in marriage and it happens through experiencing a truly celibate person.

I'm saying that authentic celibacy is witness to the Mystery and, like all else that has to do with the Mystery, it can only be freely and

cheerfully accepted and lived out. Anything else would be a contradiction and witness to nothing. But where it is so lived out it is a significant thing for the life of a community. In a world where emotional relationships are notoriously distorted by the possessiveness engendered by insecurity, all of us need to experience the source of unconditional affirmation with which the authentic celibate is in touch. He or she embodies the truth of life for everybody — that there is endless affirmation of our truth and dignity as persons. Freed from compulsive needing, people could relate freely out of mutual appreciation and life would be much healthier for all concerned.

Having made some attempt to describe the positive value of celibacy, I feel better about approaching other aspects of the question with which we began. There is, and has been for many centuries now, this discipline or law in the Catholic Church whereby only those presumed to have the charism of celibacy are to be ordained to priestly ministry. This is the appropriate description of the present situation. To try to formulate it by saying, for example, that the Catholic Church demands celibacy of its priests is to evoke a situation of screaming injustice. No institution, no State, no Church could ever have the right to impose celibacy on people as a condition. It would be a totally intolerable violation of human rights. What present Church Law requires is that only those who discern that they have this charism of celibacy should present themselves for ordination.

Now, one may argue about the desirability of such a law and say that it is unnecessarily restrictive of the field of ministry. But this argument is irrelevant to those who have been asked to discern whether they are gifted with this charism and have given an affirmative answer. The argument about restrictiveness refers to the needs of Christian communities: it does not refer to the rights of currently ordained priests. As an argument which refers to the needs of Christian communities, it is becoming overwhelming. The number of Christian communities which have a right to be nourished on the Eucharist and whose right to be so nourished is being effectively denied by this restrictive discipline is increasing all the

time. Unless this situation is redressed by the Church, we will be pastorally guilty of a very grave sin of omission. This is the main source of pressure for change in the Church's legislation, not any issue of injustice done to those ordained under present legislation.

Of course, adequate formation structures should have ensured that celibacy was seen by people as a distinct and separate vocation to that of ministerial priesthood and facilitated the discernment as to whether people truly had this charism of celibacy. Where people were not encouraged to discern about themselves in this way and where they failed to understand that the issue was the truth of themselves and not an extrinsic condition to be fulfilled in order to become a priest, real injustice may have been done. I simply do not know how adequate formation has been in contexts with which I have had nothing to do.

But the Church is not saying that you have to become celibates in order to become priests. It could never justly require that. What the Church is at present asking is that only those having the gift of celibacy present themselves for priestly ministry. Whether, pastorally, the Church is justified in holding on to this legislation is increasingly disputed.

Footnotes

1. Nos. 53-62.
2. "It is for cultural and religious groupings, in the freedom of acceptance which they presume, to develop in a social body, disinterestedly and in their own way, those ultimate convictions on the nature, origin and end of man and society." No. 25.
3. Oct. Adven. No. 37.
4. Evangelii Nuntiandi, No. 20.
5. Many important topics were raised in the question and answer sessions. I have attempted to integrate some of them into the body of the presentation but some proved resistant to integration. Such was this discussion on celibacy. One major area, on salvation and liberation, I have also omitted with a good conscience because of the recent Claretian publication of the excellent essay by the brothers Boff on this topic: they cover it better than I.

APPENDIX

Part 1

The Divine Solution to the Mystery of Evil

A strong case may be made for reading the Bible as a painful learning process about the illusions of dominative power or the power of Empire. More positively, it is fruitful to read the tradition as communicating to a desperate world the means whereby it can overcome this awful power of evil in history.

In our own times, we are being forced to learn the inevitable end of indulging such illusions of empire as we face the possibility (probability?) of an abrupt nuclear end to the human drama. What has been unmasked for us in a manner that was never available to previous generations is the true face of domination and the creation of victims as death. Not just death to the victims but death to all involved in it.

The human drama has been marked by pell-mell successions of roles which could be designated as winners versus losers, victors versus victims, masters versus slaves, empires versus colonies, superpowers versus weakly underdeveloped countries. The titanic irony of the nuclear arms race is that it has

the potential to end these scenarios of heroic victors and crushed victims. Physically dominative power is reaching its apotheosis... The dialectic of master and slave, of victor and victim, ends in the universal victimhood of all human beings.¹

But I do not believe that anything can be learned from such a lesson. Self-regarding fear of our own imminent victimhood can never promote creative responses to the crisis of our times. Fear is not productive of creativity, at least not of the kind that can promote life rather than death. What we have still to learn from the tradition is the possibility of a creative love of life which can overcome evil on terms other than those dictated by the evil. It is this possibility which constitutes the revelation of Judaeo-Christianity.

Culmination of the Old Testament Revelation

Transimperial Form of Existence/Vision of the Servant

Whatever about the possible promise of the beginnings of Israel's experience, it seems clear that the temptation to understand themselves in terms of the power of domination arose early and decisively. Under David things got bad and then they got progressively worse. I give the briefest of outlines.

Through playing the power game, interpreted as idolatry by the prophets, first the northern kingdom was wiped out and then the southern. Writing before the latter catastrophe, Isaiah gives the clearest articulation of what is involved in such idolatry. I borrow here from what I have written elsewhere.

