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**THE ROLE OF THE LAY FAITHFUL
IN THE MISSION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PAKISTAN**

by
Jacob Joseph DOGRA

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Canon
Law, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada, in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Canon Law

Ottawa, Canada
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1993

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
ABBREVIATIONS	viii
INTRODUCTION	x
CHAPTER ONE: <u>VATICAN II AND POST-CONCILIAR STATEMENTS</u> <u>RELATED TO LAY MINISTRIES</u>	1
A. THE CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS	4
1. The Constitution " <i>Lumen gentium</i> "	4
(a) "The People of God"	4
(b) "The Laity"	8
2. The Decree " <i>Apostolicam actuositatem</i> "	15
3. The Decree " <i>Ad gentes</i> "	21
4. The Constitution " <i>Gaudium et spes</i> "	27
B. THE POST-CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS	34
1. Apostolic Letter " <i>Ministeria quaedam</i> "	34
2. Apostolic Exhortation " <i>Evangelii nuntiandi</i> "	38
3. Apostolic Exhortation " <i>Catechesi tradendae</i> "	44
4. Apostolic Letter " <i>Mulieris dignitatem</i> "	50
5. Apostolic Exhortation " <i>Christifideles laici</i> "	56
6. Encyclical Letter " <i>Redemptoris missio</i> "	64
7. <i>The Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>	70
CONCLUSION	71

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ii

CHAPTER TWO: THE LAY FAITHFUL AND THEIR MINISTRIES IN
CANONS OF THE CODE OF CANON LAW AND
THE CODE OF CANONS OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES . . . 74

A. THE CODE OF CANONS OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES 76

B. COMMON CANONS REFERRING TO THE STATUS OF THE LAITY 80

 1. The Christian Faithful: cc. 204 CIC; 7 CCEO 80

 2. Equality of all Christians: cc. 208 CIC; 11 CCEO 86

 3. The Laity and their Vocation: cc. 225 CIC;
 401, 406 CCEO 89

 4. Ecclesiastical Offices: cc. 228 CIC; 408 CCEO 96

 5. The Mandate to Teach: cc. 229 CIC; 404 CCEO 104

C. CANONS IN BOTH CODES WHICH ADOPT SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT
APPROACHES 110

 1. The Concept of the Lay Faithful: cc. 207 CIC;
 399 CCEO 111

 2. Ministry of Evangelization: cc. 781 CIC; 584 CCEO 115

 3. Dialogue with non-Christians: cc. 786-787 CIC;
 592 CCEO 119

D. CANONS THAT EXIST ONLY IN THE LATIN CODE: 124

 1. The Instituted Ministries: c. 230 125

 2. Ministry through Associations: c. 298 134

CONCLUSION: 139

CHAPTER THREE: CATHOLIC CHURCH STRUCTURES AND LAY
MINISTRIES IN PAKISTAN 142

A. THE BACKGROUND 143

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iii

1. The Country	143
2. The First Missionaries	149
(a) From 1st to the early 16th century	150
(b) From the late 16th century to the present day	155
(i) Jesuit missions under Akbar (1579-1605)	155
(ii) Jesuit missions under Jahangir (1605-1627)	160
(iii) Jesuit missions under Shah Jahan (1628-1658)	161
(iv) Jesuit missions under later Mughals (1658-1760)	162
(v) Christianity during the British dominion (1840-1886)	163
(vi) The erection of the six dioceses (1886-1960)	164
B. THE PRESENT SITUATION	166
1. The Roles of Christians in General	166
(a) Diocesan priests	167
(b) Religious priests	168
(c) Women religious	169
(d) Lay catechists	170
(e) Growth of Catholics	171
(f) Muslim-Christian relationships	174
2. The Specific Roles of Christians	178
(a) Pakistani Christians at the parochial level	178
(i) The parish pastoral council	180
(ii) The parish finance council	181
(iii) The ministry of evangelization	183

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iv

(iv) ministries during the sacred liturgy . . .	184
(v) Other lay ministries	186
(b) Pakistani Christians at the diocesan level . . .	186
(i) The diocesan synod	187
(ii) The diocesan curia	187
(iii) The diocesan finance council	188
(iv) The diocesan pastoral council	189
(c) Pakistani Christians at the provincial level . .	191
(d) Pakistani Christians at the national level . . .	192
(i) The ministry of catechists	193
(ii) Pastoral ministry of religious sisters . .	197
(iii) The ministries of the lay faithful	198
CONCLUSION	202

CHAPTER FOUR: POSSIBILITIES FOR AN EVENTUAL REORGANIZATION
OR RESTRUCTURING OF LAY MINISTRIES IN PAKISTAN 204

A. Lay Ministers and their Designation	208
1. The term "Ministry"	209
2. Basic Types of Ministry	212
3. Qualifications and Appointments to Exercise Ministry	215
(a) Formation	215
(b) Appointment	216
(c) Mandate	217
B. POSSIBLE LAY INVOLVEMENT WITHIN THE FAMILY AND IN PAROCHIAL STRUCTURES	220

TABLE OF CONTENTS

v

1. Parishes: Christian Communities	220
2. Christian Activity at the Family and Parochial Levels	223
(a) Apostolate and Missionary Undertakings	223
(i) Ministries of parents and family	224
(ii) Individual ministries	229
(iii) Particular ministries of lay men	231
(iv) Particular ministries of lay women	233
(v) Particular ministries of youth	234
(vi) Group ministries	238
(vii) Liturgical ministries	241
(viii) Charismatic ministries	243
(b) Ministry through Councils	245
(i) The parish pastoral council	246
(ii) The parish finance council	249
C. POSSIBLE LAY INVOLVEMENT WITHIN DIOCESAN STRUCTURES	250
1. Lay Participation in Diocesan Councils	250
(a) The Diocesan Pastoral Council	251
(b) The Diocesan Finance Council	253
2. Organizations of the Apostolate of the Lay People	255
D. POSSIBLE LAY INVOLVEMENT WITHIN NATIONAL STRUCTURES	258
1. The Mariamabad Convention	258
2. National Organizations and Associations	260
CONCLUSION	266
GENERAL CONCLUSION	269

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX A	276
APPENDIX B	277
BIBLIOGRAPHY	278
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE	290

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AA = Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, November 18, 1965.
- AG = Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*, December 7, 1965.
- AAS = *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1909-.
- CA = Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, May 1, 1991.
- CCCCB = Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- CCEO = Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (*Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*), 1990.
- CD = Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus*, October 28, 1965.
- CIC = Code of Canon Law (*Codex Iuris Canonici*), 1917, 1983.
- CL = Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, December 30, 1988.
- CT = Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II, *Catechesi tradendae*, October 16, 1979.
- DH = Declaration on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis Humanae*, December 7, 1965.
- EN = Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, December 8, 1975.
- FC = Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, November 22, 1981.
- GS = Pastoral Constitution on the Church, *Gaudium et Spes*, December 7, 1965.
- LG = Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, November 21, 1964.
- MD = Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, August 15, 1988.
- MQ = Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI, *Ministeria Quaedam*,

ABBREVIATIONS

ix

August 15, 1972.

- OE = Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, November 21, 1964.
- PO = Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, December 7, 1965.
- RM = Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, December 7, 1990.
- SC = The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, December 4, 1963.
- SCDW = Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship.
- SCEP = Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.
- SU = Secretariat for Unbelievers.
- UR = Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, November 21, 1964.

INTRODUCTION

As an independent nation, Pakistan is barely fifty years old. It came into being on August 14, 1947 with the partition of the Indian subcontinent. Since then the total population of the country has grown to approximately 110.37 million. Of this, 97% profess Islam, while Christians constitute only a tiny minority, i.e., 1.6%, of which Catholics are roughly half, that is, 0.8% of the total population.

Even though Christians form only a very small part of the predominantly Muslim population of Pakistan, the roots of Christianity go back to antiquity when the Indian subcontinent was first evangelized. In spite of this long tradition, the present-day Catholic Church in Pakistan is slightly over one hundred years old. The Church now has a well established hierarchical structure with six full-fledged dioceses, one of which is headed by a Cardinal. There are 235 priests and 713 religious sisters, mostly indigenous. For its size and limited sources, the Catholic Church in Pakistan may be regarded as truly vibrant and dynamic in many aspects. But to be a true witness to the Gospel message, it must, at this point in time, utilize the as yet untapped potential resources of lay persons to render its mission more efficacious in Pakistani society.

The central issue of this study, therefore, concerns the role of the lay faithful in the mission of the Church in Pakistan. The

topic is timely in light of challenging developments which have taken place in the Church since the Second Vatican Council. The renewed ecclesiology of this Council, which accords due recognition to the laity in the life and mission of the Church, has reawakened in the hearts and minds of the Christian faithful the conviction that every baptized person has a right and an obligation to be involved in Christ's threefold mission of priest, prophet, and king. The Council has in fact called on lay persons to come forward and participate in this mission. Although the status and role of the laity are treated of in many conciliar documents, both *Lumen gentium*¹ and *Apostolicam actuositatem*² give the lay faithful particular prominence. In the second chapter of *Lumen gentium*, it is said that the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood have the same source, that is, Christ himself, and that they are ordered to one another. The relevant text reads:

Though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are none the less ordered one to another; each in its own proper way shares in the one priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest, by the sacred power that he has, forms and rules the priestly people; in the person of Christ he effects the

¹ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* (= LG), November 21, 1964, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (= AAS), 57(1965), pp. 5-67 (English translation in A. FLANNERY, (ed.), *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, vol. 1 [= FLANNERY I], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1975, pp. 350-423).

² SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (= AA), November 18, 1965, in AAS, 58(1966), pp. 837-864 (English translation in FLANNERY I, pp. 766-798).

eucharistic sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people. The faithful indeed, by virtue of their royal priesthood, participate in the offering of the Eucharist. They exercise that priesthood, too, by the reception of the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, abnegation and active charity.³

Later, in chapter four, the Constitution stresses the dignity and equality of all the members in the People of God:

There is therefore, one chosen People of God: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5); there is a common dignity of members deriving from their rebirth in Christ, a common grace as sons, a common vocation to perfection, one salvation, one hope and undivided charity. In Christ and in the Church there is, then, no inequality arising from race or nationality, social condition or sex, for "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you are all 'one' in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28 Greek; cf. Col. 3: 11).⁴

Several post-Conciliar documents issued by the Popes, such as *Ministeria quaedam*,⁵ *Evangelii nuntiandi*,⁶ *Mulieris dignitatem*,⁷

³ LG, 10, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 361.

⁴ LG, 32, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 389.

⁵ PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter on First Tonsure, Minor Orders, and the Subdiaconate, *Ministeria quaedam* (= MQ), August 15, 1972, in *AAS*, 64(1972), pp. 529-534 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, 427-431).

⁶ PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelization in the Modern World*, *Evangelii nuntiandi* (= EN), December 8, 1975, in *AAS*, 68(1976), pp. 5-76 (English translation in A. FLANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II: More Post-Conciliar Documents*, vol. 2 [= *FLANNERY II*], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1982, pp. 711-758).

⁷ JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter on the Dignity and Vocation of Women, *Mulieris dignitatem* (= MD), August 15, 1988, in *AAS*, 80(1988), pp. 1653-1729 (Vatican English translation: *Dignity and Vocation of Women*, Sherbrooke, Editions Paulines, 1988, 134 p.).

and *Christifideles laici*⁸ have complemented the conciliar teaching. Moreover, in recent years, the works of noted authors on the laity, and in particular those of Y. Congar,⁹ A. del Portillo,¹⁰ J. Rooney,¹¹ C. A. Waidyasekara,¹² and S. Syrjänen,¹³ have contributed immensely to the discussion on the topic. These and other important studies have indicated how lay Christians can be engaged in the life and mission of the Church.

The conciliar and post-conciliar magisterial documents and some of the important studies on the laity in the Church no doubt will provide the documentary context in which the concrete

⁸ JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World, *Christifideles laici* (= CL), December 30, 1988, in AAS, 81(1989), pp. 393-521 (Vatican English translation, Ottawa, CCCB, 1989, 202 p.).

⁹ Y. CONGAR, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, 2nd revised edition, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1954, 707 p.; Id., *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of the Laity*, translated by D. Attwater, rev. edition, Westminster, Newman Press, 1967, xxi-498 p.

¹⁰ A. DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and Laity in the Church: The Bases for their Legal Status*, Ireland, Ecclesia Press, 1972, 200 p.; Id., *Fidèles et laïcs dans l'Église, fondement de leur statuts juridiques respectifs*, Paris, Éditions S.O.S., 1980, 254 p.

¹¹ J. ROONEY, *Into Deserts: A History of the Catholic Diocese of Lahore, 1886-1986*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1986, 149 p.

¹² C.A., WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings: The Baradari in Punjabi Culture as Compared with Brotherly Love in the Gospel Message*, Rome, Pontifical Lateran University, Alfonsian Academy, 1980, xvii-246 p.

¹³ S. SYRJÄNEN, *In Search of Meaning and Identity: Conversion to Christianity in Pakistan Muslim Culture*, Helsinki, The Finnish Society for Missiology and Ecumenics, 1984, 247 p.

situation of the Church in Pakistan will be examined in this study. The Pakistani Church has by now matured to the extent where lay persons are capable of assuming responsibilities in various facets of the Church's mission, particularly in the pastoral, liturgical, catechetical, ecumenical, and political spheres.

In light of this background, the first chapter of this study will examine carefully the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and of recent popes on the role of the Christian faithful in the mission of the Church and will determine the specific areas of ecclesial life wherein they can assume responsibility. Special attention will be paid in this analysis to the role that the laity can exercise in present circumstances.

In the second chapter, the focus will be centred on the juridical norms embodied in the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* concerning specifically the lay Christian faithful and the scope of their involvement in the mission of the Church. Because of the interecclesial relationship between the Latin and Eastern Churches in carrying out the mission of the Universal Church, a brief review of related canons of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, promulgated by Pope John Paul II on October 18, 1990, will also be provided.

Chapter three will shift from the general to the particular, that is, by applying the general teachings of the Church to the particular situation in Pakistan. It will deal with the emergence of Pakistan as a nation, its particular features, the advent and

spread of Christianity up to the twentieth century, and the involvement of the lay Christians in various aspects of the mission of the Church today.

In chapter four, the concrete possibilities of responsible involvement by the lay Christian faithful in the mission of the Church in Pakistan will be explored in light of the principles established in the preceding chapters. Moreover, a modest attempt will be made to suggest some short-term and long-term ministries in the Church for the lay Christian faithful. It will also be stressed that lay Christian women in Pakistan are as equally capable of assuming active roles in the mission of the Church as are their male counterparts.

It is the hope of this study that with the cooperation of each member of the Church in Pakistan, the Catholic community will one day become more dynamic and vibrant than it is today, and be able to radiate joy according to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council which calls the messianic people constituted by Christ himself to a "communion of life, love, and truth", and whose state is that of the "dignity and freedom of the sons [and daughters] of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as in a temple."¹⁴

¹⁴ Cf. LG, 9, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 359-360.

CHAPTER ONE

VATICAN II AND POST-CONCILIAR STATEMENTS RELATED TO LAY MINISTRIES

The Vatican II and the post-conciliar documents relating to the laity and their activity clearly situate lay persons within the People of God. Although most of the conciliar texts refer explicitly to the People of God, certain documents, because of the particular emphasis placed on the laity, are of greater immediate importance for our subject. In particular, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen gentium*), the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (*Apostolicam actuositatem*), the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (*Ad gentes*), and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et spes*), contain principles that will enable us to determine more precisely the major thrust of the conciliar teaching on the active involvement of the laity in the life of the Church and the world.

These texts will have to be complemented, however, by a number of more recent documents, such as encyclical letters and apostolic exhortations resulting from various meetings of the Synod of Bishops.

The purpose of this chapter, then, is to determine what these recent Church documents teach about the lay faithful and their

mission within the People of God. From there, we should be able to draw a number of conclusions regarding the practical possibilities of ministry¹ for lay men and women, particularly in Pakistan.

Throughout this chapter, however, it will be necessary to refer to other essential elements of the Church and its mission so as not to lose sight of a more global picture; in particular, we will study and analyze the relationships between pastors (bishops and parish priests) and those lay persons who, by virtue of their baptism and confirmation cooperate in building up the body of Christ.

¹ "Minister, -ri", a Latin word, means: a servant, a helper, a minister, a minister of religion, a preacher of Christ.

"Ministerium, -ii", is equal to: a service, a ministry, an office, an occupation, an employment (Cf. *A Latin Dictionary: Founded on Freund's Latin Dictionary*, rev. ed. and in great part rewritten by C.T. LEWIS and C. SHORT, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969, p. 1146).

Though the 1983 Code of Canon Law applies "ministry" to the laity only in seven canons (canons 230; 759; 910; 943; 1481, §1; 1502; 1634, §1), and, thus, very restrictively and deliberately so, the Second Vatican Council uses the terms "ministry" and "minister" frequently, in fact, two hundred and eleven times, out of which nineteen apply to lay activity. In the post-Vatican period "ministry" has been used with great frequency to name many lay activities both within the Church and in the wider community, that is, the whole world (Cf. E.A. RINERE, *The Term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity in the Documents of Vatican II, Post-Conciliar Documents of the Apostolic See, and the 1983 Code of Canon Law*, Michigan, University Microfilm International, 1986, pp. ix, 279).

In our study, however, we will use the term "ministry" in the broad sense to connote all the services that the Christian faithful render to others, whether inside the Church organization or outside it, for the love of Christ, and in a manner consonant with His character and teaching (See also D. PEEL, *The Ministry of the Laity: Sharing the Leadership, Sharing the Task*, Toronto, Anglican Book Centre, 1991, p. 7).

To assume an apostolate is one of the principal duties of a Christian. The conciliar and post-conciliar texts often present such activity as beginning in the family, with the spouses and their children. Our study will try to keep this dimension in mind.

Furthermore, the documents that we wish to examine also address the question of preparation for various forms of apostolic activity carried out by the laity. It is a fact that in many places today the Church can be present and carry out its mission only through dedicated lay Christians who can rightfully expect to receive from their faith-community beforehand what is necessary as a background for them to assume their mission in the world of today. Obviously, this aspect will be significant when considering possibilities for lay activities.

One final dimension of our review of the documents will be to focus on the particular role which the lay faithful are called to play in mission territories. Since the general focus of our entire study is the Church in Pakistan, it will not be surprising to note that the various recommendations and instructions given in the documents specifically for mission territories will receive particular attention.

A. THE CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS

1. The Constitution "*Lumen gentium*"²

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, is the fundamental text of the second Vatican Council. Most of the other conciliar documents revolve around it and derive their thrust from its insights. This constitution presents a vastly enriched theology of the Church and its mission. For these reasons, particular attention will be paid to its teachings, especially to those which are directly relevant to our theme.

(a) "The People of God"

Chapter II of the Constitution is entitled "The People of God". The expression, chosen after careful deliberation³ to offer a deeper understanding of the nature of the Church, refers to the entire Church, as well as to its various groupings and members. In particular, when it is compared to the People of God of old, we

² SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* (= LG), November 21, 1964, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (= AAS), 57(1965), pp. 5-67 (English translation in A. FLANNERY, (ed.), *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, vol. 1, [= FLANNERY I], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1975, pp. 350-423).

³ Cf. A. GRILLMEIER, "The People of God", in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, General editor, H. VORGRIMLER (= *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*), vol. 1, Freiburg, Herder and Herder, 1967-1969, pp. 153-154.

note that it contains the notion of "election" or "choice", expressing both the love and mercy of God towards humanity. It also demonstrates continuity, although with significant differences, between the Old Testament and the New, showing God's concern for the salvation of humanity, the desire to constitute a covenant with his People, and the bringing of this to fulfilment in the person of Jesus Christ. Not only the Israelites, but also those who believe in the message of Jesus, are included within the expression. In this way, a link is also established between the peoples of the East and those of the West. Likewise, the ecumenical import of the expression is evident.¹

The Council Fathers wished to go beyond the juridical fact that Christ founded his Church at a particular time in history. Indeed, they wanted to show the development of the divine plan of salvation throughout the whole of Scripture. Thus a continuity was displayed between the major movements of the history of salvation, the messianic promises of the Old Testament, and their fulfilment in the New Testament through a deeper revelation of God's love for us in the person of Jesus.

The constitution explains, in Art. 9, how the coming of salvation leads to the formation of a community, building upon individual and personal faith. This will be a fundamental dimension of any eventual apostolate carried out by the baptized,

¹ Cf. Y. CONGAR, "The Church: The People of God", in *Concilium*, 1(1965), p. 13.

whether clerics, religious, or lay persons. All the members of this very special community of salvation enjoy equality on the basis of their baptism.⁵

Six distinctive features of the new community are noted by the Council. These too will eventually be significant for establishing an appropriate context for our theme:

- 1) Christ is the head of this community;
- 2) the members enjoy the freedom of the children of God;
- 3) love is the guiding law for the members;
- 4) the People must expand on earth until the full realization of the reign of God at the end of time;
- 5) no one is excluded from entry into the community;
- 6) in Christ, the community becomes a mediator of salvation for every individual in the world.⁶

The document also refers to the new dignity of the People of God who, by baptism, are called to participate in the prophetic, priestly, and royal office of Christ.⁷ Through this, they are no longer slaves of anxiety and oppression; rather, they are free of both spiritual and bodily slavery.⁸ Furthermore, they are consecrated through regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood to offer

⁵ Cf. Gal. 3: 28; Col. 3: 11.

⁶ Cf. GRILLMEIER, "The People of God", p. 155.

⁷ Cf. LG, 9-12; AA, 34-36.

⁸ Cf. Rom. 8: 21; Gal. 4: 7; Col. 1: 15-20.

spiritual sacrifices and to proclaim the perfection of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.⁹

As the fullness of the truth is revealed, messianic gifts are distributed to the believers, in particular the most precious gift of faith and various other gifts of the Spirit often called "charisms". These gifts, which frequently go beyond the structures of government,¹⁰ constantly impel the Church to recognize new forms of life because it too is an organism improving itself continuously. Such gifts, once they have been recognized and verified, will, in many instances, serve as a basis for particular forms of ministry and apostolate within the Church community.

The gifts which each person receives can lead to diversity within the People of God. Unity, however, is maintained through Christ who is prophet, priest, and king. Though spread geographically throughout the world, those who exercise these gifts remain in communion or fellowship with the Spirit-given fullness proper to the People of God.

Since every disciple of Christ has an obligation to spread the faith, it follows that the Church is missionary by nature.¹¹ The universal duty of all Christians to spread the Christian faith to

⁹ Cf. 1 Pet. 2: 4-10.

¹⁰ Cf. H. KÜNG, "The Charismatic Structure of the Church", in *Concilium*, 4(1965), pp. 23-33 (with references to the concept of charism), especially, pp. 30-31.

¹¹ Cf. LG, 17; AG, 1-2.

the best of their ability applies equally to the lay members of the community.¹²

(b) "The Laity"

Chapter IV of *Lumen gentium* addresses the theme of the lay members of the People of God, their status, and their identity. Negatively speaking, the lay faithful are all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to religious state approved by the Church.¹³ In positive terms, they are those believers who are incorporated into Christ by baptism, thus becoming members of the People of God, sharing in Christ's office as priest, prophet, and king, and carrying out the mission of the whole Christian people. They have a properly secular character, and their normal activities are those of the world.¹⁴ In A. del Portillo's words:

In the Church there is diversity of service but unity of purpose. Christ conferred on the apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in his name and power. But the laity, too, share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own role to play in the mission

¹² Cf. BENEDICT XV, Apostolic Letter, *Maximum illud*, November 30, 1919, in AAS, 11(1919), pp. 440, 451; PIUS XI, Encyclical Letter, *Rerum ecclesiae*, (February 28, 1926), in AAS, 18(1926), pp. 68-69; PIUS XII, Encyclical Letter, *Fidei donum*, April 21, 1957, in AAS, 49(1957), pp. 236-237.

¹³ Cf. LG, 31.

¹⁴ Cf. LG, 31; AA, 2.

of the whole People of God in the Church and in the world.¹⁵

Similarly, Congar, speaking about the laity and their apostolate, says that Jesus Christ, who is the Saviour of all humanity, continues His mission through the Church, that is, through all the members of the Church who share his threefold office of priest, prophet, and king.¹⁶

Speaking about the radical and fundamental equality of the People of God, del Portillo adds:

All the faithful, from the Pope to the child who has just been baptized, share one and the same vocation, the same faith, the same spirit, the same grace. They are all in need of appropriate sacramental and spiritual aids; they must all live a full christian life, following the same evangelical teachings; they must all lead a basic personal life of piety -- that of children of God, brothers and disciples of Christ -- which is obligatory for them before and above any specific distinctions which may arise from their different functions within the Church. They all have an active and appropriate share -- within the inevitable plurality of ministries -- in the single mission of Christ and of the Church. Therefore it follows logically that within the Church all members have certain fundamental rights and obligations in common.¹⁷

Moreover, the Council notes that whatever was stated in Chapter II of the constitution regarding the People of God applies

¹⁵ See A. DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and Laity in the Church, the Bases for their Legal Status*, translated from the Spanish by L. HICKEY, Shannon, Ireland, Ecclesia Press, 1972, p. 98; see also p. 91.

¹⁶ Cf. Y. CONGAR, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1954, p. 490.

¹⁷ A. DEL PORTILLO, *Faithful and Laity*, p. 19; see also Id., *Fidèles et laïcs dans l'Église, fondement de leur statuts juridiques respectifs*, Paris, Éditions S.O.S., 1980, pp. 30, 138, 143-150.

equally to the laity, religious, and clergy; but there are things which apply to lay men and to lay women in a particular way. In certain places and circumstances it is only through them that the Church can be present and become the salt of the earth.¹⁸ However, they are to work together with the rest of the Christians in building up the body of Christ as F. Klostermann noted:

[...] it is the common task of all Christians, we are reminded, to proclaim the truth of the Good News, in such a way that it is embodied and manifested in charity; to concern themselves with the growth and building up of the whole body of Christ and thus ensure together, that the total, cosmic goal is attained which Christ has in view in building up his body which is the Church.¹⁹

It is not surprising then to note that the saving mission of the Church in the world is not the exclusive prerogative of pastors. Art. 31 of the Constitution states that the proper vocation of the lay faithful is "to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will."²⁰

As with the People of God in general, so too with the laity, will we find both unity and diversity. In spite of this, the equality of the members is maintained. Again as Klostermann notes:

Even inequalities which exist in the Church by reason of the different lives Catholics lead, the

¹⁸ Cf. LG, 33; PIUS XII, Encyclical Letter, *Quadragesimo anno*, May 15, 1931, in *AAS*, 23(1931), p. 221; PIUS XII, Allocution, "De quelle consolation", October 14, 1951, p. 790.

¹⁹ F. KLOSTERMANN, "The Laity", in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 1, p. 236.

²⁰ LG, 31, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 389.

different positions they occupy as teachers, dispensers of the mysteries of God, and pastors, seem to become strangely unimportant in view of a deeper "true equality" (*vera aequalitas*) in the vocation to holiness, in the same faith by the righteousness of God, the same dignity, the same labour in building up the body of Christ.²¹

No matter what the functions that are exercised, there remains one basic apostolic vocation and one call to apostolic life. As the Council noted:

The apostolate of the laity is a sharing in the salvific mission of the Church. Through Baptism and Confirmation all are appointed to this apostolate by the Lord himself. Moreover, by the sacraments, and especially by the Eucharist, that love of God and man which is the soul of the apostolate is communicated and nourished. The laity, however, are given this special vocation: to make the Church present and fruitful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that she can become the salt of the earth. Thus, every lay person, through those gifts given to him, is at once the witness and the living instrument of the mission of the Church itself "according to the measure of Christ's bestowal" (Eph. 4:7).²²

It would not be surprising to note that the apostolate of the lay faithful becomes a unique one in those places and circumstances where no one else would be as effective as they are. Being thoroughly acquainted with the place, situation, culture, and circumstances, only they may be in a position to represent the Church in the best possible way in a given situation. Article 33 further says that by virtue of the very gifts or charisms that a lay person has received, that person is a witness and a living instrument of the mission of the Church itself. The lay faithful,

²¹ KLOSTERMANN, "The Laity", p. 239.

²² LG, 33, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 390.

consequently, are called to involve themselves more directly in liturgy, preaching, works of mercy, and in many other forms of the apostolate.²³

This right of the laity to be involved in the apostolic mission of the Church must be acknowledged by pastors. The laity "are not to await a mandate from the hierarchy where their general apostolate is concerned, but must do their duty on their own initiative."²⁴ It is at this point that the Council addresses more particularly the apostolate carried out in daily life as a sharing in Christ's threefold function.²⁵

Since the lay faithful share in Christ's priestly office, their works, prayers and apostolic endeavours, the events of their ordinary married and family life, their daily labour, their mental and physical relaxation, even the hardships of their life, provided they are borne patiently, --all become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.²⁶

By sharing in the prophetic function of Christ, they are called to evangelization by word and to the testimony of their life, accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world. In married life, the partners are said to have their own proper

²³ Cf. PIUS XII, Allocution, "Six ans se sont écoulés", October 5, 1957, in *AAS*, 49(1957), p. 927.

²⁴ KLOSTERMANN, "The Laity", p. 243.

²⁵ Cf. LG, 34-36 in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 391-394.

²⁶ Cf. 1 Pet. 2: 5.

vocation, and they are to be witnesses of faith and the love of Christ to one another and to their children.²⁷

The laity's sharing in the royal function of Christ is realized through humble service of one another, as Jesus showed by the example of His life.²⁸ Their service will be exercised in their secular disciplines, healing the sinful ways of the world and its culture, replacing them with moral values.

Finally, the Council addresses the issue of the rights and duties of the lay faithful. They are to reconcile their rights and duties as members of the Church with those which they enjoy as members of human society. Among the rights of the lay faithful, Art. 37 mentions that of receiving from their pastors the assistance of spiritual goods, especially the word of God and the sacraments. Pastors are to recognize and protect all the rights of the laity:

The pastors, indeed, should recognize and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity in the Church. They should willingly use their prudent advice and confidently assign duties to them in the service of the Church, leaving them freedom and scope for acting. Indeed, they should give them the courage to undertake works on their own initiative. They should with paternal love consider attentively in Christ initial moves, suggestions and desires proposed by the laity. Moreover, the pastors must respect and recognize the liberty which belongs to all in the terrestrial city.²⁹

²⁷ LG, 35, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 392.

²⁸ LG, 36, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 393.

²⁹ LG, 37, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 395.

Summary:

Lumen gentium is the fundamental text of the Council since it presents the theology of the Church. Because of its importance, more time was given to it than to any other subject in the conciliar discussions. Without exaggeration, it can be called the masterpiece among the conciliar documents.

The title *Lumen gentium* which literally means "the light of the peoples", who is, of course, Christ, reaches outwards and stresses the universal mission of both Christ and the Church. Not only Catholics, but all human beings are called to belong to this new People of God.³⁰ Because of this universal mission, every baptized person, sharing Christ's threefold office of priest, prophet, and king, is called to participate in various functions and activities in the Church and in the world.

Lumen gentium states that on the basis of their baptism all the members of the "People of God", whether clergy, laity, or religious, are equal as regards their common mission of bringing the kingdom of God to every corner of the earth. Although their services or ministries differ according to each one's call and charism, they all represent one communion which actually is a fundamental dimension of their apostolate.

Lay people have a very special mission of their own. They are called to permeate the world with the spirit of the Gospel both

³⁰ Cf. LG, 13.

through word of mouth and through the witness of their lives. Pastors are to recognize and encourage lay initiatives.

In *Lumen gentium*, the term "ministry" has been mostly used for the sacred ministers and is otherwise called "ecclesiastical ministry". For the laity, the document uses terms such as "activity", "function", "office", and "task" instead.

Although *Lumen gentium* has set out exciting principles offering many opportunities of activity to lay people, little to date has been achieved in practice as regards active participation of the laity in the life of the Church in some mission territories. If the Church has to be active in reality, the laity must be more and more activated.

These various principles, spelled out in two chapters of *Lumen gentium*, will find more concrete application in some of the other conciliar texts to which we shall now turn our attention.

2. The Decree "*Apostolicam actuositatem*"³¹

The Decree on the Apostolate of the laity, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, constituted one of the most positive steps taken by the Council to promote the internal and external growth of the

³¹ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (= AA), November 18, 1965, in AAS, 58(1966), pp. 837-864 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 766-798).

Church itself. Together with liturgical reform and the ecumenical movement, the emergence of an active and articulate laity surely represents one of the most striking and hopeful ecclesial developments of the twentieth century.

Art. 1 of the decree states the purpose of the document and the reasons for an active lay apostolate in modern times. Indeed, as was noted by Pope John XXIII when he convoked the Council, the lay faithful "[...] have become more conscious of their significance within the Church and especially of their duty to co-operate with the ecclesiastical hierarchy."³² The apostolate of the laity flows from their Christian vocation as such. This was evidenced in the early Church and has found a renewed place today.

The decree then speaks about the call of each Christian, lay faithful included, "[...] to spread the kingdom of Christ over all the earth for the glory of God the Father, to make all men [and women] partakers in redemption and salvation, and through them to establish the right relationship of the entire world to Christ."³³

The basis for the apostolate is twofold: on the one hand, the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, and on the other, the various charisms bestowed by the Holy Spirit on the members. While

³² F. KLOSTERMANN, "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity", in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 3, p. 306; JOHN XXIII, Apostolic Constitution, *Humanae salutis*, December 25, 1961, in AAS, 54(1962), p. 7.

³³ AA, 2, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 767-768; see also PIUS XI, Encyclical Letter, *Rerum ecclesiae*, (February 28, 1926), in AAS, 18(1926), par. 1, p. 65.

these might not be considered to be extraordinary, in the sense that they are found frequently within the community in one form or another, nevertheless they enable each member to use them rightfully in the Church for the good of others and the development of the ecclesial community. Some of these gifts are: ministry, teaching, admonition, comforting, love (Rom. 12: 6 ff), and assistance rendered to others (1 Cor. 12: 28). These gifts or charisms, while ordinary, are counted among the "higher gifts" (1 Cor. 12: 31).³⁴

Art. 4 addresses the issue of spirituality of the laity, in spite of their being busy with worldly affairs. For instance, it notes that family cares should not be foreign to spirituality, nor should any other temporal interest. Having set this base, the decree, then, in Chapter II, considers the functions that the lay faithful are to be engaged in:

The laity, carrying out this mission of the Church, exercise their apostolate therefore in the world as well as in the Church, in the temporal order as well as in the spiritual. These orders are distinct; they are nevertheless so closely linked that God's plan is, in Christ, to take the whole world up again and make of it a new creation, in an initial way here on earth, in full realization at the end of time. The layman, at one and the same time a believer and a citizen of the world, has only a single conscience, a Christian conscience; it is by this that he must be guided continually in both domains.³⁵

³⁴ Cf. KLOSTERMANN, "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity", p. 317.

³⁵ AA, 5, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 772.

The apostolate of the laity, then, spans the whole of life, transforming it into a universal and encompassing role. In particular, this will entail efforts to evangelize and sanctify others, first by giving Christian witness, but also by playing an active role in the explanation and defence of Christian principles and in their correct application where grave errors risk undermining religion and morals.

One special focus of the apostolate of the laity is the renewal of the temporal order by Christian social action which is to be extended to every sector of life, including the cultural.³⁶ There will also be works of charity, works of mercy to the poor and the sick, both on the national and the international levels.³⁷

The decree, in Chapter III, then addresses particular fields of lay apostolate which include parish and diocesan life, marriage and family life, concern for young people, involvement in politics and international relations. The range is indeed quite vast.

The remaining portions of the document consider various methods of apostolic action, co-ordination of activities, and the formation of the lay faithful. The notions put forward in these sections can be summarized in four points:

³⁶ Cf. LEO XIII, Encyclical Letter, *Rerum novarum*, May 15, 1891, in *ASS*, 23(1890-1891), p. 647; PIUS XI, Encyclical Letter, *Quadragesimo anno*, May 15, 1931, in *AAS*, 23(1931), p. 190; PIUS XII, Radio Address, June 1, 1941, in *AAS*, 33(1941), p. 207.

³⁷ Cf. JOHN XXIII, Encyclical Letter, *Mater et magistra*, May 15, 1961, in *AAS*, 53(1961), p. 402.

- 1) The personal apostolate of the lay faithful is exercised in their homes, in social contacts, in work, in ordinary parish life, and in their everyday civic and political responsibilities. Christians are to be apostles in everything that they do.
- 2) There will be a "temporal action" carried out through organized associations of the lay faithful.
- 3) There will be apostolates carried out also in the religious sphere, encompassing actions of a pastoral nature or works of evangelization.
- 4) There is also an apostolate to be exercised through "ministries" when the lay faithful are working specifically in the name of the hierarchy; these include administering the sacraments, teaching in the Church, and so on. For this type of apostolate the lay faithful need a direct authorization or mandate from the hierarchy, which in turn gives them more confidence and more credibility.³⁸

Summary:

The Decree *Apostolicam actuositatem* constitutes one of the most positive steps that the Second Vatican Council has taken to promote the internal and external growth of the Church itself. All Christians are called once again to be active in the Church and in the world as they were in the early Church.

³⁸ Cf. A. HASTINGS, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council (= A Concise Guide)*, vol. 2, London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1969, p. 101.

Apostolicam actuositatem is especially meant for the lay faithful. Their apostolate flows from their Christian vocation. Baptism and Confirmation call each Christian to the general apostolate, while charisms as it were assign specific ministries to individuals.

Lay persons are both believers and citizens of the world at the same time. However, they have only one, that is a Christian, conscience to guide them always. Not only do they have to be a witness throughout their life, but also to explain and defend their Christian principles more actively. This is done in three ways: through the ministry of the word; through the ministry of sacraments; and through various associations.

Apostolicam actuositatem uses the term "ministry" for the laity in three specific fields: the ministry of the word; ministry of sacraments; and ministry of associations.³⁹ It also uses terms like "activity", "role" and so forth for their involvement in the life of the Church. Thus, here the term "ministry" is not reserved to sacred ministers.

Although the lay faithful may seem to have some kind of fixed or stable life in a given situation, they can, and, in fact, they do take part in another very important activity of the Church which

³⁹ Cf. RINERE, *The Term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity*, pp. 118-119.

is properly called "missionary activity", and this we shall see especially in the decree *Ad gentes*.

3. The Decree "*Ad gentes*"⁴⁰

The opening words of the decree *Ad gentes* describe the Church as "the universal sacrament of salvation" (as also in LG, 48), in obedience to the command of its founder to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk 16: 15). The Church, or the People of God, is, thus, missionary by its very nature and it cannot exist without this dimension.⁴¹ Missionary activity has been valued by the Vatican Council as "the greatest and holiest duty of the Church."⁴² The task of proclaiming and establishing God's kingdom has passed from the apostles to their successors and, consequently, has become a permanent obligation of the Church.

We may ask what is missionary activity. The decree provides part of the answer. The encyclical *Redemptoris missio*⁴³ of Pope

⁴⁰ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad gentes*, (= AG), December 7, 1965, in AAS, 58(1966), pp. 947-990 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 813-856).

⁴¹ Cf. S. BRECHTER, "Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity", in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. 4, p. 113.

⁴² AG, 29, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 846.

⁴³ JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate, *Redemptoris missio* (= RM), December 7, 1990, in AAS, 83(1991), pp. 249-340 (Vatican English

John Paul II will develop the theme further.⁴⁴ The loving Father sends his salvation in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the Church becomes the instrument of this salvation.⁴⁵ Jesus, on his part, before returning to the Father, sent his apostles to the whole world promising that he would be with them for ever.⁴⁶ A "missionary" is a person who has been sent by the Church to go forth into the whole world to carry out the task of preaching the gospel and implanting the Church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ.⁴⁷

The decree explains that the mission of the Church is a proper missionary activity when there is the beginning or planting through preaching of Christ's salvific message to those people who are still deprived of it; this is followed by a period of strengthening and growth or, as the Council puts it "[...] a time of freshness and youthfulness."⁴⁸ Missionary activity is affirmed to be the duty of all Christians:

As members of the living Christ, incorporated into him and made like him by baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist, all the faithful have an obligation to collaborate in the expansion and spread of his Body, so

translation: *The Mission of Christ the Redeemer*, Sherbrooke, Éditions Paulines, 1991, 140 p).

⁴⁴ Cf. RM, 77, p. 108.

⁴⁵ Cf. AG, 2-4, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 814-817.

⁴⁶ Cf. Mt. 28: 20.

⁴⁷ Cf. AG, 6, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 819.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 820.

that they might bring it to fullness as soon as possible (cf. Eph. 4: 13).⁴⁹

The decree has a very special message for the lay faithful as regards missionary activity:

Lay people should cooperate in the Church's work of evangelization and share in its saving mission both as witnesses and living instruments, especially if having been called by God they are accepted by the bishop for this work.⁵⁰

In missionary lands, however, lay people, whether they are foreigners or inhabitants of the country, should teach in the schools, administer temporal affairs, collaborate in parochial and diocesan activity, establish and promote various forms of the lay apostolate, so that the faithful of the new churches might, as soon as possible, be able to play their own part in the life of the Church.⁵¹

Further on, the lay faithful are called to cooperate with others on an international scale:

In a spirit of brotherhood they should collaborate with other Christians, with non-Christians and especially with members of international associations, always bearing in mind that "the structure of the earthly city should be founded on the Lord and directed to him."⁵²

The Decree, however, makes another very important point by stating that missionary activity consists not only in going to new

⁴⁹ AG, 36, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 850.

⁵⁰ AG, 41, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 854.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 855; see also PIUS XII, Encyclical Letter, *Evangelii praecones*, June 2, 1951, in *AAS*, 43(1951), pp. 510-514; JOHN XXIII, Encyclical Letter, *Princeps pastorum*, November 28, 1959, in *AAS*, 51(1959), pp. 851-852.

⁵² AG, 41, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 855.

places and people, but also in strengthening and invigorating those who have already heard the Good News. In Suso Brechter's words:

The mission is directed to human beings and peoples, not primarily to countries and territories [...]. The purpose of missionary activity by the evangelization of the nations is the implantation of the Church, i.e., of the vigorous, fully developed particular Church described in Chapters II and III of the decree. The most important direct means mentioned are the proclamation of the word of God and the administration of the sacraments (baptism, Eucharist). The choice of means and methods varies according to the stage and the state of missionary work. The chief task is less that of establishing ecclesiastical institutions, organizations and hierarchical structures than of gathering together the People of God in active and living communities of faith.⁵³

Nevertheless, the Decree calls upon the lay faithful who are "of primary importance and worthy of special care", and imbued with the Spirit of Christ, to be a leaven animating and directing the temporal order from within, so that everything may be carried out according to the will of Christ.⁵⁴

"The principal duty of both men and women", the Decree further says, "is to bear witness to Christ, and this they are obliged to do by their life and their words, in the family, in their social group, and in the sphere of their profession."⁵⁵ Thus they are called upon to spread the faith of Christ among those with whom they are living. This obligation is all the more urgent, the Decree

⁵³ BRECHTER, "Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity", p. 120.

⁵⁴ Cf. AG, 15; LG, 33; AA, 2.

⁵⁵ AG, 21, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 838.

states, because it is only through these lay people that so many of their neighbours can come to hear the Gospel and recognize Jesus Christ. The document gives great importance to the Christian family stating that "[...] by living a true Christian life *families should become seminaries for lay apostles and indeed of priestly and religious vocations.*"⁵⁶

Among the lay faithful, catechists have been highly praised in the decree. Both men and women share this honour. Their contribution to the spread of the faith and the Church is "[...] outstanding and absolutely necessary."⁵⁷ In missionary lands, more particularly, they become the right hand of the priests. Since they live among the people, they know their language, manners and customs, share their difficulties and sufferings, and so can often approach the people more easily than foreign priests. The number of lay catechists appears to be increasing day by day, especially in mission territories. If their knowledge is updated through a necessary and appropriate training, they can prove to be even more active and efficient members of the People of God. However, we can note in passing that not only catechists, but also other lay people need to be updated to meet the needs of the present times so as to be really effective apostles in a fast-changing world.

⁵⁶ AG, 19, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 835 (emphasis added).

