

# STUDIES

in the Spirituality

of Jesuits

Changes in U. S. Jesuit Membership, 1958-1975

A Symposium

Section I. The Statistics and a Tentative Analysis  
Joseph M. Becker, S.J.

Section II. Other Reactions and Explanations  
from Different Backgrounds

by

Ladislav Orsy, S.J.

Robert F. Harvanek, S.J.

James J. Gill, S.J.

David L. Fleming, S.J.

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and William A. Barry, S.J.



Published by the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality,  
especially for American Jesuits working out their aggiornamento  
in the spirit of Vatican Council II

## THE AMERICAN ASSISTANCY SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

consists of a group of Jesuits from various provinces who are listed below. The members were appointed by the Fathers Provincial of the United States. The purpose of the Seminar is to study topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially American Jesuits, and to communicate the results to the members of the Assistancy. The hope is that this will lead to further discussion among all American Jesuits--in private, or in small groups, or in community meetings. All this is done in the spirit of Vatican Council II's recommendation to religious institutes to recapture the original charismatic inspiration of their founders and to adapt it to the changed circumstances of modern times. The members of the Seminar welcome reactions or comments in regard to the topics they publish.

To achieve these purposes, especially amid today's pluralistic cultures, the Seminar must focus its direct attention sharply, frankly, and specifically on the problems, interests, and opportunities of the Jesuits of the United States. However, many of these interests are common also to Jesuits of other regions, or to other priests, religious men or women, or lay men or women. Hence the studies of the Seminar, while meant especially for American Jesuits, are not exclusively for them. Others who may find them helpful are cordially welcome to read them.

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by

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## Editor's Foreword to Section I

To many Jesuits, as also to religious in other institutes of men and women and to the diocesan clergy, the sudden and sharp decline in the number of vocations has been one of the most puzzling phenomena in the years of changes since the beginning of Vatican Council II. Far fewer applicants entered novitiates, and professed religious and ordained priests departed in unprecedented numbers. What forces were at work as causes of these phenomena? What lessons can be learned from them which will help to guide us into the future?

The symposium presented in this issue of our *Studies* is an exploration, in tentative and preliminary form, into this obscure area where opinions are sure to differ. It is, in other words, a quest for further light for a later revision elsewhere. The decision to publish in the form of a symposium arose from the following circumstances.

The members of the Seminar learned, in their meeting of January 31, 1976, of an extensive project in which Father Joseph M. Becker, S.J., had been engaged for over two years, with encouragement from Father General Pedro Arrupe and other officials associated with him in government. Father Becker is a specialist in economics with wide experience, including participation in many committees of the United States Government, for which he often had to write reports, particularly on the problem of unemployment. His attention was caught by the rapid changes which have been occurring in the Society of Jesus, especially from 1958 to 1975. This seemed to be a phenomenon important to study and record. Hence, using the methods employed in the sociology of religion, he has been gathering information on these changes: by statistical studies, by interviews with involved Jesuits (especially but not exclusively administrators), and by reading. On this topic he plans to write a book in which the material of this present paper will be set in a wider context.

Father Becker was invited to explain his project in the Seminar's meeting of April 3-4, 1976. The members were favorably impressed by what he had done so far and its potentialities for good in the spirituality of Jesuits. Consensus arose that it would be advisable for him to

write some one of his chapters in our *Studies*, as a preliminary and experimental presentation. From such a trial run much might be learned for future procedures. He agreed, and chose the area of the changes in the number of vocations for the reasons he gives in his introduction, pages 4-6 below. Consequently, he presented a tentative draft for criticism in our meeting of October 2-3, 1976.

Every publication of a study in the sociology of religion which the present writer can remember has occasioned widely divergent reactions: praise and blame, joy and sorrow, pleasure and anger, acceptance of the author's tentative explanations of the phenomena by some readers, and partial or total rejection by others who desire to substitute other explanations of their own. In our meeting Father Becker's paper was no exception.

He had tried, as he had explicitly stated, to present the statistical data and an analysis setting forth possible explanations, without evaluating the changes as good or bad. But the ensuing discussion raised doubts as to whether this is possible, as will be recounted more fully in the Editor's Foreword to Section II (below, on page 105).

The upshot from these discussions was a decision to publish a symposium of Father Becker's paper and others, as a study still in tentative form in search of further clarification and supplementation by the opinions of others.

One final point, raised in our discussions, seems to require at least brief mention here. How does a study such as this aid in the promotion of spirituality?

One reply, among others, was this. Most of us are somewhat puzzled, sometimes with satisfaction and hope but sometimes too with apprehension, at the enormity and rapidity of the changes through which we have lived in the last few decades. A study such as that presented here gives us a comprehensive view of the number and magnitude of the forces affecting spiritual life which have been and still are operating. When they are viewed together as one ensemble, it is small wonder that they sometimes produce "future shock." To expect a study in the sociology of religious life to yield definitive answers which will never need revision is, it

seems, to look for more than such an instrument can supply. But to reject all the proffered explanations as unimportant or valueless is to fall into an opposite error which also could lead to numerous future mistakes. One does see "straws in the wind" which aid him much to understand the forces amid which he has been living so far, and then to push forward with greater knowledge, experience, hope, and vigor into the future, by nature still obscure, where most of those same forces will still be at work. Most of life's decisions must be made with only partial or tentative information; it is all that is available when the decisions can be postponed no longer. But it is a better basis for decisions than ignorance or error.

George E. Ganss, S.J., Chairman  
The American Assistancy Seminar



CHANGES IN U. S. JESUIT MEMBERSHIP, 1958-1975. A SYMPOSIUM

SECTION I. THE STATISTICS AND A TENTATIVE ANALYSIS

by

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Preliminary Biographical Note

The editor and the members of the American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality have requested me to supply an author's preface explaining who I am, how I got into this line of work, and what author-bias the reader might have to beware of.

A golden jubilarian in the Society of Jesus as of the bicentennial year, I went through the regular course of studies in the original Missouri Province, which at the time of my entrance in 1926 included the present provinces of Chicago, Detroit, Missouri, and Wisconsin. That meant Florissant for my novitiate and juniorate, St. Louis University for philosophy, and St. Marys, Kansas, for theology. After doing a master's in Greek (now *that* was living!) I shifted to economics in response to the pope's call for clergy involvement in the "social problem" as it was called in those days. A doctorate in economics at Columbia University completed the long get-ready process.

Assigned to the Institute of Social Order at St. Louis--to date, the most ambitious attempt of the American Assistancy in the social apostolate--I accompanied the group fifteen years later in its hegira, first to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and then to Georgetown University. My field of specialization has been the problem of unemployment, on which I have had to write many studies according to the methodology common in economic and sociological reports.

In the later 1960s, the remarkable alteration in the numbers and

life-styles of Jesuits caught my attention as a Jesuit social scientist. When I could not persuade better qualified persons to undertake what seemed to me the urgent task of capturing and recording this unique piece of Jesuit history, I began it myself, as a sideline to my regular professional work. Unable to cover everything that happened in that turbulent period, I have concentrated on the changes in membership and in programs of formation. It seemed to me that if one understood what had happened there, one would not have missed much that was essential.

As of the bicentennial year I had assembled a few hundred interviews, covering all the provinces, and a small mountain of documents. These materials will be available for the task of evaluation that undoubtedly will be undertaken someday, by someone. In the meantime, as opportunity presents, I plan to present some of the materials in the form of articles or monographs and eventually in a book.

While it is too soon for evaluation, which requires long-term results, there is some current purpose to be served by a narration of events and an analysis of causes. The present monograph is a beginning in this direction. It selects one outstanding event, the quantitative change in membership, and attempts to identify the more plausible explanatory factors. This is a first, tentative attempt at analysis which welcomes all the participation it can engender in the form of corrections or additional information.

At the final or book stage, the various intellectual developments will be presented rather differently than they are here. Here they are presented only insofar as they contribute to an understanding of the quantitative membership changes, the subject of this monograph. In the book, hopefully, they will be presented in a broader, more balanced form as background for all the various changes that occurred in the Society during the past decade.