The superpower of the time was Assyria, aggressively militaristic, centered on what is now Upper Iraq. Small city-states, like Judah, were in dread of this giant. In the year 735, the little kingdoms of Syria and Israel joined to attack Judah. Their purpose was to force Judah into an anti-Assyrian alliance. Ahaz, the king of Judah, immediately appealed to the Assyrian king for help. It came. Syria and Israel were wiped out as independent nations. The prophet Isaiah had not agreed with the alliance and had confronted Ahaz. He urged trust in God

who would give a sign (7.14). But the king did not listen. The alliance went ahead.

The son of Ahaz, Hezekiah, wished to get out of this alliance. But he was soon invited to enter into alliance with Egypt in return for the super-weapons of that era — Egyptian horses and chariots. Once again Isaiah came forward and warned against involvement in power-politics. Once again he was ignored. Judah became Egypt's strategic ally. Then the Assyrians came. Under Sennacherib, they swept along the coastal plain all the way to Egypt and Hezekiah was pinned down in Jerusalem. Isaiah persuaded him to hold out and not give in to fear. Jerusalem survived for a further 100 years.

In addressing the question of political alliances, Isaiah used religious language all the time. He did this because he saw it as a religious matter. He spoke of idolatry, of trust in God, of justice and the lack of it. Peace is, for him, ultimately a religious notion, as is justice and security. Since the final answers in these areas concern living with all the people God has created, they involve some insight into God's hope for human family.

...To trust in armaments and alliances is, for Isaiah, to trust in idols. An idol is an image of the power on which the state depends. Everything is to be sacrificed to these idols, including, if need be, the people. All moral considerations are subordinated to them: it suffices to invoke 'a matter of State security.' For Isaiah, this is a matter of 'making a covenant with death' (28:15). Any absolute doctrine of state security sets up the state in the place of God. It causes us to over-ride all moral considerations in the service of this doctrine, justifying any degree of violence. Ruling classes everywhere equate security with armaments, guns, armies, 'the balance of power.' They live a lie regarding their real vulnerability.

...(For Isaiah), the security of the nation lay in the worship and the knowledge of the true God who is known only in the work of justice. The men of Jerusalem feared the wrong things. Instead of awe before the God of life and his demands of justice

in the land, they stood in awe of military might, in awe of death. And they made a pact, a covenant, with death. For this reason, the prophet said, the nation was doomed to destruction. ...What brings security to the nation is paying attention to justice, attending to the case of the weak and needy of the community. And such prioritizing brings security to the nation because it puts an end to the destruction which is going on within it. The security of the State is a function of justice within the society which the State is supposed to serve.²

So it is that, no matter how great the number of Armed Forces employed by the State, they cannot bring security to the community. The unjust society is literally—not just morally—undefensible and can never be made secure. Its insecurity is chronic, no matter what weapons the State employs. Because the real nature of a nation's weakness lies in the destruction of its people, first by injustice and poverty, then through the depredations of consequent war. The failure to address the true cause of insecurity leaves only the path of oppression. For Isaiah, idolatrous religion is militarism and internal oppression.³ And if a country has a security problem, this is primarily due to what has already been done to people, the way they have already been sacrificed to the idols of the State. The misdirection of resources which economically underlies the unjust State manifests itself in a two-fold manner: militarization at one end, death by malnutrition at the other.

In all of this Isaiah was standing squarely in line with the prophetic tradition of Israel in its age-old struggle against the imperialist pretensions of the monarchy. Fidelity to God means living an alternative to the dominative power of empire: this alternative is the power of community, non-dominative, creative, life-giving, and flowing from pursuit of the integral human good. The end-result of this prophetic tradition has been labelled "the second Exodus," the Exodus of Israel from itself, the manner in which it transcended its self-understanding as a nation-power lording it over others and came to see its destiny in the extraordinary delineation of the Suffering Servant.

So, through what Eric Voegelin called 'the Mosaic leap in being,' the Chosen people had emerged in historical form in contrast to the hierarchical imperial societies of other peoples. What is meant to exist in the present under God was marked off from the rhythmic attunement to divine-cosmic order which had resulted in the cult of the empire. The theopolity, the state under God, was supplemented, for reasons of pragmatic survival, by the institution of kingship and the true shape of social life under God failed to be differentiated from the order of the people's institutions and mores. First, in his attempt to clarify the mystery of the tension, Isaiah split the time of history into the compactly unregenerate present, and a quite as compactly transfigured future, of the concrete society. The connection between the present and the future remains unclear.

Through Jeremiah this unregenerate present then gained its existential meaning, inasmuch as the prophet's participation in divine suffering became the omphalos (hub) of Israelite order beyond the concrete society. And through Deutero-Isaiah, finally, there emerged from existential suffering the experience of redemption in the present, right here and now. The movement that we call the Exodus of Israel from itself, the movement from the order of the concrete society toward the order of redemption was thus completed.⁴

Voegelin hastens to add that it was only the vision of redemption as the fruit of suffering that came to completion at this point: the reality had to await the coming of Jesus. But the movement from the order of the concrete society he refers to is the growing conviction, above all of Jeremiah, that existence in society under God—the whole point of the Sinaitic revelation—was not to assume the concrete form of a small Israelite theopolity surrounded by mighty empires. Of course, Jeremiah did not know just where it was all meant to go from that point. He spoke of a new covenant written on hearts of flesh.

Voegelin finds in Second Isaiah the symbolization of the mystery of the Exodus from concrete order itself. It takes the form of the Suffering Servant. The prophet, building on those who had

gone before him, emphasizes salvation as no longer turning on fulfillment of the law and this enables him to no longer oppose salvation and suffering. They cease to be alternatives. Israel has been forgiven. Concern now can focus on the order of life under the Redeemer God. The Servant embodies that order. Redemption is revealed as the fruit of suffering, right here and now.