⁵⁷ AG, 17, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 833.

Not surprisingly, the Decree *Ad gentes* referred to the lay faithful on many occasions,⁵⁸ acknowledging their important and active role within the People of God. Pope John Paul II recently emphasised this fact:

Today, as never before, the Church has the opportunity of bringing the Gospel, by witness and word, to all people and nations. I see the dawning of a new missionary age, which will become a radiant day bearing an abundant harvest, if all Christians, and missionaries and young Churches in particular, respond with generosity and holiness to the calls and challenges of our time.⁵⁹

Summary:

The Decree *Ad gentes* describes the Church as "the universal sacrament of salvation". The Church is missionary by its very nature. The task was first entrusted to the apostles but has passed through their successor bishops to the present-day Church. Missionary activity is a duty of all the Christian faithful.

Lay people are called upon to cooperate in the Church's work of evangelization, and very especially so in the missionary lands. They are to be the "leaven" by their Christian witness and build up Christian communities through their active participation in the word of God and sacraments. They are also called to cooperate in the missionary field with national and international organizations and associations.

⁵⁸ Cf. AG, 11, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 29, 36, and 41.

⁵⁹ RM, 92, p. 128.

In *Ad gentes*, the activities of catechists, whether male or female, Catholic Action, missionary activity, and the activity of certain lay workers who fulfill the diaconal ministry, are considered as lay ministries. However, except for Catholic Action, they are considered supplementary as sharing in the munera of the hierarchy. Catholic Action, on the other hand, can now be considered as an exercise of the munera of the People of God.⁶⁰

4. The Constitution "*Gaudium et spes*"⁶¹

Having examined the role of the lay faithful in the salvific mission of Christ, as explained in *Lumen gentium* and in *Apostolicam actuositatem*, and having seen that they are sent by the Church to proclaim the Good News as in *Ad gentes*, let us now, with the help of the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes*, see where they are sent and what are they expected to do.

This document of the Second Vatican Council is somewhat different from the other texts, because it speaks about the world into which the Christian faithful are sent and about many of its problems. In the past, the world was sometimes seen rather negatively as if opposed to the Church and its salutary message.

⁶⁰ Cf. RINERE, *The Term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity*, pp. 150-152.

⁶¹ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes* (= GS), December 7, 1965, in AAS, 58(1966), pp. 1025-1115 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 903-1001).

This constitution, on the contrary, considers the world as something positive in which the Church exists; in fact, it cannot live elsewhere. Jesus himself prayed to the Father for those who are in the world, but not that they be taken "out of the world". Indeed, as Christ was sent into the world, so too are Christians sent into it.⁶²

All Christians, especially the lay faithful, are called to full participation in the affairs of the world, because all things are theirs, and they are Christ's.⁶³ However, even when fully occupied in world affairs, Christ's faithful cannot forget their vocation and their mission. The Constitution does speak about the needs of humanity in this world, but its teaching remains absolutely centred upon Christ, the perfect man, as well as upon the Incarnation and the Resurrection. It also has an eschatological outlook in the sense that it recognizes that the saving mission of Christ will be consummated only at the end of time.⁶⁴

The Constitution begins by expressing its solidarity with the whole human race and its history, given that Christ's message of salvation is meant for all. The Council speaks of the "human family" which has been saved from the slavery of sin by Jesus

⁶² Cf. Jn 17: 14-18; see also A. HASTINGS, "The Church in the Modern World: *Gaudium et spes*", in *A Concise Guide*, vol. 2, p. 23.

⁶³ Cf. 1 Cor. 3: 21-23.

⁶⁴ Cf. HASTINGS, "The Church in the Modern World", p. 25.

Christ.⁶⁵ There are differences and imbalances in the world, the Constitution notes, on the level of individuals, families, and classes or races. These divisions cause distrust, animosity, conflict, and even woe.⁶⁶ People in despair question who is the human person, what can he or she contribute to society, and what happens when earthly life comes to an end. In this desperate situation, the Church brings hope and meaningfulness to life, relying on the power of Christ, the Lord and Master, the image of the invisible God, who, though the world may change, himself never changes, but remains always the same.⁶⁷

The Constitution, then, speaks about the human person, the centre to whom all things on earth are ordained. It acknowledges that each person was created "[...] to the image of God, as able to know and love his creator, and as set by him over all earthly creatures (Gen. 1: 26-27) that he might rule them, and make use of them, while glorifying God (Ecclus. 17: 3-10)."⁶⁸

It further speaks about Jesus as the perfect man, the "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1: 15) who has restored in humanity that likeness to God that had been disfigured ever since the first sin. In the words of the Council itself:

⁶⁵ Cf. GS, 1-2, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 903-904.

⁶⁶ Cf. GS, 8, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 908-909.

⁶⁷ Cf. GS, 10, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 911.

⁶⁸ GS, 12, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 913.

Human nature, by the very fact that it was assumed, not absorbed, in him, has been raised in us also to a dignity beyond compare. For, by his incarnation, he, the son of God, has in a certain way united himself with each man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will and with a human heart he loved. Born of the virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.⁶⁹

Though he assumed human nature, Jesus Christ as the son of God has the power to change everything. So, as Y. Congar notes:

In Jesus the three functions are plenary. He has the power to change all creation in order to bring it to that perfection which God has willed for it from the beginning, according to a plan which has been spoiled by sin.⁷⁰

Not only was the human nature of Christians raised to a very high dignity, but also that of all other persons, "for Christ died for all" (Rom. 8: 32). Thus, in a way, even non-Christians are the sons and daughters of the Father.⁷¹

The Constitution then speaks about the role of the Church in the world of today, stating that the Church exhorts Christians, who are citizens of the Church as well as of the state they live in, to perform their duties in the spirit of the Gospel and not to shirk their earthly responsibilities. Here the lay faithful are challenged in a particular way:

It is to the laity, though not exclusively to them, that secular duties and activity properly belong. When therefore, as citizens of the world, they are engaged in

⁶⁹ GS, 22, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 922-923.

⁷⁰ Y. CONGAR, *Christians Active in the World*, New York, Herder and Herder, 1968, p. 49.

⁷¹ Cf. GS, 22, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 924.

any activity either individually or collectively, they will not be satisfied with meeting the minimum legal requirements but will strive to become truly proficient in that sphere. They will gladly cooperate with others working towards the same objectives. Let them be aware of what their faith demands of them in these matters and derive strength from it; let them not hesitate to take the initiative at the opportune moment and put their findings into effect. It is their task to cultivate a properly informed conscience to impress the divine law on the affairs of the earthly city.⁷²

If the mission of the lay person, according to Congar, is not easy, it is still part of each person's vocation:

The layman is a man who works for the kingdom of God, but not at the expense of his earthly engagement. He has to serve God, not by setting himself above or apart from marriage and the professions, but through marriage and the professions, and in work. He does not take the short cut taken by the priest or the religious, who are dedicated solely to the kingdom of God. He follows a road which is longer and more difficult, but it is his own, his vocation.⁷³

The Constitution then speaks about harmony between culture and Christian mission. But for this, the lay faithful need to have proper knowledge, training, and formation: "[...] it is to be hoped that more of the laity will receive adequate theological formation and that some among them will dedicate themselves professionally to these studies and contribute to their advancement."⁷⁴

The Pastoral Constitution concludes with the recommendation that the Christian faithful love their fellow non-Christian workers as their own brothers and sisters, as if loving Christ himself.

⁷² GS, 43, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 944.

⁷³ CONGAR, *Christians Active in the World*, p. 52.

⁷⁴ GS, 62, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 968.

This will awaken a lively hope that one day there will be surpassing peace and happiness in the homeland of heaven.⁷⁵ However, it demands constant struggle at present as Pope John Paul II has recently stated:

Through Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, the victory of the Kingdom of God has been achieved once and for all. Nevertheless, the Christian life involves a struggle against temptation and the forces of evil. Only at the end of history will the Lord return in glory for the final judgment (cf. Mt. 25: 31) with the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth (cf. 2 Pt. 3: 13; Rev. 21: 1), but as long as time lasts the struggle between good and evil continues even in the human heart itself.⁷⁶

Summary:

Gaudium et spes says that as God sent Christ into the world, so are Christians sent into it. Christ came to save all human beings who are the "human family". Christians, especially the laity since the world is their specific field of activity, are called to love non-Christians as their own brothers and sisters, cooperate with them, and serve them the best way they can. They are also called to be fully engaged in the activities of the world and make their own contribution to improve it not only spiritually, but also physically, with the Christian spirit always to animate them. The

⁷⁵ Cf. GS, 93, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 1001.

⁷⁶ JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter on the Hundredth Anniversary of *Rerum novarum*, *Centesimus annus*, May 1, 1991, in *AAS*, 83(1991), no. 25, p. 824 (Vatican English translation, Sherbrooke, Éditions Paulines, 1991, p. 47).

task of lay Christians in the world is arduous and difficult, but, at the same time, it is their own vocation.

Gaudium et spes does not apply the term "ministry" to any specifically Christian activity. However, the Christian faithful are called to improve the world in cooperation with their non-Christian fellow human beings in every possible way. Thus the activity of the lay Christians has been given the widest meaning in this document. In so doing it has raised the actions of everyday life to the ministerial level. Through this document, the Council teaches that all people continue the mission of Christ, enrich the world, and fulfill the work of God. This understanding of lay ministry is, indeed, unique to *Gaudium et spes*.¹¹

Having completed this overview of certain elements of the Conciliar documents, we shall now focus our attention on some of the post-Vatican II documents to note what they propose regarding the mission and ministry of the laity.

¹¹ Cf. RINERE, *The Term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity*, pp. 170-172.

B. THE POST-CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS

1. Apostolic Letter, "*Ministeria quaedam*"⁷⁸

In the Apostolic Letter, "*Ministeria quaedam*", Pope Paul VI, speaks about minor and major orders. He also speaks about some of the ministries, previously called minor orders, which are now open to lay men and to the candidates for the priesthood and diaconate alike.⁷⁹ He states that "certain ministries were established by the Church from the earliest times for the proper ordering of worship and for the service of God's people as the need arose. By this means, certain liturgical and charitable duties suited to various circumstances were entrusted to the faithful."⁸⁰

Pope Paul VI also notes that the conferring of these ministries was often accompanied by a special rite, invoking God's blessing upon the receivers and establishing such persons in a special rank or class to be able to perform certain ecclesiastical functions. Some of these duties were closely connected with the liturgy, such as the offices of porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte, subdeacon, and deacon. The first four ministries were commonly

⁷⁸ PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter on First Tonsure, Minor Orders, and the Subdiaconate, *Ministeria quaedam* (= MQ), August 15, 1972, in AAS, 64(1972), pp. 529-534 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 427-432).

⁷⁹ Cf. "The Ministries of Lector and Acolyte", in *The Pope Speaks*, 17(1972), p. 258, footnote (not numbered).

⁸⁰ MQ, par. 1, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 427.

called "minor orders" in the Latin Church, whereas the last two were part of the "major orders".

The Pope notes that the minor orders have changed with time and that some functions connected with them were exercised by the lay faithful in the past and are being exercised again at present. Therefore, he has reformed the discipline to adapt it to present-day needs:

Clearly, the norms laid down by the Council for the general ordering and renewal of the liturgy apply also to ministries in the liturgical assembly, to the end that the very arrangement of the celebration will show the Church constituted in its different orders and ministries.⁸¹

Concerning the norms for the general ordering and renewal of the liturgy, the Council had stated:

In liturgical celebrations each person, minister, or layman who has an office to perform, should carry out all and only those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the norms of the liturgy.

Servers, readers, commentators, and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function. They ought, therefore, to discharge their offices with the sincere piety and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God's people.

To promote active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons, hymns, as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes. And at the proper time a reverent silence should be observed.⁸²

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 428.

⁸² SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (= SC), December 4, 1963, nos. 28-30, in AAS, 56(1964), pp. 107-108 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 11).

The Pope then states that it is the desire of the Church that all the faithful be led to the full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the "[...] very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people (1 Pet. 2:9, 4-5), have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism."⁸³ This active participation is fostered through various functions, offices, and ministries.

The Pope later says that besides the ministries of "lector" and "acolyte" there is a possibility of establishing other ministries such as porter, exorcist, and catechist, if they are needed in a particular territory. Still later, he prescribes the following norms as regards the ministries:

Orders which up to now have been called "minor," will henceforth be known as "ministries."

*Ministries may be committed to lay Christians. They are thus no longer to be regarded as reserved to candidates for the sacrament of orders.*⁸⁴

The ministries are conferred by the ordinary (the bishop or, in clerical institutes of perfection, the major superior) in the liturgical rites, "The Installation of a Lector" and "The Installation of an Acolyte," which are to be revised by the Holy See.⁸⁵

⁸³ MQ, par. 2, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 428; cf. SC, 14, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 7-8.

⁸⁴ MQ, 2-3, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 429 (emphasis added).

⁸⁵ MQ, 9, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 431.

Summary:

Ministeria quaedam restructured the clerical state, abolished the minor orders, and established the ministries of lector and acolyte open to the laity.⁸⁶ We can even call them lay ministries although these are also required for candidates to the diaconate and priesthood who must exercise them for a suitable period of time; dispensation from this prescription is reserved to the Holy See.⁸⁷ These ministries, then, are no longer to be called "minor orders", and their conferring is known as "installation" instead of "ordination" which would be connected with Holy Orders.

Ministeria quaedam stresses the importance of "ministry" in the Church, but at the same time its usage is not made clear. Thus the three expressions *ministerium*, *munus*, and *officium* mean "ministry" in this document.⁸⁸

Although *Ministeria quaedam* opens many possibilities of ministry for male lay members of the Christian faithful it excludes women in keeping with the "venerable tradition of the Church" without giving reasons for this.⁸⁹ The 1987 Synod on the laity manifested its eager desire that the *Motu proprio*, *Ministeria quaedam* be revised, "taking into consideration the customs of the

⁸⁶ Cf. RINERE, *The term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity*, p. 231.

⁸⁷ Cf. MQ, 11, p. 431.

⁸⁸ Cf. RINERE, *The Term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity*, pp. 231-232.

⁸⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 232.

local Churches and indicating especially the criteria to choose the candidates for each ministry."⁹⁰

2. Apostolic Exhortation "*Evangelii nuntiandi*"⁹¹

Pope Paul VI introduced his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, which marked the tenth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council, by saying that the teachings of the Council "[...] can be summed up in this single objective: to ensure that the Church of the twentieth century may emerge ever better equipped to proclaim the gospel to the people of this century."⁹²

The Pope says that the mission and mandate of Jesus Christ can be summed up in the words of the evangelist Luke: "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God, I was sent for this purpose."⁹³ He further notes:

All the elements of the mystery of Christ: the Incarnation itself, his miracles, his teaching, his calling of his disciples, the sending forth of the apostles, the Cross and the Resurrection, his enduring

⁹⁰ SYNOD FATHERS, "The Propositions", in *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 25(1988), p. 37.

⁹¹ PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, *Evangelii nuntiandi* (= EN), December 8, 1975, in *AAS*, 68(1976), pp. 5-76 (English translation in A. FLANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II: More Post-Conciliar Documents*, vol. 2, [= FLANNERY II], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1982, pp. 711-761).

⁹² EN, 2, in FLANNERY II, p. 711.

⁹³ Lk. 4: 43.

presence among his own, all were predetermined in view of the activity of preaching the gospel.⁹⁴

The Pope then explains the meaning of evangelization: to proclaim the kingdom of God. As the bishops repeatedly noted during the meetings of the October 1974 Synod, Jesus himself was the first and principal herald of the gospel. Christ announces first of all the kingdom of God which is so important that once it is attained all the other things will be added to it for whoever seeks it (cf. Mt. 6: 33).

Christ, then, proclaims salvation as the outstanding element and central point of his good news. "This kingdom and this salvation -- these words may be regarded as the key to a full understanding of the evangelization of Jesus Christ -- may be received by all men as the fruits of grace and mercy."⁹⁵

Pope Paul then states that preaching the good news is the duty of every Christian and that he or she has the power to do so:

Those who sincerely accept the good news, by virtue of it and the faith it generates, are united in the name of Jesus so that they may together seek the kingdom, build it up and implant it in their own lives. In this way they establish a community which becomes itself a herald of the gospel. The command which was given to the twelve: "Go preach the gospel" applies to all Christians though in different ways.

Moreover, the gospel of the kingdom which is coming and has already begun concerns all men of all times. All those, therefore, who have received this message and by

⁹⁴ EN, 6, in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 713-714; see also A. FURIOLI, "A 10 anni dalla *Evangelii nuntiandi*: nota ascetico-pastorale", in *Euntes docete*, 38(1985), pp. 99-104, especially, p. 100.

⁹⁵ EN, 10, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 714.

virtue of it have been united in the community of salvation have the power and obligation to hand it on and disseminate it.⁹⁶

The Church which remains in the world while the Lord of Glory has returned to the Father, "stands out as the sign at once mysterious and clear of the new presence of Jesus."⁹⁷ It protracts and perpetuates his presence in the world:

The Church, having been herself sent forth and evangelized, sends out evangelizers in her turn. She teaches them, putting on their lips, as it were, the words of salvation. She communicates to them the message which has been confided to her. She hands on to them the mandate which she has herself received and sends them out to preach, not to preach themselves or their personal ideas, but rather the gospel of which neither they nor the Church herself are the absolute masters, free to dispose of as they wish, but rather the ministers charged to hand it on with complete fidelity.⁹⁸

Speaking about the means of evangelization, the Pope mentions preaching (EN, 42-43), catechetical instruction (EN, 44), the use of the mass media (EN, 45), and person to person contact (EN, 46) as important; but he stresses Christian witness, (which is especially incumbent upon the lay faithful living in non-Christian milieux) as the most effective means of evangelization:

[...] in the church the witness given by a life truly and essentially Christian which is dedicated to God in an indissoluble union and which is likewise dedicated with the utmost fervour of soul to our neighbour is the primary organ of evangelization. "[...] the men of our days are more impressed by witness than by teachers, and

⁹⁶ EN, 13, in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 715-716.

⁹⁷ EN, 15, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 716.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 717-718.

if they listen to these it is because they also bear witness."⁹⁹

The Pope later speaks about the evangelizers who all have received the mandate for preaching the good news from Jesus the Lord himself. He begins with himself as the pastor of the Church universal, then mentions the bishops who are pastors in their particular churches together with priests and deacons who are their cooperators in a communion which derives from the sacrament of Holy Orders.¹⁰⁰

The lay faithful are mentioned next:

Laymen [and lay women], whose vocation commits them to the world and to various temporal enterprises, should exercise a special form of evangelization. [...] The special field for their evangelical zeal is the wide and complex arena of politics, sociology and economics. They can be effective also in the spheres of culture, the sciences, the arts, international relations and the communications media. There are certain other fields which are especially appropriate for evangelization such as human love, the family, the education of children and adolescents, the practice of the various professions and the relief of human suffering. If laymen who are actively involved in these spheres are inspired with the evangelical spirit, if they are competent and determined to bring into play all those Christian powers in themselves which so often lie hidden and dormant, then all these activities will be all the more helpful in the building up of the kingdom of God and in bringing salvation in Jesus Christ.¹⁰¹

Regarding the family, the domestic church (LG, 11; AA, 11), the Pope says in accordance with the Council:

⁹⁹ EN, 41, in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 727-728.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. EN, 68, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 745.

¹⁰¹ EN, 70, in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 746-747; see also FURIOLI, "A 10 anni dalla *Evangelii nuntiandi*", p. 112.

[...] in every Christian family the various features and characteristics of the universal church should be found. And accordingly the family, just like the church, must always be regarded as a centre to which the gospel must be brought and from which it must be proclaimed.

Therefore in a family which is conscious of this role all the members of the family are evangelizers and are themselves evangelized.¹⁰²

The Pope calls the lay faithful to cooperate in the service of the ecclesial community and to extend and invigorate it by "the exercise of different kinds of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord has been pleased to bestow on them."¹⁰³ He then speaks about ministries in particular, saying:

[...] the Church recognizes other ministries which, although not related to Holy Orders, are capable of rendering special service to the Church. [...] -- the ministry, for example, of the catechist, of directors of prayer and chant, of Christians dedicated to preaching the Word of God or to caring for their brethren in need, the ministry of directors of small communities, of the heads of apostolic movements and of others of this kind -- can be of the greatest value for establishing, vitalizing and extending the church and can help her to cast a more extended radiance so that she may reach those who are far distant from her.¹⁰⁴

The Pope concludes this apostolic exhortation urging the evangelizers to pray unceasingly to the divine Spirit "who plays a primary part in the propagation of the gospel" (EN, 75); to have a "true sanctity of life" (EN, 76); to give witness of unity (EN,

¹⁰² EN, 71, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 747.

¹⁰³ EN, 73, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 748.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 748-749.

77); to be disciples of truth (EN, 78), and to preach with fraternal love (EN, 79).

Summary:

Jesus Christ commanded his Apostles to go to the whole world and preach the Gospel. The Church having herself received this commandment sends evangelizing ministers into the world to continue the presence and the mission of Jesus who himself was the first preacher of the kingdom of God.

Evangelii nuntiandi says that like all Christians the laity are called to evangelize the world, using all possible means, but, especially by Christian witness. The role of the Christian family is important. The members evangelize not only others, but are themselves evangelized by one another. Lay faithful are called to cooperate with their ecclesial community through all possible ministries.

In *Evangelii nuntiandi*, lay activity has been positively affirmed, especially that which is carried out in association with the Church whether within its structures or outside of it. In this sense any activity in which lay people can be involved under a recognized form of association would be termed ministry for lay people. By offering various ministries to the laity *Evangelii nuntiandi* not only recognizes lay ministers in the Church, but also invites lay men and women to go out into the world on behalf of the Church and with its backing.

3. Apostolic Exhortation "*Catechesi tradendae*"¹⁰⁵

In October 1977 the Fourth General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held in Rome. The Apostolic Exhortation, *Catechesi tradendae* of Pope John Paul II reflects the thought and proposals of the Synod Fathers together with those of the Pope himself. In some respects it reflects *Evangelii nuntiandi* as the Pope notes,¹⁰⁶ but there are many new elements to which we shall turn our attention. The document does not have an official English title. The Latin title *Catechesi tradendae*, however, means "handing on the teaching".¹⁰⁷

L. Colussi, commenting on *Catechesi tradendae*, notes:

The Pope presents the "exhortation" as a synthesis of the recent documents of the Church on catechetical matters: the teachings of Pope Paul VI and of the Synod of Bishops in October 1977 -- of which he himself was an active member -- are particularly referred to often. Yet one evidently notices how the Pope -- himself a great catechist -- wishes to bring a valid contribution to catechesis through this document.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation on the Catechesis in Our Time, *Catechesi tradendae* (= CT), October 16, 1979, in AAS, 71(1979), pp. 1277-1340 (English translation in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 762-814).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. CT, 4, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 763.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation on Catechesis in Our Time, *Catechesi tradendae*, in *The Pope Speaks*, 25(1980), p. 35, footnote (not numbered).

¹⁰⁸ L. COLUSSI, "Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi tradendae* of His Holiness Pope John Paul II", in *Indian Missiological Review*, 2(1980), p. 123.

Explaining the word "catechesis", the Pope relates it to the term "Christocentricity" in two senses: in the first place, to stress that the person of Jesus Christ is at the heart of "catechesis"¹⁰⁹, i. e., catechesis has as its purpose to lead people to know in depth the personality of Jesus himself; secondly, it refers to the intention to transmit "not one's own teaching or that of some other master, but the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Truth that he communicates or, to put it more precisely, the Truth that he is."¹¹⁰

Pope John Paul II calls Jesus the "Teacher" par excellence because Jesus not only taught by his words but also, and especially, by his life and very being:

[...] the whole of Christ's life was a continual teaching: his silences, his miracles, his gestures, his prayer, his love for people, his special affection for the little and the poor, his acceptance of the total sacrifice on the Cross for the redemption of the world, and his Resurrection are the actualization of his word and the fulfilment of revelation. Hence for Christians the crucifix is one of the most sublime and popular images of Christ the Teacher.¹¹¹

The Pope, then, states that catechesis was first taught by Jesus himself to the twelve Apostles, who, then, were given the mission to go to the whole world, teaching all nations and making disciples, a task which they fulfilled so faithfully (CT, 10). The

¹⁰⁹ Cf. CT, 5, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 764.

¹¹⁰ CT, 6, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 765.

¹¹¹ CT, 9, in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 766-767; see also nos. 7-8, pp. 765-766.

Apostles, in their turn, transmitted this task to their successor-bishops and deacons, and also to the lay faithful. "Even simple Christians scattered by persecution went about preaching the word."¹¹² After the Apostolic Age, the Fathers of the Church took over some of the responsibility for catechesis, not only by word of mouth, but also by writing great works (CT, 12) which are still a treasure of the Church today.

The Pope further says that the ministry of catechesis draws ever fresh energy from the Councils. The missions also have played a great role for catechizing the nations, and, he adds, "the People of God have thus continued for almost two thousand years to educate themselves in the faith in ways adapted to the various situations of believers and the many different circumstances in which the Church finds herself."¹¹³

He then states that catechesis has a specific aim:

Catechesis aims therefore at developing understanding of the mystery of Christ in the light of God's word, so that the whole of a person's humanity is impregnated by that word. Changed by the working of grace into a new creature, the Christian thus sets himself to follow Christ and learns more and more within the Church to think like him, to judge like him, to act in conformity with his commandments, and to hope as he invites us to.¹¹⁴

As to the source of catechesis, the Pope says that it draws its content from the living source of the Word of God transmitted

¹¹² CT, 11, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 768; see also Acts 8: 4.

¹¹³ CT, 13, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 769.

¹¹⁴ CT, 20, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 774.

in "Tradition and Scripture, for sacred Tradition and sacred scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the word of God."¹¹⁵

Further on he notes that everyone needs to be catechised: infants (CT, 36), children (CT, 37); adolescents (CT, 38), the young (CT, 39), adults (CT, 43), quasi-catechumens (CT, 44), and the elderly (CT, 45).

He then states that the task of teaching catechism concerns all Christians: bishops (CT, 63), priests (CT, 64), men and women religious (CT, 65). The Pope praises lay teachers of catechesis in touching words:

I am anxious to give thanks in the Church's name to all of you, lay teachers of catechesis in the parishes, the men and the still more numerous women throughout the world, who are devoting yourselves to the religious education of many generations. Your work is often lowly and hidden but it is carried out with ardent and generous zeal, and it is an eminent form of the lay apostolate, a form that is particularly important where for various reasons children and young people do not receive suitable religious training in the home. How many of us have received from people like you our first notions of catechism and our preparation for the sacrament of penance, for our first communion and confirmation! The Fourth General Assembly of the Synod did not forget you. I join with it in encouraging you to continue your collaboration for the life of the Church.¹¹⁶

The Pope then speaks about places for catechesis. The parish is mentioned first since the parochial community must continue to be the prime mover and pre-eminent place for catechesis. Indeed, he calls the parish to be "a fraternal and welcoming family home,

¹¹⁵ CT, 27, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 778.

¹¹⁶ CT, 66, in *FLANNERY II*, pp. 802-803.

where those who have been baptized and confirmed become aware of forming the People of God."¹¹⁷

The Pope also mentions the family as a place where catechesis is imparted:

[...] in places where widespread unbelief or invasive secularism makes real religious growth practically impossible, "the Church of the home" remains the one place where children and young people can receive an authentic catechesis. Thus there cannot be too great an effort on the part of Christian parents to prepare for this ministry of being their own children's catechists and to carry it out with tireless zeal. [...] the service they are doing to catechesis is beyond price.¹¹⁸

The further field for catechesis is found in various lay organizations:

[...] encouragement must be given to the lay associations, movements and groups, whether their aim is the practice of piety, the direct apostolate, charity and relief work, or a Christian presence in temporal matters. They will all accomplish their objectives better, and serve the Church better, if they give an important place in their internal organization and their method of action to the serious religious training of their members. In this way every association of the faithful in the Church has by definition the duty to educate in the faith.¹¹⁹

The Pope concludes his exhortation by stressing the need of proper training for lay teachers of catechesis:

We must be grateful to the Lord for this contribution by the laity, but it is also a challenge to our responsibility as Pastors, since these lay catechists must be carefully prepared for what is, if not a formally instituted ministry, at the very least a function of great importance in the Church. Their preparation calls

¹¹⁷ CT, 67, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 804.

¹¹⁸ CT, 68, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 805.

¹¹⁹ CT, 70, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 807.

on us to organize special Centres and Institutes, which are to be given assiduous attention by the Bishops.¹²⁰

Summary:

In the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi tradendae*, Pope John Paul II explains the meaning of catechesis which is first and foremost christocentric. Jesus Christ is at the heart of catechesis. The one who catechises and those who are catechised must know Christ in depth. Also he emphasizes that it is only the teaching of Christ that is to be taught and no one else's.

As the early Christians, even the laity, catechised others, so is it today the task of every baptized person to catechise. Lay men and women are especially praised by the Pope for having catechised so many. The Pope calls the catechising of parents to their children a "ministry". Lay associations involved in this field are equally encouraged in the Exhortation. The Pope stresses the need for a serious preparation of lay catechizers for such an important activity.

Catechesi tradendae uses the term "ministry" for the activity of the Christian parents to catechise their own children. It exhorts parents to continue doing so.

¹²⁰ CT, 71, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 807.

4. Apostolic Letter "*Mulieris dignitatem*"¹²¹

Pope John Paul II, introducing his Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris dignitatem*, on the dignity and vocation of women in the Church, quotes the Second Vatican Council's Closing Message:

The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of women is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved. That is why, at this moment when the human race is undergoing so deep a transformation, women imbued with a spirit of the Gospel can do so much to aid humanity in not falling.¹²²

The Council did indeed speak of women in its various documents. For example in *Apostolicam actuositatem* and *Gaudium et spes* respectively, it said:

Since in our days women are taking an increasingly active share in the whole life of society, it is very important that their participation in the various sectors of the Church's apostolate should likewise develop.¹²³

At present women are involved in nearly all spheres of life: they ought to be permitted to play their part fully according to their own particular nature. It is up to everyone to see to it that women's specific and necessary participation in cultural life be acknowledged and fostered.¹²⁴

¹²¹ JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter on the Dignity and Vocation of Women, *Mulieris dignitatem* (= MD), August 15, 1988, in AAS, 80(1988), pp. 1653-1729 (Vatican English translation: *Dignity and Vocation of Women*, Sherbrooke, Éditions Paulines, 1988, 134 p).

¹²² MD, 1, pp. 7-8.

¹²³ AA, 9, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 777.

¹²⁴ GS, 60, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 965.

Pope John Paul II says that similar thinking about women had already been put forward, for example, in Pope Pius XII's discourses,¹²⁵ and in the Encyclical letter, *Pacem in terris*, of Pope John XXIII.¹²⁶ He mentions Pope Paul VI having the same thought about women by setting up, at the request of the 1971 Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, a special Commission for the study of contemporary problems concerning the "effective promotion of the dignity and the responsibility of women."¹²⁷

According to P. Giglioni, the two documents of Pope John Paul II, that is *Mulieris dignitatem* and *Christifideles laici*, which follows only a few months later (December 30, 1988), pay very particular attention to women and to their active and responsible participation in the life and in the mission of the Church.¹²⁸

The Pope speaks about Our Lady, a woman who intimately belongs to the salvific mystery of Christ and is therefore also present in a special way in the mystery of the Church:

¹²⁵ Cf. MD, 1, p. 8; see also PIUS XII, Address to Italian Women, October 21, 1945, in AAS, 37(1945), pp. 284-295; Address to the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, April 24, 1952, in AAS, 44(1952), pp. 420-424; Address to the Participants in the XV International Meeting of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, September 29, 1957, in AAS, 49(1957), pp. 906-922.

¹²⁶ MD, 1, p. 8; see also JOHN XXIII, Encyclical Letter, *Pacem in terris*, April 11, 1963, in AAS, 55(1963), pp. 267-268.

¹²⁷ Cf. MD, 1, p. 8; see also PAUL VI, Instituting a commission of study about the activity of woman in the society and in the Church, March 31, 1973, in AAS, 65(1973), pp. 284-285.

¹²⁸ Cf. P. GIGLIONI, "Donna: ministero e missione", in *Euntes docete*, 42(1989), p. 441.

Since "the Church is in Christ as a sacrament ... of intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race",¹²⁹ the special presence of the mother of God in the mystery of the Church makes us think of the exceptional link between this "woman" and the whole human family. [...] Cannot the "message" of Christ, contained in the Gospel, which has as its background the whole of Scripture, both the Old and the New Testament, say much to the Church and to humanity about the dignity of women and their vocation?¹³⁰

In contrast to Eve, the imperfect woman who was the cause of the fall of man, Mary, the "new Eve", the instrument of the exaltation of man in Jesus, is seen as the perfect woman as God intended her to be:

Mary means, in a sense, a going beyond the limit spoken of in the Book of Genesis (3: 16) and a return to that "beginning" in which one finds the "woman" as she was intended to be in creation, and therefore in the eternal mind of God: in the bosom of the Most Holy Trinity. Mary is "the new beginning" of the dignity and vocation of women, of each and every woman.¹³¹

Pope John Paul II mentions that Jesus Christ "became a promoter of women's true dignity and of the vocation corresponding to this dignity."¹³²

He then speaks about women's role in the Gospel and especially of those who are the first witnesses to the Resurrection:

The women are the first at the tomb. They are the first to find it empty. They are the first to hear: "He is not here. He has risen, as he said" (Mt. 28: 6). They are the first to embrace his feet (Mt. 28: 9). They are

¹²⁹ Cf. LG, 1, in *FLANNERY I*, P. 350.

¹³⁰ MD, 2, pp. 10, 11.

¹³¹ MD, 11, pp. 49-50.

¹³² MD, 12, p. 53.

the first to be called to announce this truth to the Apostles (cf. Mt. 28: 1-10; Lk. 24: 8-11). The Gospel of John (cf. also Mk. 16: 9) emphasizes *the special role of Mary Magdalene*. She is the first to meet the risen Christ. [...] Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her (Jn. 20: 16-18).

Hence, she came to be called "the apostle of the Apostles."¹³³

Emmanuel Parvez, writing upon Mary Magdalene, describes various stages that she had to go through before really believing in the Risen Lord. But once absolutely sure of it, she openly and boldly proclaims her faith:

The Third Stage: In order to arrive at this short, simple but profound stage Mary Magdalene has undergone a tremendous change. She goes to the disciples obeying the risen Jesus, who calls them his brothers, and announces "I have seen the Lord". This is not mere a news but an experience. She returns to the disciples completely transformed and expresses boldly her faith in the resurrection of Jesus.¹³⁴

I have seen the Lord:

This phrase is very special of John and demonstrates the depth of Easter faith. "I have seen the Lord" does not only mean to break a news but to relate an experience. The scholars see in this phrase a concrete and living expression of the faith of the early Christian community.¹³⁵

Another great example of women's ministry in the Gospel is found in John's gospel (ch. 4), that of the Samaritan woman:

¹³³ MD, 16, p. 68; see also GIGLIONI, "Donna: ministero e missione", pp. 446-451.

¹³⁴ E. PARVEZ, *Mary Magdalene's Faith in the Risen Lord (Jn. 20: 11-18)*, Rome, Pontificia Università Urbaniana, 1984, pp. 163-164.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 169.

This is an event without precedent: that a woman, and what is more a "sinful woman", becomes a "disciple" of Christ. Indeed, once taught, she proclaims Christ to the inhabitants of Samaria, so that they too receive him with faith (cf. Jn. 4: 39-42).¹³⁶

Women were collaborators in the mission of the apostolate with Jesus, the apostles, and especially with Paul. It is enough to recall here Paul's women collaborators mentioned in Romans, chapter 16. According to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the participation of women in the proclamation of the Good News can take many forms which can be briefly enumerated as:

Catechising, both catechumens and Christians (see AG, 26).

Visiting families, the poor, the sick, outcasts.

Involvement in retreats and spirituality sessions.

Teaching religion, to the level of theology, in every capacity.

The mass media: press, radio, television (AG, 12d).¹³⁷

In another post-conciliar document, the Congregation for Divine Worship offers the following roles to women:

- (a) Proclaim the scripture readings [...].
- (b) Offer the intentions for the Prayer of the Faithful.
- (c) Lead the congregation's singing; play the organ and other approved instruments.
- (d) Give the explanatory comments to help the people's understanding of the service.
- (e) Fulfil certain offices of service to the faithful which in some places are usually entrusted to women, such as receiving the faithful at the doors of the church and directing them to their places, guiding them in

¹³⁶ MD, 15, pp. 64-65.

¹³⁷ SCEP, "The Role of Women in Evangelization", July 4, 1976, in *FLANNERY II*, p. 323; see also Id., "Fonction de la femme dans l'évangélisation", in *La Documentation catholique*, 73(1976), pp. 612-618.

processions and collecting their offerings in church.¹³⁸

Pope John Paul II expresses his deep trust in women. In our times, he notes, their role is even more important in relation to human and religious values:

In our own time, the successes of science and technology make it possible to attain material well-being to a degree hitherto unknown. While this favours some, it pushes others to the edges of society. In this way unilateral progress can also lead to a gradual loss of sensitivity for man, that is, for what is essentially human. In this sense, our time in particular awaits the manifestation of that "genius" which belong to women, and which can ensure sensitivity for human beings in every circumstance: because they are human! -- and because "the greatest of these is love" (cf. 1 Cor. 13: 13).¹³⁹

Summary:

Mulieris dignitatem speaks about women's importance in the life of the Church and in the world. It starts with saying that the time has come to acknowledge the vocation of women in its fullness and also their influence, effect, and the power which they never had before. It recalls the role played by Mary, the Mother of God, in our salvation and in the mystery of the Church. It calls her the "new Eve" and the "perfect woman" who is the new beginning of the dignity and vocation of women. It recalls also that Jesus Christ himself was the supporter of women's dignity and of their corresponding vocation. It clearly states that man and woman are

¹³⁸ SCDW, *Liturgiae instaurationes*, September 5, 1970, no. 7, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 217-218.

¹³⁹ MD, 30, p. 122.

essentially equal since both are created in the image and likeness of God.

As to the activities of women, *Mulieris dignitatem* does not use the term "ministry" as such. However, the role played by them can be considered as equal to any important ministry. It says, for example, that the first apostles of the risen Lord were women. Mary Magdalene is called the "apostle of the Apostles" and hers is called a *special role* by the Apostolic Letter. The Samaritan woman herself became an apostle of Christ. Saint Paul the Apostle had many women collaborators. Many functions are thus performed and several others can be carried out by lay women today.

5. Apostolic Exhortation "*Christifideles laici*"¹⁴⁰

The Seventh Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in Rome, from October 1-30, 1988, had as its theme: the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and in the world twenty years after the Second Vatican Council. This shows the potential importance of the post-Synodal document. It is also important because many lay persons, both men and women, took part in this particular assembly of the Synod of Bishops enlightening

¹⁴⁰ JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World, *Christifideles laici* (= CL), December 30, 1988, in AAS, 81(1989), pp. 393-521 (Vatican English translation: *The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World*, Ottawa, CCCB, 1989, 202 p).

the participants with their own personal experiences. The exhortation is written specifically for the lay faithful and covers many aspects of their life.

The lay faithful are defined positively in the document as those who are one body with Christ and are established among the People of God through baptism, fully sharing the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ in their own way. The unique character of their vocation is to "seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God."¹⁴¹ The document quotes Pope Pius XII who had already stated in very positive terms:

The Faithful, more precisely the lay faithful, find themselves on the front lines of the Church's life; for them the Church is the animating principle for human society. Therefore, they in particular, ought to have an ever-clearer consciousness *not only of belonging to the Church, but of being the Church*, that is to say, the community of the faithful on earth under the leadership of the Pope, the head of all, and of the Bishops in communion with him. These are *the Church* ...¹⁴²

The lay faithful are called by God himself to be in the world (cf. LG, 33), and it is through them that the Church is able to fulfill the secular dimension of its mission. As Pope Paul VI had noted earlier:

[...] the Church has an authentic secular dimension, inherent to her inner nature and mission, which is deeply

¹⁴¹ CL, 9, pp. 22-23; see also J.S. MARTINS, "Ruolo missionario e formazione apostolica dei laici", in *Euntes docete*, 40(1987), p. 643.

¹⁴² CL, 9, p. 23; see also PIUS XII, Discourse to the New Cardinals, February 20, 1946, in *AAS*, 38(1946), p. 149.

rooted in the mystery of the Word Incarnate, and which is realized in different forms through her members.¹⁴³

Coming to the various roles or ministries that the lay faithful can assume, Pope John Paul states that the Church's mission of salvation in the world is realized not only by ministries exercised in virtue of the sacrament of Orders, but also by all the lay faithful. He further says:

The Pastors, therefore, ought to acknowledge and foster the ministries, the offices and roles of the lay faithful that find their *foundation in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation*, indeed, for a good many of them, *in the Sacrament of Matrimony*.¹⁴⁴

The Pope quotes numerous canons, especially canons 228, 229, and 230, regarding the many lay ministries, roles, and functions that can be exercised. He then adds:

Following the liturgical renewal promoted by the Council, the lay faithful themselves have acquired a more lively awareness of the tasks that they fulfill in the liturgical assembly and its preparation, and have become more widely disposed to fulfill them: the liturgical celebration, in fact, is a sacred action not simply of the clergy, but of the entire assembly. It is, therefore, natural that the tasks not proper to the ordained ministers be fulfilled by the lay faithful.¹⁴⁵

The Pope also speaks of the individual charisms, quoting from the Scripture (cf. 1 Cor. 12: 4-10, 28-31; Rom. 12: 6-8; 1 Pet. 4: 10-11) and noting:

¹⁴³ CL, 15, p. 35; see also PAUL VI, Address to Members of Secular Institutes, February 2, 1972, in AAS, 64(1972), p. 208.

¹⁴⁴ CL, 23, p. 58.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

Whether they be exceptional and great or simple and ordinary, the charisms are *graces of the Holy Spirit that have, directly or indirectly, a usefulness for the ecclesial community, ordered as they are to the building up of the Church, to the well-being of humanity and to the needs of the world.*¹⁴⁶

He continues by encouraging lay participation in whatever way possible stressing this especially in one's own particular Church:

The lay faithful participate in the life of the Church not only in exercising their tasks and charisms, but also in many other ways.

Such participation finds its first and necessary expression in the life and mission of the particular Church, in the diocese in which "the Church of Christ, one, holy, catholic and apostolic, is truly present and at work."¹⁴⁷

The parish is also given much importance in the document. It is not principally a structure but rather, "the family of God, a fellowship afire with a unifying spirit", "a familial and welcoming home", "the community of the faithful", "a community properly suited for celebrating the Eucharist, the living source for its upbuilding and the sacramental bond of its being in full communion with the whole Church. It is the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters."¹⁴⁸

[...] The parish offers an outstanding example of the apostolate on the community level, inasmuch as it

¹⁴⁶ CL, 24, p. 65.

¹⁴⁷ CL, 25, p. 67; see also Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus* (=CD), October 28, 1965, in AAS, 58(1966), no. 11, p. 677 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 569).

¹⁴⁸ CL, 26, pp. 70-71; see also SC, 42, in AAS, 56(1964), pp. 111-112 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 15).

brings together the many human differences found within its boundaries and draws them into the universality of the Church [...]. As far as possible the lay faithful ought to collaborate in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their own ecclesial family.¹⁴⁹

The document then speaks about the two forms of lay participation in the activities of the Church. They are either individual forms or group ones. It says that the apostolate exercised by the individual -- which flows abundantly from a truly Christian life (cf. Jn. 4: 11) -- "is the origin and condition of the whole lay apostolate, even in its organized expression, and admits no substitute", and that "all lay persons [...] are called to this type of apostolate and obliged to engage in it."¹⁵⁰

Concerning group forms of participation, the document says:

Church communion, already present and at work in the activities of the individual, finds its specific expression in the lay faithful's working together in groups, that is, in activities done with others in the course of their responsible participation in the life and mission of the Church.¹⁵¹

The document then speaks about many lay groups, associations, communities, and movements, especially contemporary ones. It further says that we can speak of a new era of group endeavours of the lay faithful. Group work, it says, is more effective than that of an individual effort. In reality, a "cultural" effect can be

¹⁴⁹ CL, 27, pp. 74-75; cf. AA, 10 in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 777-778.