I have avoided all explicit evaluation and have tried to avoid even implicit evaluation. Indeed I have refused to let myself even think in those terms, lest it influence my search for the actual events and causes. A great help to this desired neutrality is the simple fact that I do not have a judgment yet, but am predominantly agnostic.

As to the future, I am cheerful and cautious. I am cheerful because the events of the last decade will likely prove to be the growing pains of an institution sufficiently vital to make required adaptations to a new environment. I am inclined to agree with the analogy used by Very Reverend Father General Pedro Arrupe, that the Society had been ill--both before and during the collapse in membership--but that the patient is showing strong powers of recuperation.

I am also cautious, and that for two reasons. First, revolutions breed exaggerations. I lived through the revolution in economic science that followed the 1935 publication of Lord Keynes's *General Theory*. It was a genuinely needed revolution, but in its early sweep developed the inevitable exaggerations that led to Keynes's wry remark: "I am meeting people these days who are much more Keynesian than I am." The revolution of the 1960s (it was more a revolution than a reform) is still so recent that I consider it prudent to guard against its probable exaggerations. One way to keep one's balance in a strong wind is to lean somewhat against it.

Second, this revolution is not at the periphery but at the core of religious life. It involves a different view of reality and is likely to have profound long-term results. What the final effects of this epistemological change will be is not yet clear.

We now proceed into the body of our study.

## Changes in Jesuit Membership, 1958-1975: A Symposium

### SECTION I. THE DATA AND A TENTATIVE ANALYSIS

by

Joseph M. Becker, S.J.

#### Introduction

The Jesuit order experienced more changes in the decade following the Second Vatican Council than at any time since the suppression of the order in the eighteenth century. Of all the changes, the most dramatic and significant were those in the number and the stability of the order's membership. At the one end, the inflow of new vocations shrank to a trickle, while at the other end a great exodus occurred, as men by the hundreds suddenly forsook their perpetual vows, even after ordination to the priesthood.

A similar vocational collapse was experienced by the diocesan clergy and by practically all other religious orders, men and women, active and contemplative. Such a widespread, unexpected, and worrisome phenomenon challenges the viability of the institutions affected and raises the possibility that they may need to develop differently in the future. For both reasons, the phenomenon calls for investigation. It needs to be understood in its causes, conditions, and occasions. Anyone interested in the nature and history of spirituality must be interested in this remarkable and almost universal turn of affairs.

Along with the decline in numbers, many other changes occurred in the Jesuit order--in lifestyles, in methods of formation, in ministries--which are not considered here.<sup>1</sup> The sole object of this investigation is the quantitative membership change. An advantage to beginning with the membership changes is its concreteness. The phenomenon or experience revealed in the tables\* pertaining to Part I, A and B found below, is quantitative,

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\*The tables are found below on pages 78-104.



measurable, certain. It provides a solid base from which to begin, a part of the total story with which all other parts must somehow fit. We start with an undoubted fact which needs to be explained.

Also, membership changes were part of the explanation of other changes in the Jesuit order. Many of the other changes were made under pressures generated by the membership changes. Any adequate history of the other changes must take cognizance of the changes in membership. For example, in 1963 Father Nicholas Predovich was appointed to be the master of novices in the Detroit Province and was given wide permission to experiment with new approaches. He did as a matter of fact inaugurate many changes and thus became the first of the new-style novice masters. This early beginning in the Detroit Province is probably explained in part by the membership change of the preceding year, 1962, when 60% of the Detroit novices left or were dismissed.

There is also a disadvantage to beginning with these membership changes. Since these were, at first glance, in an undesirable direction, the search for explanatory factors--for example, in philosophy, psychology and theology--easily takes on the coloration of a search for factors that are undesirable, "bad," in themselves. This is not the case in the present study, as I explain in the introduction to Part II (page 29 below); but the reader should be aware from the start that only those factors, and indeed only those aspects of each factor, are presented which seem to have some explanatory value for the quantitative changes in Jesuit membership.

This study of membership changes consists of two parts: (I) a survey of the changes themselves and (II) a search for possible explanations.

Since the study is thus focussed on change, it does not include aspects of the history that remained unchanged, important though these may be. Neither does the study extend to an evaluation of the changes described, as explained at the beginning of Part II. The study is thus strictly limited to the two tasks of describing membership changes and identifying probable explanatory factors.

Since explanations must fit the facts to be explained, it seemed best to begin with a brief history of the actual events--the changed inflow and outflow, and the consequent changed total number of Jesuit

members, This history consists of a detailed account of recent years (1958-1975) and a briefer glance at an earlier period (1926-1957). Mainly the statistics relate to the American Assistancy as a whole, but where significant differences among the ten provinces occur, they are noted. Also, where feasible, the American Jesuit experience is compared with that of the entire order, with that of religious women in the United States, and with that of American diocesan clergy. The experience of the coadjutor brothers (Table 2) is not discussed, except tangentially, because it involves distinctive features and would require separate treatment. Most of the tables relate to the period 1958-1975; others cover longer or shorter periods, depending on the availability of data.

#### A Summary of the Changes, and a Chart

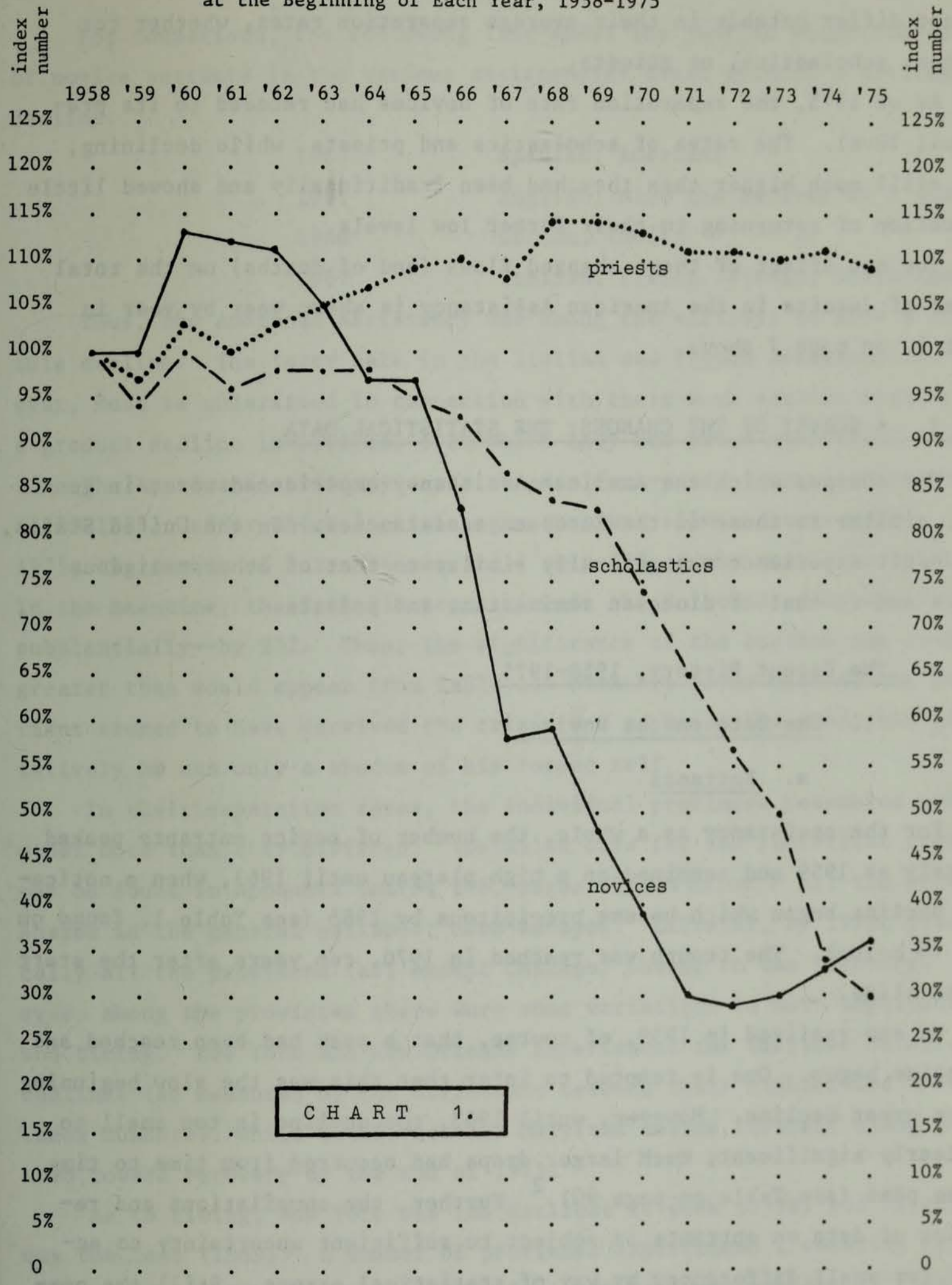
For the reader disinclined to work through the detailed tables pertaining to Part I, A and B (on pages 78-104 below), the following may be useful. He may, if he prefers, scrutinize the chart on page 7 and then go directly to the analysis or search for explanations, in Part II.