- The new Israel is the Servant of Yahweh through whom God will make his salvation reach to the end of the earth. (Is 49:6).
- The Servant's task is to spread the news of redemption from Israel to the nations. This task is not to be carried out under the conditions of a complete dissolution of the empires, but rather under the conditions of a succession of realized imperial ambitions.
- So, the task "will bring ridicule, humiliation, persecution, and suffering to the men who undertake it under such un auspicious circumstances" (Voegelin: 507).
- The Servant becomes "a new type in the order of history, a type created by the prophet in Israel and for Israel, to be figured by others until the task is accomplished" (507).
- In the face of adversity and abuse he will not turn back. "Trusting in God will he continue to speak with a disciple's tongue what he has been taught by God" (512).

Finally, the people will come to believe the unbelievable tale of representative suffering and when they do they will know the completion of liberation from the order of empire.

"The Servant who suffers many a death to live, who is humiliated to be exalted, who bears the guilt of many to see them saved as his offspring, is the King above the kings, the representative of divine above imperial order. And the history of Israel as the people under God is consummated in the vision of the unknown genius, for as the representative sufferer Israel has gone beyond itself and become the light of salvation to mankind" (515).

The Church must embody the vocation of the Servant. We must take on our own shoulders the burden of evil and pay the cost

of turning it all around. But to do this creatively in any circumstances is to evoke an alternative, the integral scale of values.

I have tried in the briefest possible manner to give an intelligible account of why the Mystery must be understood as the God of the Poor in Judaeo-Christianity. Representative of and corresponding to the God of Life, the Servant must confront injustice and never let up until justice is established on the earth. This, of course, is why he suffers! The divine initiative is an infinite costing embrace in love of the world in its brokenness. The effect of this love is the healing of all that has been falsified, the promotion of the truth of life at all levels, an affirmation of people that calls them to responsible freedom. The shape of salvation in history is that of people empowered anew to act in love, that is, in accordance with the deep down truth of things.

If we, too, are to correspond to the God of Life, it is incumbent on us to both know and live from the truth of things.

Part 2

The Scale of Values of the Integral Human Good

As I suggested in the introduction, the most pressing problem of our time is the discovery and articulation of the philosophical and theological foundations of a normative social ethics whereby culture and social institutions can be critiqued and changed through public policies and personal commitments which will promote the human good.

One thing blocking the perception of this pressing problem belongs to the malaise itself, i.e., the very way we have come to think about culture in our times. I do not mean here the problem of usage where people oppose culture to work and mean by culture what they do in their leisure time; I mean, rather, the connotation that the technical meaning of the term has come to have in the social sciences. For the cultural sphere has now come to be understood as empirical, technological, and normless. It is as though the absolutist Western mind, so convinced its way of life as normative, has experienced vertigo in being unavoidably confronted with alternative ways of understanding reality: its inappropriate response has been to tend towards an out and out relativism. All ethical choice is reduced to arbitrary personal preference. As a

consequence, moral disagreements are reduced to ideological struggles based on the will to power. All morality is labelled by its interest-group: revolutionary parties know of only one strategy of action.

If the interventions of the Church are not to be regarded simply as further instances of power-struggle, more importantly, if the conflicting societies of our world are to have a future, we need to get beyond ideological legitimations to critical foundations. We need to give a publicly intelligible and convincing account of the true demands of human transcendence.

Creatively fighting injustice involves insights into the human good which is being destroyed. The presence of such insights is easily presumed in the presence of immediate death-dealing violence. But it must be remembered that most people (not to mention species!) die today because of elaborate systems of structural violence. These systems did not come into existence without the collusion of very many people, including ourselves. Lonergan⁵ commented that the multinational corporations are not new, in that they simply do globally what has been the aim of our economic enterprise for centuries. They are built on the very principles that have been gradually shaping our economics, society and culture, i.e. our minds, for a very long time. As a result of such collusion, it is extremely difficult for us to identify accurately the true sources and extent of the injustice present in ourselves and in our world against which we must take a stand. Yet, without such accurate identification, our most sincere struggles can be undermined by the presence in them of the very evil that is to be overcome.⁶ So, what is further needed, foundationally, is a critical account, again publicly intelligible and convincing, of the human good in all its complexity.

The Notion of Value

An unavoidable preliminary step to what follows is the clarification of the meaning of value. We need to make this very precise indeed. Firstly, I understand the entire universe of being as having the character of emergent process of quest, yearning, ascent, all the

way from the relationship between sub-atomic particles to interpersonal relationships.

Secondly, the structure of the human good is likewise marked by a pattern of ascending intelligibility, from objects of desire through intelligible orders that consist of interlocking schemes of recurrence to values properly so-called. In everyday discourse, any object of desire tends to be referred to as a value. But this cannot be accurate since we deliberate regarding value and the question which we put to ourselves for deliberation is: Is it truly worthwhile? and unpacking the "truly" is what yields the notion of value. Since good relates to desire, any good is commonly referred to as a value. But, again, this neglects the possibility of irresponsible choice: value relates exclusively to the good of order as object of reasonable choice. This brings ourselves who make the choice unavoidably into focus: we make ourselves, shape our effective orientation in life, in the choices we make. Along with the terminal values to be chosen there is the originating value of the chooser.