¹⁵⁰ CL, 28, p. 77; cf. AA, 16 in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 783-784; see also J.S. MARTINS, "Ruolo missionario e formazione apostolica dei laici", p. 644.

¹⁵¹ CL, 29, p. 78.

accomplished through work done not so much by an individual alone but by an individual as "a social being", that is, as a member of a group, of a community, of an association, or of a movement.¹⁵²

The document later speaks about the status and role of women, a topic to which the Synod Fathers gave special attention. It acknowledges the indispensable contribution of women in building the Church and developing society. But women's participation in the life and mission of the Church must be specified more clearly. The document makes a reference to Pope John XXIII who saw women's growing consciousness of their own dignity and their entrance into public life as "signs of our times".¹⁵³

But not all women enjoy that dignity and status which is their right. In fact, in many parts of the world they are still victims of discrimination. As Pope John Paul II had noted previously,

vigorous and incisive pastoral action must be taken by all to overcome completely these forms of discrimination so that the image of God that shines in all human beings without exception may be fully respected.¹⁵⁴

However, in the Synod Hall, the document says, many voices were raised expressing the fear that excessive insistence given to

¹⁵² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

¹⁵³ CL, 49, p. 143; JOHN XXIII, Encyclical Letter, *Pacem in terris*, April 11, 1963, in *AAS*, 55(1963), pp. 267-268.

¹⁵⁴ CL, 49, p. 144; JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, *Familiaris consortio* (= FC), November 22, 1981, no. 24, in *AAS*, 74(1982), pp. 109-110 (Vatican English translation: *The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World*, Boston, St. Paul Editions, 1981, pp. 41-42).

the status and role of women may cause people to neglect the role of men. Therefore the Fathers suggested that

the coordinated presence of both men and women is to be pastorally urged so that the participation of the lay faithful in the salvific mission of the Church might be rendered more rich, complete and harmonious.¹⁵⁵

Towards the end, the text recommends formation which is not necessary only for lay leaders but for every Christian:

Formation is not the privilege of a few, but a right and duty of all. In this regard the Synod Fathers have said: "Possibilities of formation should be proposed to all, especially the poor, who can also be a source of formation for all"; and they added: "Suitable means to help each person fulfill a full, human and Christian vocation should be applied to formation."¹⁵⁶

Mr. Mushtaq Asad is a lay instructor in the Catechists' Training Centre, Khushpur, Pakistan. Concerning the formation and training of the lay faithful he says:

The church gives a lot of attention to the training of religious and priests but comparatively little to the training of lay preachers. Without ignoring the former it is time to give more importance to the latter. The experiments which have been done in this regard have been positive. For example those who have got religious training from abroad are now playing a constructive role in Christian communities and institutions. Those Christian people who have given themselves for this purpose have a right to support and encouragement and recognition.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ CL, 52, p. 158.

¹⁵⁶ CL, 63, pp. 187-188.

¹⁵⁷ M. ASAD, "The Lay Preacher", in *Focus* (an independent publication of the Pastoral Institute, Multan, Pakistan, published quarterly), 11(1991), p. 319.

Summary:

As is clear, *Christifideles laici* is a document meant mainly for lay people whose vocation is to seek the Kingdom of God by engaging themselves in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God. The Exhortation says that the laity not only belong to the Church, but that they are the Church. It further says that God himself has called the laity to be in the world and that the Church is able to fulfill the secular dimension of its mission only through them.

Christifideles laici acknowledges functions, roles, and ministries of lay faithful, that have their basis in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and matrimony, and encourages them to continue doing so. It urges pastors not only to acknowledge these lay ministries, but also to foster such ministries. It quotes many canons from the Code of Canon Law referring to possible lay ministries. Individual charisms assign special roles and ministries for the good of all. These ministries are best exercised in one's own ecclesial community, that is, in the parish or the diocese.

Christifideles laici, though it distinguishes "sacred ministry" from "lay ministry", does not differentiate it from other functions, roles, and tasks of the laity. The term "ministry" is applied quite frequently to mean lay activity in the Church. However, it does say that the term needs clarification and specification not to confuse it with ministry of the sacred ministers.

6. Encyclical Letter "*Redemptoris missio*"¹⁵⁸

"For if I preach the Gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9: 16). These introductory words of Pope John Paul II's Encyclical, *Redemptoris missio*, issued twenty-five years after the publication of *Ad gentes*, the Decree of the Second Vatican Council on missionary activity, aims at revitalizing the missionary activity of the Church, which belongs to the very nature of the Christian life and, which, in the Pope's own words, "appears to be waning."¹⁵⁹

Other reasons for this document are:

[...] to respond to the many requests for a document of this kind; to clear up doubts and ambiguities regarding missionary activity *ad gentes*, and to confirm in their commitment those exemplary brothers and sisters dedicated to missionary activity and all those who assist them; to foster missionary vocations; to encourage theologians to explore and expound systematically the various aspects of missionary activity; to give a fresh impulse to missionary activity by fostering the commitment of the particular Churches -- especially those of recent origin -- to send forth and receive missionaries; and to assure non-Christians and particularly the authorities of countries to which missionary activity is being directed that all of this has but one purpose: to serve man by revealing to him the love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ See p. 21, footnote 43.

¹⁵⁹ RM, 2, p. 8.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

As J. Esquerda Bifet notes, *Ad gentes, Evangelii nuntiandi*, and *Redemptoris missio* have a great deal in common since all the three documents have missionary activity as their focus.¹⁶¹

The Pope is deeply concerned about missionary activity and, he says, that is why from the beginning of his pontificate he has chosen to travel to the ends of the earth. This activity is based in a dynamic way on the "Trinitarian mission itself."¹⁶² It is absolutely the duty of every Christian to be engaged in missionary activity:

God is opening before the Church the horizons of a humanity more fully prepared for the sowing of the Gospel. I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples.¹⁶³

The document distinguishes three situations in missionary activity from the viewpoint of evangelization, the mission *ad gentes* in the proper sense of the term. First, there is the situation where Christ and his Gospel are not known. Secondly, the situation where there are Christian communities with adequate and solid ecclesial structures where the activity of the Church focuses on pastoral care. Thirdly, the intermediate situation where entire groups of the baptized have lost their living sense of the faith.

¹⁶¹ Cf. E. BIFET, "Cooperazione e spiritualità missionaria nella *Redemptoris missio*", in *Euntes docete*, 44(1991), pp. 289-290.

¹⁶² RM, 1, p. 8.

¹⁶³ RM, 3, p. 11; see also FC, 52-54, pp. 79-83.

What they need now is a "new evangelization" or a "re-evangelization".¹⁶⁴

The Pope speaks about dialogue with our brothers and sisters of other religions (RM, 55-57) including the Asian religions. Inter-religious dialogue, he says, is a part of evangelization. In fact it is a positive challenge to the Church because it stimulates its discovery and acknowledgement of the signs of Christ's presence and the working of the Holy Spirit in other religions and it leads the Church to examine more deeply its own identity.

Regarding such dialogue in Asia, Patrick F. O'Donoghue says:

The ideals of dialogue are still at an elementary stage in Asia though remarkable changes are recorded in shared monastic experience, Christian forms of oriental prayer, scholarly research exchanged and published, and common efforts in political and social goals. The ordinary Asian Christian is not aware of this mission dimension, but it offers great possibilities for the future.¹⁶⁵

Tissa Balasuriya is more critical of *Redemptoris missio* as regards other religions and cultures. In his words:

While the encyclical sets out to answer some of the problems that have arisen concerning mission it does not deal adequately with some of the dilemmas of mission. It speaks of respect for other religions and cultures as *loci* of the presence of the Spirit of God, but it does not go into what Christians have to learn from them both in their historical experience and in today's plural world. It does not recognize that in some respects

¹⁶⁴ RM, 33, p. 49.

¹⁶⁵ F. O'DONOGHUE, "Redemptoris missio and Asia", in *The Japan Missionary Bulletin*, 45(1991), p. 210.

Christians have misrepresented the message of Jesus in being cruelly intolerant of others.¹⁶⁶

Chapter VI of the document speaks about the leaders and workers in the missionary apostolate. It mentions all Christians beginning with the Pope and the members of the College of Bishops (RM, 63), diocesan priests (RM, 67), those in the consecrated life (RM, 69), and all the lay faithful (RM, 71).

Concerning the lay faithful in particular, the document says that it is necessary that like everyone else the lay faithful must share in the responsibility of missionary activity and that "it is a right and duty based on their baptismal dignity, whereby the faithful participate, for their part, in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King."¹⁶⁷

Group apostolate of the laity has been encouraged in the Encyclical:

Within missionary activity, the different forms of the lay apostolate should be held in esteem, with respect for their nature and aims. Lay missionary associations, international Christian volunteer organizations, ecclesial movements, groups and sodalities of different kinds -- all these should be involved in the mission *ad gentes* as cooperators with the local Churches. In this way the growth of a mature and responsible laity will be fostered, a laity whom the younger Churches are recognizing as "an essential and undeniable element in the *plantatio ecclesiae*."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ T. BALASURIYA, "Note on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical: *Redemptoris missio* (1990)", in *The Japan Missionary Bulletin*, 45(1991), pp. 220-221.

¹⁶⁷ RM, 71, p. 102.

¹⁶⁸ RM, 72, p. 103; see also, CL, 35, p. 101.

The ministry of catechists, both men and women, has been very much appreciated by the document, especially in mission lands, and their contribution to the spread of faith is said to be "singular and absolutely necessary." However, the document lists some other important lay ministries besides that of catechist:

Besides catechists, mention must be made of other ways of serving the Church and her mission; namely, other Church personnel: leaders of prayer, song and liturgy; leaders of basic ecclesial communities and Bible study groups; those in charge of charitable works; administrators of Church resources; leaders in the various forms of the apostolate; religion teachers in schools. All the members of the laity ought to devote a part of their time to the Church, living their faith authentically.¹⁶⁹

Missionary promotion and formation of the lay ministers is considered by the document to be an essential part of the life of the baptized:

Missionary formation is the task of the local Church, assisted by missionaries and their Institutes, and by personnel from the young Churches. This work must be seen not as peripheral but as central to the Christian life.¹⁷⁰

Summary:

The Encyclical *Redemptoris missio* is meant to enhance the missionary activity of the Church which belongs to its very nature and is absolutely the duty of every Christian. Both individual as well as group missionary activities are encouraged in it.

¹⁶⁹ RM, 74, p. 105.

¹⁷⁰ RM, 83, p. 114.

Missionary activity is mission *ad gentes* in the proper sense of the word. The document stresses the need of dialogue with brothers and sisters of other religions, especially in Asia where Christianity is in minority in comparison with other religions. It says that inter-religious dialogue is a part of evangelization and enriches the Church itself.

Among the lay missionary workers the Encyclical makes a particular mention of men and women catechists, especially in the missionary lands. However, other workers like leaders of prayer, of liturgical music, of Bible study groups, of basic ecclesial communities, of the apostolate, as well as teachers in schools, have been equally encouraged.

In *Redemptoris missio*, although the term "ministry" has been applied specifically to catechists, especially to those of missionary lands, the term would be applied also to other important activities of the laity. This is clear since the ministry of the catechists and the activities of all the other lay Christians are spoken of in the same paragraph (no. 73). In fact, the paragraph is entitled: "The Work of Catechists and the Variety of Ministries." In this sense *Redemptoris missio* is similar to *Christifideles laici*.

7. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*

On December 11, 1992, by the Apostolic Constitution *Fidei depositum*, Pope John Paul II issued the French version of the new "Catechism of the Catholic Church".¹⁷¹ This important work summarizes the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and of many of the post-conciliar documents. It provides a compendium of Catholic doctrine. Article 873 of the catechism notes:

The very differences which the Lord wished to establish among members of his Body serve its unity and its mission. For there are in the Church a diversity of ministries, but a unity of mission. To the apostles and their successors Christ has entrusted the office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing in his name and by his power. But the laity made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ, take their part in the Church and in the world, in what is the mission of the entire People of God.¹⁷²

The next article notes that Christ himself is the source of all ministry in the Church: He instituted it, gave it authority and mission, orientation, and purpose. Articles 897-913 review the teaching on the lay faithful, and, basing themselves on the

¹⁷¹ *Catéchisme de l'Église catholique*, Paris, Mame - Librairie Editrice Vaticane, 1992, 676 p.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 191. Translated by the author from the original:

Les différences même que le Seigneur a voulu mettre entre les membres de son Corps servent son unité et sa mission. Car "il y a dans l'Église diversité de ministères, mais unité de mission. Le Christ a confié aux apôtres et à leur successeurs la charge d'enseigner, de sanctifier et de gouverner en son nom et par son pouvoir. Mais les laïcs rendus participants de la charge sacerdotale, prophétique et royale du Christ assument, dans l'Église et dans le monde, leur part dans ce qui est la mission du Peuple de Dieu tout entier."

conciliar and post-conciliar documents noted above, speak of the vocation of the laity, of their sharing in the priestly, prophetic, and royal functions of Christ.¹⁷³ However, it should be noted that there is no specific section in the Catechism which refers explicitly to lay ministries.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined a number of the conciliar and post-conciliar documents that refer either directly or indirectly to the laity, to their mission, and to lay ministries. It is now time to put together some of the themes that have been running through these texts, in order to have a unified vision of what the Church intends today in regard to lay ministries.

First of all, from the conciliar texts, we noted that the People of God constitute a community with Christ as its head. No one is excluded from the community, and those who are part of it through baptism and confirmation assume the obligation of seeing to its constant development. Various gifts or charisms have been given to enable it to carry out its mission.

Among the People of God, the laity assume the special role of seeking for the reign of God, not only by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will, but also by assuming those duties and functions which are entrusted to them by

¹⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 196-199.

Christ. Thus, they do not need a special mandate to share in Christ's priestly, prophetic, and royal functions, particularly in the home. As citizens of the state and of the Church, they have special duties in both realms. Their apostolate is personal, carried out in both the temporal and the spiritual spheres. At times, it is carried out through specially mandated ministries conferred by the leaders of the Church.

More particularly, the laity are called to be missionaries in word and in example, helping each new church to attain its full stature in due time. Their principal duty, according to the conciliar decree on the missionary apostolate of the Church, is to bear witness to Christ in their life and their words, in the family, in their special group, and in the sphere of their profession (see AG, 21). Their mission is carried out "in" the world which needs to be able to express hope and to understand the meaningfulness of life. This calls for suitable and adequate formation.

The conciliar teaching is completed by other documents which entered into more practical details regarding eventual ministries of the laity. These ministries are mostly liturgical at this time, but there are many other possibilities, particularly in missionary territories. These might include service in the area of evangelization, such as preaching, catechetical instruction, the use of the mass media, and so forth.

Particular emphasis is being placed in Church documents on the dignity and vocation of women. Besides the liturgical functions they are called to carry out, their apostolic activity can be exercised in the areas of catechising, visiting families, Bible study work, leading community prayer, involvement in retreats and spirituality sessions, teaching religion, using the means of social communication, administering charitable resources, promoting leadership, and so forth.

The various apostolic activities and ministries carried out by lay persons are built to some extent on personal and community charisms, enabling all the baptized to participate in the life and mission of the particular church, especially at the parish level. Obviously, the presence and participation of the laity needs to be coordinated so as to render it more complete and harmonious. This, again, calls for appropriate formation to help each person answer his or her own personal call to mission and to provide for a mature and responsible laity in the Church.

With this doctrinal basis, we are now able to turn to the Church's legislation, as expressed in the Latin (1983) and Oriental (1990) Codes. Once we have established the legal basis for ministries, we will then be able to apply the doctrine and the legislation to the particular situation of the Church in Pakistan.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LAY FAITHFUL AND THEIR MINISTRIES ACCORDING TO CANONS OF THE CODE OF CANON LAW AND THE CODE OF CANONS OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES

The Second Vatican Council may rightly be considered to have brought almost a revolution in the life and history of the Catholic Church in the sense that in many ways it has changed the focus of the Church's theology and practice. It is generally held that, previously, the Church was considered as an "institution", a "structure", a "state", a "monarchy", a "perfect society", or a "mystical body".¹ Since Vatican II, however, and with a change in emphasis, the Church is now seen more in terms of being the "People of God".

This change, as noted in the first chapter, has made a significant difference: it is the People of God who are the Church and, therefore, who are responsible for its life, strength, and growth, in a sense, excluding no human being from the Reign of God. Each member is expected to work for the full realization of this

¹ See A. DULLES, *Models of the Church: A Critical Assessment of the Church in all its Aspects*, 2nd edition, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1988, *passim*, especially, pp. 190-203; see L. BOFF, *Church: Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church*, translated by J.W. DIERCKSMIEIER, New York, Crossroad Publishing Company, 1985, *passim*, especially pp. 47-64; see also A. HASTINGS, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, vol. 1, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1968, pp. 28-31.

reign, and, as noted in *Lumen gentium* 24, even the offices of the bishops and pastors are presented as "diakonia", or "service", to the People of God.

The 1983 *Code of Canon Law*² and the 1990 *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*³ are a reflection of Vatican II. The canons faithfully reproduce its teachings, even to the letter at times. The same idea of service or ministry is reflected throughout the new legislation but is expressed in more legal terms.

It is important to note that the lay faithful are not forgotten in the Codes. Not only are there separate sections teaching of their obligations and rights, but they are also spoken of in many other places throughout the texts.

To focus our attention more clearly, and without any pretence at being exhaustive, we shall select for review a certain number of canons that spell out the status of the laity and describe their call to apostolic ministry. We shall select certain canons which are identical or very similar in both Codes, then review others

² *Codex iuris canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus* [= CIC= Latin Code; c= canon; cc= canons; no= number; nos= numbers; §= paragraph; §§= paragraphs], January 25, 1983, in AAS, 75(1983), part II, pp. xiv-317 (American version of English translation: *The Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition*, prepared under the auspices of the CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA (= CLSA), Washington, D.C., CLSA, 1983, xlii-668 p).

³ *Codex canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus* [= CCEO= Oriental Code], October 18, 1990, in AAS, 82(1990), pp. 1033-1363 (American version of English translation: *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: Latin-English Edition*, prepared under the auspices of the CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, Washington, D.C., CLSA, 1992, xlvii-785 p).

that take distinct approaches, and, finally, note those that are found only in the Latin Code. In this way, we will be able to show not only the similarities in the legislation, but also significant differences in emphasis.

The canons selected treat of the equality of the laity, their activity and ministry, ecclesiastical offices to be held by them, their participation in the Church's teaching mission, their grouping in associations, their call to evangelization, and their mission to dialogue with non-Christians.

This overview will enable us to determine more precisely the legal basis for their activity and eventual ministry as they live out their baptismal commitment. But first a word should be said about the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* to make certain that this document is well placed in its proper context.

A. THE CODE OF CANONS OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES

The Eastern and Western, or Latin and Oriental Churches, distinguished from each other in the past for historical or doctrinal reasons, constitute the same Church of Christ, the People of God. Though the Western part of the Church is generally known as the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern parts thereof represent many traditions.

However, not only all the Christian faithful but also the individual churches, whether Eastern or Western, are equal:

These individual churches both Eastern and Western, while they differ somewhat among themselves in what is called "rite", namely in liturgy, in ecclesiastical discipline and in spiritual tradition, are none the less all equally entrusted to the pastoral guidance of the Roman Pontiff, who by God's appointment is successor to Blessed Peter in primacy over the Universal Church. Therefore these churches are of equal rank, so that none of them is superior to the others because of its rite. They have the same rights and obligations, even with regard to the preaching of the Gospel in the whole world, under the direction of the Roman Pontiff.⁴

Although there did not exist up to 1990 a common legislation in the form of a code for the autonomous Oriental Catholic Churches, Pope Pius XII did promulgate, by various apostolic letters, parts of an Oriental Code of Canon Law⁵ prepared by a Commission of Cardinals established by Pope Pius XI.⁶ These four

⁴ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, *Orientalium ecclesiarum* (= OE), November 21, 1964, no. 3, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (= AAS), 57(1965), p. 77 (English translation in A. FLANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, vol. 1 [= FLANNERY I], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1975, p. 442).

⁵ PIUS XII promulgated legislation on marriage, procedural law, religious and church property, and rites and persons as follows:

- on marriage: *Motu proprio, Crebrae allatae*, February 22, 1949, in AAS, 41(1949), pp. 89-117.

- on procedure: *Motu proprio, Sollicitudinem nostram*, January 6, 1950, in AAS, 42(1950), pp. 5-120.

- on religious and church property: *Motu proprio, Postquam apostolicis*, February 9, 1952, in AAS, 44(1952), pp. 65-152.

- on rites and persons: *Motu proprio, Cleri sanctitati*, June 2, 1957, in AAS, 49(1957), pp. 433-603.

⁶ Cf. T.L. BOUSCAREN, *The Canon Law Digest: Officially Published Documents Affecting the Code of Canon Law 1917-1933* (= *The Canon Law Digest*), Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company,

portions of the Oriental Code were promulgated in consideration of urgent needs.⁷ The rest of the code was not promulgated because, as Pope John XXIII stated, it was pre-empted by the forthcoming Council.⁸

There were many similarities between the two legislations. Meletius M. Wojnar, after comparing the pre-conciliar laws on rites and persons, noted:

Both of these disciplines, of the Oriental Code and of the Latin Code, are complementary. Through their juxtaposition and comparison they may be more clearly understood. Most important of all, however, these two disciplines by their diversity manifest the universality of the Catholic Church.⁹

The same can be said of the new Eastern and Western legislation.

Pope John Paul II, in his capacity as head of the entire visible body of Christ, promulgated the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* as their common law, with the Apostolic Constitution, *Sacri canones*, on October 18, 1990, to have effect from October 1, 1991. This Code has many similarities with the one promulgated (January 25, 1983) by him for the Latin Church, and although it is clear from its very first canon that the Oriental

1934-, vol. 1, p. 16 ; see also PIUS XI, Notification, December 2, 1929, in *AAS*, 21(1929), p. 669.

⁷ Cf. V.J. POSPISHIL and J.D. FARIS, *The New Latin Code of Canon Law and Eastern Catholics*, New York, Diocese of Saint Maron, 1984, p. 3.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4; see also JOHN XXIII, Allocution, "Questa festiva ricorrenza", January 25, 1959, in *AAS*, 51(1959), pp. 68-69.

⁹ M.M. WOJNAR, "The Code of Oriental Canon Law *De ritibus Orientalibus* and *De personis*", in *The Jurist*, 19(1959), p. 464.

Code is meant solely for the Eastern Catholic Churches, it is not to be considered their exclusive property. The Latin Church also has the responsibility to know it well, as John D. Faris notes:

This code is not to be considered as an exclusive possession of the Eastern Churches: as a sign that this new code was to be regarded as part of the disciplinary wealth of the entire Church, the Pope solemnly presented it to the Eighth Ordinary Synod of Bishops on October 25, 1990. As an integral part of the *corpus iuris canonici* of the Church, bishops, canonists, and pastors of both East and West have the responsibility to familiarize themselves with the provisions of this new legislation.¹⁰

Before examining the canons, however, it may be useful to recall that whereas the Latin Code of 1983 is divided into seven books, with parts, sections, titles, chapters, and articles, the Oriental Code has a different set up, comprising thirty titles, chapters, and articles, without a division into books. Thus, while in the Latin Code all the canons on the Christian faithful and their associations are found in Book II, "The People of God", the parallel canons in the Oriental Code are to be found under separate titles. So Title I speaks of the Christian Faithful in general (canons 7-26), while the canons specifically speaking about the laity are found in Title XI (canons 399-409). Similarly, those on associations of the faithful are in Title XIII (canons 573-583), whereas those on evangelization are in Title XIV (canons 584-594).

¹⁰ J.D. FARIS, *The Eastern Catholic Churches: Constitution and Governance According to the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, New York, Saint Maron Publications, 1992, pp. xix-xx.

Although Eastern Churches as such do not exist in Pakistan, however, given the dynamic and active presence of the Eastern Churches in the Indian sub-continent, particularly the Syro-Malabar and the Malankar Churches, this Eastern legislation enables us to appreciate even more the universality of the Church while at the same time giving us new insights into the variety it offers within its unity.

B. COMMON CANONS REFERRING TO THE STATUS OF THE LAITY

The canons which are generally common to both the Latin and Eastern legislation and which have been retained for our study are: cc. 204 CIC and 7 CCEO; cc. 208 CIC and 11 CCEO; cc. 225 CIC and 401, 406 CCEO; cc. 228 CIC and 408 CCEO; cc. 229 CIC and 404 CCEO.

1. The Christian Faithful: CC. 204 CIC; 7 CCEO

Canon 204 of the Latin Code reads:

§1. The Christian faithful are those who, inasmuch as they have been incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God; for this reason, since they have become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal office in their own manner, they are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each one.

§2. This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the world, subsists in the catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him.

According to canon 7 of the Oriental Code:

§1. The Christian faithful are those who, incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God; for this reason, since they have become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal function in their own manner; they are called, in accordance with the condition proper to each, to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfill in the world.

§2 This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the world, subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him.¹¹

The source of the first paragraphs of both canons is *Lumen gentium* 31¹² which refers exclusively to Catholic laity. The substituted term "Christian faithful" however, refers to all the baptized.¹³

The second paragraphs of the two canons are taken verbatim from *Lumen gentium* 8, describing the Church as subsisting in the Catholic Church. Whereas the term "Church" can be applied in the broad sense to the communion of all the baptized and the communion of the saints, it can, at the same time, refer to the external visible society known as the "Catholic Church". It is an expression which allows for the concept that "ecclesial communions not in full

¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*; pp. 118-119.

¹² SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium* (= LG), November 21, 1964, no. 31, in *AAS*, 57(1965), p. 37 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 388).

¹³ Cf. J.A. CORIDEN, T.J. GREEN, and D.E. HEINTSCHEL (eds.), *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary Commissioned by the Canon Law Society of America* (= *The Code Commentary*), London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1985, pp. 122-125; see also FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, p. 119.

communion with the Bishop of Rome can also contain [and, in fact, do contain] elements of truth and sanctification."¹⁴

When we compare the two canons, we find both almost exactly the same. The most important common element is that baptism incorporates the baptised not only into the Church, but also into Christ himself¹⁵ in whose threefold office they then become sharers. At the same time, it is because of baptism that the faithful have the vocation and right to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ alongside the other members of the Church.

There has been a clear shift as regards a Christian, and in spite of the current similarities, there is indeed a significant difference regarding the Christian personality described in the present and in the previous laws. For instance, Canon 87 of the 1917 Code read:

By baptism a man is constituted as a person in the Church of Christ, with all the rights and duties of Christians, unless, as regards the rights, there is an obstacle which impedes the bond of ecclesiastical communion, or a censure imposed by the Church.¹⁶

¹⁴ FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, p. 119; see also LG, 8.

¹⁵ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 125.

¹⁶ T.L. BOUSCAREN, A.C. ELLIS, and F.N. KORTH, *Canon Law: A Text and Commentary (= Bouscaren Commentary)*, 4th revised edition, Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company, 1966, canon 87, p. 78. The original Latin Text read:

"Baptismate homo constituitur in Ecclesia Christi persona cum omnibus christianorum iuribus et officiis, nisi, ad iura quod attinet, obstet obex, ecclesiasticae communionis vinculum impediens, vel lata ab ecclesia censura."

Canon 96 of 1983 Code, instead, reads:

By baptism one is incorporated into the Church of Christ and is constituted a person in it with duties and rights which are proper to Christians, in keeping with their condition, to the extent that they are in ecclesiastical communion and, unless a legitimately issued sanction stands in the way.¹⁷

Canon 16 of the Oriental law, *Cleri sanctitati*, was similar to canon 87 of CIC except for the division of the canon into two paragraphs. It read:

§1. By baptism a man is constituted as a person in the Church of Christ.

§2. A person in the Church of Christ enjoys all the rights and is bound by all the duties of Christians, unless, as regards rights, there is an obstacle which impedes the bond of ecclesiastical communion, or a censure which has been imposed by the Church.¹⁸

As is clear, in the previous law a very important and basic element was missing, that is, reference to incorporation into Christ and sharing in his threefold office of priest, prophet, and king. Consequently, lay Christians did not have recognized as such their vocation to exercise the mission of Christ. If such a

¹⁷ There appears to be no corresponding canon in the 1990 Code for the Eastern Churches.

¹⁸ PIUS XII, motu proprio, *Cleri sanctitati* (June 2, 1957), in AAS, 49(1957), canon 16, p. 440:

"§1. Baptismate homo constituitur in Ecclesia Christi persona.

§2. Persona in Ecclesia Christi omnibus christianorum iuribus fruitur et officiis adstringitur, nisi, ad iura quod attinet, obstet obex ecclesiasticae communionis vinculum impediens, vel lata ab ecclesiae censura."

vocation were not recognized, it follows that there was no question of ministry, mission, or apostolate except by a special deputation of the ecclesiastical authority and under certain conditions.

What is noteworthy, however, is that the previous Oriental law did grant the laity some say in upholding Christian laws; this was a precursor as it were of the contemporary Catholic teaching on the lay apostolate. Concerning lay people, canon 28 of *Cleri sanctitati* stated:

§1. Local Hierarchs should take care by means of opportune prescriptions, the norms given by the Apostolic See on this matter being observed, that under the leadership of suitable priests the laity offer their assistance to the clergy according to their ability, for the support of Christian laws and for the direction of the entire life of the community under such laws, always confirming their words by the example of their lives.

§2. The laity, especially those who excel in doctrine, should explain with appropriate reasons the more serious matters affecting social questions, in the light of Catholic doctrine and fraternal charity.¹⁹

Thus the legal recognition of the sharing in Christ's threefold office and mission on the basis of baptism is a very

¹⁹ M.M. WOJNAR, "The Code of Oriental Canon Law", c. 28, p. 462; cf. also the same in AAS, 49(1957), p. 592 for the original text:

"§1. Hierarcae locorum opportunis praescriptionibus curent, servatis normis de hac re ab Apostolica Sede datis, ut, idoneorum sacerdotum ductu, laici clericis adiutricem pro viribus operam praestent ad christianas leges propugnandas, et secundum eas totam populi vitam componendam, vitae exemplo sua dicta confirmantes.

§2. Laici, praesertim qui doctrina praecellant, ne omittant opportunis rationibus graviore causas, quae ad sociales res attinent, catholicae doctrinae fraternaeque caritatis lumine collustrare."

positive and welcome addition to both codes, especially as regards the activity and involvement of the Christian faithful.

Summary:

Canons 204 CIC and 7 CCEO are fundamental canons. They speak about all the Christian faithful, whether lay or clerics, and define them as those, who, because of their incorporation into Christ through baptism share his office of priest, prophet, and king. All the Christian faithful are called to fulfill the mission entrusted to the Church by God. Both canons are almost exactly the same as regards wording as well as contents.

In the previous legislation, the basic element of incorporation into Christ, which makes Christians eligible to share in various responsibilities in the life of the Church, was missing. On the basis of these two canons, all Christians are called upon and empowered to participate in the Church's threefold mission of teaching, sanctifying, and governing.

Baptism provides the faithful with another very important quality, that is, their basic equality, the theme of our next group of canons.

2. Equality of All Christians: CC. 208 CIC; 11 CCEO

Canon 208 of the Latin Code reads:

In virtue of their rebirth in Christ there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality with regard to dignity and the activity whereby all cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ in accord with each one's own condition and function.

Canon 11 of the Oriental Code states:

In virtue of their rebirth in Christ there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality with regard to dignity and the activity whereby all cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ in accord with each one's own condition and function.²⁰

Comparing both texts, we see that they are identical in content.²¹

This shows the mind of the legislator and the importance attached to the status of all the Christian faithful.

Both canons are fundamental as regards the activity and ministries of the lay faithful. Although they do not have a counterpart in the previous codes, they are based on a rediscovery of the significance of baptism by Vatican II. "Reborn in Christ,

²⁰ See FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, pp. 126-127.

²¹ In the Latin texts of the two canons, however, there are very slight grammatical differences in wording:

CIC, c. 208: "Inter christifideles omnes, ex eorum quidem in Christo regeneratione, vera viget quoad dignitatem et actionem aequalitas, qua cuncti, secundum propriam cuiusque condicionem et munus, ad aedificationem Corporis Christi cooperantur."

CCEO, c. 11: "Inter christifideles omnes ex eorum quidem in Christo regeneratione viget vera circa dignitatem et actionem aequalitas, qua cuncti secundum suam cuiusque condicionem et munus ad aedificationem Corporis Christi cooperantur."

they share a common dignity as children of God. They also have a common responsibility for building up the body of Christ although they carry out that task in keeping with personal abilities and in light of each one's respective functions."²²

The two canons are based on *Lumen gentium* 32, which states that although it was Jesus Christ himself who established some of the faithful as teachers and pastors for the others, on the basis of their baptism they are all truly equal as regards their dignity and activity. This equality with its sacramental basis comes from Jesus, not from the people.²³ In fact, all the Christian faithful are complementary as members of the same body in Christ, building it up by serving one another in a diversity of functions and ministries. As John D. Faris notes,

with regard to membership status in the Church, all faithful are equal, that is, they are all sons and daughters of God without distinction according to age, gender, nationality, social condition, or status in sacred ministry. This radical equality of Christian faithful summons the individual members of the Church to engage themselves personally in the life of the Church according to their own condition and function.²⁴

Although this equality of the faithful is not a democratic-style one and there is indeed a distinction among them²⁵ on the basis of

²² *The Code Commentary*, pp. 139-140.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

²⁴ FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, p. 126; see also L. NAVARRO, "Il principio costituzionale di uguaglianza nell'ordinamento canonico", in *Fidelium iura*, 2(1992), pp. 145-163.

²⁵ Cf. *Communicationes*, 12(1980), pp. 35-36.

their individual condition and capacity, these canons nevertheless endow them with a common juridical state based on "the radical equality that must exist among all Christians in virtue of both their human dignity and the reception of baptism" prior to the exercise of "diverse ecclesiastical functions."²⁶ So, in spite of the diversity of ministries because of qualifications, the common juridical state of every Christian remains the same.

Summary:

Canons 208 CIC and 11 CCEO say that because of their baptism all the Christian faithful are equal concerning their dignity and activity in the mission of the Church. This equality comes from their incorporation into Christ. In other words, it is Christ himself who grants them this status. If there is a diversity of functions and ministries among Christians, it is to be seen as a second stage only. What comes first is their equal juridical status as baptized.

So far we have spoken about the Christian faithful in general. Let us now focus our attention specifically on the lay faithful spoken of in cc. 225 CIC and 401, 406 CCEO. It is in these canons that they find the basis for their typical ministry.

²⁶ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 140; see also *Communicationes*, 1(1969), pp. 82-83.

3. The Laity and their Vocation: CC. 225 CIC; 401, 406 CCEO²⁷

Canon 225 CIC reads:

§1. Since the laity like all the Christian faithful, are deputed by God to the apostolate through their baptism and confirmation, they are therefore bound by the general obligations and enjoy the general right to work as individuals or in associations so that the divine message of salvation becomes known and accepted by all persons throughout the world; this obligation has a greater impelling force in those circumstances in which people can hear the gospel and know Christ only through lay persons.

§2. Each lay person in accord with his or her condition is bound by a special duty to imbue and perfect the order of temporal affairs with the spirit of the gospel; they thus give witness to Christ in a special way in carrying out those affairs and in exercising secular duties.

In the Oriental Code similar ideas are mentioned in two canons, namely, cc. 401 and 406.

401. It is above all the proper vocation of lay persons to carry out and to arrange temporal affairs according to God's plan, to seek the kingdom of God and thus in their private, family, and politico-social lives to be witnesses for Christ and to manifest Him to others; also, shining in faith, hope and charity, to strive for just laws in society, and to be like leaven for the sanctification of the world.

406. Lay persons, aware of the obligation set forth in can. 14, should know that this obligation has a greater impelling force in those circumstances in which

²⁷ See R. A. DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful: The Second Vatican Council Through the Revised Code of Canon Law*, Rome, St. Thomas Pontifical University, 1986, pp. 251-272. As background material for this section, see N. PROVENCHER, "Vers une ecclésiologie totale", in *Eglise et théologie*, 15(1984), pp. 81-93; see also D. POWER, *Gifts that Differ: Lay Ministries Established and Unestablished*, New York, Pueblo Publishing Company, 1980, pp. 44-56.

people can hear the Gospel and know Christ only through them.

Although there seems to be a difference as regards the words, the texts of both Latin and Oriental canons have a very similar message for the laity. Both say that the lay faithful are called to be active in the world and that they find their vocation in it. Both texts then say that the laity have to show Christ to others and to bear witness to the gospel, especially in those situations where only they can represent the Church among non-Christians. This then becomes their very special ministry.

These canons do not have a corresponding text in the 1917 Code. In this sense they are new and are drawn from four conciliar sources: *Lumen gentium* 33,²⁸ *Ad gentes* 21,²⁹ *Apostolicam actuositatem* 7,³⁰ and *Gaudium et spes* 43.³¹

Canons 224-231 of the revised Latin Code show a marked change concerning the laity. The 1917 Code contained only two canons which directly addressed the rights and obligations of the lay faithful.

²⁸ LG, 33, in *FLANNERY I*, PP. 390-391.

²⁹ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad gentes* [= AG], December 7, 1965, no. 21, in *AAS*, 58(1966), pp. 972-973 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 372-374).

³⁰ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem* [= AA], November 18, 1965, no. 7, in *AAS*, 58(1966), pp. 843-844 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, P. 788).

³¹ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes* [= GS], December 7, 1965, no. 43, in *AAS*, 58(1966), pp. 1062-1063 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, PP. 943-945); see also GS, nos. 40 and 72.

Canon 682 was a positive one that affirmed the right of all the Christian faithful to receive the sacraments. The other, canon 683, was a negative one, prohibiting lay persons from wearing ecclesiastical garb.³²

According to the 1917 Code, the spreading of the gospel was primarily the responsibility of the pope and bishops (cc. 1327, 1328, 1350). Others had to be designated by higher authority in order to participate in this work. At times, this designation was considered to be a concession from the ecclesiastical authorities rather than a proper lay ministry.³³ It was presumed by some that the average Christian had only a passive role to play, which consisted in supporting missionary endeavours and not remaining silent when the faith was endangered (c. 1325).³⁴

The change of perspective in the revised Code and the Oriental Code clearly reflects the increased awareness of the role that lay persons are playing in the Church.

Besides canons 224-231 CIC which directly concern the lay faithful, there are others scattered throughout the Code.³⁵ The ones placed together under one title were not meant to lock lay persons into an enclosed circle; rather, they were presented in a

³² Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 159.

³³ Cf. A. JACOBS, "Les associations de fidèles dans l'Église", in *Studia canonica*, 22(1988), p. 361.

³⁴ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 143.

³⁵ See, for example, cc. 327-329; 492; 529, §2; 766; 774; 776; 780; 861, §2; 872-874; and 1428, §2.

serious effort to respond to the criticism that it was a deficiency of the former Code to have treated the laity in such a meagre way.³⁶ The same can be said about the Oriental Code.

Canons 225 CIC and 401, 406 CCEO, the object of our study here, state that the lay people, together with all other Christian faithful, have the general obligation to carry out the mission of the Church through the apostolate.³⁷ It is not only their obligation, but also a right³⁸ having its sacramental basis in baptism and confirmation.³⁹ In other words, the ultimate source of the apostolate of the laity is God himself.

One indirect source of the canons, AA 3, refers to the charisms of the Holy Spirit and to the participation of the lay faithful in the apostolate which does not take place simply after prior deputation by ecclesiastical authorities; rather, this

³⁶ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 160; cf. also reports of the *coetus*' discussions in *Communicationes*, 2(1970), pp. 95-96; 13(1981), pp. 314-315.

³⁷ Cf. cc. 211 and 216 CIC and 14, 19 CCEO.

³⁸ Cf. AA 3; cf. also *The Code Commentary*, p. 143.

³⁹ Cf. c. 759 as presenting the sacramental basis for the apostolate of the lay faithful:

"In virtue of their baptism and confirmation lay members of the Christian faithful are witnesses to the gospel message by word and by example of a Christian life: they can also be called upon to cooperate with the bishop and presbyters in the exercise of the ministry of the word."

sharing emanates from a divine commissioning which is both sacramental and charismatic.⁴⁰

The canon 225 CIC also states that lay people may choose to carry out this mission either individually or together with other members of the Christian faithful or even in associations.⁴¹ They have a twofold missionary activity: to evangelize non-Christians, and to transform and improve the temporal order. This last duty requires constant and regular lay activity.

The three canons assign a very specific role to the lay faithful which few others can fulfill: lay people are called to spread the good news through word of mouth and especially through their example in non-Christian milieux. This can be considered their most important apostolic ministry because the Church does not always have a substitute for this approach, and, were the lay

⁴⁰ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 161. AA, 3, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 769 reads:

"The Holy Spirit sanctifies the People of God through the ministry and the sacraments. However, for the exercise of the apostolate he gives the faithful special gifts besides (cf. 1 Cor. 12: 7), "allotting them to each one as he wills" (1 Cor. 12: 11), so that each and all, putting at the service of others the grace received may be "as good stewards of God's varied gifts," (1 Pet. 4: 10), for the building up of the whole body in charity (cf. Eph. 4: 16). From the reception of these charisms, even the most ordinary ones, there arises for each one of the faithful the right and duty of exercising them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the development of the Church, of exercising them in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who "breathes where he wills" (Jn. 3: 8), and at the same time in communion with his brothers in Christ, and with his pastors especially."

⁴¹ Cf. c. 215.

faithful unable to carry it out, this very important part of the Church's mission would often be left unaccomplished.

These canons apply positively Vatican II's directive that the lay faithful have on their own initiative an active role to play in the mission of the Church, and also that their vocation consists in being spiritually active in the world.⁴² Writing about this dimension, Jacques Vernay notes:

From the fundamental affirmation of a true equality of the baptized in their dignity and common activity that leads them to build the Body of Christ, flow at one and the same time their obligation and their right to work (the Code uses the term *allaborandi* and not *collaborandi*), and not only to cooperate, so that the plan of salvation designed by God may reach all human beings of all times and of all places. This echoes the decree of Vatican II on the apostolate of the laity, whereas the 1917 Code had as a principle that "all missionary care to non-Catholics was reserved entirely to the Holy See". The weakness of missionary law in the 1917 Code is evident.⁴³

⁴² Cf. AA 2; LG 33.

⁴³ J. VERNAY, "La place des laïcs et les droits des chrétiens", in *Droits et pouvoirs dans le nouveau Code de droit canonique*, Travaux et Conférences du Centre Sèvres, 5, Paris, Centre Sèvres, 1985, p. 68:

"De l'affirmation capitale d'une véritable égalité des baptisés dans leur dignité et l'action commune qui tend à construire le Corps du Christ à la fois le devoir et le droit de travailler (dans le code il y a le term *allaborandi* et pas *collaborandi*), de travailler et non pas simplement de collaborer à, de travailler pour que le dessein de salut proposé par Dieu parvienne à tous les hommes de tous les temps et de tous les lieux. C'est là un écho d'une prescription du décret sur l'apostolat des laïcs de Vatican II, alors que le code de 1917 posait en principe que "tout le soin des missions auprès des non catholiques est réservé uniquement au Saint Siège". La faiblesse du droit missionnaire dans le code de 1917 est patente."

Although the canons do not use the word "ministry" because of the specific connotation of the term, the emphasis that they place on the necessary role of the laity clearly shows that this should not be considered less than a ministry, at least in the broad sense of the term. Indeed, we can even say that it is a lifelong and demanding ministry. In fact, canon 401 CCEO is very clear about it using the words "*the proper vocation of lay persons*". These words highlight the importance of the laity's role which needs to be recognized and appreciated universally.

Canon 761 CIC enumerates various means to be employed in proclaiming Christian teaching; among these, preaching and catechetical formation hold the primary place. As F.G. Morrissey notes:

The word is taught in five principal ways: preaching, catechetical instruction, missionary work, works of education at all levels, and through the use of social communication. In all of these areas the laity are called on to exercise specific responsibilities.⁴⁴

Lay faithful are involved in all of these areas today, either individually or through groups, organizations and associations. Most of these lay organizations work directly in cooperation with the hierarchy.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ F.G. MORRISEY, "The Laity in the New Code of Canon Law", in *Studia canonica*, 17(1983), p. 143.