The summary follows a simple order: the inflow and outflow of vocations.

Inflow: A decline in the number of novice entrants was evident by 1963 and had become precipitous by 1965. A recovery began to appear in the early 1970s, but as of 1975 the inflow was still far below former levels. The experience of the individual provinces has differed markedly. Finally, although there are some slight indications that a decline of vocations in the assistancy may have begun before the 1960s, the available evidence is not clear.

Outflow: Novices, scholastics, and priests had all begun to show slightly increased separation rates (the number leaving as a percentage of the total number in the group) well before the time of Vatican Council II. All three groups showed a marked increase in the rate during the 1960s. The separation rate of novices increased moderately (by 64%); that of the scholastics much more (by 250%); that of the priests most of all (by 3,700%) Among priests, those ordained before 1955 had the lowest rate. The provinces

Relative Changes in Numbers of Priests, Scholastics, and Scholastic Novices in the American Assistency at the Beginning of Each Year, 1958-1975



C H A R T 1.

Priests..... ●●●●●●●●●●  
 Scholastics... -●- -●- -●-  
 Novices..... ●-●-●-●-●-●-●-●-●-

INDEX NUMBER: The number of each group in each year is shown as a percentage of the number of the group in 1958, which is taken as 100.

did not differ notably in their average separation rates, whether for novices, scholastics, or priests.

As of 1975, the separation rate of novices had receded to its pre-council level. The rates of scholastics and priests, while declining, were still much higher than they had been traditionally and showed little indication of returning to their former low levels.

The net effect of these changed flows (and of deaths) on the total number of Jesuits in the American Assistancy is shown year by year in Chart 1, on page 7 above.

## PART I. A SURVEY OF THE CHANGES: THE STATISTICAL DATA

The changes which the American Assistancy experienced were, in general, similar to those in the European assistancies. In the United States, the Jesuit experience was generally similar to that of other religious orders and to that of diocesan seminarians and priests.

### A. The Recent History, 1958-1975

#### 1. The Data on the Novices

##### a. Entrants

For the assistancy as a whole, the number of novice entrants peaked as early as 1959 and remained on a high plateau until 1963, when a noticeable decline began which became precipitous by 1965 (see Table 1, found on page 78 below). The trough was reached in 1970, ten years after the start of the slide.

No one realized in 1959, of course, that a peak had been reached and a decline begun. One is tempted to infer that this was the slow beginning of the great decline. However, until 1963, the decline is too small to be clearly significant; much larger drops had occurred from time to time in the past (see Table on page 90).<sup>2</sup> Further, the compilations and reporting of data on entrants is subject to sufficient uncertainty to account for small differences by way of statistical errors. Still the possibility remains that the peak in 1959 (1958 in New York) was a genuine turning point.

For comparison, the following list shows the year in which the number of novice entrants in the various assistancies first evinced a noticeable decline.

1963	Spanish, American
1965	English; also the Society as a whole
1966	German, Indian
1967	Italian, French, Slavic, South American

Thus, the American Assistancy was among the earliest to show a noticeable decline. The later date in the Italian and French Assistancies, however, must be understood in connection with their much earlier history of a gradual decline in novices, from which they had never recovered.

The American Assistancy experienced a four-year, flat-bottomed trough (1970-1973), after which a climb began that was slow and uncertain. In 1975, the number of entrants was still only 37% of the number in 1958. In the meantime, the Catholic population in the United States had grown substantially--by 23%. Thus, the significance of the decline was even greater than would appear from Table 1. With his fever abated, the patient seemed to have survived the crisis and to be on the mend; but quantitatively he was only a shadow of his former self.

In their separation rates, the individual provinces resembled each other more than they differed. (Detailed data for the individual provinces may be found in Appendix Tables 1-6, pages 92-104 below.) All the provinces shared in the general collapse; none escaped. Likewise, by 1975, practically all the provinces (all except Chicago) shared in the recovery. However, among the provinces there were some variations in both amplitude and timing. New York and New Orleans experienced the smallest relative declines (as measured by the difference between their highest and lowest index numbers), while California and Maryland seemed furthest along the road toward recovery by the end of 1975.

As to timing, New York was the earliest to peak (1958) and Detroit was the last (1963). A number of provinces experienced a vocation decline that antedated Vatican Council II: for example, New York and Chicago in 1961, followed by Missouri and Wisconsin in 1962. The council probably did not influence these early declines. However, they were not large and

may have no more significance than similar declines in previous years (see Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10). The West Coast is accustomed to experience some cultural changes a year or two after they have appeared on the East Coast. When California was building its new novitiate at Montecito near Santa Barbara, it heard that the New York Province had been experiencing a decline in vocations and that Chicago and Detroit were expecting a decline. Reasoning that whatever forces were at work in the east would soon reach the west, the California consultants persuaded the provincial to reduce the size of the new novitiate by 35%

The Oregon provincial, John J. Kelley, recalls how at meetings of the fathers provincial he would hear of problems beginning to surface in New York and would reflect that they would likely be his problems in another year or two. The contrast between the Oregon and New York experience in the number of novice entrants shows clearly in the following list of turning points. Whatever forces were at work hit Oregon later and ran for a shorter period--five rather than nine years. It is tempting to conceive

	<u>New York</u>	<u>Oregon</u>
Peak	1958	1962
Significant decline	1961	1965
Trough	1970	1970
Significant recovery	?	1972

of change as starting on the East Coast and working its way to the west, but the data do not support any such simple pattern. For example, the midwestern provinces of Chicago, Missouri, and Wisconsin show a significant drop before either of the other two eastern provinces, Maryland and New England.

As may be seen in Table 3, the educational level of novice entrants began to rise at about the same time their numbers began to decrease. A decade after the table begins, the proportions of novices coming from high school and from college are reversed. By 1971, about three-quarters of the novices were coming from college, and over 40% were college graduates. This educational trend probably reflected two developments: (1) the rise in the proportion of the general population going on to college, and

(2) a change in Jesuit entrance requirements, as the provinces began to look for more "maturity" in applicants. As noted later, both developments could have worked to lessen the inflow of novices.

b. Separations

Table 1, column 4, shows the annual separation rate among novices, that is, the number of novices who left in each calendar year as a percentage of the number of novices at the beginning of that year. This rate, not to be confused with the loss ratio discussed later, averaged 18.5% in the assistancy for the entire period 1958-1975, and developed only a modest bulge during the middle years, 1964-1970. The upheaval of the 1960s evidently affected the exit of novices much less than it did their entrance.

The range of the separation rate was from a previous low of 14.9% to a high of 24.4%. This relative increase of 64% from trough to peak is not nearly so large as that which marked the experience of the scholastics (250%) or of the priests (3,700%). One explanation for the difference may be that the separation rate of novices has always been much higher than that of scholastics and priests. Above this higher base, there was less room for an increase. Another explanation may be that once a novice enters, the major forces that influence his decision to stay or to leave are much the same in various periods.

The current novitiate is marked by a more thorough process of selection and a modernized system of formation which includes a higher ratio of directors to novices. Yet the separation rate in the modern novitiate seems to be about the same as that of the traditional novitiate. The separation rate for the assistancy averaged 16% during the first four years of the period and 16% during the last four years. The bare statistics are compatible with either of two opposite speculations: the new methods of selection and formation are no more efficient than the old; or, alternatively, it is only the greater efficiency of the new methods that has brought the separation ratio back to its former level. The efficiency spoken of here refers, of course, to the quantitative norm, the only norm used in this monograph.