The movement from the level of good of order to that of values is coordinate with the movement in our minds and hearts from intelligent and rational consciousness to rational self-consciousness, the topmost level of human consciousness that is conscience.⁷ The movement from envisaging the human good on the two levels of (i) objects of desire, and (ii) of the good of order to (iii) judgments about the human good on the level of value is completely tied up with the issue of moral conversion. Only those who have come to accept responsibility in all their actions for the consequences of such action on others, on the world in and through which we live, and on the making of themselves really subvert the criterion of choice from satisfaction to value, the sign of moral conversion.⁸ Simply to make the move from object of desire to good of order is not yet to have reached the moral level. The good of order is involved in any recognition of schemes of recurrence that affect objects of desire. But people can become very adroit at figuring out schemes of recurrence as ways of meeting their desires and needs without thereby becoming moral.⁹

Morality is not simply anything that has to do with the relationship of means/ends. The means/ends relationship is a purposively rational one. As such, it is pre-moral. Its basic criterion is efficiency or expediency. Clearly, people can be enormously efficient in wreaking havoc and destruction on others and on the world. What is it that promotes the means/ends relationship to the level of morality? It has to be taken up into the horizon of the self as originating value, i.e., employed in relation to the question of the comprehensive meaning of one's life as human, of reality as a whole. This involves movement from the relational aspect of a good—good for someone, for some end—into universal context. There is a relationship to the whole involved in the choice of any part and in making a judgment of value we are necessarily taking a stand both on the nature of the self and on that of the universe. Only the acting out of our orientation towards the universe of being and trying to bring finite choices within that horizon makes them moral choices.

Ultimately, as I hope we can make clear, this means bringing the particular good or good of order into relationship with other goods in their concrete relationships and finalities within a hierarchical order of values as vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious.

Limit as Enabling

One final preliminary idea remains to be treated. It involves the claim that creativity results from embracing limits. Creativity results from successfully maintaining the tension between transcendence and limitation. This means that true creativity has a dialectical structure and this structure is to be found wherever people are striving to further the integral human good.

1. The Movement of Life

Reference was made above to the work of Doran and the manner in which he developed his position out of his attempt to correct the oversights of psychoanalytic theory. He came to see that it is impossible to understand what is happening in a

person apart from understanding relations to the wider community and culture.

1.01 The deepest desire in people is to make sense of their lives and this desire is fulfilled to the extent that they discover and follow, step by step, the direction that is to be found in the movement of life. The key to our lives is to be found in the challenge of history, the challenge to become subject (Freire), i.e., "progressively to restrict the realm of chance or fate or destiny and progressively to enlarge the realm of conscious grasp and deliberate choice."¹⁰ To fail to find the direction is to be become more or less sick, committed to meanings which fit neither ourselves nor our universe.

1.02 The key to this transition from depth psychology to the critique of contemporary society is the realization that the human psyche is never the cause of its own victimization: "The complex is not responsible for the genesis of its own disorder."¹¹ Psychic illness derives from distortion of the movement of life in us but this distortion derives from our involvement in the wider historical process. Disordered complexes are usually the consequence of our inevitable participation in the distortions at work in our community and culture and are always the victims of human history:

- of significant others
- of social situations emergent from the distortions in one's community
- of derailed cultural values
- of one's own freedom, self-destructiveness.

1.1 *Dialectic of the Subject*

The integrity of the human subject is a matter of sustaining a tension between the principle of limitation in a human being, which is the body and sensitive psyche, and the principle of transcendence, the dynamic of our spiritual reach, our ability to go beyond. This tension of limitation and transcendence is rooted in the disproportion between the patterns belonging to

the bodily organism and the patterns belonging to the reach of our intellectual consciousness with its unrestricted objective. Our psyche shares in both patterns and experiences their tension. Psychic health is a matter of remaining in the tension in such a way that the self as integrator is always open to transformation by the self as operator through the emergence of further questions. As Doran says, 'it is a delicate negotiation' (94). Displacement of the tension towards limitation heads towards depression; displacement towards transcendence heads towards schizophrenia, losing the roots in bodily existence. Our dreams can chart the changes in the sensitive psyche.

1.11 The dialectic here is that of the movement of life with the normative order of the search for direction in that movement. The goal to be achieved is the personal integrity of the subject.

Many have stressed the need for imagination if there is to be a way forward for us but they fail to give a coherent account of how imagination is to be brought into play. Doran presents us with a notion of transcendence as a universal characteristic of the inquiring self in its unfolding inner demands whose intelligibility is self-authenticating. And he does this in such a way as to make equally intelligible the transcending linkage of emotion, imagination and intelligence.

It is the integrity of the dialectic of the subject which liberates imagination. Integrity demands that the victimization of the psyche be healed: this calls for attention to the victim(s) *within and without*.

1.2 Dialectic of Community

The principle of limitation at this level is that of our inter-subjective spontaneity, the principle of transcendence is the workings of our more or less conscious intelligence at the service of the common good. Failure to sustain this dialectic yields the group bias of clique/class/nation. The goal to be achieved is the integrity of a social environment.

1.3 *Dialectic of Culture*

Analogous to the dialectic of the subject at the level of personal value, and to the dialectic of community at the level of social value, is the peculiar dialectic of culture. The integrity of culture determines the values of a milieu. The need here is to prevent the dynamics of cultural process from becoming proximately practical and expedient. The creative integrity needed to reflect on what is, to criticize it and to generate meanings and values to orient a way of life, cannot operate if the cultural process is marginalized or reduced to being proximately practical, with people reduced to the status of passive consumers and our journalists, writers and commentators simply mirroring back to us the values which brought us into our present mess.