⁴⁵ For reflections on the cooperation of the lay faithful with the hierarchy, especially in the power of governance, see J.H. PROVOST, "The Participation of the Laity in the Governance of the Church", in *Studia canonica*, 17(1983), pp. 433-444.

Summary:

Canons 225 CIC and 401, 406 CCEO speak about the lay apostolate to which the laity are deputed on the basis of their baptism and confirmation. These sacraments and the resulting charisms indicate that the special vocation of the laity is received from God himself, a vocation for which they do not need recognition by ecclesiastical authority.

The apostolic activity of the laity is twofold: to evangelize non-Christians and to imbue and perfect the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel. This can be done either individually or in association with others.

Having established these basic principles, we now turn our attention to the role that the lay people can play through various individual ministries. First of all, we shall examine their activity through ecclesiastical offices and functions mentioned in canons 228 CIC and 408 CCEO.

4. Ecclesiastical Offices: CC. 228 CIC; 408 CCEO⁴⁶

Canon 228 of the Latin Code reads:

§1. Qualified lay persons are capable of assuming from their sacred pastors those ecclesiastical offices

⁴⁶ See DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful*, pp. 308-337; see *Nuntia*, 21(1985), pp. 22-23; see also P. ERDÖ, "Il senso della capacità dei laici agli uffici nella Chiesa", in *Fidelium iura*, 2(1992), pp. 165-186.

and functions which they are able to exercise in accord with the prescriptions of law.

§2. Lay persons who excel in the necessary knowledge, prudence, and uprightness are capable of assisting the pastors of the church as experts or advisors; they can do so even in councils, in accord with the norm of law.

Canon 408 of the Oriental Code states:

§1. Lay persons who excel in the necessary knowledge, experience, and integrity, should be heard as experts or consultors by ecclesiastical authorities, whether individually or as members of various councils and assemblies, whether parochial, eparchial or patriarchal.

§2. Besides those ecclesiastical functions to which lay persons are by common law admitted, they may be also admitted by a competent authority to other functions, excepting those which require holy orders or which are expressly forbidden to lay persons by the particular law of their own Church.

§3. Lay persons are fully subject to ecclesiastical authority in respect to the exercise of ecclesiastical functions.

As is easily seen, both canons speak about the same thing in different words. What canon 228 CIC has expressed in two paragraphs, canon 408 CCEO has stated in paragraph 1. The second paragraph of this canon says that there is a possibility of admittance to even more ecclesiastical offices and functions for the lay faithful. Paragraph 3 expresses the requirement that these offices and functions can be exercised subject to the competent authority of the Church.

The canons are a product of Vatican II: *Lumen gentium* 33 and 37 provide the background for both.⁴⁷ Both are new and very meaningful, for it is on the basis of these norms that the laity can now be entrusted with certain ecclesiastical offices previously considered reserved to sacred ministers or clerics. The canons go even further by stating that the laity can now be counsellors to their pastors and are able (*habiles*) to participate in the various councils of the Church.

The canons speak about "ecclesiastical offices" whose definition was significantly changed in Vatican II. In the 1917 Code (canon 145) an ecclesiastical office was defined "in a broad sense as any function that is legitimately exercised in the Church for a spiritual purpose; in the strict sense, however, it was described as a function established in a stable manner by divine or ecclesiastical law -- carrying with it some participation or sharing in ecclesiastical power, whether of orders or of jurisdiction."⁴⁸

Vatican II decided that in the future an "ecclesiastical office" in the Church should be understood as "any office conferred

⁴⁷ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 164.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

in a permanent fashion to be exercised for a spiritual purpose"⁴⁹, and this definition is found in c. 145, §1, of the 1983 Code.

The shift in emphasis is very clear: the distinction between a broad and a strict sense is no longer made and, what is even more important, there is no mention of ecclesiastical power of orders or of jurisdiction restricting these offices to clerics. This reflects the Council's statement in LG 33, that lay persons can be deputed by the hierarchy for certain roles (*munera*)⁵⁰ to be carried out for a spiritual purpose; it also assumes the exhortation in LG 37, that bishops assign offices to lay people for the service of the Church.⁵¹

On this new basis, the laity are now eligible for certain ecclesiastical offices on a par with sacred ministers. To make it still clearer, the title "ecclesiastical office" was transferred from Book II, part I of the 1917 Code (entitled "Clergy") to Book I of the 1983 Code (entitled "General Norms"). This shows a very positive juridical change in the status of the laity.

The principles outlined in these canons are applied concretely in a number of canons of the Latin Code:

⁴⁹ Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum ordinis* [= PO], December 7, 1965, no. 20, in AAS, 58(1966), p. 1021 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 899).

⁵⁰ Cf. AA, 24.

⁵¹ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 98.

- Canon 469: lay persons may be appointed as members of the diocesan curia;
- Canon 483, §2: a lay person can be named diocesan chancellor;
- Canon 517, §2: lay men and women can participate in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish;
- Canon 1421, §2: a lay man or woman can be appointed a judge in a church tribunal;
- Canon 1428, §2: lay persons can function as auditors in the diocesan tribunal;
- Canon 1435: lay men and women can be named as promoter of justice and defender of the bond.⁵²

Thus these canons enable the lay faithful to participate not only in the teaching and sanctifying missions of the Church, but also in its governing function.

Thus the revised legislation also speaks about the laity's being capable of participating in ecclesiastical office as counsellors to the pastors of the Church, and notes that they can do this even in councils. Actually, it is an ancient tradition in Church law that those who exercise executive power seek counsel from others before taking action. Since pastors often decide for the community, they must consult the people, keeping in mind the

⁵² Parallel Oriental canons, except for c. 517, §2, which does not have its counterpart there, are: 243, §1; 253, §2; 1087, §2; 1093, §2; and 1099, §2.

principle that "what touches all must be approved by all."⁵³ This consultation between the clergy and the laity shows mutual respect for the one and the same mission of all the Christian faithful as well as openness to and trust in the capacities of the laity.⁵⁴ In this way, the laity can exercise their fundamental right to express their opinion,⁵⁵ as noted in cc. 218 CIC and 21 CCEO.

Regarding mutual consultation between the laity and their pastors, *Apostolicam actuositatem* says:

The laity should develop the habit of working in the parish in close union with their priests, of bringing before the ecclesial community their own problems, world problems, and questions regarding man's salvation, to examine them together and solve them by general discussion. According to their abilities the laity ought to cooperate in all the apostolic and missionary enterprises of their ecclesial family.⁵⁶

In the same document it is stated that "in constant dialogue with the laity", priests "will make painstaking search for methods capable of making apostolic action more fruitful."⁵⁷

Such consultation does not take place only in day-to-day life, but also, and especially, through various councils in which the lay faithful are now able to participate.

⁵³ *The Code Commentary*, p. 165; see also W.J. LA DUE, "The Right of the Church People to Participate in Ecclesial Decision-Making", in *Studia canonica*, 7(1973), pp. 179-190.

⁵⁴ Cf. LG, 37.

⁵⁵ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 147.

⁵⁶ AA 10, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 777-778.

⁵⁷ AA, 25, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 791.

Some of the councils in the Latin Church where the laity are eligible to participate are:

- the provincial council (canon 443, §5);
- the plenary council (canon 443, §6);
- the diocesan synod (canons 460; 463, §1);
- the diocesan finance council (canon 492, §1);
- the diocesan pastoral council (canon 511);
- the parish pastoral council (canon 536, §1);
- the parish finance council (canon 537).

The lay faithful are now capable to work on pastoral and finance councils even on the international level.⁵⁸

In fact, this consultation of the pastors with the community was quite common in the early Christian communities as Robert B. Hemberger notes:

Consultation among the people of God is rooted in the origins of the Church's theology and the early attempts of the Christian believers to structure and govern themselves. The early communities were small in number. There was a high level of involvement.⁵⁹

This proves that, already in early Christianity, the lay faithful were fully involved in all the fields of the life of the Church, and this is what the Vatican II desires and recommends today.

In his article about the laity in the revised Code, Francis G. Morrisey gives a list of canons clearly showing the intended

⁵⁸ Cf. AA, 26; cf. also PIUS XI, Encyclical Letter, *Quamvis nostra*, October 27, 1935, in AAS, 28(1936), pp. 160-161.

⁵⁹ R.E. HEMBERGER, *Consultation in the 1983 Code of Canon Law*, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America, 1985, p. 2.

participation of the laity through various functions and ministries in the threefold mission of the Church, that is, the mission of sanctifying, teaching, and governing.⁶⁰ This shows how much change regarding the status of the lay faithful is found in the revised law of the Church when compared with the pre-Vatican II legislation. Canon 228 CIC and 408 CCEO are indeed a very welcome change as regards activity and ministry of the lay people. The laity are now capable of playing their role even in decision-making. Morrisey also notes:

Although final decision-making still often remains a prerogative of clerics, few instances, especially at the local level, remain in which such decisions are to be made without consultation with the laity. *Any attempt to identify the Church with the hierarchy, or even with the clergy as a whole, would be contrary to the very teaching of the Church and to its legislation.*⁶¹

Summary:

Canons 228 CIC and 408 CCEO enable the laity to serve in the Church through ecclesiastical offices and functions. These also enable them to collaborate with their pastors as experts and advisors in councils and other meetings.

Since Vatican II, the definition of ecclesiastical office itself has been modified in comparison with previous legislation: the lay faithful are now eligible for ecclesiastical offices and

⁶⁰ Cf. MORRISEY, "The Laity in the New Code of Canon Law", pp. 141-147.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 147 (emphasis added).

functions. This is a clear and very positive change in the juridical status of the laity. On the basis of these canons, lay Christians are now capable of participating in the Church's threefold mission of teaching, sanctifying, and governing.

This leads us to another important set of canons relating to the teaching ministry of the laity.

5. The Mandate to Teach: CC. 229 CIC; 404 CCEO⁶²

Canon 229 of the Latin Code reads:

§1. Lay persons are bound by the obligation and possess the right to acquire a knowledge of Christian doctrine adapted to their capacity and condition so that they can live in accord with that doctrine, announce it, defend it when necessary, and be enabled to assume their role in exercising the apostolate.

§2. Lay persons also possess the right to acquire that deeper knowledge of the sacred sciences which are taught in ecclesiastical universities or faculties or in institutes of religious sciences by attending classes and obtaining academic degrees.

§3. Likewise, the prescriptions as to the required suitability having been observed, lay persons are capable of receiving from legitimate ecclesiastical authority a mandate to teach the sacred sciences.

Canon 404 of the Oriental Code states:

⁶² See R.P. DEELEY, *The Mandate for Those Who Teach Theology in Institutes of Higher Studies: An Interpretation of the Meaning of Canon 812 of the Code of Canon Law*, Rome, Pontifical Gregorian University, 1986, pp. 11-75, especially, pp. 29-57; see DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful*, pp. 295-308, especially, pp. 304-308; see *Nuntia*, 21(1985), pp. 17-18.

§1. In addition to the catechetical instruction, which should be received from infancy, lay persons have the right and obligation of acquiring a knowledge, suitable to their capacity and condition, of the doctrine revealed by Christ and taught by the authentic magisterium of the Church, so that they may be able not only to live according to that doctrine, but also to announce it, and, if need be, to defend it.

§2. Lay persons also possess the right to acquire that deeper knowledge of the sacred sciences which are taught in ecclesiastical universities or faculties or in institutes of religious science by attending classes and obtaining academic degrees.

§3. Likewise, the prescriptions as to the required suitability having been observed, lay persons are qualified to receive a mandate to teach the sacred sciences from competent ecclesiastical authority.

Canons 229 CIC and 404 CCEO represent another achievement of Vatican II. The pre-conciliar legislation did not appear to envisage that the laity would be engaged in purely ecclesiastical studies, although it did not exclude them from such programme. Even if these canons are not based on one particular conciliar text, they have the entire Council as their background. They reflect the combined concerns of *Christus Dominus* 13,⁶³ *Apostolicam actuositatem* 28-32, *Gaudium et spes* 62, and *Gravissimum educationis* 11.⁶⁴

⁶³ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus* [= CD], October 28, 1965, no. 13, in AAS, 58(1966), pp. 678-679 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 570-571).

⁶⁴ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum educationis* [= GE], October 28, 1965, no. 11, in AAS, 58(1966), p. 738 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 736-737); see *The Code Commentary*, p. 166.

The canons speak specifically about the formation of the lay faithful in Christian knowledge in order to carry out their role in furthering the mission of the Church, and also so that they may defend their faith publicly if necessary.⁶⁵ They also have the right to a more advanced degree of theological knowledge which can be acquired in Catholic institutes. Once properly prepared, the laity have the capacity to be mandated to teach theology and other related subjects.

The legislation spoken of here implies that the Christian faithful are to be properly acquainted not only with theology, but also that it is their duty to acquire knowledge of the necessary human sciences. AA 29-30 is very clear about this when it stresses the need of a well-rounded human formation for the apostolate, especially in the arts, sciences, and interpersonal relations. This will help the faithful to place their Christian and sacred knowledge in its proper setting. When called upon to defend their faith as mature Christians, they will thus be better able to do so.⁶⁶

The canons speak about higher theological studies. Though such studies are not necessarily clerical by nature, they were considered the domain of the clergy until recently.⁶⁷ Every priest is still obliged to take theological studies. But now there is a

⁶⁵ Cf. cc. 879 CIC and 692 CCEO.

⁶⁶ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 166.

⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

need to open this field to the laity as well. Indeed, as George V. Lobo says,

there is a need to declericalize academic degrees in sacred sciences. While lay people should be freely accepted as students and staff, there is no need for every priest to strive to acquire such degrees. A more pastoral course would be better for many clerics while degrees should be destined for those who have sufficient aptitude and interest in academic studies.⁶⁸

He further notes:

The Code Commission has explicitly stated that [today the exercise of] every form of ecclesiastical governance or jurisdiction can no more be reserved to clerics.⁶⁹

In fact, canon 819 of the Latin Code requires diocesan bishops and competent superiors of institutes to send to ecclesiastical universities not only clerics but also young lay people. Furthermore, the competent ecclesiastical authority is to provide where possible for a faculty, an institute, or at least a chair of

⁶⁸ G.V. LOBO, "Laity in the New Code", in *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection*, 48(1984), p. 287.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 288; cf. also *Communicationes*, 3(1971), p. 187:

Certain offices which are committed to lay persons, for example, religious instruction, should be considered as ecclesiastical offices. Therefore, ecclesiastical offices are not reserved to clerics. Likewise, today the exercise of the power of governance, that is, of jurisdiction in the Church, is not reserved to clerics.

"Quaedam igitur officia quae laicis committuntur, uti v.g. est institutio religiosa tradenda, dici debent officia ecclesiastica. Officia itaque ecclesiastica non reservantur clericis. Similiter clericis non reservatur hodie exercitium omnis potestatis regiminis seu iurisdictionis in Ecclesia."

theology so that lay people may be able to take classes in this subject.⁷⁰

The last paragraphs of both canons speak about the "mandate" that lay people are now able to receive. This is something rather new and not mentioned in the former Code or even directly in the teachings of Vatican II. The notion actually originated in Germany in 1848 when certain schools were secularized and the hierarchy was struggling to keep some control over the teaching of religion. The bishops required that all Catholic religion teachers receive a "canonical mission" before beginning to teach Catholic doctrine.

When this proposed discipline appeared on a universal basis in the 1977 draft of the revised Code, it met with strong opposition in North America because of potential Church-State problems. As a result of this, the present Codes, in paragraphs §3 of canons 229 CIC and 404 CCEO, speak now of a "mandate" rather than of a "canonical mission". This "mandate" is a recognition that the person carrying out the ministry of teaching theological disciplines is properly engaged to do so.⁷¹ It should not be too difficult to obtain if a person is properly prepared.⁷²

Canons 229 CIC and 404 CCEO give qualified lay people a share in the teaching ministry of the Church, but, at the same time, by requiring a "mandate", they somewhat restrict this ministry to

⁷⁰ Cf. cc. 811, §1 CIC and 643 CCEO.

⁷¹ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, pp. 575-576.

⁷² Cf. cc. 253 CIC and 340 CCEO.

selected persons. However, one purpose of this mandate is to make certain that those who are teaching in the name of the Church are competent to do so and that those attending their courses can rely on the teaching received.⁷³

We should keep in mind that the assistance that lay people are called upon to provide, including the teaching of sacred sciences at Catholic universities, is not absolute in its scope. As Yves Capony remarks, it is evident that lay people have rather a restricted role of assisting the clergy in the Church. This is clear, he says, because the Code, speaking about the laity, often uses terms such as "have part", "participate", "cooperate", which are often accompanied with expressions as "in accord with their own function", "according to the diversity of ministries", or "in accord with the condition proper to each one."⁷⁴ However, these limitations do not take away the basic principle which is recognized in law but rather provide for its prudent application.

⁷³ See also DEELEY, *The Mandate for Those Who Teach Theology*, pp. 29-57, especially, pp. 51-55.

⁷⁴ Y. CAPONY, "Le champ d'activité des laïcs ou les limites de la notion de fidèle", in *Praxis juridique et religion*, 2(1985), p. 189:

"De ce rapide examen du rôle des laïcs dans l'Église, il ressort qu'il s'agit surtout d'un rôle restreint d'aide aux clercs. C'est ce que nous avons voulu mettre en évidence en soulignant quelques expressions employées par le Code dans les différents canons cités. D'ailleurs lorsque le Code, au sujet des laïcs, emploie des termes comme "avoir part, participer, coopérer", ces termes s'accompagnent souvent d'expressions restrictives comme "selon leur mode", selon la diversité des ordres (ou des charges), ou encore chacun à sa manière."

Summary:

Canons 229 CIC and 404 CCEO state that it is a duty and a right of the laity to acquire and deepen their knowledge of Christian doctrine and the sacred sciences in order to live accordingly, to announce, and defend it, and to make their apostolate more effective. For this purpose, they can attend classes at ecclesiastical universities and institutes and acquire academic degrees. Once properly prepared, they can themselves teach these sacred sciences to others.

The above mentioned canons are either the same, similar, or, at least, express similar ideas in both the Latin and the Oriental Codes. We shall now study some canons which, while speaking about the same matter, take a somewhat different approach.

C. CANONS IN BOTH CODES WHICH ADOPT SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT APPROACHES

The canons that have adopted somewhat different approaches and that we have chosen for our study, include: cc. 207 CIC and 399 CCEO; cc. 781 CIC and 584 CCEO; cc. 786, 787 CIC and 592 CCEO.

The first set of such canons is cc. 207 CIC and 339 CCEO. Their central theme is the concept of the laity and its participation in the mission of the Church.

1. The Concept of the Lay Faithful: CC. 207 CIC; 399 CCEO⁷⁵

Canon 207 of the Latin Code states:

§1. Among the Christian faithful by divine institution there exist in the Church sacred ministers, who are also called clerics in law, and other Christian faithful, who are also called laity.

§2. From both groups there exist Christian faithful who are consecrated to God in their own special manner and serve the salvific mission of the Church through the profession of the evangelical counsels by means of vows or other sacred bonds recognized and sanctioned by the Church. Such persons also are of service to the saving mission of the Church; although their state does not belong to the hierarchical structure of the Church, they nevertheless do belong to its life and holiness.

Canon 399 of the Oriental Code instead reads:

In this Code, the name of lay persons is applied to the Christian faithful whose proper and special state is secular and who, living in the world, participate in the mission of the Church, and are not in holy orders nor enrolled in the religious state.⁷⁶

The source of canons 207 CIC and 399 CCEO is *Lumen gentium* 31.

Canon 399 of the Oriental Code does not have as such a counterpart in the Latin Code. Canon 207 CIC contains only a portion of what is contained in canon 399 CCEO. When compared, we note that the Oriental Code appears to be more positive in its approach because the laity are defined here as having secularity as a proper

⁷⁵ See D.G. HERVÁS, "Los derechos de los fieles en los Códigos latino y oriental", in *Fidelium iura*, 2(1992), pp. 73-77; see also *Nuntia*, 21(1985), pp. 12-16.

⁷⁶ "Nomine laicorum in hoc Codice intelleguntur christifideles, quibus indoles saecularis propria ac specialis est quique in saeculo viventes missionem Ecclesiae participant neque in ordine sacro constituti neque statui religioso ascripti sunt."

condition of their life, which in other words is their vocation because it is in this very state that they are called to participate actively in the mission of the Church. This important element is surprisingly missing in the Latin Code. Thus, in comparison with the Oriental Code, the definition or description of the laity in the Latin Code is incomplete.¹⁷

Whereas the first paragraph of c. 207 CIC speaks about two main groups in the Church, that is, the clerics and the laity, its second paragraph gives rather long details of the faithful in the consecrated life. Thus the canon can give the impression that the laity are less important than those in the consecrated life.

However, canon 399 CCEO is far more positive in accordance with the understanding of the lay faithful put forward by Vatican II. Even before this great Council took place, Yves Congar, in his *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, had defined the laity in very positive terms:

Lay people are Christians in the world, there to do God's work in so far as it must be done in and through the work of the world.¹⁸

¹⁷ See *Nuntia*, 21(1985), pp. 6-7.

¹⁸ Y. CONGAR, *Lay People in the Church: A Study for a Theology of Laity*, translated by Donald Attwater, Westminster, Maryland, The Newman Press, 1967, p. 19; see also Id., *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, 2nd rev. edition, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1954, p. 38 for the French text:

"Les laïcs sont dans le monde en tant que chrétiens et pour y faire l'œuvre de Dieu en tant même qu'elle doit se faire dans et par l'œuvre du monde."

Elsewhere Congar uses different but similar words to define lay persons and their role in the Church:

[The layman] is the Christian who serves God and his Kingdom in and by his natural engagement in this-worldly activity. [...] The layman is properly that Christian whose service of God is exercised from within his insertion into the structures and the activity of the world, a service the ministerial priest carries out in another manner as consecrated minister of the positive means of salvation.⁷⁹

Canon 207, §1, of the Latin Code does not define the lay faithful. This canon, taken on its own, does not show the lay faithful as being active or being called for any ministry or service, or having a role to play in the Church, as is the case with canon 399 of the Oriental Code. Thus canon 207, §1 of the Latin Code, again taken alone, is somewhat deficient when compared with canon 399 as regards the activity and mission of the Christian faithful.

Comparing the two canons, Dolores G. Hervás remarks that the concept of the laity in the Latin Code has been criticized because it appears to have given an excluding and purely negative definition of lay person situating him/her in a position as if of second class.⁸⁰

It should also be noted that the Oriental canon excludes religious from the lay state, while canon 207 of the Latin Code says that religious may be clerics or lay persons. The Oriental

⁷⁹ Y. CONGAR, "My Path-Finding in the Theology of Laity and Ministries", in *The Jurist*, 32(1972), p.173.

⁸⁰ See HERVÁS, "Los derechos de los fieles", p. 74.

approach, following that of LG 31, is more logical in that it clearly distinguishes three states -- clergy, religious, and laity -- while the Latin Code speaks of two states, but then continues to divide the legislation into three parts. This confusion is based in part on the descriptions found in LG 31 and 44.

Canon 225, §2, of the Latin Code however, is more positive and calls upon the lay faithful to perfect the order of temporal affairs with the Christian spirit and to give witness to Christ⁸¹ through the exercise of their proper secular affairs. On the whole, in spite of differences in drafting, both codes offer the laity an active part to play in the Church's life and mission.

Summary:

Canons 207 CIC and 399 CCEO taken together speak specifically about the lay faithful in the Church. They define and describe lay persons as the Christian faithful whose proper and special state is secular and who from the very world they live in participate in the mission of the Church. These canons speak of the secularity of the laity as their very vocation and typical ministry (c. 225, 2, CIC).

Having reflected upon the canons concerning the concept of the laity in the two Codes, we shall now study another group of canons, namely, canons 781 CIC and 584 CCEO on evangelization, a ministry absolutely necessary for every member of the people of God.

⁸¹ Cf. c. 401 of the Oriental Code.

2. Ministry of Evangelization: CC. 781 CIC; 584 CCEO⁸²

Canon 781 of the Latin Church reads as follows:

Since the entire Church is missionary by its nature and since the work of evangelization is to be viewed as a fundamental duty of the people of God, all the Christian faithful, conscious of their own responsibility in this area, are to assume their own role in missionary work.

Canon 584 of the Oriental Code states:

§1. The Church, following the mandate of Christ to evangelize all nations, and moved by the grace and charity of the Holy Spirit, recognizes herself to be totally missionary.

§2. The evangelization of the nations should be so done that, preserving the integrity of faith and morals, the Gospel can be expressed in the culture of individual peoples; namely in catechetics, their own liturgical rites, in sacred art, in particular law, and, in short, the whole ecclesial life.

Ad gentes 1 and 2 and *Gaudium et spes* 58, provide the background for these two canons. As regards missionary activity, canon 781 of the Latin Code seems to be more direct here. The part that calls for the Christian faithful to engage themselves in evangelization is missing in canon 584, §1, of the Oriental Code. It is found, however, in its canon 14, which reads as follows:

All the Christian faithful have the right and obligation of working so that the divine message of salvation may increasingly reach all peoples in every age and in every land.⁸³

⁸² See FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, pp. 128-129.

⁸³ Cf. c. 211 of the Latin Code.

On the other hand, canon 584, §2 CCEO stresses the need for inculturation in the whole ecclesial life of a particular Church. This is important and especially beneficial for the lay faithful since thus it becomes much easier for them to participate in various church-related activities more readily and enthusiastically. This element is missing in canon 781 CIC.

Eastern Catholic Churches had been somewhat restricted in their missionary efforts in the past.⁸⁴ (This may possibly explain why canon 584, §1 CCEO does not refer to what 581 CIC calls a "fundamental duty" of the people of God). Since Vatican II, however, they also have the same rights and obligations as the Latin Church even with regard to evangelization.⁸⁵ This has given new life to the Eastern Catholic Churches as Faris notes:

To acknowledge the reality that evangelization is an essential element of Eastern Catholic life is to breathe new life into these churches; it should also be noted that there is a need for evangelization not only in the lands traditionally regarded as "missionary territory," but also in developed nations which [have] for the most part abandoned Christian values for secularism and materialism.

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the role of evangelization was considered to be the exclusive domain of the hierarchy and the laity were for the most part left out of the entire process. In conformity with the principles of *Lumen Gentium*, n. 33, the CCEO affirms the obligation of all the faithful to proclaim the Gospel

⁸⁴ Cf. FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, p. 128; see also A. HASTINGS, *A Concise Guide to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, vol. 2, London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1969, pp. 176-179.

⁸⁵ Cf. OE, 3.

message, each person according to his or her condition in life.⁸⁶

Although there seems to be a difference of approach, the ministry of evangelization is so important that in both the Oriental and the Latin Codes it is given a separate title. In the Vatican II documents it is mentioned in many places,⁸⁷ and since it is a continuous activity which will never come to an end, the post-Conciliar documents continue stressing it.⁸⁸

When Jesus mandated his disciples to "proclaim the good news to the whole creation" (Mk. 16: 15), he meant it for every one of his followers as well. Both codes are very clear about this mandate in stating that all Christians must work so that the divine message of salvation may reach every human being in every land and in every age.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, pp. 128-129.

⁸⁷ Cf. LG 17; AG 2, 35; SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Declaration on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis humanae* [= DH], December 7, 1965, in AAS, 58(1966), pp. 929-941, especially no. 13, p. 939 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, P. 810).

⁸⁸ Cf. PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, *Evangelii nuntiandi* [= EN], December 8, 1975, nos. 13-16, 59-66, in AAS, 68(1976), pp. 12-16, 49-56 (English translation in A. FLANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents*, vol. 2 [= *FLANNERY II*], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1982, pp. 715-718, 732-737); JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter on Church's Missionary Activity, *Redemptoris missio* [= RM], December 7, 1990, nos. 1-3, 77-86, 92, in AAS, 83(1991), pp. 249-252, 324-333, 339-340 (Vatican English translation: *The Mission of Christ the Redeemer*, Sherbrooke, Éditions Paulines, 1991, pp. 7-11, 108-120, 128-129).

⁸⁹ See for example, cc. 211; 225, §1; and 747 of the Latin Code, and cc. 14 and 595 of the Oriental Code.

We know that the Christian faithful in the Latin Church have been active as regards evangelization, but it is equally true of the Eastern Churches. Andrews Thazhath, giving the historical background of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Oriental Church in India, which, he says, "according to strong and living tradition, was founded by the Apostle Thomas", and whose members were called the "Thomas Christians",⁹⁰ notes:

There was no objection to conversions from castes of the superior or equal status (Brahmins and Nairs). Proselytising became rare. Those converted from the low castes were segregated from the rest of the Christians. Vicissitudes and attitudes have now changed. Today the Syro-Malabar Church is one of the most energetic Churches in the field of evangelization.⁹¹

Apostolicam actuositatem stresses the role of every individual Christian in the apostolate, and this can be applied to the missionary vocation:

In fact, the Christian vocation is, of its nature, a vocation to the apostolate as well. In the organism of a living body no member plays a purely passive part, sharing in the life of the body it shares at the same time in its activity. The same is true for the Body of Christ, the Church: "the whole Body achieves full growth in dependence on the full functioning of each part" (Eph. 4: 16).⁹²

⁹⁰ See A. Thazhat, *The Juridical Sources of the Syro-Malabar Church: A Historico-Juridical Study*, Kottayam, Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, 1987, p. 2.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁹² AA 2, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 768.

Summary:

Evangelization, the theme of canons 781 CIC and 584 CCEO, is to be carried out, keeping in mind the local culture and customs. Previously, the Eastern Catholic Churches were restricted in the field of evangelization, but since Vatican II all the faithful, including lay Catholics of all rites, have a right and an obligation to evangelize. Because of the importance of the ministry of evangelization the post-Conciliar documents also stress that it be carried out by every baptized person.

Let us now turn to another group of canons of our study where we find a difference of approach besides similarities. The intended canons are cc. 786-787 CIC and 592 CCEO concerning ministry of apostolate and dialogue with non-Christians, particularly in missionary territories. It seems that this last activity can belong especially to the laity.

3. Dialogue with Non-Christians: CC 786-787 CIC; 592 CCEO⁹³

Canons 786 and 787 CIC read:

786. Missionary activity, properly so-called, by which the Church is implanted among peoples and groups in which it has not yet taken root, is accomplished by the Church especially by sending heralds of the gospel until the young churches are fully established to the point that they are able to perform the work of evangelization

⁹³ See FARIS, *Eastern Catholic Churches*, pp. 442-443.

on their own with their own resources and sufficient means.

787. §1. By the witness of their life and words missionaries are to establish a sincere dialogue with those who do not believe in Christ in order that through methods suited to their characteristics and culture avenues may be open to them by which they can be led to an understanding of the gospel message.

§2. Missionaries are to see to it that they teach the truths of faith to those whom they judge to be ready to accept the gospel message so that these persons can be admitted to the reception of baptism when they freely request it.

Canon 592 CCEO states:

§1. In missionary territories particular care has to be taken to promote forms of apostolate for the lay persons; to promote institutes of consecrated life through methods suited to their characteristics and culture; to establish, according to the needs, schools and other institutions of Christian education and cultural progress.

§2. Likewise dialogue and cooperation with non-Christians is to be eagerly and prudently encouraged.

Although cc. 786 CIC and 592 CCEO are generally considered to be parallel ones,⁹⁴ there are quite a few differences between the two. For example, c. 786 CIC speaks about establishing new communities and churches capable of being in turn evangelizers themselves, whereas c. 592 CCEO stresses the need for promoting the forms of apostolate for lay persons according to their characteristics and culture. Paragraph 2 of c. 592 CCEO states that dialogue and cooperation with non-Christians is to be eagerly though

⁹⁴ For the juxtaposition of the two canons see *The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: Latin-English Edition*, Washington, D.C., CLSA, 1992, pp. 744, 765.

prudently encouraged; c. 786 CIC does not mention such a dialogue. In fact, it is the following canon (787) that speaks about this important ministry of Christian faithful. Moreover, c. 592 CCEO has a more direct and clearer approach concerning this ministry of the laity. The three canons together however, can be said to form one common theme of "apostolate to and dialogue with non-Christians".

The underlying principles governing this missionary work and cooperation are expressed in *Ad gentes* 11-12, 41 and *Evangelii nuntiandi* 17-24. Since we have already spoken about evangelization or missionary activity in the previous section of our study, in this section we wish to stress more the importance of dialogue with non-Christians. This dialogue is stressed not only in *Ad gentes*, but also in *Gaudium et spes* 92. Moreover, in the document of the Secretariat for Unbelievers on Dialogue with non-Christians, *Humanae personae dignitatem*, it is noted:

Largely because of more frequent contacts with each other, men have become aware of pluralism and indeed have come to see it as the hallmark of our age. True pluralism, however, is impossible unless men and communities of different origins and culture undertake dialogue.

All Christians should do their best to promote dialogue between men of every class, as a duty of fraternal charity suited to our progressive and adult age.⁹⁵

Again, in *Redemptoris missio*, Pope John Paul II, stressing the need for turning towards non-Christians, says:

⁹⁵ SECRETARIAT FOR UNBELIEVERS (= SU), On Dialogue with Unbelievers, *Humanae personae dignitatem*, August 28, 1968, no. 1, in *AAS*, 60(1968), p. 693 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 1002, 1003).

The number of those who do not know Christ and do not belong to the Church is constantly on the increase. Indeed, since the end of the Council it has almost doubled. When we consider this immense portion of humanity which is loved by the Father and for whom he sent his Son, the urgency of the Church's mission is obvious. [...] I sense that the moment has come to commit all the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*.⁹⁶

In missionary lands like Pakistan, where there is a majority of at least 97% Muslims, such dialogue becomes even more important and necessary. Though we do not as yet have an official forum for a formal Christian-Muslim dialogue in Pakistan, and notwithstanding certain laws and attitudes that are not entirely favourable to Christianity,⁹⁷ there certainly is an informal dialogue between certain Christians and Muslims. They are working together in factories, in the field of agriculture, in educational institutes, and many other areas of common interest. At times, they talk openly without hesitation about the two religions. Occasionally, they borrow religious literature from one another, visit one another's institutes, and even attend mutual prayer meetings.

Marcello Zago has been visiting Pakistan and the Christians there. As regards Christian-Muslim dialogue in Pakistan he notes:

Unlike ten years ago when I made my first visit, today there are many forms of Christian-Muslim dialogue, especially in the cities and among educated people. There

⁹⁶ RM 3, pp. 10, 11.

⁹⁷ See, for example, Gul Masih of Sargodha having been sentenced to death on November 2, 1992, by a Pakistani court for unfavourable statements made in the course of a religious dialogue, in *National Catholic Reporter*, 29(1992), p. 16.

are groups for discussion and study above all on social and economic subjects.

If dialogue, understood as mutual respect and collaboration, is to become a common fact both parties need to be recognized in their human and religious identity. And in a society that wants to be Muslim this seems to be difficult.

On the other hand only dialogue can make the situation evolve. In this state of affairs dialogue can be realized between special people, people who are more open and better prepared. On the part of Christians, there are different centres where this can be realized and promoted.⁹⁸

What is needed now is proper formation and preparation, especially among the laity, for an effective apostolate and dialogue, which will enable the Christian faithful at the same time to work together with other Christian groups⁹⁹ who are active in the same ministry in the Church.

Summary:

Besides the apostolate of the laity, especially in missionary lands, canons 786-787 CIC and 592 CCEO speak about dialogue and cooperation with non-Christians. Canons also speak about the

⁹⁸ M. ZAGO, "Christian Minority in Muslim Pakistan", in *Omnis terra*, 23(1989), p. 302; see A. DE SOUZA, "Dialogue in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan", in *Islamochristiana*, 14(1988), pp. 211-218; J. CHANNAN, "Interreligious Dialogue in Asia: Dialogue Experience in Pakistan", in *Bulletin: Pontificium consilium pro dialogo inter religiones*, 71(1989), pp. 164-172; D. BHATT, "India: A Land of Religious Dialogue", in *Bulletin: Pontificium consilium pro dialogo inter religiones*, 71(1989), pp. 173-179; see also F. GHEDDO, "Catholic Communities in Pakistan", in *Christ to the World*, 28(1983), pp. 50-51.

⁹⁹ Cf. c. 328 of the Latin Code.

promotion of forms of lay apostolate in missionary territories suited to their characteristics and culture.

Besides, they stress the need for prudent dialogue with non-Christians. Those working in this field are to open this dialogue by the testimony of their lives and words. The gospel is to be set forth in ways that are suited to the abilities and background of their partners in dialogue.¹⁰⁰

D. CANONS THAT EXIST ONLY IN THE LATIN CODE

Two very important canons referring to lay ministries and existing only in the Latin Code are: c. 230 concerning the instituted ministries; and c. 298 speaking about associations of the Christian faithful. Because of differing liturgical traditions, it was not considered appropriate to speak of these ministries in the Oriental Code.¹⁰¹ Likewise, the canons on associations (CCEO 573-583) leave to the various ritual Churches the details regarding such groupings. Nevertheless, the draft of the canons on associations had contained a norm similar to that of canon 298 CIC, but it was decided to omit it in the promulgated version.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 562.

¹⁰¹ See *Nuntia*, 21(1985), pp. 16-17.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

We shall first turn to canon 230 which refers to the instituted ministries of acolyte and lector, now open to the laity. This canon does not have a parallel one in the Oriental Code.

1. The Instituted Ministries: Canon 230¹⁰³

§1. Lay men who possess the age and qualifications determined by decree of the conference of bishops can be installed on a stable basis in the ministries of lector and acolyte in accord with the prescribed liturgical rite; the conferral of these ministries, however, does not confer on these lay men a right to obtain support or remuneration from the Church.

§2. Lay persons can fulfill the function of lector during liturgical actions by temporary deputation; likewise all lay persons can fulfill the functions of commentator or cantor or other functions, in accord with the norm of law.

§3. When the necessity of the Church warrants it and when ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors or acolytes, can also supply for certain of their offices, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside over liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, and to distribute Holy Communion in accord with the prescriptions of law.

Canon 230 is entirely new in the Church's legislation when compared with the previous Code. Indeed, under the 1917 legisla-

¹⁰³ See T. RICHSTATTER, "Instituted Ministry: The History and Future of Canon 230", in *The Canon Law Society of America Proceedings*, 49(1987), pp. 35-44; E.A. RINERE, *The Term "Ministry" as Applied to the Laity in the Documents of Vatican II, Post-Conciliar Documents of the Apostolic See, and the 1983 Code of Canon Law*, Michigan, U.M.I., 1988, pp. 280-286; DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful*, pp. 337-361; see also H.M. LEGRAND, "Où en est la théologie des ministères?", in *Vocation*, 35(1973), pp. 393-430; A. PEELMAN, "Le ministère et les ministères", in *Kerygma*, 13(1979), pp. 121-134.

tion, there were no recognized ministries as such to be exercised by the lay faithful. Because of the particular importance of c. 230 for our theme, it would be opportune to review at this time the evolution of the legislation relating to ministries.

In fact, at the time of Saint Cyprian (third century A.D.) the special term "cleric" was used in distinction from "people". In the fourth century the ministries of porter, lector, exorcist, acolyte, and subdeacon were already in vogue in the Western Church, and belonging to the clerical state was a privilege of these ministers.¹⁰⁴

With the introduction of the first "tonsure" one would enter the clerical state.¹⁰⁵ This also entailed an exemption from the authority of the state in certain matters and being placed under that of the Church.¹⁰⁶ Up to the eighteenth century, tonsure could be given even to young children in order to obtain this privileged state for them. "Cleric" denoted a state, without regard to ministry or function.¹⁰⁷

During the Middle Ages in Rome, candidates who aspired for major orders had to have exercised at least one minor order, that is, either that of "lector" or "subdiaconate". The practice of entering the clerical state with tonsure and receiving minor orders

¹⁰⁴ Cf. RICHSTATTER, "Instituted Ministry", p. 37.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. CIC 1917, c. 108, §1, in *Bouscaren Commentary*, p. 98.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. CIC 1917, c. 121, in *Bouscaren Commentary*, p. 107.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. RICHSTATTER, "Instituted Ministry", p. 37.

before the diaconate began in France and was followed in Germany. However, in Rome this practice became a rule only in the eleventh or twelfth century.¹⁰⁸

By the time of the Council of Trent, the minor orders had lost their significance, and were seen only as steps towards the priesthood. As T. Richstatter mentions, "the Council of Trent stated that no one should receive the minor orders unless he seemed qualified to be raised in due time to higher orders."¹⁰⁹ Both Codes, the former as well as the present, and Paul VI's *Motu proprio, Ministeria quaedam*¹¹⁰ require that the orders (now ministries) of lector and acolyte be received as a step towards the diaconate and priesthood.¹¹¹

The remote source of canon 230, as Richstatter notes, is found in Paul VI's *Motu proprio, Sacram liturgiam*, January 25, 1964,¹¹² which stated that a special commission was being established to

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38; see also H.J. SCHROEDER, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent: Original Text with English Translation*, London, Herder Book Company, 1941, pp. 160-161 (Latin text, pp. 432-433).

¹¹⁰ PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter on First Tonsure, Minor Orders, and the Subdiaconate, *Ministeria quaedam* [= MQ], August 15, 1972, in *AAS*, 64(1972), pp. 529-534 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 427-432).

¹¹¹ Cf. CIC 1917, c. 973, §1; CIC 1983, c. 1035, §1; MQ, 11, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 431.

¹¹² PAUL VI, *Motu proprio, Sacram liturgiam* (January 25, 1964), in *AAS*, 56(1964), pp. 139-144.

revise the liturgical rites and to prepare the new liturgical books.¹¹³ This was complemented by *Ministeria quaedam*, August 15, 1972.

It is this latter document that opened the possibility for the ministries of "lector" and "acolyte" to be exercised by the lay faithful.¹¹⁴ The document also provided that conferences of bishops could request the Holy See to establish other offices and ministries if necessary in their particular territories.¹¹⁵

Canon 230, although not taken literally from a particular conciliar document, reflects the serious efforts made by the constitution on the liturgy to implement the principle of a broader distribution of roles in liturgical celebrations.

Paragraph 1 of this canon is a condensed form of the salient provisions of *Ministeria quaedam*. Paragraph 2 has its background in *Sacrosanctum concilium* 29,¹¹⁶ and in the "General Instruction on the Roman Missal", nos. 66-68.¹¹⁷ Paragraph 3 is derived from LG, 35, and AG 16-17.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Cf. RICHSTATTER, "Instituted Ministry", p. 39.

¹¹⁴ Cf. MQ, 3, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 429.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 428-429.

¹¹⁶ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum concilium* [= SC], (December 4, 1963), no. 29, in *AAS*, 56(1964), p. 107-108 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 11).

¹¹⁷ Cf. "General Instruction on the Roman Missal", nos. 66-68, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 182-183.

¹¹⁸ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 167.

In canon 230 an explicit recognition is given to several ways for lay people to exercise prominent roles in liturgical services. The canon acknowledges: firstly, that lay men (*viri laici*) can be permanently installed as lectors and acolytes; secondly, that lay men and women can temporarily be deputed to act as lector, commentator, cantor and so forth; thirdly, that where proper ministers are lacking many parochial functions, such as proclaiming the word, presiding over liturgical prayers, conferring baptism, and distributing the Eucharist, can be entrusted to the laity.

Canon 230 marks a shift from the pre-Vatican ecclesiology; henceforth, as with the other functions of the Church, it is because of baptism and confirmation that a person is designated for certain liturgical roles. It is this rediscovery of baptism and confirmation and their significance that has opened the door to liturgical ministries for the lay faithful.¹¹⁹

Accordingly, Pope Paul VI eliminated tonsure, minor orders, and subdiaconate from the Latin Church to provide for the formal recognition of lay ministry in the Church since all Christians are called to participate in the mission of the Church, and "ministry" is one way to carry out this mission.¹²⁰

Although the Code refers to lay "apostolate" and "service" elsewhere, the formal recognition of lay ministry was made in terms of "the key elements of the Church's mission: word (lector or

¹¹⁹ Cf. RICHSTATTER, "Instituted Ministry", p. 38.