An outstanding characteristic of the data on novices is the degree of

fluctuation exhibited. This fluctuation is largely obscured in Table 1, which averages the data from all the provinces, but comes out clearly in Table A-2, which reports the data from the individual provinces. The rates fluctuate markedly and repeatedly from year to year and from province to province. It is difficult to find any five-year period in any province that does not contain both high and low separation rates.

For the period as a whole, the provinces with the lowest average rates were New England (14.1%) and New York (15.9%), while the highest average rate belongs to Detroit (22.6%). Most of the provinces experienced at least one year during which their separation rate climbed to 40% or more. The largest and the earliest of these was Detroit's 60% in 1962.

The above discussion has been in terms of annual separation rates-- that is, the proportion of all novices (whether first or second year) who left the novitiate in a given year. This is not the same thing as the loss ratio per entering class. The latter ratio is almost twice as large, because each member in any given class is exposed to the risk of leaving over a period of two years. Thus, where the assistancy separation rate per year was 18.5%, the corresponding loss ratio per entering class was 34.1% (Table A-2). That is, on the average, 34% of all the novices who entered during the period 1958-1975 left the Society in either their first or second year of novitiate. This average loss ratio per entering class varied among the provinces from the 27.6% in New England to the nearly 43% in Detroit. Fuller data on loss ratios are available for the New England and Maryland-New York Provinces. These data, shown in Tables 8 and 9, are more conveniently discussed later.

## 2. The Data on the Scholastics

### a. The Total Number

Among Jesuits, a "scholastic" is one who has taken vows, is studying for the priesthood, but is not yet ordained. Traditionally, this stage of formation covered about thirteen years for those entering from high school, a shorter period for those entering from college. Beginning about 1966, this stage was shortened a year or two for all. This change would have the effect, a minor one, of decreasing the number of scholastics



relative to the number of priests.

The scholastics are the Society of Jesus of the future. For this reason, column 5 of Table 1 provides what is probably the most significant single view of the American Assistancy's collapse during the 1960s and its present potential. The total number of scholastics in the assistancy ceased to grow after 1958. However, it did not begin to shrink notably until about 1965, when a long decline began which had not ended by 1975. The 744 scholastics in 1975 were less than a third (31%) of the 2,431 scholastics in 1958. Among the provinces, this proportion varied from Chicago's 15% to Wisconsin's much higher 46% (Table A-3).

The experience of the American Assistancy was generally similar to that of the entire Society, as may be seen in Table A-7. In both, the trend followed an almost uninterrupted downward slope after 1958, so that in the entire order, the number of scholastics in 1975 was only 34% of the number in 1958. (Although in this table the term "scholastics" includes novices, the latter are relatively so few that the table faithfully reflects the general trend of scholastics strictly so-called.)

Table 4 shows the data on diocesan seminarians in the United States, who are comparable to Jesuit scholastics. The total number of seminarians peaked later (1964) than did the total of Jesuit scholastics (1958), but resembled the scholastics in continuing to decline throughout the rest of the period. By 1975, the number of seminarians was only 47% of their peak number--a better record, however, than that of the scholastics, whose corresponding percentage was 31%. In the case of the seminarians, preliminary figures for 1975-1976 published in the *CARA Seminary Directory* seemed to indicate that their decline had bottomed out; they showed a slight increase in total number at all three levels: high school, college, and theology (major seminary).

#### b. Separations

The decline of scholastics in the assistancy was the result primarily of three changes: the greatly decreased number of novice entrants, the somewhat increased number of novice separations, and the greatly increased number of scholastic separations. (A fourth but minor factor was the

reduced number of years of study required of scholastics before ordination.) The annual separation rate for scholastics (the number of scholastics leaving during a year as a percentage of the number at the start of the year) averaged about 3% during the early years of the period, but it had tripled by 1968 and was still more than double in 1975 (Table 1, column 7). The time of greatest outflow was the five-year period 1967-1971, during which the separation rate was about 8% every year.

Although this is a much lower separation rate than that of the novices, it applies to a much larger body of Jesuits. The total number of scholastics separated from the Society during the period 1958-1975 was 1,876 as compared with 1,444 separated novices. Also, the departure of a scholastic has greater significance than the departure of a novice; for the scholastic has pronounced his perpetual vows and has become a member of the official body of the Society.

The separation rates of scholastics differed among the provinces as regards both amplitude and timing (Table A-4). California, with an annual average rate of 4.7%, had the lowest overall record, while Oregon and Detroit, with annual averages of 6.2 and 6.0%, respectively, had the highest records.

No geographical pattern is manifest in the turning points of the various provinces. Nor, indeed, is there any certainty that a turning point has been reached. As of 1975, New England seemed to be recovering, but Chicago, Maryland, and New York still had annual separation rates of over 10%. In most of the provinces, the annual separation rate dropped encouragingly in 1972 and 1973, but then began to rise again.

One important aspect of the separation rate among scholastics is not adequately reflected in any of the tables. The impact of the separations was felt with special intensity in the houses of studies--the philosophates and theologates--because the scholastics were largely concentrated in these houses and because a given community usually included scholastics from more than one province, sometimes from half a dozen provinces. Thus, although the tables might show that only 5 scholastics left from the Maryland Province and five from the New York Province, the actual impact on the community of Shrub Oak or Woodstock was that of 10 or more scholastics

leaving in the course of a year. There were several instances of a single house of studies losing 15 or more scholastics in the course of a single year.

### 3. The Data on the Priests

#### a. The Total Number

The number of priests is augmented as scholastics are ordained and is diminished as priests leave or die. Fed by the large classes of scholastics of earlier years, the number of priests in the assistancy continued to grow well into the "time of troubles." The total number of priests reached its peak in 1969 (Table 1, column 8), 10 years after the peak for novice entrants (column 2) and 11 years after the peak for scholastics (column 5). Paradoxically, priests reached their peak number at about the same time that they were experiencing their highest separation rate.

The decline in the number of priests was very gradual, without the precipitous drop that marked the history of the novices and scholastics. Between 1958 and 1975, although the number of novice entrants had decreased by 63%, and the number of scholastics had decreased by 70%, the number of priests had *increased* 8%. Hence, in 1975 the total number of priests was still larger than in 1958 (Table 1, column 8). With only this column to examine, one could easily underestimate the extent of the membership loss incurred by the Jesuit order in the United States. The column does not fully reflect, as it eventually will, the impact of the decline in the numbers of novices and scholastics, the source of future ordination classes. Neither does it as yet adequately reflect the impact of the new, and perhaps permanent, higher separation rate among priests (column 10).<sup>3</sup>

As may be seen in Table A-7, the trend in the total number of priests in the American Assistancy closely resembled that in the entire order. The latter reached a peak in 1969-1970 and began a slow decline thereafter. Likewise, the number of priests in the entire order was still greater in 1975 than it had been in 1958.

The trend in the number of all priests in the United States, three-fifths of whom are diocesan, is shown in Table 4 (column 7). Although

the number of all priests climbed more steadily than the number of Jesuit priests, it declined slightly earlier and slightly more (a 5.3% vs. a 3.7% decline). However, it also gives indications of a somewhat more robust upturn.

The number of religious women (Table 4, column 1) peaked earlier than that of Jesuit priests, but later than that of Jesuit scholastics. Likewise, the decline was greater for the women than for Jesuit priests, but less than for Jesuit scholastics. This result was to be expected, since the data for the women combine the experience of the older, more settled religious (similar to the priests) with the experience of the younger women (similar to the scholastics).

#### b. Separations

From the viewpoint of the order, the separation of a priest is more significant than that of a novice or a scholastic. The priest who is separated represents the greatest loss to the order in point of both efficiency and morale. The priest is the fully trained worker representing an extraordinary investment of fifteen to twenty years of formation. Hence, the impact of his separation on the order's efficiency is greater.