2. **The Full Expansion of the Scale of Values**

Valuable though the interlocking triple-dialectic model undoubtedly is, it demands unpacking in terms of the various levels of value involved in it. In particular, the relationship between different levels of value needs to be made clear: a model is explanatory only to the extent that it is implicitly defined by internal relations. As the summary scheme on page 56 below indicates, there are nine levels to be interrelated.

2.1 *Levels One to Four: Ecological Values*

In accordance with our present state of understanding of our world, we have developed the sciences of physics, chemistry, botany and zoology. Perhaps the most significant observation to be made about the impressive development of these sciences is the extent to which we have consistently failed to appropriate them as self-knowledge. It is almost as if our passion to control through knowledge was a reflex of our fear of the universe and of belonging to the universe and a means of distancing ourselves from what we feared. The most obvious message of all that we were investigating was the extent to which we belong to, are produced by, the every processes we were coming to understand: we were really studying ourselves. This was repressed.

NINE LEVEL STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN GOOD

Religious (2.19)

Personal (2.18)

from above
Conditioning
and
Enablement

Cultural (2.17)
 superstructural

 infrastructural

Social (2.16)
 political
 economic
 technological

Vital (2.15)

Zoological (2.14)

Botanical (2.13)

Chemical (2.12)

from below
Differentiation
and Creativity

Physical (2.11)

Genuine movement
between levels
occurs only through
personal relations

Authenticity on
one level requires
authenticity of the
next higher level

2.11 The continuity of life between us and the whole universe at the physical, chemical level—there are bits of the stars in us, the self-same phosphorus, for example—grounds a huge insight into the true dimensions of our own story as being the twenty-billion years story of God's unfolding universe. But to realize this is to understand that there are humanly relevant values to be realized at all the interrelated levels of the emerging universe. In the emerging process, the enormous time involved was needed to lay the foundations of the possibility of emergence of developing life. It is not as though the foundations could be discarded following the emergence: they remain foundational, sustaining what has emerged. The water, the air, the sunlight through our ozone filter—all remain essential to life. If they are polluted, everything dies. There are themes for a renewed religiosity, one not alienated from our earth, to be found here. Likewise, a true understanding of divine Providence can emerge from meditation on the extreme fineness of the process of the emergence of our universe. Ultimately, since God is known in and through God's works, a religiosity which does not passionately love and cherish the earth is in deep trouble.

2.12 Respect for the chemical constitution of ourselves in continuity with our world should be manifest in what we regard as food. Since 1953, some people have been fighting against being poisoned by pesticides and food additives. Despite evidence that many of these additives are carcinogenic in animals, they continue to be used without the slightest intention of their effects on humans being monitored by the food producing companies. Money is available to find a technological 'fix' for unfortunate people who have been poisoned and have contracted cancer. No money is available for preventative cure—to determine what is wrong with what we eat and how we live so that the technological 'fix' will not be needed! A preventative cure would eat into the profits of agribusiness. As people in Davao are discovering, mercury is not on the menu of the natural foods Earth has created for us over eons of subtle

experimentation regarding what is and what is not compatible. Instead of eating from this richness, people are encouraged to stuff themselves with the fake junk put out by multinationals with less knowledge of the Earth than could be crammed into an empty peanut shell.

Ecology versus Environmentalism

Ecological awareness has to do with the knowledge that:

- the twentieth century is heir to deadly perils growing out of industrial and technological development;
- a biosphere that preserved life over eons is endangered;
- the continued existence of the human species is not to be presumed in the context of the drastic destruction of life in which we are involved.

But very often the above data is presented in the categories of environmental degradation and its true ecological significance—and seriousness—is missed. A frame of mind which has grown accustomed to treating the Earth as resource for exploitation, for transformation into commodities, cannot grasp the real challenge of ecological catastrophe. It tends to see in everything just another technological challenge. But there are some realities which just have to be left untouched—it is only in that sense that they can be considered resource. Such realities are the planet itself and the sun and the atmosphere; they make life possible and must be preserved in that state which enables them to do so.

The World Bank people are representative of the absence of ecological awareness in the leaders of government and industry in their total refusal to modify their development programs in favor of ecological recovery. They consistently ignore the interests of any people who live outside the formal economy despite the fact that the problems of such people are caused by that very economy! They merit the critique of Edward Goldsmith:¹²

"If Third World people are poor today, Mr. Conable, it is not that they suffer from a shortage of transistor radios, plastic buckets, tinned pet foods and the rest of the rubbish that development is

making available, at least to the richest among them, nor is it even that their villages remain to be electrified or that they have no access to piped water. If they are poor it is above all because their environment has deteriorated, because the rivers from which they derive their fish and their drinking water are now contaminated with agricultural and industrial chemical, because loggers have cut down their forest causing their rivers to become torrents, their streams and springs to dry up and their weather to change because their land has been eroded and desertified by large export-oriented agricultural undertakings."... (The projects funded by the Bank) "only satisfy the short term financial and political interests of a small group of bankers, bureaucrats, industrialists, engineers and politicians. The short term interests of such a group are totally incompatible with the long-term interests and needs of an increasingly impoverished humanity." For the technological mind, ecological questions are reduced to better management of the environment. "The technological age subverts its own questioning by its commitment to technical answers."¹³

There is much more involved in ecological awareness. It perceives the true meaning of our scientific knowledge of the Earth as self-knowledge. It grasps this meaning by critiquing the ideology of science as 'mastery' for the loveless, fear-ridden syndrome that it is. In place of the exploitative maximizing productive applications of this knowledge, it proffers a praxis of cherishing, appreciation, nurturing life. This spirituality (it is truly that) knows the break that is to be made. It recognizes the mentality of dominative power to be at the heart of all of our ecological problems. It sees that the way people relate to the earth is a function of the way they are relating to other human beings.