¹²⁰ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 167.

"reader") and sacrament (acolyte, focusing on the central sacrament -- the Eucharist)."¹²¹ However, the ministries of lector and acolyte are not the only conceivable ones. *Ministeria quaedam* provides that additional ministries could be established according to the needs of various particular churches.

Although it is very encouraging to note that many ministries are open to the laity, the restriction of canon 230 to male lectors and acolytes seems to be more difficult to maintain today. In some countries, the conference of bishops has allowed women to read in the church from the very place where the gospel is read. Women distribute the Eucharist as extraordinary ministers in many dioceses. "What would be the impact on the community if some who provide these ministries were to be installed but others, equally qualified and experienced, were to be denied installation merely on the basis of sex? It would seem to belie the provision of canon 208 on the equality of the baptized."¹²²

Regarding the exclusion of women from installed ministries, Dr. Astrid Anne Lobo, a Scientific Officer at the Tata Memorial Hospital, Bombay, India, says:

The fact that women are excluded from any formal installation seems to indicate either that the Church believes they have a limited responsibility in her mission with regard to Word and Sacrament, or that the

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid., p. 168.

Church is unwilling to make a public gesture of approval of women as ministers.¹²³

According to Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago, many women feel anger, hurt, tension, and frustration because they believe that the Church does not value their service. In his own words:

A major tension has to do with women in ministry. Some women ministers experience considerable frustration. They view the fact that only men can be ordained as diminishing their potential for ministerial service. While no man or woman can claim a "right" to ordination, the unbroken tradition of the church has permitted only men to be ordained. The church does not consider itself authorized to change this normative practice. Nevertheless some women consider this unjust, especially since *they may possess ministerial skills -- such as theological knowledge, compassion, a talent for communication, sense of mission -- at least on a par with those of ordained men.*¹²⁴

In his pastoral letter on the subject, Archbishop Edward McCarthy of Miami explains how women are sharing in the threefold office of Christ in various fields of the Church's mission. He states:

Women need to be recognized and encouraged in church ministry as prophets. They have a special role as educators and promoters in the various fields of the church's apostolate; as priestly people, especially through their gifts of prayer and willingness to offer sacrifices; as shepherds, especially through their insights and their role in the kingdom of love as social workers, health care workers and pastoral ministers.¹²⁵

¹²³ A.A. LOBO, "Women and Canon Law", in *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection*, 51(1987), p. 171.

¹²⁴ J. BERNARDIN, "In Service of One Another: Cardinal Bernardin's Pastoral Letter", in *Origins*, 15(1985-1986), p. 134 (emphasis added).

¹²⁵ E. MCCARTHY, "The Vocation of Lay People: The Council and the Laity", in *Origins*, 15(1985-1986), p. 326.

Paragraph 3 of canon 230 uses the words "*when ministers are lacking*". At first reading, this sounds somewhat negative and rather discouraging. It can even be compared by some to exploiting people when there is no other way out. Mr. Dennis Castillo, Director of Religious Education for Saint Alphonsus Parish in Chicago, says:

But there is a danger, mainly of attitude, which can undermine this whole approach. This danger is to see a greater use of lay ministry solely in regard to the vocation crisis. An unintended message would thereby be sent to the laity: "*We will allow you to have a role in the Church's work only because we are desperate and, if the vocations situation should ever improve, you would be returned to the pew.*"¹²⁶

What we have said about canon 230 shows that although the new law does allow some ministries to the lay faithful, there is still room for improvement.

Summary:

Canon 230 is especially important for lay people since it clearly speaks about the ministries of lector and acolyte that can be conferred upon them on a stable basis, even though at the present time only men are eligible. As regards the ministry of lector, it can be exercised during liturgical actions by temporary deputation even by women. Both men and women can perform the ministries of cantor, commentator, and so on. In the absence of the ministers, any lay persons can exercise the ministry of the word,

¹²⁶ D. CASTILLO, "Lay Ministry and the Vocation Crisis", in *RFR*, 44(1985), p. 545 (emphasis added).

preside over liturgical prayers, confer baptism, and distribute Holy Communion as the law allows them. It should be noted that in such instances there is no "installation" in a ministry; rather, a simple designation suffices.

Canon 230 can be considered a revolutionary one as regards lay activity in the life of the Church. Although the ministries of lector and acolyte are still required for those on the way to diaconate and priesthood, they are no longer reserved to them. Labelling these two ministries as "lay" is a sign of formal recognition of active participation of the laity in the life of the Church and the world.

We shall now focus our attention on the last canon of our study, that is, canon 298 concerning associations of the faithful established to fulfill the mission of the Church through group or joint ministry of the faithful. This canon also does not have a counterpart in the Oriental Code.

2. Ministry through Associations: Canon 298¹²⁷

§1. In the Church there are associations distinct from institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, in which the Christian faithful, either clergy or laity, or clergy and laity together, strive by common effort to promote a more perfect life or to foster public worship or Christian doctrine or to exercise other apostolic works, namely to engage in efforts of evangelization, to exercise works of piety or charity and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit.

§2. The Christian faithful should enroll especially in associations which are erected or praised or recommended by competent ecclesiastical authority.

Canon 298 has its counterpart in the 1917 Code: canon 685 for §1; and canon 684 for §2. Canon 685 read as follows:

Associations distinct from the religious institutes or societies of canons 487-681 can be established by the Church, either to promote a more perfect Christian life among the members, or to practice certain works of piety or charity, or finally for the embellishment of public worship.¹²⁸

As regards the participation of the faithful in these associations, canon 684 had stated:

It is praiseworthy on the part of the faithful to give their names to associations which have been erected or at least approved by the Church; but they should be on their guard against those which are secret, condemned,

¹²⁷ See F.G. MORRISEY, "The Right of Association as a Basic Right of the Faithful", in W. AYMANS, K.T. GERINGER, H. SCHMITZ, (eds.), *The Associational Element in the Church: Proceedings of the Vith International Congress of Canon Law, München, 14-19 September, 1987* [= *The Associative Element in the Church*], München, EOS Verlag Erzabtei St. Ottilien, 1989, pp. 7-24; see DUSTON, *The Rights and Obligations of the Lay Christian Faithful*, pp. 263-272; see also A. JACOBS, "Les associations de fidèles dans l'Église", in *Studia canonica*, 22(1988), pp. 359-379.

¹²⁸ Bouscaren Commentary, p. 360.

sedition or suspect, or which seek to evade the legitimate vigilance of the Church.¹²⁹

Although there seem to be similarities in both Latin Codes regarding associations of the faithful, there definitely are changes in the new legislation. In the present Code, confraternities and pious unions are no longer mentioned as such, whereas in the previous Code they were allotted a separate section (cc. 707-719). The norms relating to them have become a part of those on associations of the Christian faithful.

Another change in the present law,¹³⁰ in comparison with the former one, is that the activity of associations has been broadened to extend from evangelization to explicit Christianization of the secular order. This suggests the enormous range of potential of these associations of the faithful.¹³¹

The early Christian communities were called "fraternities". Already in the third century there existed "associations" in the Orient that cared for the sick and buried the dead. "Guilds" for divine worship and works of charity were known in the West in the seventh century. Afterwards "pious unions" were formed for various purposes such as the celebration and foundation of masses, almsgiving and so forth. In the thirteenth century a new group or

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

¹³⁰ Cf. W. AYMANS, "Ecclesiological Implications of the New Legislation", in *Studia canonica*, 17(1983), pp. 80-81.

¹³¹ Cf. *Bouscaren Commentary*, pp. 360-361; see also J.R. AMOS, "A Legal History of Associations of the Christian Faithful", in *Studia canonica*, 21(1987), pp. 271-297.

association appeared, known as a "confraternity". Its principal purpose was to take an accessory part in public worship. These various associations were recognized by the Church, and their juridical status and privileges defined by papal documents.¹³² Some of these groups and associations still exist and are active today.¹³³

The sources for canon 298 of the revised Code are *Apostolicam actuositatem* 19 and 21.¹³⁴ Paragraph 1 of this canon gives a description of Christian associations. Their general characteristic is that they are a group of persons within the Church, who, although they do not take public vows as do those in consecrated life, nevertheless work in order to promote "a more perfect life or to foster public worship or Christian doctrine or to exercise other apostolic works."¹³⁵ Indeed, as it stands, the canon lists seven possible forms of apostolic activity:

- promoting the perfection of christian life;
- promoting divine worship;
- teaching the faith;
- carrying out works of evangelization;

¹³² Cf. *Bouscaren Commentary*, pp. 360-361.

¹³³ For more reflections on associations in the Church, see *The Associative Element in the Church*, *passim*, but especially, pp. 25-47.

¹³⁴ Cf. also PIUS XII, *Allocutio ad Concilium Foederationis Internationalis Virorum Catholicorum*, December 8, 1956, in *AAS*, 49(1957), pp. 26-27.

¹³⁵ *The Code Commentary*, p. 244.

- promoting works of piety (the spiritual works of mercy);
- carrying out works of charity (the temporal works of mercy);
- animating the world with a Christian spirit (e.g., the justice apostolate).

All of these, in various ways can eventually become the object of a ministry. In passing, it may be noted that the listing might well serve as a basis for the duties of pastoral councils (both diocesan and parochial) and for similar groupings of the faithful.

Paragraph 2 is an exhortation to the faithful to unite themselves especially with those associations that have either been "established" or at least have the "recommendation" or "commendation" of ecclesiastical authority. The first group of such associations are "public" entities with the status of a "public juridic person"; those in the second group, although recognized within the Church, remain only "private juridic persons".¹³⁶ Both types serve in the Church and the world in their own specific ways.

Summary:

Canon 298 concentrates on associations of the faithful whether of the laity only or those of the laity together with members of the clergy. These associations work for one or more of the spiritual purposes enumerated in the canon in order to enhance the mission of the Church. Canon 298 reconfirms the importance of group activity of the lay faithful in the mission of the Church.

¹³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. also *Bouscaren Commentary*, pp. 361-362.

The canons of both Latin and Oriental Codes that we have examined briefly, assign potential roles and ministries to the lay Christian faithful in particular. These canons show a marked shift in the potential for the laity's participation in the life of the Church. There are still other canons scattered throughout the new legislation which support and confirm the same and show that the laity are now in reality capable of participating in the teaching, sanctifying, and governing functions of the mission of the Church.¹³⁷

Although there are several differences of approaches concerning various canons in the two Codes, it can safely be said that they are not contradictory. In fact, they are mutually complementary. If at times one code is not clear enough on a certain point, the other code may have a better wording. Consultation of both texts helps to clarify a doubtful point. At the same time, the two Codes will assist all the Christian faithful to work in unison for the one common mission in the Church, and as Victor J. Pospishil notes: "With the two new Codes of the Latin Church (1983) and of the Eastern Churches (1991), the communion of Catholic Churches can look forward to a more secure sailing over the stormy seas of our times."¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Cf. for example, cc. 129, §2; 329; 512; 517, §2; 759; 910, §2; 943; 1112; 1421, §2; and 1435.

¹³⁸ See Faris, *The Eastern Catholic Churches*, p. xviii.

CONCLUSION

Chapter II, dealing with both the *Code of Canon Law* and the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, consisted of four main parts. The first one introduced the Oriental Code, given its importance in the post-Vatican Church.

The second part dealt with certain canons that are either identical or similar in both Codes. It spoke about the Christian faithful in general, and about their equality and dignity on the basis of their baptism and confirmation. It also spoke about the laity in particular, about their vocation and sharing in the Church's threefold function of teaching, sanctifying, and governing.

The third part concentrated on some canons in the two Codes which although having common themes, adopt somewhat different approaches to them. The most important theme here was that of the concept of the "lay faithful" in both Codes. The difference of approaches between the two was obvious. It was clearly seen that the Oriental Code was far more positive in this regard. Other themes in this part were the missionary activity of the faithful, especially that of the laity, and their ministry of dialogue and cooperation with non-Christians.

Finally, the fourth part spoke about two canons that are not found in the Oriental Code but which are of considerable importance. Lay instituted ministries of lector and acolyte were the

theme of one canon; associations of the Christian faithful were mentioned in the other. In all four parts, the focus had been on the bases for lay activities and ministries in the Church and in the world.

From this overview of selected canons of both Codes, we can determine the status of the laity as regards their participation in the life of the Church through various possible tasks and ministries. In fact, besides the Second Vatican Council and the revised legislation legalizing its teaching, we have now the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*,¹³⁹ closely following and richly quoting the documents of the Council, to reconfirm the rediscovered position that the laity have in the mission of the Church.¹⁴⁰

It is easy to see that the lay faithful are an integral part of the People of God, that they have equal status and dignity with all the other Christians, and that they are not only called, but also have a right and an obligation to be fully active in every field of the Church's mission, since it can never be fully effective and achieve its goal of bringing the reign of God to fruition unless every member, whatever his or her role or ministry, cooperates constantly and vigorously for this purpose.

¹³⁹ See JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Constitution on Publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, *Fidei depositum*, (October 11, 1992), in *Origins*, 22(1992-1993), pp. 525, 527-529, especially, p. 527.

¹⁴⁰ See *Catéchisme de l'Église catholique*, Paris, Mame - Librairie Editrice Vaticane, 1992, *passim*, especially, nos. 897-913, pp. 196-199.

Both Codes, in comparison with previous legislation, show a remarkable change in assigning responsibility to the lay faithful. This has become possible because of the rediscovery of the sacramental importance of baptism.

Needless to say, both Codes follow the directives of the Second Vatican Council in offering roles and ministries to the laity, but unless these directives are implemented, the goal of a more active participation of the lay faithful and thus of recognizing their rediscovered status in the Church will not be reached. These directives need to be implemented everywhere including missionary territories such as Pakistan.

Having established the doctrinal (chapter one) and the legal bases (chapter two) for lay ministries, we can now apply these principles to the lay faithful of the Catholic Church in Pakistan.

CHAPTER THREE

CATHOLIC CHURCH STRUCTURES AND LAY MINISTRIES IN PAKISTAN

The Catholic Church is the communion of particular churches guided and united by their bishops. We find this clearly expressed in *Lumen gentium* 23 which states that it is in these churches and from them that the one and unique Catholic Church exists. It is precisely for this reason that each bishop represents his own church, whereas all the bishops, together with the Pope, represent the entire Church.

Furthermore, in *Lumen gentium* 26 it is stated that in each particular church, a eucharistic community under the sacred ministry of the bishop, "the steward of the grace of the supreme priesthood", a manifest symbol is to be seen of that charity and unity of the mystical body without which there can be no salvation. It further says that in such communities, which may often be small, poor, and existing in diaspora, Christ is indeed present and through His power and influence, the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church is constituted.

In Pakistan, there exist six such communities or dioceses, each having its own pastor. The six united together, then, make up what we call the Catholic Church in Pakistan.¹ In this chapter, we intend to see how Christianity reached Pakistan, consider the

¹ See APPENDIXES A and B for the maps of Pakistan.

circumstances wherein the first converts came to the Church, and examine the present strength of the Church, noting, in particular, in what kinds of apostolic activity the lay faithful are involved at present throughout the country. We shall also try to make an assessment of their involvement in the light of the present-day needs of the Church and the world.

This chapter, then, intends to examine how far is the Church in Pakistan trying to follow the directives of the Second vatican Council and those of the post-conciliar Magisterium, and how much participation in the life of the Church are the laity offered there in view of the revised legislation.

On the basis of their baptism the lay faithful are now capable to participate not only in the Church's mission in general, but also in its three functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing. To verify this in regard with Pakistani Christians is another aim of this chapter.

A. THE BACKGROUND

1. The Country

The word "Pakistan" is composed of two Persian words: "pak" (holy); and "stan" (land),² literally meaning a holy land, or, by

² Cf. C.A. WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings: The Baradari in Punjabi Culture as Compared with Brotherly Love in the Gospel Message*, Rome, Pontifical Lateran University, Alfonsian Academy,

implication, a land where holy people live. All Pakistani Muslims, and all Muslims for that matter, are "momineen", the plural of the arabic word "momin", meaning one who believes in one Allah, the one God and in Muhammad his prophet.

The very word "Pakistan" shows how seriously our Muslim brothers and sisters regard their religion, and that the Christian faithful have in certain respects much to learn from them in order to be able to offer something similar in matters of religious values and piety. In this chapter, therefore, we shall refer on occasions to the Muslims with whom the Christian faithful are called to live.

The full name of the country is: "The Islamic Republic of Pakistan",³ even though the shorter form "Pakistan" is usually used. This name was coined by Chawdhuri Rahmat Ali, an educated Indian Muhammadan, in 1933 in Cambridge. "It was a development of Iqbal's⁴ conception of a Union of Indian provinces with a majority

1988, p. 32.

³ Cf. R.I. CRANE, "Pakistan", in *World Book Encyclopedia*, Chicago, World Book, Inc., 1984 edition, vol. 15, p. 78b; see also WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 32.

⁴ Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1876-1936) was a great Muslim thinker and poet in India, who inspired in Muhammadan youths there the sense of a separate destiny. In 1930 he made a suggestion for the union of the North-Western Frontier Province, Balochistan, Sindh and Kashmir as a Muslim state within an Indian federation. This, later, gave birth to what is known as Pakistan today. Cf. S. BHATTACHARYA, *A Dictionary of Indian History*, New York, George Braziller, 1967, pp. 473-474. (Balochistan in this dictionary is spelt as Baluchistan, but Pakistanis prefer to spell it with an "o" since it is pronounced that way in Urdu, the national language).

of Muhammadans in their population."⁵ It is also said that in the word "Pakistan", "P" stands for the Punjab, "A" for Afghans (North Western Frontier Province), "K" for Kashmir, and "S" for Sindh,⁶ thus representing the would-be separate Muslim state.

A country of South Asia, Pakistan is located to the north of the Tropic of Cancer, between latitudes 24° and 37° N.⁷ It has an area of 310,404 sq. miles (803,943 sq. kms.), about one-tenth that of the continental United States,⁸ or about twice the size of California.⁹ In the north stretching from east to west are a series of high mountain ranges separating Pakistan from China, Russia, and Afghanistan. These include the Himalayas, the Karakoram, and the Hindu Kush. The Himalayas are in the north-east, while the Karakoram rise on the north-west and extend eastward to Gilgit. The Hindu Kush mountains lie to the northwest of the Karakoram, but extend eastwards into Afghanistan.¹⁰ India is to the south-east and

⁵ Ibid., p. 707.

⁶ Ibid. Unfortunately, there does not seem to be information concerning how the Balochistan province is represented in the name PAKISTAN. We could perhaps take "STAN", the last syllable of Balochistan, as standing for it.

⁷ Cf. *Pakistan 1991: An Official Handbook* (= *An Official Handbook*), Islamabad, The Directorate General of Films and Publications, 1991, p. 23.

⁸ Cf. CRANE, "Pakistan", p. 78c.

⁹ Ibid., p. 78b.

¹⁰ Cf. *An Official Handbook*, p. 17.

Iran to the south-west of Pakistan, whereas, to the south it borders the Arabian Sea.¹¹

Pakistan emerged on the world map as a sovereign Muslim State on August 14, 1947.¹² It then comprised two parts known as East Pakistan, the present Bangladesh, and West Pakistan, the present Pakistan. Bangladesh became an independent state on December 16, 1971, following a civil war in East Pakistan.¹³

About 85% of the population in Bangladesh is Muslim. The rest are mostly Hindus, with small numbers of Christians and Buddhists.¹⁴ Christians are really a tiny minority, about 0.3% of the total population amounting to about 280,000 persons. The total number of Catholics is 180,000 while the rest 100,000 are protestants.¹⁵ Although Bangladesh and Pakistan were one country till 1971, but because of about 1000 miles of Indian territory between the then East Pakistan and West Pakistan, there never really developed an ecclesiastical relationship between the two parts. After the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971 as an independent state

¹¹ Cf. APPENDIX A.

¹² Cf. *An Official Handbook*, p. 1; see also WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 32.

¹³ Cf. C. BAXTER, "Bangladesh", in A.T. EMBREE, (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Asian History*, prepared under the auspices of The Asia Society, vol. 1, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988, p. 133.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Cf. East Asian Pastoral Institute, "Situation of Evangelization in Bangladesh", in *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 25(1988), p. 402.

this became even more difficult. For this reason we will focus our attention only on Pakistan.

Although Muslims were only a small number when they first arrived in the Indo-Pak subcontinent, today, in a separate and independent homeland, Pakistan, they are one of the most numerous nations of the world. The population of Pakistan is ever on the increase.

The literacy rate is improving, but very slowly. According to the 1981 census, out of 13 million people in the country who have received some education, 46% have passed primary level (69% males, 31% females), 23% middle level (75% males, 25% females), and 20% matriculation level (77% males, 23% females). After matriculation, that is at the higher secondary level, the percentage falls to 6 (74% males, 26% females), at the graduate level it is only 4 (74% males, 26% females), and at the post-graduate level it is merely 1% (75% males, 25% females). The percentage of engineering graduates is 0.28 and that of medical graduates 0.25. Out of the medical graduates 22% are females. And, finally, the percentage of female law graduates is 3.¹⁶

The population of the country as on 1st January, 1990, is estimated at about 110.37 million with its male/female ratio of 51.72 : 48.28 per cent. Literacy rate is estimated to be 27.69 per cent.¹⁷

¹⁶ Cf. *An Official Handbook*, p. 25.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

According to "Pakistan News", the literacy rate has now improved to 34% from the 26.2% that it was in 1981.¹⁸

Of the four provinces of Pakistan, Punjab is the most densely populated (230 persons per sq. km.). Though this province has only 25.8% of the land area of the country, it has 56.1% of the total population. Sindh follows Punjab with 17.7% of the land area and 22.6% of the population. Then, the North-Western Frontier Province (NWFP), including the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), with 12.8% of the land area and 15.7% of the population. Finally, the province of Balochistan with 43.6% of the land area, has 5.1% of the total population.¹⁹

Of the total population of Pakistan, 97% are Muslims.²⁰ The remaining 3% are Hindus, Sikhs, Parsees, and Christians. The Christians are the largest religious minority, comprising about 1.6% of the total population,²¹ and amounting to about 1.8 million in number, with Catholics being almost half of these. According to *Annuario pontificio (1993)*, the total number of Catholics in the six dioceses in Pakistan at present is:

¹⁸ Cf. "Pakistan News", Ottawa, High Commission for Pakistan, vol. 6, (August 1992), p. 4.

¹⁹ Cf. *An Official Handbook*, pp. 24-25.

²⁰ Cf. CRANE, "Pakistan", p. 78b; see also WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 35.

²¹ Cf. WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 100.

Faisalabad:	115,439 ²²
Hyderabad :	46,608 ²³
Islamabad-Rawalpindi:	115,182 ²⁴
Karachi (Archdiocese) :	75,000 ²⁵
Lahore:	479,875 ²⁶
Multan:	80,000 ²⁷

Total:	912,104

Having seen Pakistan and its people in general, we turn towards Christianity, especially Catholic Christians, starting from the first Century A.D.

2. THE FIRST MISSIONARIES

John Rooney has recently written a history of Christianity in Pakistan in six monographs. He is of the opinion that Christianity in Pakistan today is not the result of a continuity from generation to generation, but that there were two beginnings with a gap of centuries in between:

[...] there are two main cycles in the development of the history of Christianity in this country, the ancient and the modern. The first may be said to run from the

²² *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992, p. 224.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 324.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 355.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 450.

beginning to about the tenth century of the Christian era, the second from the late sixteenth century to the present. In between these two periods there was a time during which Christianity was locally a dead letter.²⁸

We shall follow the same division as regards the history of Christianity in Pakistan.

(a) From the 1st to the early 16th Century

It is not certain when Christianity was originally brought to the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. Scholars differ in their views. According to some, the foundations of Christianity were even laid by the apostle Thomas himself. Others, however, think that it was the enterprise of merchants and missionaries of the Eastern-Syrian or Persian Church.²⁹

According to D. Emmerich, some historians now admit that Apostle Thomas had visited the territories known today as Pakistan. He wrote:

The first Catholic missionary in the present territory of West Pakistan was the Apostle St. Thomas, whose presence at the court of King Gondopharnes, who reigned at Taksalia (near Peshawar) between 19-45 A.D., is now admitted by the historians. However, about his activity and influences nothing is known, though it seems, according to Eusebius' Church History, that

²⁸ J. ROONEY, *Shadows in the Dark*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1984, p. 2.

²⁹ Cf. WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, pp. 100-101.

Christian communities in North Western India were still in existence in the third century.³⁰

John Rooney dedicates a whole chapter, "St. Thomas in Pakistan",³¹ in an attempt to discover the reality of this fact. He mentions King Gondulphares³² and the Apostle Thomas in detail. The King's and his brother Gad's conversion to Christianity are also noted.³³ He even speaks about coins of this famous king giving pictures thereof.³⁴ He then refers to Taxila Cross which could be a sign of Thomas' having visited Taxila (a town near Rawalpindi and Islamabad).³⁵ Rooney concludes his research saying:

There are good grounds for accepting the *Acts of Thomas*, within certain restrictions, as an historical document, and we may conclude that the story of Gondulphares' conversion has a basis in fact. With reason we have located the court of Gondulphares at Sirkap, near modern Taxila. It was there that the first Christian community in Pakistan sprung into being.³⁶

Andrews Thazhath, in his study on the Syro-Malabar Church in India, also speaks about Thomas the Apostle having brought Christianity to India, and, in fact, the Christians themselves were

³⁰ F. EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan", in *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft (Nouvelle revue de science missionnaire)*, 9(1953), pp. 52-53.

³¹ Cf. ROONEY, *Shadows in the dark*, pp. 29-51.

³² This is how Rooney spells the great King's name on p. 29.

³³ Cf. ROONEY, *Shadows in the Dark*, p. 31.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33-36.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-45.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

called "The Thomas Christians".³⁷ People very strongly believe that Saint Thomas was killed and buried at Mylapore in India.³⁸ Thazhath further says:

Scholars today generally accept as reliable the tradition about the apostolate of St. Thomas in India, more precisely in Malabar and on the Coromandal coast, and about his martyrdom at Mylapore. Tradition holds that the Apostle Thomas ordained bishops and priests for the Christian communities he had founded.³⁹

M. Roekaerts, writing about the Church in Pakistan, also mentions the apostle Thomas. Though he does not take a position as to whether Thomas really preached in India and Pakistan or not, still he has an interesting remark:

Although still a very young Church, the Church in Pakistan likes to consider itself connected with the early Church of the Apostle Thomas who may have passed through the country on his way to India.⁴⁰

Though some scholars refer to Saint Thomas as the Apostle of India, others, however, state that he was the Apostle of Parthia (Persia).⁴¹ Rooney speaks of him as the Apostle of the East, and therefore of both India and Parthia:

³⁷ A. THAZHATH, *The Juridical Sources of the Syro-Malabar Church: A Historico-Juridical Study*, Kottayam, Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, 1987, p. 2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁰ M. ROEKAERTS, "Pakistan: A Young Church in a Young Muslim Country", in *Pro mundi vita: Dossiers, Asia-Australasia Dossiers*, 18(1981), p. 13.

⁴¹ Cf. ROONEY, *Shadows in the Dark*, pp. 69-70.

Here we suggest that both these reports may be considered correct. St. Thomas' mission was a general move towards the east and embraced both Persia and India. Indeed, any treatment of the history of Christianity in Pakistan makes very little sense unless it is related to development of the Church in Persia.⁴²

Rooney later states that it is evident that the history of Christianity in Pakistan during the first seven centuries can be best understood in relation to the Church in Persia and that there is no real contradiction in the assignment to Saint Thomas of the mission both to Persia and to India.⁴³ He further says:

By the fifth century, and probably as early as the council of Nicea, the churches in India had come under the control and guidance of the Church in Persia. They were subject to the *Catholicos*, Patriarch of Seleucia. This was a natural enough development, paralleled elsewhere by the gathering of Churches round the great patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople. The development of the Seleucia patriarchate may seem more fitting if our suggestion is accepted that St. Thomas is to be regarded not simply as the Apostle of India, but must be designated more correctly the Apostle of the Orient.⁴⁴

One of the main factors that contributed to the spread of Christianity in Northern India and Pakistan was the persecution of the Persian Church under Shahpur II between A.D. 340-376 followed by the emigration⁴⁵ of Persian Christians and missionaries to the Indian sub-continent. Rooney says, however, that it is only a

⁴² Ibid., p. 70.

⁴³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 90; see also pp. 69-89.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106.

⁴⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

possible assumption and that there is no documentary evidence to prove this.⁴⁶

According to L. Mascarenhas, writing in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*: "By the 5th century there were Christians among the Roman traders to this region (Pakistan), as attested by the discovery of a statuette of St. Peter at Charsadda."⁴⁷ Rooney also states that there did exist Christians in Sindh in the eighth century.⁴⁸ But, he adds:

The eleventh to the sixteenth century was a time of almost complete vacuum for Christian religious practice and influence. It is possible that some Armenian Christian communities may have lived in some of the large cities. It is possible too that Christian mercenary soldiers may have found occasional employment in Hindu armies. The influence of these types of Christians is likely to have been neither very extensive nor deep.⁴⁹

Emmerich has a similar statement to make with only a slight difference:

After St. Thomas, for 15 centuries, history does not relate a single trace of any missionary activity in the whole country. The territory may have been crossed by christian travellers, as Pantooemus about 180, and the Egyptian Monk, Kosmos Indikapleustes about 550; especially by Armenian traders or by soldiers of the Crusades. But of their passage no trace remains.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 77.

⁴⁷ L. MASCARENHAS, "Pakistan", in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967, vol. 10, p. 869.

⁴⁸ Cf. ROONEY, *Shadows in the Dark*, p. 106; see also pp. 45-46.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107; see also WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 101.

⁵⁰ EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan", p. 53.

Having reviewed this first phase of Christianity in Pakistan, we shall now turn to the second and more important one.

(b) From the late 16th Century to the present day

Although we are not too sure of the beginnings of Christianity in Pakistan in the first phase (from the beginning to about the tenth century A.D.), for the second phase (from the late sixteenth century to the present), however, more evidence is available, and there are not major differences of opinion among historians and scholars regarding the Christian history of the Indian sub-continent.

(i) Jesuit missions under Akbar (1579-1605)

It is an established fact that the Mughal Emperor Akbar the Great (1579-1605) was very interested in Christianity and invited the Jesuit priests of Goa to his court, first at Fatehpur Sikri and later at Lahore,⁵¹ the then capital of his empire. According to Rooney, there were three missions of the Jesuits who aimed at

⁵¹ Cf. J. ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1984, pp. 31-56; see also WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, pp. 101-102; MASCARENHAS, "Pakistan", p. 869; EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of Pakistan", pp. 50, 53.

conversion work in the Mughal empire but hoped to achieve this through first converting the Emperor himself.⁵²

The first mission of the Jesuits was launched in 1579 at the personal request of Akbar.⁵³ He was delighted to have the Jesuit priests and to discuss the Christian faith with them. He had even granted them permission to preach and to make converts, and, in fact, "a goodly number of his courtiers, among them Abdul Fazl, rushed to ask for instruction in the faith".⁵⁴ But, in spite of the Jesuits trying their very best, the Emperor was no nearer becoming a Christian. He continued raising strong objections against Christianity, especially regarding the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation:

He told the fathers that he was ready to accept Christianity; but first the Trinity and Incarnation must be explained to him rationally.⁵⁵

The Jesuits continued trying to convince the emperor for three years, but to no use. Since he did not convert, none of his courtiers did. The Jesuit provincial at Goa came to know about this and thought it was a waste of time and energy. He therefore ordered the priests to close the mission immediately and return to Goa.

⁵² ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, p. 34.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Thus the first Jesuit mission to the court of Akbar the Great ended in 1582 in an apparent failure.⁵⁶

Eight years later, on August 15, 1590, when Christians were celebrating the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, Emperor Akbar felt a kind of nostalgia for Fr. Rudolph Aquaviva, his friend from the time of the first Jesuit mission to his court at Fatehpur Sikri, who had died in the meantime. He decided that he too would celebrate the feast:

He brought out the picture of the Madonna that Fr. Rudolph had given him, placed it on a rich high throne and commanded that all his court should pay it solemn reverence. He decided to embrace monogamy, distributed his wives among his nobles, and dispersed his harem.⁵⁷

The Emperor then sent letters to Goa once again as he had done in 1579 requesting the Jesuits to send priests as before to his court, this time at Lahore, the capital. Two priests and a lay brother arrived at Lahore in 1591.⁵⁸ Soon after, they opened a school for the sons of the nobility but met with very strong opposition from the pro-Muslim faction at the court. Moreover, they soon discovered that Akbar did not have any real intention to become a Christian. They felt that further work at Lahore would be fruitless. Consequently, they closed the mission and returned to Goa after about one year.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 41.

⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 41-42.

The closing of the second mission was too hasty; this annoyed Akbar and the Viceroy of Goa, as well as the Jesuit superiors in Rome who thought that the mission had not been given a chance to succeed. In 1594, Akbar sent a third invitation to Goa for priests. The provincial, instructed by the General that "even though Akbar remained unconverted, it was fitting that the fathers accept responsibility for the pastoral care of the Christians⁶⁰ residing in his dominions",⁶¹ sent two priests and a lay brother on the third mission to the court at Lahore. The party reached the city in May 1595.⁶²

This third mission of the Jesuits met with some success. The fathers opened a school attended by the children of the Portuguese merchants,⁶³ the nobility, and the richer Hindus:

Many of these boys wished to become Christians and the son of one of Akbar's vassal kings hoped that he might become a priest one day.⁶⁴

On August 5, 1595, Akbar allowed and encouraged the fathers to build a church and "gave his verbal permission to preach publicly and make converts, but declined to sign a *firman* (decree) making

⁶⁰ These Christians were from Europe and were employed in the army and in other parts of the Mughal administration.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 42.

⁶² Ibid., p. 43.

⁶³ These Portuguese Christian merchants were around a hundred in number at Cambay according to ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, p. 44, footnote 42.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 45.

this permit fully official."⁶⁵ The fathers began to preach publicly by virtue of Akbar's personal permission, and by August "several persons were already baptized and others were anxious to become Christians."⁶⁶

The reason why people were baptized only three months after the Jesuits arrived in Lahore is that converts had been under instruction long before Akbar had given his verbal permission to preach publicly.⁶⁷ The statistics and recording of converts began only in 1599:

In late 1598, Fr. Xavier⁶⁸ went with Akbar's expedition. In 1599, Fr. Pinheiro wrote to tell him that in the six months since his departure from Lahore 39 persons had been baptized. In 1600, there were at Lahore three group baptisms, one of 39, one of 20 and a third of 47 persons. [...] up to the time of Fr. Xavier's final return to Goa (ca. 1615), there were 1,000 native baptisms in the whole of the Mughal empire, but three hundred of these were infants at Lahore, who died almost immediately after baptism.⁶⁹

In May 1601 Fr. Pinheiro and Fr. Xavier managed to "persuade Akbar to issue a written *firman* granting freedom of worship, the right to preach publicly, and to make converts."⁷⁰ Akbar the Great

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 46.

⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, footnote 51.

⁶⁸ Fr. Xavier's full name was Fr. Jerome Xavier. He was grandson of St. Francis Xavier's sister and actually belonged to the Estepelata family. However, on his entry to the Society of Jesus, he adopted his granduncle's name (cf. *ibid.*, p. 43).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

died in 1605, and there is no evidence that he ever became a Christian.

(ii) Jesuit missions under Jahangir (1605-1627)

Akbar was succeeded by his son Salim, who took the name Jahangir (1605-1627). Like his father, Salim was friendly with the Jesuits and gave generous gifts to them to build churches both at Lahore and Agra. "He always wore a golden crucifix round his neck and was fascinated with western religious art. At his accession the fathers looked forward to trouble-free times."⁷¹

Though Jahangir remained friendly with the Jesuits and was interested in Christianity till death, he never actually received baptism. He prepared three sons of his brother Daniyal to receive baptism for political reasons. They did receive it but, some years later, all three renounced their Christianity by returning their crucifixes.⁷² There were not too many conversions during Salim's reign, but Christians were free to attend the churches of Lahore and Agra built with his generous help. He died in 1627, poisoned perhaps to prevent his becoming a Christian.⁷³

It is to be noted that while the Jesuits were busy mostly in the Punjab province of Pakistan, Augustinian and Carmelite priests

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 58.

⁷² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 60.

⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 65.

were working in similar missions in the province of Sindh. Two main stations were Thatta and Lahri Bandar:

In the same period as the Jesuits were displaying their activity in the Punjab some Augustinians and Carmelites gave of their best to Sind, near the Portuguese factories of Thatta. A few names of Carmelites are recorded: the blessed Redemptus, who was martyred in 1638 on the island of Sumatra, had been invested with the Carmelite habit at Thatta; - the following died in Sind, Fr. Louis Francis, 1622; Patrick of St. Louis, 1643; Michael of St. Simon, 1651; Peter of the Mother of God, 1672. But concerning their activities no details have been kept.⁷⁴

(iii) Jesuit missions under Shah Jahan (1628-1658)

Jahangir's son, Prince Khurram, later Shah Jahan (1628-1658), succeeded him. He was altogether different from his father and very unfriendly to the Jesuits. He issued a decree forbidding conversions from Islam and ordering all non-Muslim places of worship in his empire destroyed:⁷⁵

The end of Shah Jahan's reign saw the Jesuit mission at Lahore reduced to the status of an occasionally visited out-station of the Agra mission, a staging post for Jesuit missionaries on the way to Tibet. Lahri Bandar was finished and Thatta was a place that provided not much more than church service.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan", p. 54.

⁷⁵ Cf. ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, p. 87.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

(iv) Jesuit missions under later Mughals (1658-1760)

During the reigns of the later Mughal Emperors, that is, Aurangzeb (1658-1707), Shah Alam I (1707-1712), Jahandar Shah (1712-1713), Farruksiyar (1713-1719), Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), Ahmad Shah (1748-1754), and Alamgir II (1754-1759),⁷⁷ the Jesuits were unable to work on a regular basis, and no permanent resident priest was stationed at Lahore although the Christian community there was sufficiently numerous.⁷⁸ According to Emmerich,

a triple Catholic congregation existed in Lahore: the European Christians, mostly Portuguese; the Armenians, and the Indian converts. In 1606 they numbered altogether 40 or 50, while in 1714 the kernel of the army was Christian.⁷⁹

At this stage, the Lahore Christian community was visited twice each year by a priest⁸⁰ from Agra because of the shortage of Jesuit personnel.⁸¹ In fact, in 1760, they finally had to close their mission at Lahore, and indeed in the rest of Mughal India.⁸²

⁷⁷ Cf. BHATTACHARYA, *A Dictionary of Indian History*, pp. 605-606.

⁷⁸ Cf. ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, p. 94.

⁷⁹ EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan", p. 54.

⁸⁰ Cf. ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, pp. 94-95.

⁸¹ Cf. EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan", p. 54.

⁸² Cf. ROONEY, *The Hesitant Dawn*, p. 96.

Emmerich says that the remaining Christians, mostly in the army, were taken to Afghanistan:

In 1752 the remaining Christian artillery men were deported to Kabul by the invading King Ahmad Shah.

When the British troops, between 1830-48, conquered the Punjab, the accompanying chaplains met not a single survival of those previous missions.⁸³

There may have been a few Christians left here and there, but they were either hidden, or their number was insignificant.

(v) Christianity during the British Dominion (1840-1886)

As far as Pakistan is concerned, the British conquest started around 1840. From its very origin, it opened a new era of history which proved very profitable for missionary work. "Already in 1813 a parliamentary Act had allowed all Christian missionaries to enter India. In 1832 the Governor General, Lord William Bentick, passed a law exempting all converts from the forfeiture of property, which law was confirmed by an act of 1850."⁸⁴ Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries profited from it and many came to the country, building churches, schools, and hospitals.⁸⁵ Catholic starts were slower comparatively, but deeper.

⁸³ EMMERICH, "The Ecclesiastical Province of West Pakistan", p. 54.

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 54-55.

⁸⁵ Cf. ibid., p. 55.

The British troops who conquered the Punjab were accompanied ever since 1845 by Catholic Chaplains, dependent on the Vicar Apostolic of Agra. One of them, Fr. Francis de St. Etienne, a French capuchin, was killed on the battlefield, while hearing the confession of a wounded soldier (11-12-1845); Fr. Caffarel, S.P., built the first catholic Church at Nomila (Anarkali-Lahore) in 1847. Another church was built at Ferozepur, and one at Jullundur the same year, and at Wazirabad in 1850 by Fr. Morin, S.P. Six years later Sialkot Church was erected by Fr. Zachariah, Cap., and the same year Fr. Michael-Angelus opened the church of Mian Mir (Lahore Cantt).⁸⁶ Later followed Multan in 1850, Amratsar in 1860, Dalhousie in 1870.⁸⁷

Fr. Michael Angelus Jacobi was appointed Pro-Vicar Apostolic of the Punjab in 1855. "He introduced in 1856 the Sisters of Jesus and Mary for the education of European and Eurasian Children; in 1861 he built the Pro-Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception at Anarkali."⁸⁸ By a decree of September 18, 1880, the Vicariate Apostolic of the Punjab was established, Fr. Paul Tossi, a Capuchin, being appointed its first Vicar Apostolic. "His jurisdiction extended to the Punjab, the North-Western Provinces, Kafiristan and Kashmir."⁸⁹

(vi) The erection of the six dioceses (1886-1960)

The great event was, with the establishment of the Hierarchy in India, 1-9-1886, the raising of the Vicari-

⁸⁶ Cantt stands for Cantonment.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 55-56.

ate of the Punjab into the diocese of Lahore. Mgr. Tossi retired and Fr. Marcus of Faverges, capuchin, was appointed Administrator Apostolic.⁹⁰

After the erection of Lahore, on September 1, 1886,⁹¹ five other dioceses were established as follows: Multan, July 20, 1939;⁹² Islamabad-Rawalpindi, July 10, 1947;⁹³ Karachi, May 20, 1948;⁹⁴ Hyderabad, April 28, 1958;⁹⁵ Faisalabad, April 13, 1960.⁹⁶ The bishops in charge of the six dioceses⁹⁷ are now all Pakistani.

Having seen the general background of the Catholic Church in Pakistan, we shall now focus our attention on the present situation of the church in the country and on the activity of Christians on the parochial, diocesan, provincial, and national levels.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 56; see also ROONEY, *On Heels of Battles*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1986, pp. 106-114; Id., *Into Deserts: A History of the Catholic Diocese of Lahore, 1886-1986*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1986, pp. 7-8.

⁹¹ Cf. *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1992*, p. 353.

⁹² Ibid., p. 443.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 293.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 319.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 281.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 223.

⁹⁷ See APPENDIX B for the six dioceses in Pakistan.

B. THE PRESENT SITUATION

1. The Role of Christians in General

In 1947, India was divided by the British into two parts to create two separate homelands, Bharat (Hindustan) and Pakistan, for Hindus and Muslims respectively. This partition, because of the massive wanton killing that followed, was perhaps one of the most tragic events in the recent history of peoples struggling for liberation from foreign domination.⁹⁸ As a result of the ensuing migration, nearly half a million died and over 14 million were left homeless.⁹⁹

This meant that the local Christian communities, still rather new and inexperienced, had to prepare themselves to face the difficulties of a new country in the process of building itself. As Frederick Stock put it:

Partition in 1947 left the Christian community financially poor and economically insecure, because many of their Hindu and Sikh landlords had fled the country. Severe floods devastated the Punjab in 1950, 1954, 1955, and 1959, destroying the homes and crops of thousands of Christians.¹⁰⁰

In 1972, another very discouraging event occurred for the Christians: most of the schools and colleges run by the churches

⁹⁸ Cf. ROEKAERTS, "Pakistan: A Young Church", p. 3.

⁹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ F. STOCK, *People Movements in the Punjab*, South Pasadena, Calif., William Carey Library, 1975, p. 316.

were nationalized. This seemed to be a severe blow at that time to the prestige of the Christian community, and it aroused much ill feeling. Positively, however, as W.G. Young puts it, "it has opened the door for the emergence of a real Christian laity, working voluntarily for the upbuilding of the Church."¹⁰¹ As a tiny minority in a predominantly Muslim majority, the Christians in Pakistan could survive only by working together with fellow Muslim citizens to build up a better, stronger, and peaceful homeland.