Still more significant is the impact of a priest's departure on group morale and on the character of the vocation itself. Since the order is expressed most completely in its priests, who have been subject to its formative influences for the longest time, the priest's separation from the order raises in its sharpest form the question: "What failed?" The separation of a Jesuit priest carries the connotation of a double failure--to live out his perpetual vows and to live out his priesthood, which in the eyes of the Catholic community has generally connoted commitment for life. Whether the failure is that of the priest, or of the order, or of both, the impact on efficiency and morale--and on the public image of the vocation--is most severe in the case of the priest.

The annual separation rate for priests averaged only 0.11% during the five-year period 1958-1962 (Table 1, column 10), a low rate that probably reflected previous average incidence at least as far back as the 1920s (see for example, the data on the Eastern provinces in Tables 7, 8,

and 9). During the next five-year period, 1963-1967, the annual separation rate doubled, but still averaged only 0.21%. Thereafter, the rate climbed rapidly. During the five-year period 1969-1973, it averaged 1.6%--over ten times as high as the average at the start of the period. At its peak (1970) the annual separation rate reached almost 2%.

As of 1975, the separation rate had been declining for five years, but the 1975 rate of 1.04% was still 10 times as high as the average rate in the early part of the period. Since the priests are the largest group in the order, even this small percentage represents a significant number of fully formed priests lost each year. During the entire eighteen-year period, a total of 611 priests were separated from the order.

Among the provinces (Table A-6), the highest annual separation rates (above 2.5%) were experienced by California, Detroit, and Missouri in 1969, and by Maryland in 1970. For the entire period, Missouri and California had the highest averages, 0.86 and 0.83%, respectively, but were followed closely by the others.

In this study, concerned directly only with what has changed, the separation rate of priests has special significance for the additional reason that it changed the most. Where the separation rate of novices increased about 60% after 1958, and the rate of scholastics about 250%, the separation rate of priests increased about 3,700% (Table 1). Also, where the rate for novices seems to have returned to its original level, the rate for priests, like that for scholastics, has remained far above its original level.

According to data prepared for the 32nd General Congregation, the average separation rate of all Jesuit priests during the period 1961-1974 was 0.66%. This was somewhat lower than the rate in the American Assistancy (0.82%). For the various assistancies this rate varied from 0.17% in the Slavic Assistancy to 1.36% in South America. France, Italy, and India all had rates that were less than half that of America. Previous experience with vocation losses had probably prepared France and Italy against the storm of the 1960s, while the wave of change had not yet reached India in full force.

Data on the separation rates of diocesan priests and of religious

women are harder to come by. What information is currently available is shown in Tables 5 and 6. The separation rate for diocesan priests (Table 5) peaked slightly earlier and was slightly higher but in general resembled the Jesuit experience. The average annual rate for diocesan priests during the eight-year period 1966-1973 was 1.5%, while for the Jesuit priests it was 1.2%.

The separation rate of women religious (Table 6), which peaked at about the same time as did the rates of priests and scholastics, was much higher than that of Jesuit priests and much lower than that of Jesuit scholastics. As remarked above, this pattern was to be expected.

#### 4. Characteristics of Jesuits Who Left

The little information available on the characteristics of Jesuits separated from the order is largely limited to priests from the entire Society. According to unpublished data prepared by the Jesuit Curia in Rome, a total of 1,975 priests were separated from the order during the fourteen-year period of 1961-1974. About 23% of the 1,975 separated priests had been ordained before 1955 and about 20% after 1965. The rest (about 57%) consisted of the single generation, as it were, of those who occupied a period that moved along as follows:

Born:	1926-1935
Entered:	1946-1955
Ordained:	1956-1965
Separated:	1966-1974

Here is a definable group that might reward an intensive study linking the cohort to the changing events, values, and institutions of the cohort's lifetime.

The same concentrated cohort appears in the New England Province (Table 8).<sup>4</sup> Of the 128 priests<sup>5</sup> who were separated during the period 1926-1975, 59 (46%) belonged to the entering classes of 1943-1952 and to the ordination classes of (about) 1956-1965. The following summary table shows the distribution of these 128 separated priests according to both the year of the separation and the year of ordination.

	<u>By Year of Separation</u>	<u>By Year of Ordination</u>
Pre-1926		1
1926-30	1	6
1931-35	1	7
1936-40	3	9
1941-45	5	6
1946-50	6	7
1951-55	9	11
1956-60	7	31
1961-65	4	28
1966-70	28	18
1971-75	<u>64</u>	<u>4</u>
	128	128

For example, in the five-year period 1956-1960, 7 priests were separated from the New England province; and, of all the priests who were ordained during this five-year period, 31 had been separated from the order by 1975. (These latter would have entered the order about 13 years previous to their ordination.) The table is a convenient way of seeing interrelationships.

The highest loss ratio of priests in the New England Province was experienced by the entering class of 1943, which saw the departure of 11 of its 23 priests, for a loss ratio (thus far) of 48% (Table 8, col. 9). The first of the 11 left in 1961, the last in 1974. Five left in the two years 1970-71. (This part of the history is not shown in the table.) The class of 1943 would have been in their mid-forties and ordained 10 years or more when the storm broke. This class had earlier lost 10 members before ordination. Thus of the 34 members who entered in 1943, 21 members had been separated by the end of 1975, for an overall loss ratio of 62%.

As may be seen in the table, the classes of 1959 through 1962 experienced even higher overall loss ratios, but more of their losses had occurred before ordination. The classes of 1960 and 1961 have thus far *lost* 75% of their original members. By contrast, the class of 1926 had a *perseverance* ratio of 76%.

Table 9 presents similar data--that is, by year of entrance--for the Maryland-New York Province. The general pattern resembles that of New England, with a heavy concentration of separations among priests who had entered in 1947-1951. The perseverance ratio averaged 66% for the first ten classes of the table, but only 31% for the last ten. Because the other provinces do not possess similar data arranged according to year of entrance, we cannot be sure how representative of the assistancy Tables 8 and 9 are. However the similarity between these two provinces strengthens the probability that they are generally representative.

Certainly, my own 1926 entrance class in the Midwest corresponds to this eastern pattern. Sixty-eight of us entered that year into the Missouri Province, which included the territory now covered by the Chicago, Detroit, Missouri, and Wisconsin Provinces. Of the 68, 59 (87%) took vows and of these, 51 (86%) reached ordination. After ordination, one left the priesthood and two transferred to the diocesan clergy. In all, the class lost 19 members (including the two transferees) for a total loss ratio of 28%. The corresponding ratio for the class of 1926 in New England was 25% and in Maryland-New York 30% (Tables 8 and 9). Thus, for the class of 1926, at least, the Midwest resembled the East.

How long after ordination do priests tend to leave? For the Society as a whole, of priests leaving during the period 1961-1974, about a third left during the first 5 years after ordination; another third left during the period 5-10 years after ordination; the remainder left during the period 10-44 years after ordination (data prepared for the 32nd General Congregation). In the period 1961-1965, the departures tended to concentrate at about 4 years following ordination. Of those leaving during the succeeding period, 1966-1970, the departures tended to concentrate at about 8 years following ordination. Thus both groups tended to come from the ordination classes of 1957 through 1962. That is, these were



the classes that were hardest hit.

Data available for New England (not shown) provide a different picture of later ordination classes. In New England, of those ordained during 1961-1965, the majority (68%) left 6 to 10 years after ordination, whereas of those ordained during 1966-1970, the majority (67%) left 1 to 5 years after ordination. In other words both groups suffered their greatest loss at about the same time in history, an indication perhaps that the predominant factor was not the number of years after ordination but the character of the times when they left.

Information is available on the occupations of the separated priests, but little can be done with it because it cannot be related to an appropriate universe, or base. For example, it is known that 44% of the separated priests in the entire order were connected in some way with institutions of higher education; but without knowing the total number of Jesuit priests who were connected with such institutions at that time, it is not possible for us to conclude that the 44% is above or below what might have been expected.

In the American Assistancy, there is a widespread belief that the separation rate was higher among those with more salable abilities--for example, among those with a doctorate in a secular subject. This is plausible enough as a conjecture, but the data are not available whereby its validity can be tested. The belief may be based on nothing more than the greater visibility of men with advanced degrees. For the period 1949-1968, the New Orleans Province examined the comparative separation rates of their men with and without advanced degrees and found no difference between them.