Where environmentalism maintains the dominative power mentality, ecological consciousness breaks with market values and power values, the unwieldy concentration of political power and the destructive economics it serves. It accepts the demand for a restructuring of all interhuman relationships since domination enters into our political structures, sexism, authoritarian child-rearing, education, etc.¹⁴

It may seem odd that I have spoken about religious and social values in the context of physical and chemical values but this is the whole point of the integral human good—it demands the integration of every level of value. It is to see that true human creativity results from embracing enabling possibility and enabling possibility is precisely the body connected with its universe.

2.13 There is something unique about the mass extinction of species which is going on at present. It is not just that species are being lost at an unprecedented rate—some 400 times faster than at any other period in recent geological time—but the range is wider than ever before. In earlier mass extinctions most of the plant diversity survived: now for the first time it is being mostly destroyed.¹⁵ Most people are unaware that our modern farming methods have reduced crop diversity to the point where we now rely on just eight crops to provide 75 per cent of our food. This loss of genetic diversity makes our agriculture very vulnerable to disease or climatic change. Only access to wild species of plants in the future can fortify modern varieties against such threat.

Hence the suicidal nature of current destruction of our richest pool of life forms in the death of the tropical rain-forests.

2.14 A recent finding is that for every species we destroy, possibly twenty others go out of existence because of the intricacy and total interconnectedness of all living things. This means a huge recalculation of the extent of biocide to be expected before the year 2000 and nobody can say what this will mean for human life on the planet. But this same interconnectedness indicates that “sooner or later, the vital functions of earth’s ecosystems will be sufficiently impaired that the planet’s carrying capacity for human beings will plummet, perhaps over a period of decades, perhaps within a single year. Then humanity will be faced with extinction.”¹⁶

2.15 *Vital Value*

Vital values are those of health and strength, grace and vigor. They pertain to food and drink and shelter and care.

Without food people die. Wherever children are malnourished, the next generation faces the challenges of life with irreparably diminished human faculties. Hence, along with the previous levels, this level constitutes the essential underpinning of any further levels of value. We must be in unqualified solidarity with people anywhere whose vital needs are not being met. 'To worry about cosmetics and luxuries but to neglect life-enabling needs of our fellow inhabitants of the planet is to rupture human identity' (Falk).

But the 'plans' for growth through expanded production of present state and market forces work against the priorities of basic needs. They strike at the heart of human community on which all long-range prospects for human hope ultimately depend.

2.16 *Social Value*

Social value is the value of system. Vital values need to be met in a sustained and recurrent fashion: it will not do to be fed just once! What ensures that vital values will be met in a recurrent fashion is the good of order which is systemic. Hence, social value is to be defined as the value of system(s) which ensures that the vital values of a total population will be met in a sustained and recurrent fashion. Social value sub-divides into the values of technological order, economic order, and political/legal order.

2.161 *Technological system*

The social value of technological system pertains to the system of tools which a people employs to facilitate production. Tools may seem to be value-neutral and therefore unproblematic. To assume this would be a drastic mistake. We live in what has been termed the technosociety. The name points towards the extent to which not just our world but also our imaginations are shaped by our technologies.

We are deeply enslaved to our technologies. It manifests itself in our faith in technological 'fixes,' our inability

to appreciate human scale and appropriateness. According to Mumford and Ellul, this is our real prison. The message should be clear that technologies built on a dream of indefinite expansion and constant growth are ill-suited to a planet of limited resources. Nobody in our times can afford to accept uncritically the proffered technologies as suited to the resolution of our problems.

The unfavorable reaction of many in government to the idea of appropriate technology is indicative of the extent to which we have all come to live by faith in inappropriate technology. Bhopal, Chernobyl, Challenger are the most recent names to shake the complacency of simple technological faith. But people concerned with popular sovereignty have known all along that technologies beyond the control of local communities can never be trusted to further life. We must get over our addiction to the technological 'fix.'

Beyond the political implications, there is a serious challenge to culture and religion here. The spirituality of the techno-society centers on two symbols which distort the symbol of good creation.

- The symbol of progress transformed the biblical hope for the fulfillment of creation into infinite human progress through mastery of the world.
- The symbol of power as imposition of human will transformed the biblical symbol of the human in the image of God (a God whose mode of production is infinite cherishing) into the human in the image of a monarchical ruler.¹⁷

It is clear that nothing short of nuclear catastrophe will cause the modern world to eschew technology. This leaves just one option for survival for a contemporary Westernized world—to embrace its creative powers while comprehending how these powers may be modes of attunement to nature and knowledge rather than modes of domination and exploitation. There is a marvellous creativity operative

in our modern science but it is heavily obscured by being so excessively harnessed to the military-industrial complex. Compliance with this limitless material growth project of modernity is possible only through a systematic forgetfulness and repression of what it does to the Earth and to the human psyche. True technological value is defined by appropriateness to the life values of the planet and its people.

2.162 *Economic Value*

Economic value is realized in the system which can meet the vital needs of a total population in adequate and recurrent fashion. To formulate such a normative definition is to point to the significant non-realization of economic value in our present world.