The Christians, however, were fortunate in the sense that although the year 1947 marked the end of the British regime, many new missionaries continued arriving until the early sixties.¹⁰² This helped increase the number of Christians and led to the establishment of the two new dioceses of Hyderabad, in 1958, and Faisalabad, in 1960.

(a) Diocesan priests

Before 1957, there was no major seminary in Pakistan. In 1950, there were 23 diocesan priests working in the country, but none of them was a Punjabi. The first Punjabi priest, trained at Christ the King Seminary, Karachi, erected in 1957, was ordained in

¹⁰¹ Cf. W.G. YOUNG, "Christianity in Pakistan", in *The St. Thomas Christian Encyclopedia of India*, Madras, B.N.K. Press, 1982, p. 138.

¹⁰² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 15.

1960.¹⁰³ In 1980, out of 89 diocesan priests, 44 were Punjabi.¹⁰⁴ According to Christ the King Seminary records of 1991, those priests who received their training at the Seminary totalled 202.¹⁰⁵ At least 90% of them are from the Punjab; five of these have been consecrated bishops.¹⁰⁶ The rest of the bishops received their training before 1957 in Kandy, Sri Lanka. According to the *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, there are 124 diocesan priests working in the six dioceses in Pakistan at present.¹⁰⁷

(b) Religious priests

Besides the diocesan priests, there are many religious priests working in Pakistan. In the early fifties, they numbered between 135-140, including the Mill Hill Fathers who are not, strictly speaking, religious. In the early sixties their number reached a peak of 185-190.¹⁰⁸ However, afterwards, there was a decline and by the late seventies the number dropped to 140 and never rose

¹⁰³ Cf. ROEKAERTS, "Pakistan: A Young Church", p. 16.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *Christ The King Seminary Directory 1991*, Karachi, Roti Press, 1991, p. 44.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, for the number of diocesan priests in the dioceses of Faisalabad, Hyderabad, Islamabad-Rawalpindi, Karachi, Lahore, and Multan, respectively on pp. 224, 284, 297, 324, 355, and 450.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. ROEKAERTS, "Pakistan: A Young Church", p. 16.

higher in spite of the addition of some new Punjabi priests.¹⁰⁹ The number of foreign missionaries has now dropped considerably, and there is little hope of more arrivals, and, perhaps we may even say, less need thereof. According to the *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, there are 111 active religious priests¹¹⁰ in the Church in Pakistan at present.

(c) Women religious

In 1950, the number of women religious was 260. In 1960, they were 490, and in 1970, they totalled 600. By 1979, they numbered 650.¹¹¹ According to the *Statistical Yearbook of the Church 1984*, there were 701 women religious in Pakistan then.¹¹² The main reason for their increase has been a greater number of local vocations. According to the *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, there are, at present, 713 religious women¹¹³ actively busy in various fields of the life of the Church in Pakistan.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Cf. *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, for the number of religious priests in Pakistan on pp. 224, 284, 297, 324, 355, 450.

¹¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 17.

¹¹² Cf. *Statistical Yearbook of the Church*, In Civitate Vaticana, Secretaria Status (= *Statistical Yearbook of the Church*), 15(1984), p. 199.

¹¹³ Cf. *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1993*, for the number of religious sisters in Pakistan on pp. 224, 284, 297, 324, 355, 450.

(d) Lay catechists

Lay catechists started assisting the missionaries as early as 1889 when the first permanent Catholic mission station, that is, Adha, was opened in the present diocese of Lahore. Another station, Sahowala (opened in 1897), soon followed.¹¹⁴ "From these centres the missionaries toured other surrounding villages, while at the mission centre there was a permanent priest helped by catechists to look after the apostolic work of the centre."¹¹⁵

In the beginning, although the catechists were of real assistance to the missionaries, and without their help the latter would have accomplished little, they were not properly prepared for their apostolic work. With the passage of time, however, the need was felt for a greater number of qualified catechists:

The missionaries felt that the services of properly trained catechists were indispensable, especially for the outlying villages which were visited only periodically by a priest. In order to build a solid group of catechists a training-school was opened in Jallundur in 1936.¹¹⁶

As a result of the labours of both priests and catechists, the number of Christians continued growing. Soon it was felt that the training centre of Jallundur could not cope with the growing needs of many more catechists. As a consequence, a new station centre was

¹¹⁴ Cf. WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 123.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.; see also STOCK, *People Movements in the Punjab*, p. 319.

¹¹⁶ WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, p. 130.

opened at Khushpur, which became in 1965 the "National Catechists' Training Centre" for the whole of Pakistan.¹¹⁷

According to the *Statistical Yearbook 1984*, there were 390 trained catechists working throughout Pakistan.¹¹⁸ Their number is ever on the increase because of the growing demand. Unfortunately, their number is not mentioned in the current *Annuario pontificio*. Bishop Simeon Anthony Pereira, Bishop of Islamabad-Rawalpindi Diocese, in a letter, dated July 29, 1992, writes:

You asked about the number of catechists in Pakistan. There are 366 full-time and 71 part-time catechists, besides specially trained teachers of catechism in schools. Then you asked about lay ministers: only Hyderabad has some, but no figures available. There is one [... married] deacon in Karachi.¹¹⁹

According to Bishop Simeon's letter thus, the total number of catechists at present is 437. In fact, the number would be much higher if we counted also the teachers of catechism in schools (whether Sunday schools or regular ones).

(e) The growth of Catholics

In 1950, when the hierarchy was established in Pakistan, the Catholic population stood at 150,000 or 0.44% of the total

¹¹⁷ Cf. J. ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1988, p. 165.

¹¹⁸ Cf. *Statistical Yearbook of the Church*, 15(1984), p. 90.

¹¹⁹ Personal correspondence with author dated July 29, 1992.

population of 33,800,000.¹²⁰ In 1962, the total number of Catholics in Pakistan was 222,164.¹²¹ They reached 341,000 in 1972,¹²² and are 912,104 at present, which amounts to about 0.80% of the total population.

If we compare the Catholic population figures of 1950 with those of 1993, there seems to be quite an increase. Even in comparison to the Protestant Churches, the Catholic Church grew faster during this period, that is, from 45,641 in 1931 to 123,164 in 1949, whereas the Protestants, who were 349,659 in 1931, were 351,205 in 1949.¹²³ But, actually, most of the Church growth has been from the natural increase of the community.¹²⁴ Another factor has been the acceptance of Catholicism by a significant number of Protestants during this period. Stock, after comparing the figures for Protestants and Catholics in Pakistan at that time, notes:

The sharp rise in the membership of the Roman Catholic Church during this period (1950-1972) evidently comes from winning to her ranks thousands of former Protestants.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ ROEKAERTS, "Pakistan: A Young Church", p. 15.

¹²¹ That is, the total number of Catholics in the six dioceses added together in accordance with *Annuario pontificio per l'anno 1992*.

¹²² Cf. YOUNG, "Christianity in Pakistan", p. 138.

¹²³ Cf. STOCK, *People Movements in the Punjab*, pp. 314-315.

¹²⁴ Cf. YOUNG, "Christianity in Pakistan", p. 139.

¹²⁵ STOCK, *People Movements in the Punjab*, p. 316.

As regards Muslim conversions, they were very few, perhaps a hundred or two.¹²⁶ The same is confirmed by Stock when he comments upon the characteristics of the Roman Catholic work:

It seems to be a policy of the Roman Catholic Church not to attempt to convert or baptize Muslims. In their schools they have never required non-Christians to take any catechetical training or Bible study. In their hospitals they have no evangelists to visit non-Christian patients or hold general meetings in the wards with the purpose of giving Christian teaching. It is a pity that the outstanding example they set in attitudes and actions, and the good will engendered through their excellent educational and medical facilities are not used to bring people to Jesus Christ. They have unlimited opportunities in their institutions to make a clear witness in high places, but these are not utilized.¹²⁷

This seems to be a serious deficiency on the part of the Catholic Church although there were three principal reasons for this kind of attitude, as Cardinal Joseph Cordeiro of the Archdiocese of Karachi points out:

In the Christian response to the Islamic state, it is not difficult to find excuses and reasons for pessimism, fear, and defeat. This pessimism has afflicted many Pakistani Christians, for three principal reasons: the threat of numbers; the threat to Christian education; and the threat of mixed or apostate marriage.¹²⁸

However, that was the case some twenty years ago. Things are changing slowly and there are now signs of hope as Cardinal Cordeiro points out:

¹²⁶ cf. YOUNG, "Christianity in Pakistan", p. 139.

¹²⁷ STOCK, *People Movements in the Punjab*, p. 320.

¹²⁸ J. CORDEIRO, "The Christian Minority in an Islamic State: The Case of Pakistan", in *The Vatican, Islam, and the Middle East*, edited by K.C. Ellis, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1987, p. 283; see also pp. 284-286.

Christians were first called to cut the umbilical cord tying them to the colonial past, and to cease whimpering for the loss of those petty advantages they had enjoyed in that area. Thus liberated, they were able to see themselves clearly as a small church, perhaps, but a church in their own right.¹²⁹

(f) Muslim-Christian relationships

There now are in many areas significant improvements in the relationships between Muslims and Christians. The majority of the Muslims in Pakistan are poor. They do all kinds of tasks, such as farming, teaching in the schools, working for daily wages as labourers, and, especially, in the factories in the cities. Christians are equally involved in these undertakings with many chances for them to have contact with their fellow Muslims; this can lead to informal inter-religious dialogue.

Muslims, generally, respect Christians as the "People of the Book", that is, having the Inspired Law and Revelation from on High. They know that Christians believe in the One God, like themselves (the difficulties with the mysteries of the Holy Trinity and Incarnation come much later, if ever). They know that Christians fast for forty days every year as they themselves do for thirty days. They know that Christians pray regularly on Sundays as they do on Fridays. That is enough to start with and to enable them to attempt to work side by side with their Christian compatriots.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 286.

Since Muslims and Christians live together day and night in the same milieu and under the same social conditions, prejudice that was once very strong is slowly giving way to mutual respect and trust, so much so that Christians are asked to pray for the healing of sick Muslims, both at home and in the hospital, and this practice is spreading.¹³⁰

Pope John Paul II visited Pakistan on February 16, 1981. This was a morale-boosting event:

The Pope's visit, although it lasted scarcely three hours, was a spirit-filled event of nationwide impact. In the course of weeks of preparation, various communities received enthusiastic cooperation and expressions of goodwill from government departments, the press, and other agencies. Christians from all over the country were offered half-fares to Karachi by road, rail, and air. For the first time, Christians found themselves gathered together in the National stadium of Karachi in a eucharistic celebration with the Holy Father and the bishops of the country.

President Zia met the Pope at the airport and escorted him to the stadium, where he had ordered the celebration to be televised. The effect on the largely islamic populace was remarkable.¹³¹

In his address the Pope used kind and appreciative words towards the President and the rest of the Pakistani Muslims. He said that the Muslims, like the Christians and the Jews, eagerly link their faith with that of Abraham, one of whose salient characteristics was his great spirit of hospitality. The Pope then quoted an example thereof from Genesis 18, and added:

¹³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 287.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

The warm welcome which you and the beloved people of Pakistan extend to me on this happy occasion gives expression to this same spirit of hospitality. For this I am deeply grateful and I would like to reciprocate your kindness with the assurance of my prayers.¹³²

The Pope further noted that it was gratifying to see how the bonds which unite all the believers in God have been strengthened in recent years. As regards the dialogue between Christians and Muslims, he said:

I am thinking in a particular way of the bonds of dialogue and trust which have been forged between the Catholic Church and Islam. By means of dialogue we have come to see more clearly the many values, practices and teachings which both our religious traditions embrace: for example, our belief in the one almighty and merciful God, the creator of heaven and earth, and the importance which we give to prayer, almsgiving and fasting. I pray that this mutual understanding and respect between Christians and Moslems, and indeed between all religions, will continue and grow deeper, and that we will find still better ways of cooperation and collaboration for the good of all.¹³³

Another thing, very important as regards the relationship between Muslims and Christians in Pakistan, is that when Pope John Paul II landed at the Karachi airport, President Zia-ul-Haq asked him to pray over his family. This had a very positive effect on the Christians, and Cardinal Cordeiro puts it in these terms:

Those engaged in the ministry of praying over Muslims for healing found themselves healed -- of the congenital fear of Islam -- and became relaxed enough to pray boldly in the name of the risen Christ and the Holy Trinity. These droplets of blessings found their apothe-

¹³² JOHN PAUL II, "Islam and Christianity: Pakistan", in *Origins*, 10(1980-1981), p. 92.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

osis in the downpour of goodwill that accompanied the Pope's visit in 1981.¹³⁴

In spite of periodic difficulties, Muslim-Christian relations are generally improving. Both groups often share each others' joys and sorrows, attend mutual festivities, exchange greetings on special days, and carry out many social programmes together. If they wish to visit each other's holy places they are extremely respectful, and, usually, take their shoes off before entering in. What is most encouraging, is that they can occasionally for the sake of personal enrichment and enlightenment discuss religious matters now without malice or prejudice. Religious literature is also exchanged for the same purpose. In short, we can say that Christians, both Protestants and Catholics, are doing considerably better than before as regards the dialogue of life¹³⁵ with their Muslim compatriots.

Having reviewed the situation of Christians in Pakistan in general we shall now focus our attention on their role, referring more specially to Catholics.

¹³⁴ CORDEIRO, "The Christian Minority in an Islamic State", p. 287.

¹³⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 283.

2. THE SPECIFIC ROLES OF CHRISTIANS

In this part of our study we shall be dealing with the terms "diocese" or "particular church", and "parish". It will be useful, therefore, to have a clear notion of the same.

The Code of Canon Law defines a diocese as follows:

A diocese is a portion of the people of God which is entrusted for pastoral care to a bishop with the cooperation of the presbyterate so that, adhering to its pastor and gathered by him in the Holy Spirit through the gospel and the Eucharist, it constitutes a particular church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative.¹³⁶

A parish, which is a distinct part or portion of a diocese,¹³⁷ has also its proper definition in law:

A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop.¹³⁸

We shall begin our review of the activities of the Christian faithful at the parochial level.

(a) Pakistani Christians at the parochial level

As is clear from the definitions, both the diocese and the parish are not inanimate structures, but rather are living and

¹³⁶ Canon 369.

¹³⁷ Cf. c. 374, §1.

¹³⁸ Canon 515, § 1.

active communities of people who bring them into existence and cause their continuation under the guidance of their pastors. Consequently, it is primarily the people and their apostolic roles that we are concerned about when speaking of a diocese or a parish.

The parish is the centre of all Christian activity. It is here that the faithful can give most of their time and energies. Since they are being brought more and more to feel part of the parish community, they also feel more responsible now to care for whatever belongs to it. They strive to engage themselves more and more in its activities and do their best to make it become fully alive. The Fathers of the 1987 Synod on the Laity acknowledged the importance of the parish and exhorted the faithful to be even more active in parochial life:

The parish in the diocese continues to be the customary place where the faithful gather to grow in holiness, to participate in the mission of the Church and to live out their ecclesial communion.

We note with great satisfaction that the parish is becoming a dynamic community of communities, a centre where movements, basic ecclesial communities and other apostolic groups energize it and are in turn nourished.

We exhort all the lay faithful to enter intensely into the life of their parishes by the reading of the Word of God, the celebration of the Lord's Day, serving in parish councils, and by participating in the various forms and activities of the apostolate.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ THE SYNOD FATHERS, "In the Path of the Council: Message to the People of God", in *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 25(1988), p. 7.

The faithful are now able to participate in a variety of activities in the parish. We shall select some of these to see how they are being assumed.

(i) The parish pastoral council

Probably the most important working body of a parish is its pastoral council through which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office, give their help in fostering pastoral activity.¹⁴⁰ It is important because in engaging themselves in it, the faithful show a high level of responsibility by participating in the decision-making process as regards the pastoral activity of the parish. This encourages them to seek other responsible roles.

In Pakistan, pastoral councils as such do not exist. However, there are general parish councils in most parishes, informally called pastoral councils. The pastor usually calls in the members for consultation on arranging for special occasions such as the festivities of Christmas, Easter, Christ the King, Assumption, and so on. Pakistani faithful feel proud of doing something on these occasions and usually come willingly whenever the pastor calls them.

There is need, however, for improvement in this field. Firstly, such councils should be regularized, that is, their

¹⁴⁰ Cf. c. 536, §1.

meetings held at least bimonthly. Secondly, the members should be allowed to engage in more responsible tasks, especially apostolic ones, on a stable basis and encouraged to continue in spite of any initial difficulties. As regards participating in the decision-making process, Pakistani people surely are capable of doing so if given a chance since they are gradually becoming more and more responsible.¹⁴¹ In this regard, Cardinal Joseph Cordeiro stated during the Synod on the Laity in 1987:

It is to be noted, moreover, that in the last twenty years the Catholic laity has grown in its sense of responsibility. One example of this is clearly evident in the relations that the Catholic laity have with the vastly Muslim majority. The fact that the laity is a tiny minority, 1 %, and lives for most part side by side with the Muslim population and not in any marked ghettos, places upon the laity an additional responsibility of Christian mission and witness. The last twenty years seem to show that the Catholic laity has begun to realize more and more not only its responsibility, but also its rights. There is a sense of pride in being a Christian, without any fear of approaching the Muslims, and working alongside them in the daily tasks of life.¹⁴²

(ii) The parish finance council

As members of the finance council, the faithful help the parish priest in the administration of parish goods.¹⁴³ This is another area of serious responsibility. Indeed in some cases it

¹⁴¹ Cf. c. 519.

¹⁴² J. CORDEIRO, "Asian Voices in the Synod", in *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 25(1988), p. 27.

¹⁴³ Cf. c. 537.

could be left entirely to the lay faithful, thus freeing the pastor for more spiritual and apostolic activities.

In Pakistan there is not yet a custom of having parish finance councils. It is usually the pastor himself who deals with the financial needs of the parish; obviously, this takes much of his time while he also has to provide for the spiritual needs of his people. Mostly, he asks catechists to collect the monthly *chanda* (pastor's fund) from the faithful and then give an account to the priest in-charge. Each month, then, the catechists are forced to spend the first few days doing that. Fr. John Rooney points this out clearly when he recounts the history of the National Catechists' Training Centre, Khushpur, run by the De La Salle Brothers:

The Brothers' training programme at Khushpur saw the two functions, those of clerk (to the priests) and *chanda* collector, as the death of any really effective catechists' work. They resolved to bring about a reform of the catechists so as to free them from these tasks. The catechist was to work as an animator in the Christian community. He was to have a ministry in his own right, separate from, but not independent of the priest.¹⁴⁴

Many of the lay faithful could easily handle the financial matters today if given an opportunity to do so.

¹⁴⁴ ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, p. 166.

(iii) The ministry of evangelization

The pastor and lay faithful together have an obligation to bring the gospel message to all the people in the parish whether Christian or not.¹⁴⁵ Evangelization in company of the lay faithful not only makes the pastor's work easier, but also more effective.

In Pakistan this ministry is being carried out very well. Besides approaching non-Christians on an individual basis in day-to-day life, the faithful give a collective witness to the Christian faith. One of the best examples of this is the annual parochial convention in various parishes of each diocese, for which many preparations are made well in advance. This gathering is like a religious manifesto, a three day programme of Bible readings and long homilies (30-45 minutes), psalms and hymns, quiz programmes from the Bible for both children and adults, short plays, and so on. The concelebrated liturgy is the main feature of each day, especially, the third day, when it reaches its climax with the diocesan bishop himself being the principal celebrant.

The convention¹⁴⁶ is perhaps the best means of Christian witness in Pakistan. It is effective because non-Christian neighbours, mainly Muslims, become a part thereof since it takes place in the centre of the town or village. Large coloured and decorated tents are fixed within an area of about one acre (4,050

¹⁴⁵ Cf. c. 528, §1.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, p. 167.

sq. metres). Two to four loud speakers are used for all the three days almost day and night. Consequently, the Muslim neighbours have to listen to everything even if they would rather not. But, being themselves very religious-minded, they do not seem to mind it at all. Rather, it is quite common to see Muslims coming, watching, and appreciating Christian programmes. At times they even help at keeping order.

Actually, praying and preaching over the loudspeaker is very common in Pakistan both among Muslims and Christians. Muslims, in fact, do it five times daily, and, we can say, Christians have learned to evangelize on the speaker from their Muslim neighbours. In some places, early in the morning, when people are getting up and late at night just before they go to bed, they can sometimes hear the psalms sung in beautiful local tunes on the loudspeaker. Many such cassettes of psalms, hymns, and other religious songs and prayers are available throughout the country. Evangelization through conventions and cassettes is a ministry which is carried out mainly by lay people in Pakistan.

(iv) Ministries during the sacred liturgy

The faithful are now encouraged to take a knowing and active part in the sacred liturgy,¹⁴⁷ to be lectors and acolytes, and, in

¹⁴⁷ Cf. c. 528, §2.

the absence of the ministers, to fulfill some of their functions, as well as carrying out other ministries during the liturgy.¹⁴⁸

As regards the faithful in Pakistan, lay people have not as yet been installed in the ministries of lector and acolyte. Informally, however, they are fulfilling some of these functions. For example, for the two readings during the Sunday liturgy in most of the parishes lay persons, a male and a female, are usually appointed, and they take turns in order that more and more people have an opportunity to exercise this ministry of the word.

When it comes to the distribution of the Holy Eucharist, lay people are still looking forward to the day when they will be able to assist. The practice, at present, is for a religious brother or sister to help the priest in this ministry.

It is common practice in the parishes to have a full choir, not a solo cantor. The people join in the singing if the hymn or psalm is not entirely new to them. They know many hymns and songs, especially psalms, by heart, and they love to sing.

We do not generally yet have lay commentators. This ministry needs to be encouraged in parishes in Pakistan. The ministry of usher has also not yet been introduced as such although the faithful are always ready to help on important occasions.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. c. 230.

(v) Other lay ministries

Pakistani lay Christians are generally not as yet aware of many other possible ministries such as presiding over liturgical prayers, conferring baptisms (c. 230, §3), participating in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish (c. 517, §2), assisting at marriages (c. 1112, §1), taking part in the administration of ecclesiastical goods (c. 1282), conducting funerals, and so on. These areas will also have to be seen to in the near future for the still more active participation of lay people in the life of the Church.

Having referred to some of the possible lay ministries in the parishes of Pakistan, we shall now speak about some similar functions on the diocesan level.

(b) Pakistani Christians at the diocesan level

In this section we shall focus our attention on the diocesan synod, the diocesan curia, the diocesan finance council, and the diocesan pastoral council with special reference to Pakistan.

(i) The diocesan synod

"A diocesan synod is a group of selected priests and other Christian faithful of a particular church which offers assistance to the diocesan bishop for the good of the entire diocesan community."¹⁴⁹ Every time that the diocesan synod is called the members are obliged to participate in it.¹⁵⁰

It is very positive to see that the lay faithful should be invited to participate in such an important event as the diocesan synod. This clearly shows that they are now considered fully mature and responsible in the life of the Church and of the world.

In Pakistan, however, one yet has to look for the day when the lay faithful will be invited to participate in the diocesan synod. The reason is not that there is a dearth of such capable lay people, but, rather that the practice of holding synods has not as yet begun. Hopefully, though, the day is not far off, and it should be possible for the lay faithful to play an active role in synods.

(ii) The diocesan curia

"The diocesan curia consists of those institutions and persons which furnish assistance to the bishop in the governance of the entire diocese, especially in directing pastoral activity, in

¹⁴⁹ Canon 460; see also c. 463, §1, no. 5, §2.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. c. 463, §1.

providing for the administration of the diocese and in exercising judicial power."¹⁵¹

Lay people can serve in this ministry together with the clergy since little is specified as to personnel. Consequently, qualified lay persons are now eligible to be appointed judge, promoter of justice, defender of the bond, chancellor, vice chancellor, notary, finance officer, and so forth. However, they must be well-prepared for their work, prudent, and enjoy a good reputation.¹⁵²

In Pakistan, lay people are not yet assisting the bishops in the governance of the diocese nor working as officers on tribunals as such. As regards pastoral activity, however, they are also given a share though mostly as lay catechists. In some dioceses other lay persons are serving as secretaries or unofficial notaries in the diocesan curia. They may have a dual role to play: besides being involved in the ministry of the diocesan curia, they may also serve as the diocesan bishop's personal secretary.

(iii) The diocesan finance council

"In each diocese a finance council is to be established by the bishop, over which he himself or his delegate presides, and which is to be composed of at least three members of the Christian

¹⁵¹ Canon 469.

¹⁵² Cf. cc. 482, 483, 494, 1421, 1435.

faithful truly skilled in financial affairs as well as in civil law, of outstanding integrity and appointed by the bishop."¹⁵³

We can note that the members of the finance council, who should be at least three in number, are to be members of the "Christian faithful" regardless of whether they are lay people, religious, or clerics.¹⁵⁴ Thus all three members of this council can be chosen from among the laity. The same can be said about the finance officer, who is to be named by the bishop. The only requirement is that he/she be truly skilled in financial affairs and absolutely distinguished for honesty.¹⁵⁵

In Pakistan, once again, this practice has not as yet been introduced. In fact, it does not seem that there are any formal finance councils in the country as yet.

(iv) The diocesan pastoral council

"In each diocese, to the extent that pastoral circumstances recommend it, a pastoral council is to be established whose responsibility it is to investigate under the authority of the

¹⁵³ Canon 492, §1.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. J.A. CORIDEN, T.J. GREEN, and D.E. HEINTSCHEL, (eds.), *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary Commissioned by the Canon Law Society of America (= The Code Commentary)*, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1985, p. 398.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. canon 494, §1.

bishop all those things which pertain to pastoral works, to ponder them and to propose practical conclusions about them."¹⁵⁶

What is important here as far as the lay faithful are concerned, is that they be given prominence in this most important diocesan ministry. Canon 512, §1 is very clear about this:

The pastoral council consists of Christian faithful who are in full communion with the Catholic Church, clerics, members of institutes of consecrated life and especially lay persons, who are designated in a manner determined by the diocesan bishop.

Since the diocesan pastoral council is supposed to reflect the entire portion of the people of God,¹⁵⁷ it is necessary that there be members from institutes of consecrated life and from the clergy besides the laity who could be in majority.¹⁵⁸

In Pakistan, we do not as yet have diocesan pastoral councils. It is now time for this important Church structure to be introduced, and that it comprise male and female catechists¹⁵⁹ and other members of the lay faithful, such as teachers, representatives of the *baradaris* (groups of 20-30 families belonging to a common ancestor or all the families of a given area),¹⁶⁰ and youth

¹⁵⁶ Canon 511.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. c. 512, §2.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. *The Code Commentary*, p. 411, footnote, 89.

¹⁵⁹ In Pakistan there are now some female catechists although they are as yet very few in number.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. WAIDYASEKARA, *Encounter of Meanings*, pp. 78-94, especially pp. 87-90.

representatives. This then would also be more according to the spirit of canon 512, §2.

The above-mentioned are only some of the services or eventual ministries which the lay faithful could render to the people of God. The diocesan bishop could, and in fact he has a duty to, introduce and foster new ministries in his diocese,¹⁶¹ which a Church like that of Pakistan now really needs.

(c) Pakistani Christians at the provincial level

When neighbouring particular churches (or dioceses) of a certain territory are brought together so that their common pastoral activity may be promoted in accord with the circumstances of persons and places and so that the relationship of the diocesan bishops among themselves may be more suitably fostered, an ecclesiastical province is created.¹⁶²

One of the important roles that the lay faithful can play on the provincial level is participation in plenary and provincial councils. A plenary council is one which is held for all the particular churches belonging to the same conference of bishops.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Cf. c. 385.

¹⁶² Cf. c. 431, §1.

¹⁶³ Cf. c. 439, §1.

A provincial council is similar to it in the sense that it also involves all the particular churches of the same province.¹⁶⁴

The difference between a plenary and a provincial council is that a plenary council comprises of all the provinces of a region or of a nation, whereas the provincial council represents only one province. But,

[...] if the area covered by an ecclesiastical province coincides with the territory of a nation, a provincial council for that area has the same significance as a plenary council since it covers a geopolitical unit similar to what a plenary council would involve.¹⁶⁵

In Pakistan, therefore, since there exists only one ecclesiastical province, the plenary council or the provincial council would be the same thing. As regards lay participation in such a council, the present law allows them to be invited.¹⁶⁶ However, no such council has been held to date.

(d) Pakistani Christians at the national level

Fortunately, the lay faithful in Pakistan are engaged in many informal lay ministries at the national level. We shall review some of these under various headings.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. c. 439, §2.

¹⁶⁵ *The Code Commentary*, p. 357.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 360; cf. c. 443.

(i) The ministry of catechists

The ministry of the catechists is the ministry par excellence in Pakistan. Because of its preeminence, we shall pay more attention to it. If today Catholics number nearly a million it is mainly because of the dedication, determination, and selfless continuous work of the catechists, who have given everything they have in cooperation with the missionaries and pastors. They often work almost unnoticed and their ministry is not always appreciated as it would deserve to be.

However, there are always people who can go deeper into the reality and disclose things hitherto unknown. Among such persons is Brother Osmund Senewiratne, FSC,¹⁶⁷ a De La Salle brother, Director of the National Catechists' Training Centre at Khushpur, Pakistan, since 1967. In a letter, dated March 14, 1992, he states:

As you know the bulk of the evangelization in Pakistan is done by the Catechists. So we have to pay attention to this important ministry of the word.¹⁶⁸

In an article on catechists he writes:

The role of the catechists in the young Pakistan Church cannot be underestimated. They act not only as catechists but also as judge, lawyer, doctor and guide.

Because of the ignorance and illiteracy, Christians are unable to form living communities without the help of

¹⁶⁷ See also ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, p. 165.

¹⁶⁸ Personal correspondence with author dated March 14, 1992.

catechists who help to form such communities and then animate them on a regular basis.¹⁶⁹

Besides training catechists, Brother Osmund is rendering another great service to the nation. He has opened, and is in charge of the Benildus Literacy Centre which prepares catechists' wives in such a way that they may be able later to assist their husbands in their ministry. As he himself says:

Catechist candidates, who must be high school graduates, come to Khushpur with their families. While they are attending the catechist training programme, their wives attend the Literacy Centre. In the family training program both are helped to change their attitudes and values in order to improve their lives.

The whole program is oriented towards justice and peace.

Upon completion of the course catechists and their wives work as a team. Most of them work in villages. Each catechist is in charge of 20-30 villages.¹⁷⁰

Both the Catechists' Training Centre and the Literary Centre are inter-diocesan and indeed "the whole Church of Pakistan depends so much on these two training centres."¹⁷¹ Because of the exceptional role and dedication of the catechists, an elderly priest who holds a high office in ecclesiastical circles said that "some

¹⁶⁹ O. SENEWIRATNE, "Catechists Firm Foundations of Pakistan Church", in *Asia Focus*, July 9, 1988, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

catechists could be ordained at any time."¹⁷² Concluding his article on the catechists, Brother Osmund says:

The whole social structure of the Church here depends on the catechist. Day and night he is with his Christian community animating, orienting and helping Christians.¹⁷³

The hierarchy in Pakistan has expressed appreciation for the ministry of the catechists. Very recently, one of the diocesan bishops, during a concelebrated Sunday Eucharistic celebration at Khushpur, gave the mandate to teach in the Church to nineteen trainees. The women who had completed the family training programme were also granted certificates publicly. Later, this event was reported in the Catholic periodical *Christian Voice*:

On December 20 in a graduation ceremony in Khushpur, nineteen Trainees were given the mandate to teach by Bishop Joe Coutts of the Hyderabad Diocese.

After a profession of faith, the Catechists came to the Bishop one by one to receive the crucifix, the bible, and the diploma. Accompanied by appropriate words, the Bishop presented these to every Catechist.

Women who have done the family training programme were granted certificates in religious education. They did this course according to their academic background. Besides Theology, Catechetics, Liturgy, Scripture, Geography and Psychology they also followed courses in human development and social studies.¹⁷⁴

Antoine Matenkadi is another admirer of the ministry of the catechist. He has done research work on the catechist in mission

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ O. SENEWIRATNE, "Catechists' Training Centre", in *Christian Voice*, January 19, 1992, p. 5.

territories. In his doctoral dissertation on the subject, he compares the catechist to an apostle:

The catechists have been among the first lay apostles of modern times because they have extended missionary activity beyond the limits of the mission, and made it prosper in numerous surrounding villages.¹⁷⁵

For Father John Rooney, the catechist plays a most important role as regards pastoral care in the Church in Pakistan:

Central to any notion of pastoral care in the Catholic Church in Pakistan is the position of the catechist.¹⁷⁶

The second matter concerns the function of the new stations. They served as focuses round which the migrant Catholics of the Punjab formed new *baradaris* and communities. The work of bonding these together was done mainly by the catechists. They went out into the *chaks* and *bastis* to find where the Catholics had settled, to gather them together for prayers and instruction.¹⁷⁷

In short we can say that the catechist in the life of the Church in Pakistan is like the soul in a living body, and will be so for many more years, perhaps always.

Another important ministry in the Church in Pakistan is the pastoral ministry of women religious which is the next item of our study.

¹⁷⁵ A. MATENKADI, *Le Statut juridique du catéchiste en territoires de missions*, J.C.D. Dissertation, Ottawa, Université Saint-Paul, 1988, p. 2. The original French text reads: "Les catéchistes furent parmi les premiers apôtres laïcs des temps contemporains car ce sont eux qui ont porté l'action missionnaire au-delà des limites du poste de mission et l'ont rendue féconde dans de nombreux village environnants."

¹⁷⁶ ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, p. 162.

¹⁷⁷ J. ROONEY, *On Rocky Ground*, Rawalpindi, Christian Study Centre, 1987, p. 153.

(ii) Pastoral ministry of religious sisters

In Pakistan, because of custom and tradition, it had not been possible for priests and catechists to be involved directly in the instruction of women.¹⁷⁸ This difficulty has now been overcome by the generosity of the many religious sisters. Previously, they preferred mostly the ministry of teaching children at schools and taking care of young girls in hostels. The sisters are still serving the Church through these praiseworthy ministries, but, pastoral ministry, especially to women, has now become equally important to them. And, as Fr. John Rooney puts it:

In the late 1970s, they began to become more involved in directly pastoral work. In the 1980s, this movement accelerated and it is now the norm rather than the exception that one or two Sisters in each convent are employed as full time parish pastoral workers. Training programmes have also been provided to increase the effectiveness of these sisters.¹⁷⁹

It is a positive sign and a proof of the growth of the church in Pakistan that the number of the local religious sisters is increasing day by day. Previously, few would think that local sisters could be engaged in pastoral work. Now, however, it has become a common factor, and people feel so much at home and happy with the sisters who are their own daughters and sisters and who can make them understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God in their own mother tongue. This has another positive effect: it

¹⁷⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

attracts many young girls to follow their example in pastoral ministry. At the same time, it helps promote the correct place of women in the Church which is badly needed, especially in Pakistan,¹⁸⁰ where there is even proportionately a big difference of numbers of educated persons, educational institutes, and facilities for the same concerning men and women.¹⁸¹

(iii) The ministries of the lay faithful

When one thinks about the activity of lay Christians in Pakistan, the name of Allama Paul Ernest, who died in 1991 at the age of 90, automatically comes to mind. He spent his entire life in the service of the local Church as a writer, a preacher, and especially, a great teacher who trained many catechists. As Brother Osmund puts it:

He has taught at the Training Centre for a few decades. Mr. Paul was a biblical scholar and a self-made

¹⁸⁰ Whereas the birth of a son is an occasion to rejoice, the birth of a daughter is still considered something to be ashamed of in some areas in Pakistan. Cf. R. PATEL, *Pakistani Aurat kee Samajee wa Qanoonee Haseeyat (The Social and Legal Status of Woman in Pakistan)*, Karachi, Educational Press, 1981, *passim*, especially, pp. 97-102; see also monthly published periodical of Karachi, *Jafakash (The Sufferer)*, January, 19(1993), p. 11, where it says that the witness of one woman does not suffice in a civil court, but that they have to be two to make one witness, whereas in comparison, the witness of one man is enough for such credibility.

¹⁸¹ Cf. R. PATEL, *Pakistani Aurat kee Samajee wa Qanoonee Haseeyat*, pp. 26-38.

man. His contribution to the local church was tremendous.¹⁸²

In appreciation and acknowledgement of his contribution to building up the Church in Pakistan, Pope Paul VI in 1973 awarded him the title "Knight of St. Sylvester" together with a gold medal of honour. Christ the King Seminary, Karachi, the only major seminary of the country, publishes an annual magazine called *Jaras* (the bell of the caravan on the move). The 1989-1990 issue of this magazine was dedicated to Paul Ernest, who is frequently called "Allama" ("the Scholar"), a title given him by one of the literary groups of Pakistan. The editors of this particular issue say:

This issue of *Jaras* deserves special attention. It is dedicated to the most outstanding lay scholar of our country Allama Paul Ernest. He has spent the whole of his life in reading and writing. The number of articles that he has written goes in thousands.¹⁸³

Fr. Parvez Emmanuel, one of the professors at Christ the King Seminary who interviewed him, asked him:

Allama Sir, you have spent a great many years in preparing evangelizers (catechists), is there any special reason for that? His answer was:

The catechist is the corner-stone for evangelization in Pakistan.¹⁸⁴

He is considered a national hero in the Catholic Church of Pakistan. Many other lay people are now trying to follow the

¹⁸² SENEWIRATNE, "Catechists' Training Centre", p. 5.

¹⁸³ *Jaras 1989-1990: Allama Paul Ernest*, Karachi, Ahabab Printers, 1990, p. 8.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 43 (Urdu section).

selfless example of dedication and service to the Church set by Allama Paul.

Among the most common activities of the laity at the national level in Pakistan are: teaching in schools; writing both prose and poem; evangelization through the annual national *Mela* (religious fair) celebrated on September 8, the birthday of our Lady, at Mariamabad¹⁸⁵ near Lahore; taking care of the sick in hospitals; carrying out the charitable works of the St. Vincent de Paul Society; being involved in the apostolate through dialogue with the non-Christians both through dialogue of life and on the academic level:

On the academic and research level contacts with Muslims take place at the universities and are promoted by two specialized centres: Loyola Hall at Lahore and The Christian Study Centre at Rawalpindi. Even though they do not seem to enjoy full support of the Christian community they are producing a steady flow of important publications.¹⁸⁶

The Catechetical Institute,¹⁸⁷ Karachi, and the Pastoral Institute,¹⁸⁸ Multan, deserve a special mention. Whereas the Catechetical Institute, called "Catechetical Centre", is useful for the country, though mostly it takes care of the Karachi Diocese, the Pastoral Institute is a boon for Pakistani Christians. It

¹⁸⁵ Cf. ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, p. 167.

¹⁸⁶ ROEKAERTS, "Pakistan: A Young Church", p. 21.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, pp. 108-110.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 169-172.

provides not only for the catechetical needs of the nation,¹⁸⁹ but it serves many other purposes as well. To mention a few: regular, bi-monthly or longer, training programmes for schoolteachers and catechists; training and formation of sisters; post-ordination training of priests; dialogue with non-Catholic Christians; Muslim-Christian dialogue; and on-going research programme known as Theology in Context.¹⁹⁰

The Hierarchy of Pakistan has not as yet instituted any lay ministries in the sense of canon 230 though there is much of talent and good will among Christians for this. However, something very encouraging has taken place recently: the bishops have appointed a commission for lay faithful called the "National Commission for Laity" (NCL) to promote and encourage their role in the life of the Church. Bishop Paul Andreotti, a bishop emeritus, is its chairman. At the same time a periodical "Momineen" (the Laity), has been introduced in Urdu, the national language in which the articles and poems will have *Christifideles laici* as their background. This, definitely, is a positive step taken by the Hierarchy, and now there is hope that soon Pakistani Christians will be involved in all the fields of the life of the Church.

¹⁸⁹ The periodicals "Achcha Charwaha" (the Good Shepherd), and "Focus" are published at the Pastoral Institute.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. ROONEY, *Symphony on Sands*, p. 171.

CONCLUSION

Chapter III spoke about the lay faithful in Pakistan. It consisted of two main parts. The first part gave the background of the country itself and its religious history.

British Dominion in India (from about the middle of the nineteenth century) enabled the Church to become solidly established. The government allowed and even encouraged Christian missionaries of all denominations. Soon the number of Christians grew and today they are more than a million in Pakistan. Catholics number about half of the total Christians and are grouped in six dioceses.

The second part of the chapter spoke about the activity of all Christians, including the laity, in the Church in Pakistan. It mentioned diocesan and religious priests, religious sisters, lay catechists and other members of the laity and reviewed their involvement. In this part of the chapter efforts were made to show how the laity can carry out their activities at the parochial, diocesan, provincial, and national levels.

As it appears, most of the Pakistani Christians are involved in the teaching function of the mission of the Church. Their involvement in its sanctifying mission is minimal, and in the governing function they have no participation at all.

Not only the Second Vatican Council, but also the 1983 Code of Canon Law have opened so many ministries to the laity. The

1987 Synod on the laity, followed by *Christifideles laici*, calls upon lay faithful to be more and more active in the life of the Church and the world today. However, in Pakistan, the involvement of lay Christians is still at a bare minimum as regards the proper lay ministries. There is a serious need for pastors to look into this aspect if the Pakistani Church is to keep pace with the rest of the Christian world.

From our survey we gather that although Christians in Pakistan are willingly serving the Church and the world through various activities and ministries, there remains room for improvement, and many areas still need to be explored. This we shall do in our next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

POSSIBILITIES FOR AN EVENTUAL REORGANIZATION OR RESTRUCTURING OF LAY MINISTRIES IN PAKISTAN

Before the 1983 Code of Canon Law was promulgated, David N. Power, in his essay on ministry in the Church, noted that before organizing and structuring any activity in the Church, the juridical status of all Christians must be recognized:

Prior [...] to any specific rulings about offices confided formally to the baptized, church law ought to recognize the juridical element present in the sacrament of baptism and applicable to the rights of all members of the Church. All the baptized have some rightful part in ordering the life of the community and hitherto not enough canonical provision has been made to recognize this. It would be a distortion to legislate for special offices if this were not based on a recognition of a general responsibility, which allows for use of any charism or gift which can serve the community.¹

After the promulgation of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, Normand Provencher said similar things as regards roles, services, and ministries in the Church:

The theology of ministries calls for a renewed restructuring of the people of God. The couplet clergy/laity will have to be abandoned in favour of ministries/communities. [...] Before any distinction of functions and responsibilities, the Church is the communion of the communities of the baptized. It is within these responsible communities that we can situate

¹ D.N. POWER, "The Basis for Official Ministry in the Church", in J. H. PROVOST, (ed.), *Official Ministry in a New Age*, Washington D.C., Canon Law Society of America, 1981, pp. 86-87.

a diversity of functions that allows them to realize concretely the mission entrusted to them by the Lord.¹

In his essay on the theology of ministries, Hervé-Marie Legrand confirms this idea of responsibility of all Christians and notes that the various functions and ministries are but the realization of the grace of the Holy Spirit for the building up of the Church:

Let us summarize what can be said concerning ministries. First of all they are realities in the order of the grace, charisms. Then they are services or diakonias: these terms are synonymous. Finally, these services are relatively circumscribed, and relatively durable, as the terms used by Paul and Peter suggest respectively: *organization* or *stewardship*. Thus we are talking about relatively circumscribed, relatively durable services whose purpose is to build up the Church. For such a construction of the Church, all are jointly responsible.²

¹ N. PROVENCHER, "Vers une ecclésiologie totale", in *Église et théologie*, 15(1984), p. 89:

"La théologie des ministères appelle une nouvelle restructuration du peuple de Dieu. Le couple "clercs-laïcs" devrait être abandonné au profit de celui "ministères-communautés". [...] Avant toute distinction de fonctions et de responsabilités, l'Église est la communion des communautés des baptisés. Et c'est à l'intérieur de ces communautés responsables que nous pouvons situer une diversité de fonctions qui leur permettent de réaliser concrètement la mission confiée par le Seigneur."