Among those separated from the Society, some were "dismissed" in the ordinary sense of the term--either *ipso facto* or by an explicit command. By far the greater number left on their own initiative, but with official clearance. Some publicly criticized the Roman authorities for not acquiescing promptly enough when clearance was sought, and a few priests in prominent positions forced the hand of the authorities by announcing their intention to marry without permission, with attendant scandal, if clearance were delayed.

Many of those who left had high visibility, either because they were

in positions of authority, or because they were prominent in their respective fields, or simply because they were unusually active in the drive for change and thus were viewed as leaders. The impact of their leaving was greater than that of the less visible Jesuit and may have operated as an independent cause of further change, accelerating the outward flow. Their leaving certainly explains much of the polarization and internal suspicion that marked Jesuit communities in this turbulent period.

The Santa Clara Conference in 1967, dealing with "The Total Development of the Jesuit Priest," was the assistancy's first major attempt to plan for the changing future. To manage this conference the provincials selected a planning committee of twelve. Of these twelve, chosen to guide the renovation of Jesuit life, a third proved not to have a Jesuit vocation themselves. Soon after the conference they left the order and the priesthood. Of the 40 participants, also chosen as best fitted to provide guidance for the order, 8 (20%) proved to have no roots in religious life; they also left the order a few years after the conferences.<sup>6</sup>

In one province, the provincial and a newly appointed member of his curia toured the province at the height of the disturbance to quiet the anxieties over changes being made. Shortly after the completion of the tour, both men left the order and married.

There were a number of examples of priests selected to renew an apostolic activity--a sodality, a retreat house, a theology department--who began by dismantling the traditional structures, but then left the order before establishing a viable alternative. The eastern provinces provided the most striking examples of departures from high places; a provincial, a master of novices, and the rector of a seminary. In the West, two psychologists who had been very active in the process of renovation (one had led a week of renewal for the English-speaking provincials in Rome) left the order and the priesthood during the early 1970s. Georgetown University twice had the experience of the chairman of its Board of Trustees leaving the order and marrying a secretary--his own secretary in one case, and in the other, the secretary of the president of the university.

More than 20 priests left while teaching younger Jesuits in the houses of formation, mostly in philosophy and theology and mostly in the eastern

provinces. The impact of their departure was probably the greater because of their position,<sup>7</sup>

## B. Earlier History: 1926-1957

How did the collapse of the 1960s come about? Abruptly, like a sudden storm? Or, gradually, like an old bridge wearing away? Were there any warning signs of the impending collapse? If there were, one would expect to find them in a decreased entrance rate or an increased separation rate. To test this hypothesis I gathered what data were available for the period 1926-1957 on the numbers of novices, scholastics, and priests in the American Assistancy.

### 1. Entrants

After a stream that feeds a pond begins to shrink, eventually the pond itself will shrink. If the stream is small and the pond large, the effect on the pond may be long in appearing clearly, but the beginning of change in the stream is the beginning of change in the pond. The yearly entrances of novices to the order are the stream that continues to feed the entire order. A change might occur in this stream before any recognizable change appeared in the pond itself.

The experience of the American Assistancy, as shown in Table 10, affords little support for the hypothesis that the collapse of the 1960s had a discernible earlier beginning. After a notable decline during 1933-1945, the effect of depression followed by war, the number of entrants climbed strongly during the postwar period 1946-1951. Although it declined somewhat during the three-year period 1952-1954, it rose steadily thereafter into the 1960s (Table 1) up to the start of the long fall.

The decline during 1952-1954 is probably explainable by three developments, none of which suggests a genetic connection with the collapse of the 1960s. There was the Korean War (1950-1953); there was the extraordinarily low birth rate of the depression period 20 years earlier; and there were some transfers of personnel from American provinces to newly erected mission provinces, such as Patna and the Philippines.

The experience of the Society as a whole may afford some slight

support for the hypothesis of an early beginning of the great decline. The peak number of novices, as shown in a table prepared for the 32nd General Congregation, occurred as early as 1950, when there were 2,741 scholastic and coadjutor novices combined. After a decline in the early 1950s, the number recovered gradually to 2,616 in 1962, but never again reached as high as in 1950.

In the American Assistancy, each province fluctuates considerably from year to year in the number of novice entrants. These fluctuations tend to offset each other when merged in an assistancy total, and hence the total situation in the assistancy shows more stability than is to be found in any one of the provinces. However, the general history of the individual provinces is similar to that of the assistancy. Lack of space prevents the inclusion of more than one example of the provinces. New England is chosen because its data are unusually full (thanks to years of attention by Robert F. Hoey, S.J.) and permit of further use at other points in the analysis.

The major lines of the New England story are caught in Table 7 (columns 1 and 2). In 25 of the 32 years covered by the table, at least as many novices entered as in 1958. Four of the other 7 years were depression years and 2 were war years. The entire history shows a fluctuating pattern, which is best seen by dividing the New England experience into segments, as in the schematic arrangement below. The number in parentheses is the average number of entrants for the indicated period.

1926-35 (38)	1946-51 (37)	1959-62 (42)	
	1952-58 (30)		
1936-45 (27)		1963-69 (26)	
			1970-75 (10)

The high segment of the 1920s and early depression years (1926-35) was followed by the low segment of the depression-with-war years (1936-45). Then came the postwar bulge of vocations (1945-51), followed by a "medium" experience (1952-58) which lasted up to the period of our interest. In

the first part of that period, entrances reached a new high (1959-62), followed by a low (1963-69) reached only once before (during a time of depression and war), followed finally by a literally unprecedented low (1970-75).

Since the Catholic population of New England was growing throughout the 50-year period, a stable ratio of Jesuit vocations to the Catholic population would have resulted in a rising average number of entrants. But, in fact, there is no substantial rise over the long period 1926-1962. The absence of such a long-term rise in numbers may indicate a long-term gradual decline in the ratio. In this hypothesis, the events of the recent period represent not so much a change in direction as they do a steepening of the slope of a line that had been falling almost from the beginning. Alternatively, the stable numbers may indicate a deliberate province policy of non-expansion, a policy dictated, perhaps, by the same considerations of surfeit that led the Boston diocese for some years to turn away from the diocesan seminary many otherwise suitable candidates.

## 2. The Separation Rate of Novices

This rate in the American Assistancy (Table 10) does supply some possible support for the hypothesis. During the 15-year period 1930-1944, the average separation rate was 9.8%. During the following 10-year period, 1945-1954, the average rate rose to 13.4%, and during the last four years, 1955-1958, it continued to rise to 14.9%.

As may be seen in Table 7, the New England experience reflects the same long-term rise in the separation rate of novices. When 10-year averages are calculated for the 30-year period covered by the table, they reveal the following rising trend: 7.6%, 8.7%, 11.5%.

## 3. The Separation Rate of Scholastics

Data on this rate are at hand only for the Society as a whole and for the New England Province. In the entire Society, according to a table prepared for the 32nd General Congregation, the separation rate of scholastics began to rise as early as 1925. This rise was very slight, but a more notable rise began about 1956. Where the average separation rate

during 1950-1955 had been 0.85%, during the succeeding period, 1956-1963, it rose to 1.1%--an increase of almost one-third antecedently to Vatican II.

The New England data (Tables 7 and A-4) exhibit a similar trend, as shown in the average separation rates of five consecutive periods:

1927-1940: 0.7%	1951-1957: 1.5%	1964-1975: 5.8%
1941-1950: 1.2%	1958-1963: 2.3%	

Since each rate is larger than the preceding one, we may have here another indication that the process of change had begun in a mild way before the full revolution of the 1960s.

#### 4. The Separation Rate of Priests

Here, the only data at hand are for the New England Province.<sup>8</sup> In this province, the separation rate for priests, like the rates for novices and scholastics, shows an early rising trend (Table 7, column 8). During the 22-year period 1927-1948, the average rate was only 0.11%, and in most years there was no instance of a priest leaving. A change seems to have set in as early as 1949, and thereafter it is an exceptional year that does not see at least one priest separated from the order. The average ratio for the 10-year period 1949-1958 was 0.30%, almost triple the previous average. Thus, once again there is evidence of a worsening trend beginning well before Vatican Council II.