2.163 *Political Value*

Despite the protestations of capitalistic faith in self-regulating markets, economic system cannot of its nature be self-adjusting to changing circumstances. The value of political system is to be found in an order which ensures that the needed adjustments will be forthcoming in the economic system to meet the demands of changing circumstances and fluctuations. This control of the economic by the political system is what guarantees that the economic system will continue to meet the vital needs of a total population in changing circumstances.

2.17 *Cultural Value*

All the creative social movements in our world are agreed on one thing: the need to alter the character of relations between the state and civil society. Re-establishing people's control over their own destiny is the realization of cultural value. Without consensual government there is the tendency to promote internal violence and provide pretexts for interventionary policies. "At the core of struggles to establish a more peaceful world is the whole question of governance."¹⁸

The Feminist Dimension

It has become commonplace to state that a mechanistic cultural model has come to dominate all industrialized societies. But Gibson Winter points to a complexity even here: technological societies operate with mechano-morphic images in politico-economic organization *yet preserve organicist hierarchies of male dominance in familial, religious, and interpersonal communities*. Hence, sexist oppression is integral to the structure of industrial societies that are threatening traditional peoples—and ultimately all of us throughout the world.¹⁹

The experience of oppressive governance is grounded in cultural patterns of relationship at all levels. The key feminist perception is of the relevance of everyday relationships to politics. "Adam Michnik, on behalf of Polish Solidarity, has eloquently explained how the insistence of citizens on truthfulness, openness and trust undermines and restricts the control of the most arbitrary and authoritarian government, especially if these postures are struck in a militant way, that is as defiance that, at least in potentiality, expresses a commitment to honest action even at the risk of death or imprisonment."²⁰

The structures emerging from women's movements that are highly relevant to popular governance are:

- openness and trust in all dealings;
- consent;
- respect for law;
- fairness.

Further qualities are gentle anger; shared leadership that works against cults of personality; a blurred boundary between personal relations and public agenda; disinterest in traditional authority roles; avoidance of hierarchy; reliance on song, dance, prayer as principal instruments of struggle.

I have presented the women's movement in some detail precisely to give a descriptive definition of what is involved in cultural value. Cultural value is realized in the process of human beings determining the meanings and the values by which they will

live and by which they will shape their world. Expressed in this way, it is easy to see that what was referred to above as the dialectic of culture is central to the dynamic of human freedom. If people give away their right to name their world, if they allow others to define for them how the world is to be shaped, they have ceased to be masters of their own destiny.²¹

The power of community is the matrix of cultural value. A glance at the qualities of the women's organizations detailed above is enough to show that what is operative in them is the power of community which promotes participants to freedom and responsibility in open loyalty. It is precisely the same dynamics that make Basic Christian Communities liberated areas of both society and Church.

Politics belong to the Infrastructure

To insist on placing cultural value above political value is to say that people in a healthy society never give over their own ultimate right of control to the state. It is to insist that the political system belongs to the infrastructure of a society. Looking at the order of values delineated so far, the major disorder of our world becomes clearer: it consists of an inversion of the true order in that (i) the political system does not control the economic system in our societies; (ii) it is controlled by economic interests and thus displaces cultural dynamics from the key position of decision-making for the society. Under such a double reversal, politics, instead of being the mechanism that mediates cultural values to the technological and economic systems, becomes coercive propaganda to convince the populace that they need what the system is delivering to them.

2.18 Personal Value

The condition for the realization of cultural value is the creative authenticity of the individual persons who participate in a society. Technologically shaped imagination constantly bypasses this basic truth, as do those who believe that coercive power (taking over the apparatus of a dominative state) can heal human ills. Where people achieve authenticity in their

feeling, knowing and doing cultural values thrive. This is the import of the quotation from Adam Michnik on page sixty-four above.

2.19 *Religious Value*

Sustained authenticity in all of our living is not possible without the experience of unconditional affirmation, without knowing that the Mystery at the heart of the universe is on our side. Because this paper was originally directed to people of explicit Christian faith, Part One above was devoted to a clarification of the heart of Judaeo Christian faith, its understanding of how the Mystery is present is history. It is this religious knowledge which empowers people to stand vulnerably against enormous odds, to commit themselves to creativity and healing in the midst of resentment, hatred and violence, to remain steadfast in the face of personal failures, to keep hope alive.

Conclusion

This book is not a blueprint. Like many other people, I do not believe in grandiose schemes concocted by intellectuals that claim to have the solution to the world's problems.

What is presented here is quite modest. It is an attempt to outline an explanatory matrix of the human good. I feel that the model outlined finds support in the actual creative responses to the challenges of human survival in our times. Implementation of the model is what matters. My hope is to have provided some help to those willing to commit themselves to such implementation.

The value of this model lies in its integral nature. At the religious level the healing of our times is in large part the overcoming of dichotomies that should never have arisen. Symptomatic of the recent past are spiritualities that were not 'earthualities,' a hope for the kingdom of God that did not include the rest of creation, the loss of the sense of the mystico-political constitution of faith. This model enables us to see the interconnection of all the levels of value, how each level is relevant to the realization of all of the other levels.

The model invites, encourages and enables us to see how extensive malnutrition of children is a challenge to religious faith, how personal authenticity, realized in cultural value, is essential to the humanization of politics, how the phrase "integrity of creation" can receive appropriate analytic expansion, and how faith (being religious value) and justice (being social value) are to be mediated to one another.²²

Footnotes

1. Matthew L. Lamb, "Christianity Within the Political Dialectics of Community and Empire," *Method*, Spring '83, p. 1.

2. "Introduction" to Pablo Richard, *Our Struggle is Against the Idols*, (C.S.R.C., Ozamis City 1984), pp. ii-v.