² H.M. LEGRAND, "Où en est la théologie des ministères?", in *Vocation*, 35(1973), p. 406:

"Ramassons brièvement ce que cela nous permet de dire des ministères. D'abord ce sont des réalités de l'ordre de la grâce, des charismes. Ensuite ce sont des services, ou des diaconies: ces termes sont synonymes. Enfin ces services sont relativement circonscrits, et relativement durables, comme le suggèrent les termes qu'emploient Paul: *organisation*, ou bien Pierre: *intendance*. Il s'agit donc de services relativement circonscrits, relativement durables, finalisés par la construction de l'Église. De cette construction de l'Église tous sont solidairement responsables."

Taking these principles as a base for this chapter, we can now look at some further possible roles and ministries for the lay Christian faithful of the Catholic Church in Pakistan.

In the previous three chapters we have examined the place of the faithful in the Church according to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, of recent popes, and of certain theologians. We also noted the role that the laity are expected to play both in the Church, the new People of God, and in the world, on the basis of their baptism and confirmation.

Next we saw that the lay Christian faithful have a recognized legal basis in the revised *Code of Canon Law* making them eligible to carry out certain ministries in the Church. Like any baptised member of the People of God and without the need of intervention on the part of higher authority, they enjoy the rights and are expected to fulfill duties that are common to all the Christian faithful. This legal basis has been reiterated in the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* which stresses the same principles, at times even in clearer terms.

The principles that we presented in the first two chapters are applicable to all the Christian faithful. However, our primary intention is to particularize them by applying them to the Church in Pakistan.

In our survey of the activity of the Christian lay faithful in Pakistan, we noted that although the extent to which Christians there are involved in the mission of the Church is quite encourag-

ing, nonetheless there still remains much room for improvement and many more functions could be assumed by Pakistani Christians. In this chapter we shall try to address some of these possibilities by stressing the need for change according to the directives of the Second Vatican Council which wishes to see more and more lay Christians involved in the life and activity of the Church. "The need for change in church office is urgent, and for this reason a theology which relates charism, sacrament, and authority is important." ⁴

Pastors and Church leaders have a main role to play in bringing about this change. It will depend mostly upon them to encourage and invite individuals and groups to undertake various activities and ministries. Moreover, it is under their guidance and with their cooperation that the laity will be prepared and formed to carry out more responsible ministries. It is they who will mainly cause the change from less productive to more productive new structures in the Catholic Church in Pakistan.

For most Christians, the parish is their spiritual home from one generation to the next. They can expect to be called upon to work for this cherished home. That is why it is only fitting that this chapter looks especially at the family and parochial levels for further possibilities of activity.

⁴ POWER, "The Basis for Official Ministry in the Church", p. 87.

Pakistani Catholics have been practising their faith for over a hundred years and have thus acquired extensive knowledge of and experience in the faith. Some of them are ready and eagerly looking forward to being able to serve the People of God beyond their parish boundaries. For this reason, we shall also need to seek for newer ministries for them on the diocesan, provincial, and national levels. Before doing that, however, it would be worthwhile to speak briefly about the term "ministry" itself to see how it can be usefully applied.

A. LAY MINISTRIES AND THEIR DESIGNATION

From our examination of the situation of Church in Pakistan in the preceding chapter, we can reasonably conclude that there do not yet exist lay ministers in the proper sense of the word since, so far, it has not been possible to pay full attention to this very important aspect of the life of this Church. Therefore, it is imperative that we take steps to begin the formation of lay ministers in Pakistan, considering also their appointment and mandate. It can also be asked whether it is still appropriate to have mandated and canonically recognized ministries, or whether informal ministries would be sufficient at this time.

1. The Term "Ministry"⁵

In the Church, because of the grace and power of the Holy Spirit received through baptism, every Christian is called for some service to the community, each one thus responsibly contributing towards building it up. This service of the baptized is commonly designated as "ministry". In this sense, not only individuals, but also the whole Church is ministerial.⁶

Any "ministry" in the Church is considered to be a specific gift or charism, whether ordinary or extraordinary, of the Spirit. In fact "ministry" is equal to having been baptized in the Spirit, as Schillebeeckx also notes:

It can hardly be denied that originally there were times when ministry in the Church was exercised on the basis of the baptism of the Spirit, the pneumatic power of which was manifested more clearly in certain believers than in others. The first were themselves leaders, teachers and liturgists of the ecclesial communities of believers.

⁵ For reflections on the notion of "ministry", see E. SCHILLEBEECKX, *The Church With a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry*, New York, Crossroad Publishing Company, 1985, *passim*, especially, pp. 63-66, 121-123; R. G. CUNNINGHAM, "The Laity in the Revised Code", in J.H. PROVOST, (ed.), *Code, Community, Ministry: Selected Studies for the Parish Minister Introducing the Revised Code of Canon Law*, Washington, D.C., Canon Law Society of America, 1983, pp. 32-37; C. CHAMPAGNE, "Diversité et unité des ministères", in *Kerygma*, 12(1978), pp. 141-157; PROVOST, *Official Ministry in a New Age*, *passim*, especially, pp. 89-116; C.F. STARKLOFF, "Introduction: A Brief Definition of Ministry", in *Kerygma*, 23(1989), pp. 7-12.

⁶ Cf. CHAMPAGNE, "Diversité et unité des ministères", p. 141, ff.

⁷ SCHILLEBEECKX, *The Church with a Human Face*, p. 73.

The meaning of the terms "ministry", and "lay ministry" in particular, is still somewhat unclear, and needs further attention for clarification.⁸ In fact, even during the 1987 Synod on the Laity, the Fathers asked for greater clarity about the three terms: "ministerium" (ministry), "munus" (function), and "officium" (office):

They call "instituted ministry" the service which must be performed in the Church's name and authority in a steady way (though not necessarily perpetual), implying a special participation in the three-fold function (munera) of Christ. The Synod manifested its eager desire that the "Motu Proprio" *Ministeria quaedam* be revised, taking into consideration the customs of the local Churches and indicating especially the criteria to choose the candidates for each ministry.⁹

We are still awaiting clarification of these terms. However, no matter which terms are eventually used, the bishops of the Synod had this to say regarding the general ministries, roles, and functions of the faithful:

The functions of the laity in the Church are based upon the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and eucharist. Through the baptismal bath we are immersed in the life of the Trinity; through the anointing of the sacred chrism, the Lord strengthens us with the power of the Holy Spirit for a missionary testimony of Christian life and to sanctify the world; in the eucharist we are nourished to fulfill those functions.

The lay functions bear on the social and welfare field, on marriage and family, on catechesis and liturgy, on pastoral activities, and mainly on the management of the communities. Specialized laity work wonderfully in

⁸ Cf. PROVOST, *Official Ministry in a New Age*, p. 5.

⁹ THE SYNOD FATHERS, "The Propositions", in *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 25(1988), p. 37.

the administration, especially in financial administration.

The Church needs more lay people in parish activities, in order to be able to carry out an evangelization equal to modern conditions. These functions of the laity do not flow from sacred orders.¹⁰

The Fathers note that it is not only difficult to raise every function of the lay faithful to an "instituted ministry", but also that it is not even advisable:

[...] it does not seem easy to elevate the functions of the laity to the rank of instituted ministries. These ministries can becloud many lay gifts and functions in marriage and in the family, in daily work, in the sciences, economy, arts, culture and even in politics.¹¹

This last paragraph of the bishops' statement is particularly revealing, because most of the Christian laity serve through non-instituted ministries or apostolic activities. Indeed, even though the common services of Christians may not be ranked as recognized or instituted ministries, they have their value nonetheless. In our study we still continue using the term "ministry" in the broad sense, applying it to all types of spiritual roles and functions carried out by the lay faithful in the Church as well as in the world.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 38.

¹¹ Ibid.

2. Basic Types of Ministry

John M. Huels, in his essay on lay jurisdiction, written before the promulgation of the 1983 Code, sees the possibility of a great variety of action and ministry in the Church. Much of what he said at that time can become a reality today.

He distinguishes four basic types of ministry in the Church: common ministry, public ministry, jurisdictional ministry, and ordained ministry.¹² The first, that is, common ministry is one which is common to all Christians called by the Gospel to serve, to love their neighbour, or to evangelize the world in their own way, and according to their own abilities and charisms. "This is authentic ministry performed by dedicated persons who are called by Christ to serve in manifold ways. They do not serve as authorized ministers of the Church, but their ministry is valid nonetheless."¹³

The second basic type of ministry is public ministry performed in a more identifiable manner than the common ministry. Here the "minister is designated by legitimate ecclesiastical authority and recognized by the community."¹⁴ Examples of this type of ministry are: teacher of religion, eucharistic minister, reader, music

¹² J.M. HUELS, "Another Look at Lay Jurisdiction", in *The Jurist*, 41(1981), pp. 74-78.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

minister, financial advisor, parish council president, and youth minister.

The third type is one for which a special mandate is required. "These ministries are limited to those which are indicated as such in the law by the requirement of some canonical or juridical determination."¹⁵ For example, the ministry of a theology professor who requires a mandate by law to be able to teach on certain faculties.¹⁶ Or the ministry of lay catechists in mission lands, who can be given a special mandate if it is considered opportune to do so and are thus made official Church representatives within a given territory.¹⁷ As Huels notes:

Catechists are jurisdictionalized for ministry by their canonical mission. Such empowerment for ministry ought to mean that they are well qualified to be official representatives of the local Church.¹⁸

The ministry of catechists is not the only one that can be recognized in this way; there is a possibility for some other ministries too:

Some jurisdictional ministries are usually limited to the ordained but may be conceded to the laity by exception. The ministry of the preacher at liturgy and

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Cf. c. 812; see also c. 229, §3.

¹⁷ Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad gentes* (= AG), December 7, 1965, no. 17 in AAS, 58(1966), p. 968 (English translation in A. FLANNERY (ed.), *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, vol. 1 [= FLANNERY I], New York, Costello Publishing Company, 1975, p. 834).

¹⁸ HUELS, "Another Look at Lay Jurisdiction", p. 76.

the qualified witness at a wedding both require jurisdiction and are ordinarily done by the ordained, but competent lay persons can be jurisdictionalized for these ministries in certain countries and under certain circumstances.¹⁹

The fourth basic type of ministry is the one that is performed only by the ordained since it depends upon the power of orders. Examples of such ministry are: presiding at the Eucharist, absolving from sin, and ordaining the clergy. All these actions require the power of orders.

According to Huels, only the last type of ministry may not be exercised by lay faithful:

Of the four basic types of ministry in the Church, only one should be exclusively restricted to the ordained. Theoretically, there is no convincing reason why lay persons cannot exercise any of the others, including jurisdictional ministries not dependent on the power of orders.²⁰

Thus, according to Huels, lay Christians have a significant number of ministries open to them, and we add that only for the "instituted ministries" and other special ones, is the intervention of competent ecclesiastical authority required at present.

In Pakistan, only informal types of ministry exist at this moment. Although the Christian faithful have much good will and strive to serve the Church as best they can, if they are to carry out other forms of ministry there is an urgent need to provide them with a proper formation.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 77.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 78.

3. Qualifications and Appointments to Exercise Ministry

(a) Formation

The Church is not truly established and does not fully live, nor is a perfect sign of Christ unless there is a genuine laity existing and working alongside the hierarchy. For the Gospel cannot become deeply rooted in the mentality, life and work of a people without the active presence of lay people. Therefore, from the foundation of a church very special care must be taken to form a mature Christian laity.²¹

In this conciliar passage, it is shown how the role of the lay faithful can be made evident in a fully active and alive Church. However, for the laity to be actively present as mature and responsible Christians, they must be prepared, trained, and formed. The Council expects bishops and priests to see that this takes place:

Ministers of the Church should greatly value this arduous apostolate of the laity. They should so train them as members of Christ that they would become conscious of their responsibility for all men. They should instruct them deeply in the mystery of Christ, teach them practical techniques, and help them in their difficulties, all according to the spirit of the Constitution on the Church and the Decree on the Lay Apostolate.²²

The most effective and easiest way to train the laity is through their own local lay ministers. As regards Pakistan, there it has not yet been possible to establish in the country any

²¹ A.G., 21 in *FLANNERY I*, p. 838.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 839.

formation institute for them,²³ although many important documents of the Church stress this need today.²⁴ The country needs such institutes, not only on the national level, but perhaps in each diocese which can seriously consider setting up formation centres or at least formation programmes for the lay faithful.

(b) Appointment

An appointment is an action of a competent authority through which an office is acquired. Free conferral is by far the most common way in which offices are acquired in the Church.²⁵ The bishops have the requisite liberty to make appointments to various

²³ Cf. "Creating a Living, Witnessing and Prophetic Church: Final Message from the All Pakistan Catechetical Conference", in *Catholic International*, 4(1993), proposal no. 5, p. 93.

²⁴ Cf. for example, SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, *Apostolicam actuositatem* (= AA), November 18, 1965, nos. 22, 28-32, pp. 855-856, 859-863 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 788, 793-797); Id., AG, no. 21, in *AAS*, 58(1966), p. 972-973 (in *FLANNERY I*, p. 839); Id., The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (= SC), December 4, 1963, no. 19 in *AAS*, 56(1964), p. 105 (in *FLANNERY I*, p. 9).

²⁵ Cf. R. A. HILL, "Provision of Ecclesiastical Office", in J.A. CORIDEN, T.J. GREEN, and D.E. HEINTSCHEL (eds.), *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary Commissioned by the Canon Law Society of America* (= *The Code Commentary*), London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1985, p. 99; cf. also cc. 157, 523.

ministries in the Church²⁶ and even to establish new ones if helpful and necessary for their particular church.²⁷

For lay ministers to be recognized and respected as such, it would be very beneficial for them to be installed as such during a liturgical celebration presided over by the diocesan bishop or his delegate on a Sunday or another suitable occasion when a large number of the faithful are present. This can have a dual effect: the faithful would accept and respect these ministers more willingly; it would be morale boosting for the ministers themselves as well. Given the circumstances, this procedure should apply to any public ministry exercised in the Church.

(c) Mandate

In the Church, a "mandate" is generally considered to be a recognition that a person is properly engaged in a given ministry in the Church. It usually is not an empowerment, an appointment, or

²⁶ Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus*, October 28, 1965, no. 28, in AAS, 58(1966), p. 687 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 580).

²⁷ Cf. PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter on First Tonsure, Minor Orders, and the Subdiaconate, *Ministeria quaedam*, August 15, 1972, in AAS, 64(1972), p. 531 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 428-429).

a formal commission. Rather most often it is a disciplinary action, not a doctrinal one.²⁸

"Mandate" differs from "appointment" in the sense that whereas the former is required for only limited ministries in the Church, the latter can be made for many more functions and roles of the faithful. Moreover, a mandate entails a permission, whereas an appointment connotes a selection.²⁹ The obligation of receiving a mandate can, however, be considered to be something negative since to some extent it restricts the activity of Christians to only a few. However, it is still very positive in comparison with the old legislation.

Lay persons, both men and women, are now, for example, capable of receiving a mandate from legitimate ecclesiastical authority to teach the sacred sciences.³⁰ It is up to the diocesan bishop to give a mandate for various lay ministries if such were required. In Pakistan, there is an even greater need for such or for some similar commissioning so that those involved in a given pastoral activity would be truly seen to be functioning with and on behalf of the Church. Not only is there a scarcity of priests, but some

²⁸ Cf. J. A. CORIDEN, "Catholic Universities and Other Institutes of Higher Studies", in *The Code Commentary*, p. 576; see also R.P. DEELEY, *The Mandate for Those Who Teach Theology in Institutes of Higher Studies: An Interpretation of the Meaning of Canon 812 of the Code of Canon Law*, Rome, Pontifical Gregorian University, 1986, pp. 119-131.

²⁹ Cf. c. 805 and 812.

³⁰ Cf. c. 229, §3.

communities are almost inaccessible. Consequently, it is most difficult for a priest to keep a regular contact with Christians living in remote areas. Locally mandated lay ministers can perhaps be a good substitute in such cases.

Once they are commissioned, the duties and responsibilities of the ministers should be clearly spelled out in a letter of appointment. This letter, besides describing the apostolate to be carried out, should clearly state among other things whether there is any remuneration attached to the work, to whom the person so mandated is directly accountable, and the duration of the mandate. It can also spell out the territory where the ministry is to be exercised (for instance in a village, a parish, or throughout the diocese). It would also be good to provide, where possible, that those involved in such ministries are to participate each year in a special retreat or ongoing formation programme.

Perhaps some external sign can be given to those so mandated. This may consist of a cross having as a background a map of Pakistan, or some other appropriate symbol. This sign would identify them as duly-mandated pastoral workers.

B. POSSIBLE LAY INVOLVEMENT WITHIN THE FAMILY
AND IN PAROCHIAL STRUCTURES

1. Parishes as Christian Communities

"A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church..."³¹ A diocese or a particular church would not exist if these smaller portions or communities of the People of God were not there to bring it into existence. Because of its active life, the parish represents the entire Church. Speaking about the same in his recent exhortation on the laity, Pope John Paul II notes:

The ecclesial community, while always having a universal dimension, finds its most immediate and visible expression in the parish. It is there that the Church is seen locally. In a certain sense it is the *Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters.*³²

It is in the parish that the Christian faithful are most active, either individually or in various groups, councils, and associations. The Fathers of the 1987 Synod stated:

We note with great satisfaction that the parish is becoming a dynamic community of communities, a center where movements, basic ecclesial communities and other

³¹ Canon 515, §1.

³² JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici*, December 30, 1988, no. 26 in *AAS*, 81(1989), pp. 437-438 (Vatican English translation: *The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World*, Ottawa, CCCB, 1989, p. 70).

apostolic groups energize it and are in turn nourished.³³

The dynamism of the parochial community is manifested through various ministries. Some of these are described in canon 529, §1 which provides an insight into what can be done in a parish to help build community:

In order to fulfill his office in earnest the pastor should strive to come to know the faithful who have been entrusted to his care; therefore he is to visit families, sharing the cares, worries, and especially the griefs of the faithful, strengthening them in the Lord, and correcting them prudently if they are wanting in certain areas; with a generous love he is to help the sick, particularly those close to death, refreshing them solicitously with the sacraments and commending their souls to God; he is to make a special effort to seek out the poor, the afflicted, the lonely, those exiled from their own land, and similarly those weighed down with special difficulties; he is also to labor diligently so that spouses and parents are supported in fulfilling their proper duties, and he is to foster growth in the Christian life within the family.

Among the activities that are the responsibility of the parish priest and for which he would need on-going assistance, we can note the following points mentioned in the canon:

- visiting the faithful and their families;
- assisting the sick and dying;
- seeking out the poor, the suffering, the lonely, those exiled from their homeland, those burdened with special difficulties;
- ensuring that spouses and parents are sustained in the fulfillment of their proper duties;

³³ THE SYNOD FATHERS, "In the Path of the Council: Message to the People of God", in *East Asian Pastoral Review*, 25(1988), p. 7.

-- fostering the growth of Christian life in the family.

Each of these can be the object of a special team or association. More will be said about this later. Those burdened with special difficulties include those suffering from alcoholism or other addictions in various forms, those who are unemployed, those who are rejected by the society. Special groups could be set up to minister to them, according to needs. Family life apostolates could also be a particular focus of parish outreach.

What would be important is that these activities be adapted specifically for Pakistani Catholics, enabling them to give a consistent witness of a living, active faith -- possibly through the formation of small faith-sharing communities.

But, it is not only in Pakistan that there are calls for renewal in parishes. This is a constant theme of pastoral letters and addresses by bishops in various parts of the world.³⁴ In other

³⁴ See, for instance, the pastoral letter "The Parish: Reflections for Priests" by Cardinal J. BERNARDIN, February 1992, in *Origins*, 21(1991-1992), pp. 782-787; "Parish Life Perspectives" by Bishop J. LIEBRECHT, in *Origins*, 21(1991-1992), pp. 712-716; and "Signs of Hope: Focal Points for Pastoral Planners" by Archbishop T. MURPHY, February 15, 1992, in *Origins*, 21(1991-1992), pp. 653, 655-658. Archbishop Murphy notes:

"Pastoral planning by parish communities asks parish leadership to find out what people in their parish want. And the answer comes back loud and clear. People want the church to interpret the signs of the times, to be in touch with real life issues, to trace the movement of how people meet God and how God meets them in the concrete circumstances of their lives. If we are to take time to meet this need, we must take time to listen to people. This process of listening may be far more important than any project a parish decides to do. Listening itself is and must be a primary ministry of a parish" (p. 656).

words, since the parish is so vital to the building up of the Christian community, it necessarily becomes the focus of a variety of ministries.

2. Christian Activity at the Family and Parochial Levels

It is reasonable to expect that lay Christians in any territory would be called to serve the people of God in various ways and in greater number more at the parochial level than elsewhere. There is no limit to the number of ways in which they can serve. However, for practical purposes we may group these various functions of the lay faithful on the parochial level in two general categories: a) parochial apostolate and mission undertakings; b) service on parish pastoral and finance councils.

(a) Apostolate and missionary undertakings

The parochial apostolate of the lay faithful can be carried out through various ministries such as: (i) Ministries of parents and family; (ii) Individual ministries; (iii) Particular ministries of lay men; (iv) Particular ministries of lay women; (v) Particular ministries of youth; (vi) Group ministries; (vii) liturgical ministries; (viii) charismatic ministries.

(i) Ministries of parents and family

In the 1987 Synod on the Laity, the Fathers paid special tribute to the Christian family in these words:

The Christian family, founded on the Sacrament of marriage, is the privileged place for human formation and the awakening, growth and sharing of the faith. May it become a true "domestic church" where its members pray together, the commandment of love is lived in an exemplary way, and life is welcomed, respected and protected.³⁵

One of the most important and very first duties of Christian parents is to transmit faith to their children and strengthen it:

In what might be regarded as the domestic Church, the parents, by word and example, are the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They must foster the vocation which is proper to each child, and this with special care if it be to religion.³⁶

Normand Provencher, writing on the family as domestic church says that among the Jews, the liturgy was very much developed in the house besides that in the temple. The rites and prayers were prepared beforehand for important liturgical feasts and for the Sabbath. He notes that the most important feast, that is, the Passover, was celebrated in the house around the dining-table. Most of the thanksgiving prayers for God's blessings were said by the father of the family whereas the mother took care of the lighting

³⁵ THE SYNOD FATHERS, "In the Path of the Council", p. 6.

³⁶ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, November 21, 1964, no. 11, in *AAS*, 57(1965), p. 16 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 362-363).

of the lamp (or candle) both on the vigils of feasts and on the Sabbath day.³⁷

He further notes that at the start of Christianity, the worship that was expressed, especially in breaking of the bread, was celebrated in private houses and that the homes were in very fact our primary churches.³⁸

In the same line of thought, while writing about various ministries of the lay faithful, including members of a Christian family, Donald Peel notes:

A whole book could be written on the ministries family members can have to each other within the home. Among the most important are the vital ministries of parenting and evangelizing children, leading to their willing incorporation into the life and mission of the Church. The home is the initial training ground for all aspects of Christian living, including the development of lay ministries.³⁹

The Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People *Apostolicam actuositatem* says that the family has received from God a special mission:

The mission of being the primary vital cell of society has been given to the family by God himself. This mission will be accomplished if the family, by the mutual

³⁷ Cf. N. PROVENCHER, "Vers une théologie de la famille: l'Église domestique", in *Église et théologie*, 12(1981), pp. 27.

³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; see also A. PEELMAN, "La famille comme réalité ecclésiale: Réflexions sur la famille comme facteur de transformation d'une Église qui veut renaître à partir de la base", in *Église et théologie*, 12(1981), pp. 95-114, especially, pp. 112-113.

³⁹ D. PEEL, *The Ministry of the Laity: Sharing the Leadership, Sharing the Task*, Toronto, Anglican Book Centre, 1991, p. 61.

affection of its members and by family prayer,⁴⁰ presents itself as a domestic sanctuary of the Church.

A second, and equally important role of Christian parents is *the education and formation of their children:*

As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must therefore be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education. The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute. It is therefore the duty of parents to create a family atmosphere inspired by love and devotion to God and their fellow men which will promote an integrated, personal and social education of their children. [...] Finally it is through the family that they are gradually initiated into association with their fellow-men in civil life and as members of the people of God. Parents should, therefore, appreciate how important a role the truly Christian family plays in the life and progress of the whole people of God.⁴¹

In his apostolic exhortation on the importance and role of Christian family, Pope John Paul II noted:

The Christian family also builds up the Kingdom of God in history through the everyday realities that concern and distinguish its *state of life*. It is thus in *the love between husband and wife and between the members of the family* -- a love lived out in all its extraordinary richness of values and demands: totality, oneness, fidelity and fruitfulness -- that the Christian family's participation in the prophetic, priestly and kingly mission of Jesus Christ and of His Church finds expression and realization. Therefore, love and life constitute

⁴⁰ AA, 11, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 779.

⁴¹ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum educationis*, October 28, 1965, no. 3, in *AAS*, 58(1966), p. 731 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 728-729).

the nucleus of the saving mission of the christian family in the Church and for the Church.⁴²

In the Vatican "Charter of the Rights of the Family", released after the 1980 Synod of Bishops, the importance of the family is expressed in these words:

D. The family, a natural society, exists prior to the state or any other community and possesses inherent rights which are inalienable;

E. The family constitutes, much more than a mere juridical, social and economic unit, a community of love and solidarity which is uniquely suited to teach and transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values essential for the development and well-being of its own members and of society;

F. The family is the place where different generations come together and help one another to grow in human wisdom and to harmonize the rights of individuals with other demands of social life.⁴³

In a Christian family, *children play their role* as well. Their contribution makes the family even more Christian as noted by *Gaudium et spes*:

Children as living members of the family contribute in their own way to the sanctification of their parents. With sentiments of gratitude, affection and trust, they will repay their parents for the benefits given to them

⁴² JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the World, *Familiaris consortio*, November 22, 1981, no. 50, in *AAS*, 74(1982), p. 142 (English translation: *The Role of the Christian Family in the World*, Boston, St. Paul Editions, 1982, p. 76); see also Id., Discourse to those Taking Part in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Family, June 10, 1988, in *The Pope Speaks*, 33(1988), pp. 312-315.

⁴³ "Charter of the Rights of the Family", in *Origins*, 13(1983-1984), p. 462.

and will come to their assistance as devoted children in times of hardship and in the loneliness of old age.⁴⁴

Each Christian family, as all families together, plays its *apostolic role*, a life-time service to the Church and to society:

Everywhere and always, but especially in regions where the first seeds of the Gospel are just being sown, or where the Church is still in its infancy or finds itself in a critical situation, Christian families bear a very valuable witness to Christ before the world when all their life they remain attached to the Gospel and hold up the example of Christian marriage.

To attain the ends of their apostolate more easily it can be of advantage for families to organize themselves into groups.⁴⁵

In Pakistan, we must recognize that Catholic parents generally try to fulfill their duties to the best of their ability even though most of them must spend a great deal of time to provide for the material well-being of their children. Usually, they make sure that their children learn their catechism at home and later at school or through a catechist. They see to it that the younger children attend Sunday liturgy with them. More will be said about this form of family apostolate later when we speak of the 1992 "All Pakistan Catechetical Conference".⁴⁶

Christian families are encouraged to support one another in the practise of their religion, thus serving as an example to their

⁴⁴ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*, December 7, 1965, no. 48, in AAS, 58(1966), p. 1069 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, p. 951).

⁴⁵ AA, 11, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 779-780.

⁴⁶ Cf. "Creating a Living, Witnessing and Prophetic Church", pp. 92-93.

Christian and non-Christian neighbours alike. Many are indeed models of dedication and true Christian love.

The role of Christian parents in Pakistan could be enhanced even more if the priests of the parish, and occasionally the diocesan bishop himself, were to make it a point to encourage them from time to time, for example by celebrating "parents' day" in the parish each year. This would not only boost their morale, but also serve as an invitation to those who are about to become parents to follow the good example of those who have gone before them. Also, associations which have family apostolate as their focus (such as the Catholic Family Movement) could be established in parishes. It might eventually be possible to set up a family life office in each diocese; this would provide support to those involved in family life ministry at the parochial level.

(ii) Individual ministries

Individual active participation of a Christian in the life of the Church means being entrusted with a unique task which cannot readily be performed by another and which is fulfilled for the good of all.⁴⁷ The Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People stresses the need of the apostolate on an individual basis, especially in those places where Catholics are few and scattered.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Cf. CL, 28, p. 77.

⁴⁸ Cf. AA, 17, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 784.

Stressing the importance and fruitfulness of the individual apostolate in *Christifideles laici*, Pope John Paul II says:

In the apostolate exercised by the individual, great riches are waiting to be discovered through an intensification of the missionary effort of each of the lay faithful. Such an individual form of apostolate can contribute greatly to a *more extensive* spreading of the Gospel, indeed it can reach as many places as there are daily lives of individual members of the lay faithful. Furthermore, the spread of the gospel will be *continual*, since a person's life and faith will be one.⁴⁹

Each individual in the Church has been endowed with some gifts by the Holy Spirit through which to serve the community, and there does not exist a single person who has not received any such gifts at all, as Leonardo Boff also notes:

There are no passive members in the Church. Each person, within the body, exercises some function. Therefore, every Christian is charismatic. Paul says: "each one has his own gift from God, one this another that" (1 Cor. 7: 7); "To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (1 Cor. 12: 7). Peter confirms this in the same way: "As generous distributors of God's manifold grace, place your gifts at the service of one another, each in the measure he has received" (1 Pet. 4: 10). Acts states that the Spirit is "poured out on all mankind" (2: 17).

Thus, charisms are not reserved for a certain group of persons, such as priests or bishops. No one should attempt to possess all charisms. "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" (1 Cor. 12: 29). Every Christian is invited to view his or her function, profession, abilities as gifts that have been received and that must be exercised in service to the entire community.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ CL, 28, p. 78.

⁵⁰ L. BOFF, *Church: Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church*, New York, Crossroad Publishing Company, 1985, p. 159.

In Pakistan, those Christians who are engaged in the apostolate do so more in individual activity than in group work. Some aspects of this are: *dialogue with non-Christians* (usually on a friendship basis); *writing about the Christian religion* (either books or articles published in local magazines); *selling Christian articles and literature*; *bringing non-Christians to the church for visits*; *visiting the sick and praying over them*, and so forth. These are only some of the praiseworthy activities of Pakistani lay faithful. For such Christian practices to continue and even improve, parish priests and other Church leaders should occasionally publicly show their appreciation for them.

(iii) Particular ministries of lay men

Certain activities would appear to be more readily available to men than to women, at least in some mission countries where cultural diversity leads to certain practical distinctions.

In Pakistan, since Christian men are working as farmers and as factory workers together with their Muslim counterparts, there is a strong possibility of occasional *religious dialogue* between them. Most of the people work six days a week. Friday is the weekly national holiday. Consequently, Christians have to work on Sundays too. However, they are given a two-hour break on Sundays for their prayers.

Even young Christian boys have better chances of contact with their Muslim colleagues than Christian girls. This possibility is offered on play grounds and at schools, colleges, universities etc. On national days, or on Muslim or Christian feasts days, it is mostly the men and boys who meet and wish each other well.

Another field of Christian activity for men in Pakistan is involvement in *religious discussions* on an individual basis. This practice is not infrequent in Pakistan. Two or three would start a discussion, and others would join in. Occasionally, this theological exchange might turn into polemics, but most of the times both sides respect and accept each other's belief and views.

Another important field of activity of Christian lay men in Pakistan is the *apostolate in the schools*. Christian teachers not only continue strengthening the faith of their co-religionists, but also serve as the first source of Christian information to the Muslim students who are at times in majority in the schools. The good example of the dedicated service of these teachers, together with the use of their Christian language, can easily be considered an informal apostolate.

Although informal ministries of Christian lay men in Pakistan, which they perform on their own initiative, are praiseworthy and create good will between Islam and Christianity, there is a continued need for a proper training and formation of these lay workers. At the same time, however, they need the backing of

priests to ensure that they are not alone in their struggle, and that the whole Church supports them in their invaluable apostolate.

(iv) Particular ministries of lay women

In Pakistan, the literacy rate as yet is not very high. Even among those who are educated, there are differences of percentages between male and female students.⁵¹ Mostly it is the men who benefit from educational facilities. Although the situation is now improving and girls are being encouraged by teachers and parents themselves to continue their studies, the country still has a long way to go in order to have enough women in all fields of life for the building up of the nation.

The Pakistani Church is fortunate in this regard in the sense that it has comparatively a higher percentage of women workers in various fields of the life of the Church. Actually, this is mainly because of the involvement of religious sisters working in Pakistan. They have now prepared and formed local sisters even for *pastoral work* at the parochial level.

Although in comparison with men, with very few Christian women engage in any type of formal Church ministry, their role has its special importance: those who are involved are relatively well trained and are able to speak to the people convincingly. Moreover,

⁵¹ Cf. *Pakistan 1991: An Official Handbook*, Islamabad, The Directorate General of Films and Publications, 1991, p. 25.

they often have modern means of communication, such as projectors, slides, and films, to make their work even more effective.

Besides religious sisters, there are a number of lay women engaged in the *catechising ministry* in schools. In Catholic schools, most of the primary sections are staffed by women teachers. Their contribution to the mission of the Church is invaluable.

Caring for the sick as nurses, especially in Christian hospitals, is another very important field of work for Pakistani women. Those who have been well-trained by the sisters are thus proficient in taking care of the patients both physically and spiritually. This very noble ministry is now becoming more and more common in Pakistan.

Sadly, however, the majority of Christian women in Pakistan is still illiterate. There is a pressing need for many more schools or institutes both for their basic education, and also for forming them for many more forms of Christian lay ministry.

(v) Particular ministries of youth

Youth are considered the future and hope of any nation, society, group, or family. The same holds good for the Church:

[...] In fact the Church sees her path towards the future in the youth, beholding in them a reflection of herself and her call to that blessed youthfulness which she constantly enjoys as a result of Christ's Spirit. In

this sense the Council has defined youth as "the hope of the Church".⁵²

A similar idea was expressed by Pope John Paul II at another occasion:

It is significant that the World Day of Youth should this time have the centre of its celebration in Latin America, the majority of whose population consists of young people, who are the animators and future protagonists of what has been called the "continent of hope."⁵³

In his Apostolic letter of March 31, 1985, for the "International Year of Youth", Pope John Paul II said:

The Church looks to the youth, indeed the Church in a special way *looks at herself in the youth*, in all of you and in each of you. It has been so from the beginning, from apostolic times. [...] In our generation, at the end of the Second Millennium after Christ, the Church also sees herself in the youth.⁵⁴

Regarding the participation of youth in the life of the Church in all possible ways, the Pope again notes:

The Church, then, must hold out to young people all the possible Christian vocations, so that each may strive to respond to God along the path to which he calls him. It is not a question then, of not precluding special vocations, but of inviting all young people to consider those possibilities as well.⁵⁵

⁵² CL, 46, p. 137; see also GE, 2, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 728.

⁵³ JOHN PAUL II, "World Day of Youth, Message to all Young People of the World for the Occasion of the World Day of Youth, Palm Sunday 1987 (November 30, 1986)", in *The Pope Speaks*, 32(1987), p. 83.

⁵⁴ CL, 46, p. 137.

⁵⁵ JOHN PAUL II, "Questions of Youth: Address of Pope John Paul II to about 6,000 Young People of the Diocese of Carpi in the Cathedral at Piacenza, Italy", June 3, 1988, in *The Pope Speaks*, 33(1988), p. 291.

Young people have a great deal of potential and good will, and most of the time they are willing to cooperate if presented with a challenge. However, there are times when they get tired of traditional ways and wish to have something new, something of their own making. In another cultural context, Lori Crocker, a diaconal minister and youth leader at Innisfail United Church, Alberta, says:

[...] My experience is that young people challenge and push us, demanding that faith be relevant to the present and that ritual be meaningful and sincere. They have energy to offer and wish to exercise leadership and participate in decision making. Rarely will they accept traditions or beliefs because elders tell them that this is what they should do or believe.⁵⁶

Crocker further says that where youth are concerned, the best results are had when they are allowed to plan according to their own wishes and needs:

Often the biggest mistake we make is to sit down as adults and try to plan things "for" youth. Our efforts will have much more meaningful outcome when we plan "with them," enabling them to meet their own needs.⁵⁷

Likewise, the 1987 Synod Fathers recognized the abilities of youth and recommended that their ideas and suggestions be heeded:

The young have much to say, things which can be of benefit to all. Thus the dialogue between generations can be established, which is very useful for the Church and civil society.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ L. CROCKER, "In Search of Broader Horizons", in *The Practice of Ministry in Canada (PMC)*, 9(1992), p. 6.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ THE SYNOD FATHERS, "The Propositions", p. 50.

The above passages show that young people have their proper place in the People of God, and that their roles and functions like involvement in *Christian youth groups, student centres, guidance, teaching, organized sporting and cultural activities for under-privileged children, and other extra-curricular activities*, need to be equally appreciated. In fact, it is they who are by their very nature looking for new activity everywhere and particularly in the Church.

In Pakistan, youth are enthusiastic and are ready to do whatever is asked of them. Sometimes they even complain that they do not seem to have much to do in the life of the Church. This is true to a great extent because the only real and regular ministry that they are exercising is that of *choral singing* during the weekly Sunday liturgy. For the rest of the week they just wait around.

Mr. Javed Yaad is a writer and a poet in Pakistan. He also complains about the lack of interest that Christian leaders show towards young men and women. He says that they have so much potential, desire, and energy to work, but nobody bothers to care. He further says that if a pastor understood them, the youth would fill the church; if any church had them participate, none of its programmes would fail; and if a bishop added their ideas into his own thinking, a revolution would result. But, unfortunately, few

really accept youth, not because they are not old, but because they are young.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, Pakistani youth are very helpful and active in the weeks before Christmas and Easter because they are asked to help decorate the church building and the surrounding areas. While this is a useful activity for them, it cannot really be considered a ministry.

Young people in Pakistan need special attention from Church leaders. There are so many important roles that they can play in the life of the Church if only they can be properly trained and formed. Some examples of their possible regular, and not only occasional, future ministries could be: *readers during liturgy, organizers of annual Christian youth rallies, organizers of youth retreats, organizers of youth groups in parishes, participants in the Church's annual meetings, pastoral activity organizers, and participants as regular members in parochial councils.* All of these, however, require leadership qualities which cannot be developed without proper formation.

(vi) Group ministries

When individual lay persons form associations, groups, communities or movements, to promote and enhance Christian life,

⁵⁹ Cf. J. YAAD, *Yesu Mera Mahboob (Jesus My Beloved)*, Multan, Manzil Press, 1991, p. 93.

they are exercising a group apostolate. Although the communion of the Church is already present in the activities of each individual Christian, its full and specific expression is had when the faithful come together as groups.⁶⁰

Group activity or ministry may be varied according to the goal and aim of each association:

Great variety is to be found in apostolic associations. Some look to the general apostolic end of the Church; others aim specifically at evangelization and sanctification; others work for the permeation of the temporal order by the Christian spirit; and others engage in works of mercy and of charity as their special way of bearing witness to Christ.⁶¹

Lay movements and groups may differ as regards their external structures, procedures, training methods, and field of work. However, they all have a common purpose: "the responsible participation of all of them in the Church's mission of carrying forth the Gospel of Christ, the source of hope for humanity and the renewal of society."⁶²

"Catholic Action" is the name that was given by the hierarchy⁶³ to various types of group apostolate of the laity in many

⁶⁰ Cf. CL, 29, p. 78; see also AA, 18, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 785.

⁶¹ AA, 19, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 786.

⁶² CL, 29, pp. 79-80.

⁶³ Cf. PIUS XI, Letter to Cardinal A. Bertram, *Quae nobis*, November 13, 1928, in *AAS*, 20(1928), p. 385; Id., Letter to Cardinal A. Schuster, *Perhumano litterarum*, August 28, 1934, in *AAS*, 26(1934), p. 586; see also PIUS XII, Allocution to the Active Members of Italian Catholic Action, September 4, 1940, in *AAS*, 32(1940), p. 362.

countries, and more specifically in Italy, Belgium, and France, in the 1920s and 1930s.⁶⁴ It was considered as a "collaboration of the laity in the hierarchical apostolate."⁶⁵ These types of apostolate, whether or not they are known as Catholic Action, are still valid today.⁶⁶

In Pakistan, there are a few groups which can be considered as being engaged in this type of apostolate. For example, some lay women of Khushpur, a Catholic village, are either members of *Saint Catherine's Tertiaries* or of the *Marian Group*. Both groups aim to permeate the temporal order with a Christian spirit. Because of their spirit and dedication they are a source of inspiration to the community.

However, what is most encouraging and positive concerning these two groups is that they are backed by Church authorities. This attracts new members and can eventually lead to the creation of new lay apostolic groups operating on a wider scale.

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society is also active in Pakistan although only in a few cities. Both lay men and lay women are members thereof. They meet quite regularly, arrange programmes, and thus encourage other Christians to share their ministry. The

⁶⁴ Cf. Y. CONGAR, "My Path-Finding in the Theology of Laity and Ministries", in *The Jurist*, 32(1972), p. 171.

⁶⁵ AA, 20, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 787.

⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

members of the society and the people whom they serve seem to be quite satisfied with their work.

What is really needed in Pakistan, however, is the introduction of some of the associations spoken of in article 19 of the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People; these include associations promoting the perfection of Christian life, the liturgical apostolate, teaching the faith, evangelization, works of piety and charity, and those aimed at animating the world with a Christian spirit. Once again, Church leaders could perhaps generate such new ideas of service in the hearts of Pakistani lay Christians.

(vii) Liturgical ministries

In the celebration of the Mass the faithful constitute the sacred assembly, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart that they may give thanks to God and offer the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest but also with him, learning to offer themselves.

From this it follows that they should appear as one body, whether they are listening to God's word or taking part in prayers or singing, and especially when together they offer the sacrifice and share in the Lord's table. This unity is most fittingly manifested when the people make gestures or take up common postures all together. And let them not be unwilling to serve God's people with joy whenever they are asked to perform some special function during the celebration.⁶⁷

These passages from the General Instruction on the Roman Missal manifest the mind of the Church today. The Instruction then

⁶⁷ C. HOWELL (translator), "General Instruction on the Roman Missal", March 26, 1970, no. 62, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 181.

proceeds to mention certain functions which lay people can carry out during the liturgy: singing, especially as choir members; serving as organist, cantor, or choirmaster; performing the duties of acolyte, lector, or psalmist; carrying the Missal, the Cross, candles, bread, wine, water, and thurible; acting as commentator or as ushers; taking up collections, and serving as master of ceremonies.⁶⁸

In the spirit of the times, the 1970 Instruction then added:

All the ministries below those proper to the deacon may be performed by laymen, whether they have been commissioned for any office or not. Those ministries which are performed outside the sanctuary may be entrusted to women if this be judged prudent by the priest in charge of the church.⁶⁹

If this Instruction was mostly very positive as regards lay ministries, it clearly distinguished between men and women who were already serving the people of God as readers, eucharistic ministers, and so on, at least in some countries, from inside the sanctuary. The restriction would be considered discriminatory today and if the Instruction were to be revised in the future it would, hopefully, reflect the immense changes the Church has made since 1970.

In Pakistan, where mostly lay men are seen as participating in ministries, and where women are given a very minor role to play in

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 181-183.

⁶⁹ Ibid., no. 70, p. 183.

the life of the Church, a perpetuation of any such attitude would harm lay women's chances for active and successful ministry.

(viii) Charismatic ministries

Charisms are gifts and motions of the Holy Spirit, both ordinary and extraordinary, distributed to all kinds of believers for the edification of the Church and for the good of the whole world. They differ according to the type of person receiving them, according to the circumstances of the Church's mission and according to the needs of the world. The charisms are bestowed upon individuals, but others can also participate in them, and they can persist in time as it were a spiritual patrimony. Since the Holy Spirit is the author of all charisms, whether they belong to the hierarchical order or not, there can be no abiding contradiction among them.⁷⁰

As this passage shows quite clearly, charisms are unique and peculiar gifts given to individual persons. Since they are entirely free gifts of the Holy Spirit, any baptised person can receive them whatever his or her position in the Church. These charisms can take on "a great variety of forms, both as a manifestation of the absolute freedom of the Spirit who abundantly supplies them, and as a response to the varied needs of the Church in history."⁷¹

Jess S. Breña says that because of the personal charisms and gifts, each Christian's role in the Church becomes extremely important:

⁷⁰ THE SYNOD FATHERS, "The Propositions", p. 33; see also LG 12, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 363.