## PART II. ANALYSIS: A SEARCH FOR POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

### A. Introduction

Such an extraordinary collapse of vocations calls for explanation. How did it happen? What explanatory factors can be identified that help to make this Jesuit experience intelligible? Before beginning the direct search for such factors, it may be well to point out once more the exact focus and the limitations of this search. Experience with readers of the preliminary draft of the present paper has indicated the need for such an introduction.

It is not likely that the explanatory factors are confined to the

Jesuit order. Practically all other religious orders, male and female, active and contemplative, experienced similar changes in their memberships. The diocesan clergy also had this same experience. Neither is it likely that the explanatory factors are confined to the United States. All the assistancies of the West had a history similar to that of the American Assistancy. Provinces in Spain and Canada and South America experienced even greater membership changes than did the United States. The experience of Japan also, which is highly westernized, while less severe than that of the United States, was basically similar. It is clear, therefore, that the explanatory factors cannot be limited to circumstances peculiar to the United States, such as the Viet Nam War or the civil-rights movement or the assassination of President Kennedy. National events played a distinctive part in each geographical region, but they served rather to direct the dominant forces into particular channels than to create the forces themselves. We are searching for forces that are very deep and widespread.

They are so deep and widespread indeed that they have affected all the major institutions of Western culture--the family, the school, the military, the government, labor unions. Although these other institutions have not experienced the membership changes of the religious orders, they have experienced many of the other changes, especially in life-styles and interpersonal relationships, that are a part of the total Jesuit history during the past decade. Clearly, some very general forces have been at work transforming the Western world. An adequate account of the transformation would require a team of historians who would have to review all the major developments in modern Western culture.

Although such an analysis cannot be attempted here, it may be possible to identify at least some leading ideas and events that could have played a part in changing the history of Jesuit vocations. These factors have an antecedent plausibility; furthermore, they surfaced frequently in the several hundred interviews I conducted with persons who were part of the changes in the 1960s. In calling them explanatory factors, I do not necessarily imply direct causality. Some of these ideas and events, if they had any influence, may have been merely conditions or occasions.

Most of the changes listed as possible explanatory factors had the

general effect of diluting previous certitudes and shaking the existing bases of vocations, In this respect, the general experience was like the analytic phase of the psychoanalytical process. The characteristic operation of that process is reflected in its Greek root *ana luo*, to loosen up. The hold of previous psychic patterns is loosened, with a resulting increased freedom to exercise new options. Something of this sort seems to have happened on a large scale in the 1960s. The basic certitudes of this generation were "loosened up," and it was free to, and indeed had to, remake or unmake old choices. A whole generation was invited, with a new urgency, to overcome "pluralistic ignorance" and to recognize the existence of other alternatives, or, even more shattering, the possibility that its construction of reality was but one of many options.

As a result, previous vocational choices were challenged in a newly intense way, and the possibilities of vocational change were increased. When a house is moved from one foundation to another, it may or may not reach its goal; if it does, it may or may not be better founded than before (that is not the concern of this study); but, while the house is in transition from the old foundation to the new, it is in greater danger of destruction--a change reflected in the insurance rates.

In somewhat the same way, those Jesuits who experienced such a "loosening" of their previous certitudes, by that very fact faced an increased possibility of vocational change. What proportion of Jesuits felt this loosening, I do not know. Probably most Jesuits did, but over a wide spectrum of degrees, from the barely perceived to the traumatic. This loosening effect is the principal effect claimed for the changes examined here. Whether in addition some of the changes may have been directly antithetical to the religious vocation as such (not merely to the previous base of vocations) is a further possibility that invites examination but is not examined closely in this study.

The analysis aims only at explanation and not at evaluation. With regard to each factor examined, only two questions are pertinent: (1) Does the factor represent change? Since we are examining *changes* in Jesuit membership, explanatory factors should presumably be things that changed. (2) Could the factor have contributed in some way to the



disturbance or deterrence of a vocation? The further question is never asked; Is the factor good? Neither is there an unspoken assumption that because a factor may have contributed to the disturbance or deterrence of vocations it is by that very fact proved to be bad. The evaluation of the factors simply lies outside the scope of this study.

This needs to be emphasized because the structure of the analysis is such as sometimes to imply evaluation. Since the analysis is limited to one aspect of the membership changes of the 1960s, their quantitative change, and since this change was in an undesirable direction--at least in the short run and from the viewpoint of the institution--the search for explanatory factors easily takes on the coloration of a search for factors that are undesirable in themselves.

But this is not and cannot be the case for at least two reasons. First, limited as it is to quantitative changes, the analysis does not take account of possible offsetting qualitative changes. Though fewer, novice applicants may be stronger than their predecessors, with a purer motivation; also, the Jesuits who still remain in the order may have experienced a personal purgation and put down deeper roots of faith. Finally, the order may now be prepared to function more effectively in the modern setting. All these are possibilities. Second, in the long run, the upheaval of the 1960s may prove beneficial even quantitatively. Eventual membership may be greater precisely because of the current collapse. I understand that forestry experts consider an occasional fire to be beneficial to the forest in the long run. Certainly in economics, solid, long-term growth seems to include with a certain inevitability some periods of recession.

The model of an economic recession is a particularly useful one for the task at hand and may repay a slightly fuller development. A recession is quantitative by definition. A recession is a decline from a previous level. A recession is unplanned and unwanted at the time it occurs; indeed, all efforts in the economy are strongly directed to bringing the decline to a halt. The causes of a recession are multiple and complex; they are also interacting and reinforcing. In the course of a recession, many more firms than normally meet shipwreck and go out of business. Nevertheless, most firms remain in business and most workers remain

employed. When the unemployment rate is 10% (a serious recession), 90% of the labor force is still employed. Finally, a recession seems to serve the function of pain in a healthy body: it reveals the presence of something "wrong" and calls forth remedial efforts that, if successful, enable the economy to rise to levels of performance higher than that which preceded the recession.

The changes in Jesuit membership described in the tables resemble a recession. They are a quantitative decline stemming from multiple, reinforcing causes. The decline was unplanned and unwanted at the time; it was a collapse under forces beyond the order's control. Nevertheless, when the separation rate was highest among Jesuit priests, it still affected only a small proportion of their total number. Finally, the decline may contribute to a healthier future than could otherwise have been attained.

The model of a recession has guided me in still another point of methodology. Even in the depths of a recession, many positive developments are normally taking place. Wasteful patterns of production are eliminated, productivity begins to increase, new processes are invented, new firms and even new industries are founded. Although these positive developments occur during a recession, they are not factors that explain the recession. They are rather the factors that explain the succeeding period of (hoped-for) prosperity: they are its seeds. Such positive developments are therefore properly omitted in a search for the causes of the *recession*. In a similar way, this study does not attempt to provide a complete history of the period of the 1960s, but concentrates on factors that may explain the "recession," the quantitative declines in membership that occurred during this period. If I have stressed this point, perhaps tiresomely, it is because experience with readers of the preliminary draft showed it to be a point easily missed.

#### B. Changed Image of Religious Life and Priesthood

In the 1960s, the image of the religious life and of the priesthood underwent considerable modifications. This alteration in image, while the result of the same basic forces directly affecting the number of vocations, could have been itself a separate influence on that number.

In the period following the Council of Trent, priests and religious enjoyed a position of very high esteem among the Catholic population. Nuns, brothers, and priests were considered to have been called by God to a special vocation. Indeed common usage restricted the term "vocation" to their calling. In condemning the doctrines of the Reformers, the Council of Trent had solemnly declared: "If anyone says that the conjugal state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity or celibacy than to be joined in matrimony: let him be anathema" (Denzinger-Schönmetzer, 1810; DB, 980).

This Church doctrine was buttressed by social structures. Canon Law inclosed priests and religious within an elaborate structure of provisions that governed every detail of their lives, as one would legislate for something uniquely valuable and important. They were surrounded by the taboos of dress and action with which all cultures have traditionally surrounded the "holy." To the formal prayers offered in parishes for "vocations," Catholic parents added their own fervent petitions. The family whose son or daughter was called to this special form of life was considered by the Catholic community to be specially favored.