3. For fascinating documentation of the drift to fundamentalist style, radically artificial religion within the Chilean Armed Forces in recent years, see Kenneth Aman, "Fighting For God: The Military and Religion in Chile," in *Cross Currents*, Winter 1986-87, pp. 459-466. 'Even General Pinochet, despite his claims to be strongly Catholic, can hint at the possibility of finding another "spiritual shelter."'

4. *Order and History*. Vol. 1: Israel and Revelation, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1956), p. 501.

5. Cf. Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, 1985, pp. 102-103.

6. The issue has been seen for some time. Other perceptions of this problem would include the so-called Frankfurt School of critical theory which can be broadly characterized as an attempt to carry on Marx's critical intent of changing the world by including in the analysis critical categories derived from various forms of cultural analysis, particularly those derived from psycho-analysis. They were driven to this by reflection on the decidedly non-revolutionary commitment of the majority of workers in Western countries to the pursuit of their real interests. The concern of the founders of the school was to focus in on the ways in which what is cultural, i.e., human product, can come to be seen as 'natural,' including the very

understanding of science, 'mastery' over nature, etc.. The aim was to clarify what was social so that it will not be absolutized.

Then there is the unifying factor in the complex investigations of Foucault: the analysis of the ever so subtle and far-reaching patterns and manifestations of power. I read this work as stressing that forms of power and domination permeate the whole of our everyday consciousness and are operative in all the taken-for-granted patterns of relating in which people are involved. In this perspective, there are not and cannot be disparate forms of oppression: economic destruction, sexism, racism, political and economic oppression, consumerism, are all interlocking facets of dominating power that controls us all the more effectively to the extent that we try to localize and particularize it in one structure. We have to become aware of how problematic our own consciousness has become in terms of all the cultural values we have taken for granted as 'natural,' 'beyond' deformation by dominative power. Cf. Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, (London: Tavistock Publications 1971); *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (Harmondsworth: Peregrine Books 1979); *Power, Truth, Strategy*, (Sydney: Feral Publications 1979); *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books 1980).

Finally, as relevant to the same problem, I mention (i) the shape of the development in papal social teaching in the last two decades referred to in the Introduction above, and (ii) the change in emphasis in liberation theology in regard to popular religiosity: despite its ambiguities, it has come to be seen as crucial to the liberating process and this implies recognition of the creative cultural moment present in any appropriation of the faith. Cf. my "Religion and Popular Religiosity" in *Asia Journal of Theology*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Oct. 1987, pp. 477-485.

7. Cf. B. Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974), pp. 165-187.

8. Cf. Lonergan *Method in Theology*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1979). p. 240.

9. Cf. Fred Lawrence, "Elements of Basic Communication"

in Lonergan Workshop, Vol. 6, 1986, pp. 127-140. Lawrence stresses that what is at issue in moral conversion is the emergence of true personhood. Emergence of the person is seen to depend on the realization of the capacity for self-transcendence in genuine benevolence towards others. 'Anyone whose range of choice-worthy ends is circumscribed by pre- or sub-rational criteria as based on individual, class, or national selfishness is like an animal in its habitat, no matter how cleverly devised are his or her schemes for the realization of the particular goods envisaged' (136).

10. B. Lonergan, *Insight*, (London, Longmans: 1957), p. 228.

11. R. Doran, "From Psychic Conversion to Dialectic." p. 99.

12. "Open Letter to Mr. Conable, President of the World Bank," in *The Ecologist*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1987, pp. 58-61.

13. G. Winter, *Liberating Creation: Foundations of Religious Social Ethics*, (N.Y.: Crossroad, 1981), p. xi.

14. I have tried to expand on this in the closing chapter of *Life Before Death*, "The Genetic Throbbing of History" pp. 77-97. Also in McDonagh/Busch, *Our Future A Mirage*, (Q.C.: Claretian Publications, 1986), pp. 1-11.

15. Cf. *The Ecologist*, Vol. 17, No. 4-5, 1987, pp. 129-133.

16. Paul and Anne Ehrlich as quoted in *The Ecologist*, Vol. 17, No. 4-5, p. 130.

17. Cf. Gibson Winter, *Liberating Creation*, pp. 116-117.

18. Richard Falk, "Openings for Peace and Justice...", p. 31.

19. *Liberating Creation*, p. 25.

20. R. Falk, "Openings..." p. 24.

21. Cp. *Life Before Death*, pp. 5-15, 87, 90-91.

22. For an account of sustained concrete implementation of the model, see John Boyd Turner, "The Example of Development in the Philippine Province of Northern Samar" in Fred Lawrence (ed.), *Communicating A Dangerous Memory: Soundings in Political Theology*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), pp. 109-241.

Confusion can attach to either the demands of faith or the concrete path of witness. Whatever the source, such confusion makes radical witness an impossibility.

This book attempts to dispel such confusion by promoting a better understanding of the dynamics of the integral human good... It tries to illuminate the Law of the Cross under which the Church should operate. It clarifies the dynamics of the human good on the realization that living in accord with this Law demands insight into these dynamics.

Life under the Law of the Cross is actualized in the concrete mission of establishing the integral scale of values in human-earth and inter-human relations, establishing the appropriate relation between the social infrastructure and the cultural superstructure of society. This will serve to clarify the dynamics of historical salvation and the concrete paths to be followed in participating in such salvific process. Then it elaborates on the implications of all this for being Church...

— *From the Introduction*



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