⁷¹ CL 24, p. 64.

"Everyone is important; everyone is needed!"

This is one point which is of great importance. The theology of the Charisms, of the spiritual gifts brings a deep sense of responsibility, a joyful discovery of themselves which develops self-esteem and a desire to develop and to use these gifts for the service of God's kingdom. We should repeat this so often that it becomes a slogan:

"Everyone is important, everyone is needed!"

because everyone is unique in his own gifts and charisms.⁷²

Enrique Nardoni confirms this in his essay on ministries in the New Testament:

The Pauline churches are not amorphous communities. A charismatic community is not the same as an unorganized community. Each one of the communities is a responsible body in which all members share responsibility even though some have a special responsibility of leadership over all the members. Moreover, all authority is transformed by Christ into a function of service in the community of love and faith. No titles of dignity or power are used, only different categories of services; all are servants of Christ for the good of all the brothers.⁷³

Since this special ministry of lay people through charisms can be so beneficial for the whole Church, the Council in *Presbyterorum ordinis* urged pastors to pay special attention to and encourage the initiative of those who receive such charismatic gifts:

While trying the spirits if they be of God, they must discover with faith, recognize with joy, and foster with diligence the many and varied charismatic gifts of

⁷² J.S. BREÑA, *The Laity Today: Vocation, Formation, and Mission*, Bombay, St. Paul Publications, 1987, p. 63.

⁷³ E. NARDONI, "Ministries in the New Testament", in *Studia canonica*, 17(1977), p. 35.

the laity, whether these be of a humble or more exalted kind. Among the other gifts of God which are found abundantly among the faithful, special attention ought to be devoted to those graces by which a considerable number of people are attracted to greater heights of the spiritual life. Priests should be confident in giving lay people charge of duties in the service of the Church, giving them freedom and opportunity for activity and even inviting them, when opportunity occurs, to take the initiative in undertaking projects of their own.⁷⁴

It is most probably through prayer groups and Eucharistic Renewal leadership teams in Pakistan that the charisms can come to light and be applied for the upbuilding of the Church.

Another important field of activity of the lay faithful is their ministry through participation in parish councils.

(b) Ministry through Councils

Vatican II, in its Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, stresses the importance of the councils in the life of the Church:

In dioceses, as far as possible, councils should be set up to assist the Church's apostolic work, whether in the field of evangelization and sanctification or in the fields of charity, social relations and the rest; the clergy and religious working with the laity in whatever way proves satisfactory.

⁷⁴ SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum ordinis* (= PO), December 7, 1965, no. 9, in AAS, 58(1966), p. 1006 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 880-881).

Such councils should be found too, if possible, at [the] parochial, inter-parochial, inter-diocesan level, and also on the national and international plane.⁷⁵

Although each council in a parish has its importance and its own specific field of activity, we consider that the parish pastoral council and the parish finance council have priority over all others, especially since they are called to involve many lay people.

(i) The parish pastoral council

Defining a "parish", canon 515, §1 calls it "a definite community of the Christian faithful". This is a remarkable change brought about by the Second Vatican Council. As Roch Pagé notes:

That the parish be a "definite community of the faithful", is certainly the most remarkable of its characteristics in comparison with what it was in the 1917 Code. In fact, there the parish was presented firstly as a subdivision of the diocese.⁷⁶

Pagé says that this is the direct result of the accent placed by the Vatican II on the Church as the People of God, and a community

⁷⁵ AA, 26, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 791-792; cf. also c. 536.

⁷⁶ "Que la paroisse soit une 'communauté déterminée de fidèles' est certes le plus remarquable de ses caractéristiques par rapport à ce qu'elle était dans le Code de 1917. Dans celui-ci en effet, la paroisse était présentée d'abord comme une subdivision territoriale du diocèse" (R. PAGÉ, *Les Église particulières*, Montréal, Éditions Paulines, 1989, vol. 2, p. 16); cf. CIC 1917, c. 216, §1.

of faith, hope, and charity,⁷⁷ where all the members have to participate actively in its life to have full effect.⁷⁸

The same principle of collaboration, says Pagé, is the basis of the parish pastoral council,⁷⁹ or of any other parish council for that matter.

Joseph A. Janicki confirms the same idea when he defines the parish council as a body in which the pastor and the parishioners work together in the service of the Church:

A parish council is a parochial structure consisting of representative members of the parish who form one body with the pastor in fulfilling the Church's ministry.⁸⁰

The participation of all, including lay faithful, in the care of the parish through the parish pastoral council is a new insight from Vatican II. Those who share in this pastoral care in virtue of their office together with the pastor are: "the associate pastor(s), the moderator and members of a team ministry, deacons, lay ministers, directors of religious education, teachers, and other hired personnel -- some of whom may not actually be members of the parish."⁸¹

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

⁷⁸ Cf. AA, 10, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 777.

⁷⁹ PAGÉ, *Les Églises particulières*, vol. 2, p. 123; see also pp. 122-129.

⁸⁰ J.A. JANICKI, "Parish Councils", in *The Code Commentary*, p. 431; see also c. 536, §1.

⁸¹ *The Code Commentary*, p. 432.

Many conciliar texts stress the necessity of collaboration⁸² of clergy and laity in the Church's all important tasks of evangelization and sanctification. The parish pastoral council is one of the most appropriate means to achieve these goals.⁸³

The specific and particular duty of the parish council is to reflect on the parish's ministerial activity and, on the basis of this reflection, to discern what needs to be changed or developed in the parish to make it more faithful to what God is calling it to be.⁸⁴ *In a sense, the parish council has the role of a "think tank".*

The parish pastoral council is responsible for the "pastoral activity" of a parish, "an organized, unified endeavor, which broadly includes liturgy, education, social service, evangelization, mission activity, family life, communications, ecumenism, and administration. Parish council committees frequently correspond to these areas of concern."⁸⁵ In fact, the ministry of the parish council is co-extensive with the total mission of the parish.

⁸² Cf. for example, LG, 37; CD, 30; PO, 9, in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 394-395; 581-582; 880-881 respectively.

⁸³ See W. DALTON, "Parish Councils or Parish Pastoral Councils?", in *Studia canonica*, 22(1988), pp. 169-185, especially, pp. 175-176.

⁸⁴ Cf. JANICKI, "Parish Councils", p. 431.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

As is clear from what we have just said, all the members of a parish are called to participate in its pastoral activity through various roles and ministries. The members of the parish pastoral council represent the faithful in the council. In turn, they encourage and update them concerning the activities of the other parishioners and any new developments or decisions taken for the good of the individuals or the entire community.

(ii) The parish finance council

Each parish is to have a finance council which is regulated by universal law as well as by norms issued by the diocesan bishop; in this council the Christian faithful, selected according to the same norms, aid the pastor in the administration of parish goods with due regard for the prescription of can. 532.⁸⁶

The parish finance council is a relatively new concept in the law of the Church. The idea behind it is not only to make the laity share more and more in the life of the Church, but also to make them responsible and accountable through such an important ministry. This is a noteworthy step. Both the pastoral and the finance councils can be considered first steps towards an eventual restructuring of lay ministries in the entire Church as well as in each particular church.

It will be important in the years ahead to make certain that these councils are flourishing in all parishes in Pakistan.

⁸⁶ Canon 537; see also R. PAGÉ, *Les Églises particulières*, vol. 2, pp. 129-133, especially, p. 131.

Having seen the possible new ministries of the faithful at the parochial level, we shall now examine similar possibilities at the diocesan level.

C. POSSIBLE LAY INVOLVEMENT WITHIN DIOCESAN STRUCTURES

According to the Second Vatican Council and the present legislation, the lay faithful can participate in the following diocesan structures: the diocesan synod,⁸⁷ the diocesan curia,⁸⁸ the diocesan finance council,⁸⁹ and the diocesan pastoral council.⁹⁰ They can also take part in various organizations of the apostolate. However, because of their particular importance, we shall concentrate on two areas of the lay people's activity at the diocesan level: 1. participation in diocesan councils, and 2. diocesan organizations for the lay apostolate.

1. Lay Participation in Diocesan Councils

Various kinds of councils may exist in a diocese. The most important ones where lay people could be involved are: a) the diocesan pastoral council, b) the diocesan finance council.

⁸⁷ Cf. cc. 460; 463, §1, 5, §2.

⁸⁸ Cf. c. 469; see also CD, 27.

⁸⁹ Canon 492.

⁹⁰ Canons 511-512.

(a) The diocesan pastoral council

The importance of the diocesan pastoral council is mentioned in the Decree on the Pastoral Office of the Bishops in the Church:

It is highly desirable that in every diocese a special pastoral council be established, presided over by the diocesan bishop himself, in which clergy, religious, and laity specially chosen for the purpose will participate. It will be the function of this council to investigate and consider matters relating to pastoral activity and to formulate practical conclusions concerning them.⁹¹

The pastoral council, recommended so strongly in *Christus Dominus*, represents the communion and unity of the entire Church:

As spare as this reference may seem, it initiated an important canonical institute based on the *communio* model of the Church expressed by the phrase "people of God." By baptism and confirmation all are called to share in the threefold office of Christ as priest, prophet, and king in accord with their respective roles in the Church. It is fitting therefore that a diocesan structure represent the organic reality of the particular church.⁹²

Since it represents the whole people of God in a particular Church, the diocesan pastoral council must include as its members, besides the diocesan bishop under whose authority it functions, priests, deacons, men and women religious, and lay people.

Canon 512, §1 stresses the membership of the laity in the pastoral council by adding the word "especially" (*praesertim*). In

⁹¹ CD, 27, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 580; see also R. PAGÉ, *Les Églises particulières*, Montréal, Éditions Paulines, 1985, vol. 1, pp. 184-197.

⁹² J.A. ALESANDRO, "The Pastoral Council", in *The Code Commentary*, p. 410.

fact, it replaces the earlier suggestions that the "majority" of the members should be lay persons.⁹³

As to the nature of the pastoral council, the conciliar text (CD, 27) contains four key principles:

[...] (a) the pastoral council is established to serve the needs of the entire particular church; (b) it is not a group apart from the bishop but one closely joined with him, over which he himself presides; (c) it is not a lay association but a group which presents a cross section of the diocese; and (d) it is neither a decision-making body nor a study club but a set of advisors who will investigate the diocese's pastoral life and recommend concrete steps to promote and improve it.⁹⁴

As is clear from these principles, to be a member of the diocesan pastoral council is a very responsible task which requires special qualifications, such as, faith, moral integrity, and prudence.⁹⁵ We can add that a certain preparedness and formation is also needed, especially as regards the lay faithful for whom to be a member of such a council is a rather new ministry.

It would be up to the bishops of Pakistan in those dioceses where the councils have not yet been established to follow the directives of canon 511 and *Christus Dominus*, 27, and establish

⁹³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 411, footnote 89; see also *Communicationes*, 13(1981), p. 139.

⁹⁴ ALESANDRO, "The Pastoral Council", p. 410; see also PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter, *Ecclesiae sanctae I*, August 6, 1966, nos. 16-17, in *AAS*, 58(1966), pp. 767-768 (English translation in *FLANNERY I*, pp. 601-602).

⁹⁵ Cf. c. 512, §3.

diocesan pastoral councils to open such important new ministries to the lay faithful.

(b) The diocesan finance council⁹⁶

Canon 492 requires that in each diocese the diocesan bishop establish a finance council, over which he should preside himself or appoint a delegate to preside in his name. As regards the members of this council, the requirement is that there be at least three selected from among the Christian faithful; these members should be learned in both law and finances. Furthermore, their honesty and integrity should be beyond doubt. The bishop himself appoints the members of the finance council (§1).⁹⁷

The diocesan finance council is similar to the administration council (*concilium administrationis*) of canon 1520, §1, of the 1917 Code,⁹⁸ and may be considered its modified version. The former canon stated:

To help him fulfill this office (of vigilance) properly, the Ordinary shall establish in his episcopal city a council consisting of himself as president and two or more capable men who, as far as possible, should be expert in both the canon and the civil law. The Ordinary

⁹⁶ See A. FARRELLY, "The Diocesan Finance Council: Functions and Duties According to the *Code of Canon Law*", in *Studia canonica*, 23(1989), pp. 149-166.

⁹⁷ See also R. PAGÉ, *Les Églises particulières*, vol. 1, pp. 106-114.

⁹⁸ Cf. J. A. ALESANDRO, "The Finance Council", in *The Code Commentary*, p. 398.

himself is to choose the members of the Council after taking the advice of his chapter (consultors) unless their appointment has already been provided for in some other equivalent manner by particular law or custom.⁹⁹

There is a notable change in the designation of membership in the revised canon, however. Instead of "two or more capable men" (*viris idoneis*) it says "at least three members of the Christian faithful" (*christifidelibus*) which means that the members do not necessarily have to be men, but that women can also be members of the diocesan finance council. This council is significant for other reasons too:

The position of the finance council in the diocesan structure is more significant than that of the council of administration in the former Code. The finance council is not solely an advisory group to be consulted at the discretion of the bishop but a council with specific rights and duties, most of which are found in Book V. The finance council (unlike the presbyteral council) does not cease *sede vacante* (cc. 423, 501).¹⁰⁰

Two important duties of the finance council are noted in canon 493: (i) to prepare the annual diocesan budget; and (ii) to approve the annual financial report.

Canon 494 speaks about the duties of the finance officer named by the diocesan bishop (§1). This officer may also be a lay person whose principal duties are: (i) to administer diocesan monies in accord with the annual budget prepared by the finance

⁹⁹ Translation of the canon as in T.L. BOUSCAREN, A.C. ELLIS, and F.N. KORTH, *Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, 4th rev. edition, Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Company, 1966, canon 1520, §1, p. 831.

¹⁰⁰ ALESANDRO, "The Finance Council", p. 399.

council (§3); and (ii) to report to the council each year about diocesan receipts and expenditures (§4).

The diocesan finance council can be considered a field of activity entirely suited for the laity since the law requires it be composed of at least three persons, who can be more if the bishop judges it necessary or useful, chosen from among the faithful. This makes it possible for all the members to be lay Christians including the presiding delegate of the bishop in case he cannot preside over the council himself.¹⁰¹ It can also mean, though, that only clerics would be appointed since they too are members of the faithful.

Like the diocesan pastoral council, the diocesan finance council can be considered a welcome addition to the diocesan structures. These are further possible areas of service open for lay persons in the Church in Pakistan.

2. Organizations of the Apostolate of the Lay People

Because of the importance and urgency today of the lay apostolate, the Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People says:

Participators in the function of Christ, priest, prophet and king, the laity have an active part of their own in the life and action of the Church. Their action within the Church communities is so necessary that without it the apostolate of the pastors will frequently be unable to obtain its full effect. Following in the footsteps of the men and women who assisted Paul in the

¹⁰¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 398.

proclamation of the Gospel, lay persons of a genuinely apostolic spirit supply the needs of their brothers and are a source of consolation no less to the pastors than to the rest of the faithful.¹⁰²

Besides, the Decree says that according to their abilities "the laity ought to cooperate in all the apostolic and missionary enterprises of their ecclesial family."¹⁰³ Lay Christians are urged to go even further:

The laity will continuously cultivate the "feeling for the diocese," of which the parish is a kind of cell; they will be always ready on the invitation of their bishop to make their own contribution to diocesan undertakings. Indeed, they will not confine their cooperation within the limits of the parish or diocese, but will endeavor, in response to the needs of the town and rural districts, to extend it to inter-parochial, interdiocesan, national and international spheres.¹⁰⁴

Canons 211 and 225 speak of the apostolate as a duty and a right of all the Christian faithful. The basis of their apostolate is sacramental, arising especially from baptism and confirmation. Once baptised, they do not have to wait for further authorization to initiate apostolic action; they have this authorization from Christ himself.

According to the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, AA 3, 15-22, 24, there are three major types of apostolate. The first one is the individual apostolate to which each Christian is called: bearing witness to the gospel in one's personal situation. The

¹⁰² AA, 10, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 777.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 778.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

second type consists in working together in communities, whether parochial or some other kind. These communities need not be officially organized groups. Parishioners share in a common society which obliges them to a common responsibility of witnessing their faith therein. The third type of the apostolate, often exercised at the diocesan level, is by association with others in which apostolic activity is directly and purposefully carried out.¹⁰⁵

Although the individual apostolate has its own importance, group apostolates, like those carried out through diocesan associations, are considered more effective and "a much richer harvest can be hoped for from them than if each one were to act on his own."¹⁰⁶

There can be varied goals and purposes for Christian associations. F.G. Morrissey, in his essay on associations, notes:

The purposes could be enumerated as follows: to foster the perfection of Christian life, to promote public worship, to promote Christian teaching, to undertake initiatives for evangelization, to carry out works of piety (the spiritual works of mercy) and works of charity (the temporal works of mercy), and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit (as, for instance, the justice apostolate), fostering an intimate union between faith and life.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Cf. J.H. PROVOST, "Apostolic Activity", in *The Code Commentary*, p. 150.

¹⁰⁶ AA, 18, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 785.

¹⁰⁷ F.G. MORRISSEY, "The Right of Association as a Basic Right of the Faithful", in *The Associational Element in the Church: Proceedings of the Vith International Congress of Canon Law*, München, September 14-19, 1987, München, EOS Verlag Erzabtei St. Ottilien, 1989, pp. 11-12; see also AA, 19; canon 298.

These associations may work at the parochial, diocesan, provincial, national, or international levels. In Pakistan, there would appear to be a need to introduce and organize at least some of these associations on a diocesan basis. In particular, a formal group for inter-religious dialogue, or for the promotion of cooperatives and similar ventures, and one to coordinate the activities of women could be most appropriate.

D. POSSIBLE LAY INVOLVEMENT WITHIN THE NATIONAL STRUCTURES

In Pakistan, lay people are only rarely engaged in ministries at the national level. However, there are two areas where they could easily play a more active role: 1. national conventions; and 2. national organizations and associations.

1. The Mariamabad Convention

Pakistani People are naturally inclined to social gatherings and meetings. This can easily be seen on national days such as Pakistan Resolution Day¹⁰⁸ or Pakistan Independence Day and on annual feasts like Eid-ul-Azha, Eid-ul-Fitr, Christmas Day, and

¹⁰⁸ In Pakistan, "Resolution Day" is celebrated each year on 23rd March in remembrance of the firm decision taken by the Muslim League leaders to go for a separate Muslim Homeland to be called "Pakistan". This resolution was taken in a meeting held at Lahore, on March 23rd, 1940. See S. BHATTACHARYA, *A Dictionary of Indian History*, New York, George Braziller, 1967, p. 657.

Easter Day. On such occasions -- Muslims and Christians alike -- the whole nation expresses its gratitude to God for the blessings received.

A similar event for Pakistani Christians is the annual parochial convention. It is usually a three-day programme of a spiritual nature. The daily Eucharist, a lengthy homily, dramas, film-shows, a singing competition, and a Bible quiz programme comprise its main features. Christians, together with their parish priest, prepare these conventions very well, and during those three days they spend most of their time at the convention site.

The Mariamabad Annual Convention can be considered a national event. Every year Christians eagerly await it, and, according to an estimate, about 40,000 persons attend, among whom are some non-Christians, especially devout Muslims. Even from as far away as Karachi (about 1,300 kilometers from the village of Mariamabad) people travel to attend this inspiring and faith-generating programme.

Since it is an event of such an importance, many people, especially the laity, are involved in its preparation, each one working either for an individual or for a group performance, mutually helping one another since everyone feels it his or her duty to make the convention a great success.

The Mariamabad Annual Convention is perhaps the best and the only forum where Pakistani Christians meet as a whole, exchange ideas, and strengthen one another in faith and in community

building. It serves two purposes: i) evangelization and the implanting of the Church among non-Christians, and ii) fostering the growth and maturity of the Pakistani Church.

Conventions need to be encouraged since they are bound to be successful, given the religious and social nature of the Pakistani people; the laity will automatically find roles and ministries for themselves in them. But above all, the convention of Mariamabad deserves a full cooperation from every Christian in Pakistan.

2. National Organizations and Associations

The Second Vatican Council speaks of the need for the apostolate beyond diocesan boundaries:

On the national and international planes the field of the apostolate is vast; and it is there that the laity more than others are the channels of Christian wisdom. In their patriotism and in their fidelity to their civic duties Catholics will feel themselves bound to promote the true common good; they will make the weight of their convictions so influential that as a result the civil authority will be justly exercised and laws will accord with the moral precepts and the common good.¹⁰⁹

However, in order to be able to permeate the whole society, Christians need to be well organized, prepared, and backed up by the entire Church. Societies and organizations called "Catholic Action" were successful because they had the backing of the Church.

¹⁰⁹ AA, 14, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 782.

The Church itself praises, commends, and even founds some societies and organizations and invites all Christians to join them:

Proper esteem is to be shown to all associations of the apostolate; those, however, which the hierarchy has praised, commended, or decided to found as more urgent to meet the needs of times and places, should be valued most by priests, religious and lay people, and developed each in its own way. And among these organizations today especially must be numbered the international associations or societies of Catholics.¹¹⁰

In Pakistan, according to the present *Catholic Directory 1990*, there do exist a few associations. Most prominent among these is the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. Some others are: Caritas Pakistan, Catholic Social Services, Saint Joseph's Association, Catholic Relief Services, Legion of Mary, Christian Youth Social Welfare Service, Pontifical Mission Aid Societies, and the Focolare Movement.¹¹¹ More of these associations are needed in Pakistan since Christians are only a tiny minority. They could thus probably have positive long-term effects in comparison with individual, though important, efforts.

Various denominations of Christians exist in Pakistan, and are active each in their own way. They could give a better witness¹¹² of their faith to non-Christians if they worked through organizations grouping all denominations. At the same time, this working

¹¹⁰ AA, 21, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 788.

¹¹¹ Cf. *Pakistan Catholic Directory 1990*, Faisalabad, Diocese of Faisalabad, 1990, pp. 19-20, 35, 49, 69-70, 94-95, 116.

¹¹² Cf. AA, 27, in *FLANNERY I*, p. 792.

together for the same goal would bring Christians closer to one another.

As noted above, one very important area where a combined and organized effort would be imperative in Pakistan, is dialogue with non-Christians. Whereas dialogue on an individual basis has its own value, a collective and organized dialogue could be equally or even far more effective.

Vatican II goes even further and recommends cooperation for human values with non-Christians:

Not seldom also do human values common to all mankind require of Christians working for apostolic ends that they collaborate with those who do not profess Christianity but acknowledge these values.

Through this dynamic, yet prudent, cooperation, which is of great importance in temporal activities, the laity bears witness to Christ the Saviour of the world, and to the unity of the human family.¹¹³

In a country like Pakistan, because of the situation of Christians, especially that of the lay faithful, such a dialogue and cooperation are even more necessary. This dialogue and cooperation could eventually lead to preaching and catechising, thus preparing those among non-Christians who would like to be baptized on their own.

The delegates from all of the six dioceses of the Catholic Church in Pakistan met in Multan from 26-30 October, 1992, for the first All Pakistan Catechetical Conference. The theme of their deliberation was: "The Challenges of Faith Formation in the 21st

¹¹³ Ibid.

Century." They felt that God was calling them to a deeper commitment to the task of handing on his saving message in the next millennium. At the end of the conference, they issued a statement for all Pakistani Christians to answer God's call positively and generously. Among other points raised, the statement said:

The aim of catechetics is to deepen the relationship with God and with man and to help build a living community which would be a model and a witness to the kingdom of God.

Taking stock of the present state of catechetics, we would like to express our gratitude for the many positive initiatives over the past hundred years. We recognize the good work done by clergy, religious, catechists¹¹⁴ and lay teachers in forming our people in the faith. Nor can we forget the formation given by devout parents to their children.¹¹⁵

They thus not only praised the lay faithful for the past, but also invited them to accept the future challenges. In this regard they noted:

There is a continual challenge of the Church for evangelization and catechizing the tribal people and to devise new methods adapted to their needs and culture.

Another challenge lies in the fact that the number of faith educators and animators is not enough to keep up with the growing population. Hence the challenge to involve the lay faithful, especially the parents, to be

¹¹⁴ See JOHN PAUL II, "Diversified Service of Catechists: Address of Pope John Paul II to the Members of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples", April 30, 1992, in *The Pope Speaks*, 38(1993), pp. 1-4.

¹¹⁵ "Creating a Living, Witnessing and Prophetic Church: Final Message from the All Pakistan Catechetical Conference", in *Catholic International*, 4(1993), p. 92.

more active in their responsibilities to educate their children.¹¹⁶

While focusing primarily on the family and parochial levels, the statement goes beyond them to encompass the entire country. Any proposal for action had to have as its main vision "the building of the kingdom of God through small vibrant Christian communities."¹¹⁷ It also said that all Christians together should strive to create a "living, witnessing and prophetic Church in their dioceses."¹¹⁸ Stressing the responsibility of parents the statement noted:

The first place where the faith must develop is in the family community. The time has come for parents to see themselves as the first catechizers and the essential task of their vocation is to hand on the faith to their children, while at the same time evangelizing each other. They should provide a proper Christian atmosphere in the home and celebrate certain important events in the family.¹¹⁹

In the next paragraph the statement added that the parish priest should form a team of parents who will help to instruct other parents in their responsibilities. It emphasized that the local community ought to be the agent of catechesis and that a special effort should be made to involve the women of the parish. The need for some initial training for these voluntary catechists was recommended.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 92-93.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 93.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

The statement then spoke of catechists, whether full time or part time, noting that they must take the teaching of faith as their primary responsibility, and that they should be entrusted with only a limited number of families to provide sufficient religious formation.¹²⁰

School teachers who provide catechism were spoken of in the next paragraph of the statement. It said that they must intensify catechism in the schools. It further recommended that the heads of schools must take great care to provide for well motivated catechism teachers "who would enjoy a proper status and adequate remuneration."¹²¹

The need for ongoing formation of catechetical personnel was mentioned by the statement as a must. It was strongly recommended that for initial training to be imparted at the local level a national institute for lay theological formation be set up in Pakistan.

The closing words of the statement were an invitation to all the faithful in Pakistan, whether clergy, religious, or laity, to "work hand in hand to strive for the common vision of the Conference, namely, to realize the earnest wish of Our Lord Jesus Christ: 'Father, thy kingdom come!'. "¹²²

¹²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

Although we have tried to put forward some of the roles, activities, and ministries in which Pakistani lay Christians could participate at present, the list of such possibilities is far from complete because there will always be need for ever new ministries, and, as Leonardo Boff notes, the "Church is being built day by day, open to new ministries answering the needs of the community and responding to all human life and not just culture, a Church involved in the working world and living out the meaning and joy of the resurrection in the heart of the secular world."¹²³

CONCLUSION

Chapter Four focused on possible future ministries for Pakistani Christians. It began by examining various basic types of ministry to find out which ones would be more suitable for the faithful there. Afterwards, it spoke about the necessary qualifications of the ministers themselves, their formation, appointment, and mandate in order to exercise ministry in the Church.

The chapter dwelled at length upon the possible involvement of the Pakistani laity at the parochial level since it is here that they would mostly be engaged in their ministry. Their involvement

¹²³ L. BOFF, *Church: Charism and Power*, p. 62; see also p. 133 for a "fraternal and communitarian model" of the Church which is flexible in that the services conform to the needs as they arise in contrast to a "monarchical model" where they do not; see also Y. BERGERON et al., *Des ministères nouveaux?: Une question qui se pose*, Montréal, Éditions Paulines, 1985, pp. 193-229.

was seen under two headings: (a) their apostolate and missionary activity which includes the Christian family as a whole, parents in particular, then lay men, lay women, and the youth separately; (b) their service through participation in various parish councils, especially pastoral and finance councils.

Possible future activities of the Pakistani lay faithful were then considered at the diocesan level. This was again done under two headings: (a) their participation in the mission of the Church through the diocesan pastoral and finance councils; (b) their apostolate through various organizations and associations.

At the national level, conventions were focused on as an important medium of contact for Christians and non-Christians alike. Associations of the faithful, a powerful means to carry out the Church's mission, were also spoken of. Dialogue with non-Christians was considered equally important at this level. Some of the recommendations of the first All Pakistan Catechetical Conference for Pakistani Christians, especially the lay faithful, were also mentioned.

Throughout this chapter we have seen that there have been significant changes in possibilities for sharing in comparison with the past regarding the understanding that the Church has of itself and of its members, especially the laity. We saw that because of their sacramental basis they are now capable of participating in all three functions of the Church's mission, namely, teaching, sanctifying, and governing. Both the teachings of the Magisterium

and the revised legislation of the Church reiterate this important change.

The Pakistani Church, no doubt, is trying hard to keep pace with other Christians. However, there still remains a great deal to do. For instance, participation in councils -- parochial, diocesan, national and international -- is an area that needs special attention. The same can be said about associations of the Christian faithful. Moreover, Pakistani Catholics can participate in tribunals and other similar special fields. But for all these a thorough preparation and formation, under the guidance and with the cooperation of the Church leaders, is needed.

All that is lacking now is the desire and will-power as well as sufficient imagination, to make these possibilities a reality. It is not the law that is placing obstacles to the development of lay ministries. Obviously, factors such as sufficient formation and resources come into play, but with time and energy, any difficulties can be overcome and the Church in Pakistan can truly become with Christ, and in due proportion, a "light for the nations" (LG, 1).

GENERAL CONCLUSION

One of the most important theological principles that underlies the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar magisterial teaching concerning the laity is that through their incorporation into the Church by baptism they share Christ's threefold function as priest, prophet, and king. Since the Church is the extension of Christ, and consequently, has the same mission, all the Christian faithful have an inherent right to share in that mission. Several important conclusions applicable to the situation of the Church in Pakistan can be drawn from this principle.

First, the right of the laity to participate in the mission of the Church is not of human origin but is founded on the mandate received from Christ himself in virtue of baptism. Once baptized, they do not have to await a special commissioning to commence that apostolic work. They can do it either personally or through any associations that they are entitled to form for that purpose. They have the right to be involved in the mission of the Church, and this right has been reaffirmed by conciliar and papal teaching as well as by the canons of the Code of Canon Law. For the good of the Church, this right is exercised under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the supervision of legitimately constituted pastors of the Church.

Second, in light of this principle, the following steps could be taken to enhance the role of the lay Christian faithful in the Pakistani Church:

(i) Promoting *participation in the sanctifying mission of the Church*: among the ministries which could easily be opened to lay persons in Pakistan immediately are those of reader and *eucharistic minister*. In some places like Khushpur, both lay men and women proclaim the first two readings during the Sunday liturgy. This ministry could be formally introduced in all parishes in the country.

In Pakistan, eucharistic ministry during Mass is mostly reserved to religious men and women. This ministry could also be opened to catechists without any difficulty. The faithful would understand and appreciate such ministry performed by lay persons.

Pakistanis love singing, for it enhances the beauty and joy of liturgical celebrations. Music ministry should be encouraged in every parish, especially through organized choirs leading singing during liturgical celebrations.

Moreover, the functions of carrying the cross, the lectionary, the candles, the Offertory gifts, the thurible, etc., for festive liturgies can be shared by selected lay persons, men and women. These functions do not require extensive preparation.

It would also be good to prepare lay persons to preside over liturgical celebrations other than Mass, to preach at such celebrations, to baptize, to prepare couples for marriage, to

assist at marriage as qualified witnesses, to bring communion to the sick, and to celebrate funeral services. All these functions demand that those who assume them be adequately prepared in advance.

(ii) Considering *ministries requiring greater preparation*: although there are some ministries and roles that Pakistani Christians can engage in immediately, there are others which call for a more elaborate preparation, such as membership in parish pastoral councils. First and foremost, the dioceses in Pakistan should look into the pastoral benefits of establishing such councils in all parishes and missions. Involvement of parishioners in such important councils enhances their appreciation of the life of their parish community in its various pastoral aspects. However, this can be achieved only when the members are properly initiated into the mission of the parish community. Diocesan pastoral councils would follow. This holds equally true for finance councils. They should be started in Pakistan both on the parochial as well as on the diocesan levels. Indeed, the law requires that these be established.

(iii) Providing for *participation in the teaching mission of the Church*: with proper training and formation more and more lay persons can be called upon to assume the teaching mission in Catholic schools, colleges, and universities so that the teaching staff in Catholic institutions will reflect the varied talents and potential the Church possesses. Of course, persons who assume such

functions in the Church would have to undergo proper formation, and the Church should be prepared at this time to assume all or part of the responsibility for such a vital undertaking. This will not be a one-time undertaking, because such a project would naturally entail the continuous formation of persons capable of assuming such tasks. The Church will have to look for financial resources to sustain such responsible and ongoing tasks.

(iv) *Promoting participation in the governing mission of the Church:* canon 129, §2 allows lay persons to cooperate in the exercise of ecclesiastical governance, and canon 228, §1 provides for qualified lay persons to assume those ecclesiastical offices and functions which they are able to exercise in accord with the prescriptions of law. In light of these provisions, qualified lay persons in Pakistan can eventually be called upon to participate in the governing mission as chancellors, vice chancellors, notaries, judges, assessors, auditors, defenders of the bond, promoters of justice, etc. Such a participation will, no doubt, release priests presently involved in those functions for more direct pastoral work. However, these activities call for years of preparatory study with serious financial implications.

(v) *Formation and preparation of the laity:* the appropriate formation of future ministers is vital to the fulfillment of the Church's mission. The Catholic Church in Pakistan is still considered to be a missionary Church, yet it continues to find its way according to present-day needs and demands both of society and

of the Church itself. Therefore, it is imperative that its lay members be properly formed and prepared to assume and fulfill the responsibilities assigned to them.

Church leaders in Pakistan have often been sending future ministers to formation houses in foreign countries. Among these there have been a few lay persons. While this practice is beneficial in some ways, at least one lay formation house or centre should be opened in Pakistan itself in the immediate future so that the formation takes on an indigenous character. This would allow more members of the laity to be prepared in their local cultural setting.

(vi) *Remuneration of lay ministers*: not every ministry in the Church requires remuneration. But there are some which deserve a certain remuneration. The present law strongly recommends it (see cc. 231, §2; 1274, §3; 1286).

The ministry of catechists comes to mind as the very first example. Catechists often dedicate themselves for the service of the Church on a full-time basis. As a consequence, and by extension of canon 231, we can say that they "have a right to a decent remuneration suited to their condition" enabling them to "provide decently for their own needs and for those of their family with due respect for the prescriptions of civil law." They even "have a right that their pension, social security and health benefits be duly provided" (cf. c. 231, §2). If this is kept in mind and implemented, catechists in Pakistan would become still more effective.

The same could be said about teachers of religion, whether at the lower (school) or at the higher (college, university) levels, and of other ministers hired by the Church. Often, women are paid inadequately.¹ The Church leaders in Pakistan need to pay attention to this. Of course, one must be careful to avoid losing a sense of voluntary and gratuitous contributions to the life and ministry of the Church.

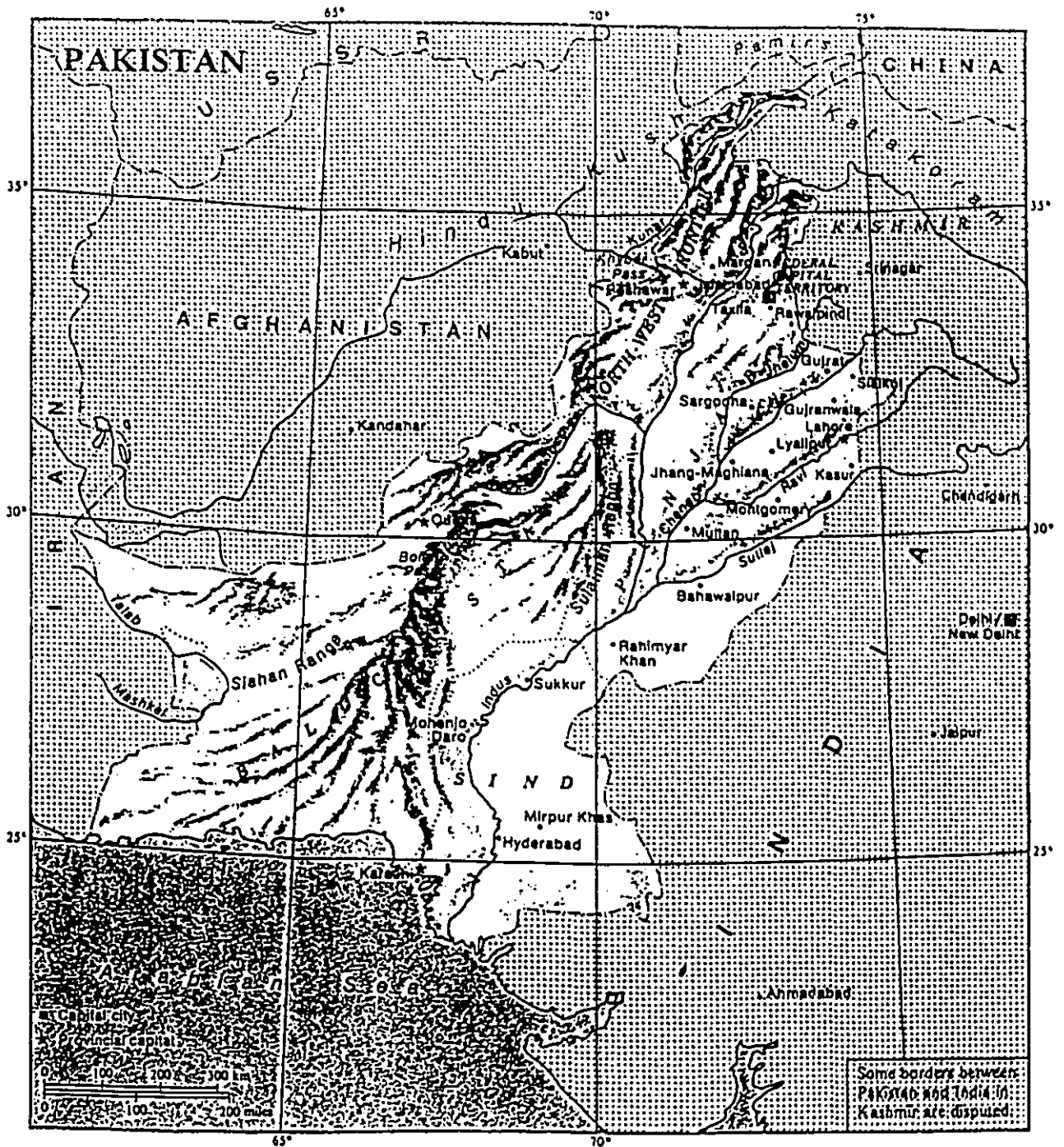
The third conclusion is that because for centuries the Church was primarily identified with the hierarchy and the clergy with less active roles being assigned to the laity, certain pastors may be somewhat reluctant to entrust responsibilities to the laity. However, the process has to be started at some time, and the present seems to be the best moment to do so. To delay too long would mean not only lagging behind, but also belittling the potential, expertise, and religious sense of the Pakistani lay Christian faithful. Moreover, to refuse to do so would be contrary to the directives of Vatican II which desired to see every Christian become more and more active in the life of the Church and the world for the good of all.

Because of the new spirit that the Second Vatican Council has infused into the Church, there is hope that the Church in Pakistan

¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, *Familiaris consortio*, (November 22, 1981), in *AAS*, 74(1982), no. 24, p. 109 (English translation from Vatican Polyglot Press, Boston, St. Paul Editions, 1982, p. 41).

too will soon become much more alive and active, but this hope can be realized only if there is an openness to change and renewal as the Spirit moves, and if each and every one of its members is allowed, invited, and sincerely prepared to do his or her part.

APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Archdiocese of Karachi

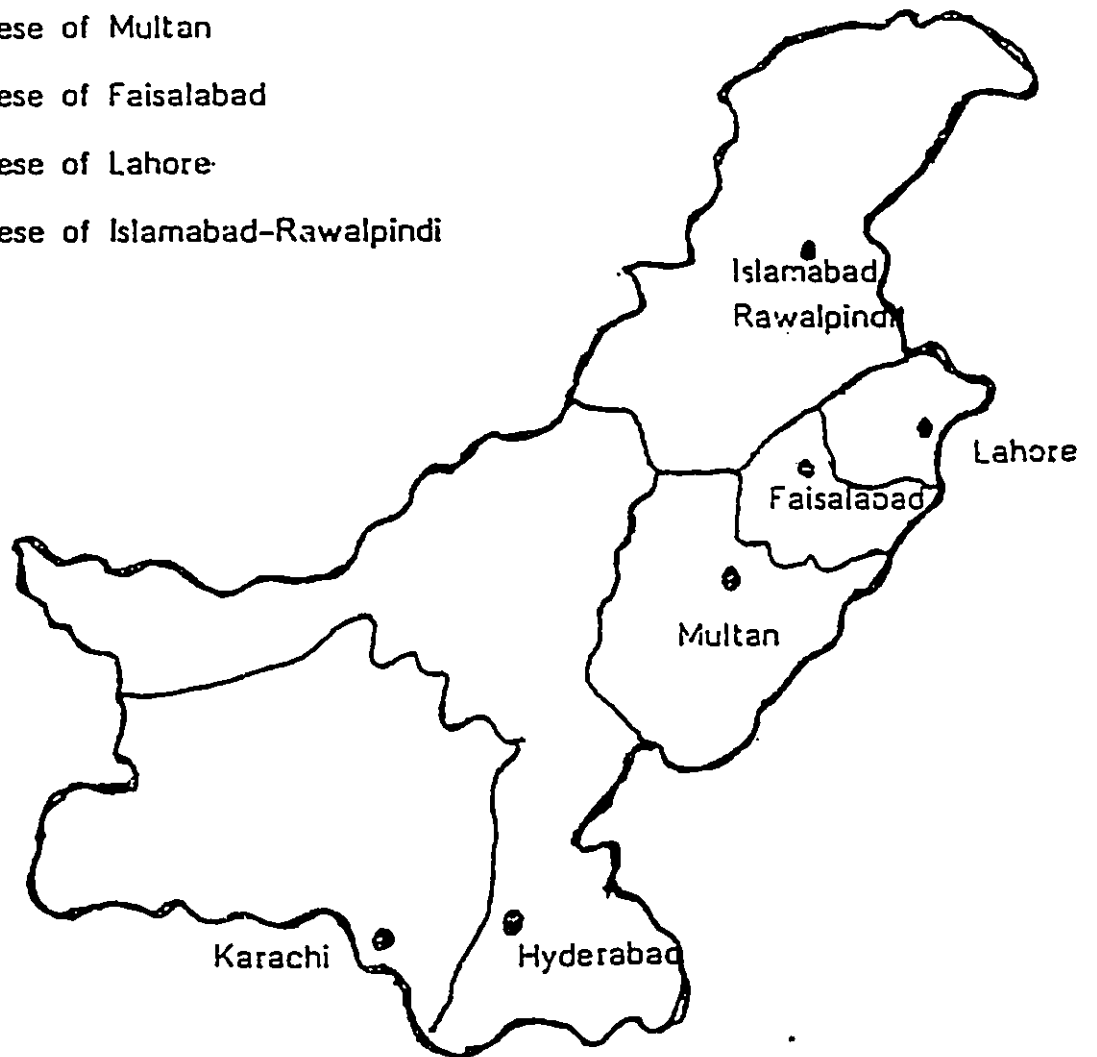
Diocese of Hyderabad

Diocese of Multan

Diocese of Faisalabad

Diocese of Lahore

Diocese of Islamabad-Rawalpindi



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After four years of parish ministry in his diocese, he studied Canon Law at the Urbaniana University, Rome, and received the Licentiate in Canon Law in 1982. He then began teaching this subject at Christ the King Seminary, Karachi. In 1990 he registered at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, to begin the doctoral programme in Canon Law.