In the United States, until very recently, the Catholic Church was largely an immigrant church. Partly for this reason, a vocation to a religious order, and especially to the priesthood, was an invitation to a higher social status. The status included, often enough, a level of education higher than the other members of the family expected to reach. Until recently, also, American Catholics were an embattled minority who had closed ranks around their priests with the fierce loyalty natural to a group under siege.

It was the common understanding of the Catholic community that a "vocation," once ratified by vows and especially by ordination, represented a permanent commitment. "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Once a Jesuit's perpetual vows were accepted by competent ecclesiastical authority, the individual could be certain that this was God's will for him. Only a contrary decision by the same authority, a decision unforced by the voluntary actions of the religious, could change this relationship. There was inevitably a perception of some failure when a vowed Jesuit left

the order, and the departure was handled as quietly as possible. Among Jesuit priests, departures were extremely rare and were practically never accompanied by release from the obligation of celibacy.

Scarcely a feature of the picture just sketched remained unchanged in the upheaval of the 1960s. Developments in philosophy, psychology, and theology seriously undermined the former comforting belief that, once competent ecclesiastical authority had accepted his vows, a religious could be certain he was doing God's will by remaining faithful to those vows until death. Since this certainty had been a strong attraction for some, its dilution would have correspondingly weakened the pull of a vocation. This new view could have affected those already in the religious state as well as those considering entrance.

The Second Vatican Council recognized the sacrality of the secular to such an extent that any antecedent advantage of the clerical or religious state over the lay state was lessened or removed. When the council was discussing the decree on the Renewal of the Religious Life, Cardinal Spellman intervened to warn that the proposed language in the early drafts could have the effect of emptying the seminaries and convents of his diocese.<sup>9</sup> This modern emphasis is reflected in many spiritual writers of the 1960s, who rejected vigorously the traditional description of the clerical or religious state as in some way objectively preferable to the lay state. The novices whom I interviewed generally accepted--indeed, insisted on--this view of the equality of the two states.

The Chicago diocesan paper, *The New World*, carried an item in early 1975 that illustrates very strikingly this new view of the religious state. After noting that 27,000 women had withdrawn from religious orders in a period of five years, the article reported that this development did not at all disturb Sister Lois McGovern, O.P., associate director of the National Sisters Vocation Conference. She considered these figures as reflecting "one of the most exciting things that has ever happened to the Church." "After all," she explained, "Vatican II said the people are the Church. Formerly the religious, perhaps unconsciously, thought that they were the Church."

In the move away from the taint of "triumphalism," priests and religious made many adjustments to lessen or remove entirely external differences between their state and the lay state. Jesuits began to abandon titles and distinctive garb and to open their community meals to lay men and women. The rooms of novices were indistinguishable from those of their peers in college. Jesuits also began to disregard traditional taboos on behavior in public. A group of novices could attend a performance of "Hair," with permission and money supplied by the rector. Some scholastics and priests experimented with "dating," and a "Third Way" was seriously proposed. The changes were made openly, not secretly, and many of them eventually won formal approval by superiors.

In the United States, as the Catholic community grew rapidly more affluent and left its geographical and cultural ghetto to seek assimilation in the secularity of the suburbs, the former concentrated Catholic culture was diluted. Moreover, for a much larger proportion of the population than previously, the clerical or religious state represented no advance in social status. For both reasons, surveys found a decreasing proportion of Catholic parents who said they would be pleased if one of their children chose the religious life or the priesthood.

The permanent commitment of the clerical or religious state was widely questioned in theory and in practice. Catholic sociologists began to analyze the priesthood as a religious function performed by a professional who was as free as anyone else to change his profession. Rome seemed to recognize this changed view by greatly relaxing the conditions under which it would grant a priest a dispensation from celibacy. The traditional social stigma attaching to a ruptured vocation--less strong in the case of a religious, very strong in the case of a priest--practically disappeared. A "high tea" could properly be arranged for a scholastic leaving the Woodstock theologate.<sup>10</sup> A former Jesuit scholastic could continue to live, with his wife and baby, in the same apartment and with the same Jesuit scholastics with whom he had previously lived. Forty former Jesuit priests and their wives could assemble for a social evening at the invitation of the local provincial. And so forth.

The change in the image of permanent commitment would clearly have tended to make departure from the clerical or religious state easier and more probable. The other changes, all making the clerical or religious state more secular and less distinctive, would tend to have a similar, though perhaps milder, effect. It is possible, also, that the changed image contributed to the decrease in the number of new applicants. Since the young men of the 1960s would have been familiar with the former more elevated image of the clerical or religious state, the change might have been perceived as a demotion, a letdown. Even if they approved of the change, they might have found this deflated, secularized "occupation" less attractive than formerly, and would have questioned whether it justified the extraordinary choice of a celibate life. (It is an interesting speculation whether a later generation, spared the experience of deflation, may respond differently. But this possible development lies outside the scope of this study, as contributing nothing to an understanding of why the flow of vocations drastically declined in recent years.)

The altered image of the clerical or religious state was itself the fruit of deeper roots, to be found in modern intellectual history.

### C. Intellectual Developments

New events bring about new ideas, and new ideas beget new events. Both lines of influence are operative simultaneously. By beginning with the world of ideas, I do not mean to prejudge the dispute over which deserves the primacy of influence. My choice of intellectual developments as a starting place is a choice merely of convenience--because it is easier, or so it seems to me, to see the probable consequences of ideas on events than to detect the impact of events on the world of ideas.

#### 1. Science and History

All genuine revolutions, as Sorokin has observed, are epistemological in root; they follow upon a change in the way men perceive reality. Such a change has been in process throughout the modern period and has gathered speed in recent years. Modern man sees his world, and himself in it,

very differently than did his ancestors. The change is expressed reflexively in philosophy (also in psychology and theology) and by that very explicitation is advanced further, but at least some of the original roots of the process are to be found in the physical sciences.

The advances in science that changed man's understanding of his own nature and history were especially significant. The work of the naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882) began a development which has made the notion of evolution as natural as breathing. The card catalog of a modern library provides clear testimony of the extent to which the evolutionary paradigm has influenced the mind-set of modern man. At the same time, anthropologists were unearthing stone axes in the caves of northern France and a manlike skull in the Neander Valley in Germany. The popular view taught in the churches on the basis of the biblical narrative that man's history was encompassed by a span of 6,000 years had become absurd.

A personal memory helps me grasp the recency of this particular change. I recall a morning dogma class in 1938, during my second year of theology at St. Marys, Kansas, when our professor told us, with an air of not wanting to shock us too much, that in his opinion the traditional figure of 6,000 years was too low; the correct figure could be as high as 20,000 years! When I forget, as I tend to do, how great a change has come how quickly in man's (popular) understanding of his own history, I remind myself of this incident.

The work of anthropologists and sociologists has prepared the mind of modern man to recognize that few, if any, human institutions are "natural" in the sense of being universal or permanent. The work of chemists, physicists, and biologists has opened the prospect of rearranging the atoms, genes, and cells of all beings, including man himself, in almost any desired pattern. Developments in linguistics and in the sociology of knowledge have notably increased modern man's appreciation of the extent to which his perception of reality is subjective. The readiness with which Heisenberg's "principle of indeterminacy" was accepted, and then exaggerated and misused (according to Heisenberg himself), reflects the dominant spirit of the era which saw all existence characterized not by certitude but by freedom.

Alvin Toffler's 1970 book, *Future Shock*, documents in 500 pages the life-style changes stemming from the technological revolution and describes how life-style changes affect self-perception and values. Toffler stresses the acceleration of the rate of such changes and agrees with the conclusion of C.P. Snow, novelist and scientist: "Until this century, change was so slow that it would pass unnoticed in one person's lifetime. That is no longer so. The rate of change has increased so much that our imagination cannot keep up."

Kenneth Boulding, the eminent economist, recently said, "Almost as much has happened since I was born as happened in all the ages before." Such a proposition is rather easily accepted today as probably true. Modern man is conditioned to weigh in the balance his own experience against that of all mankind before. Existentialism, with its emphasis on the present, grows naturally in such a soil.

Among the many factors accounting for the acceleration of change must be included the remarkable increase in formal education. In the United States, in the 20-year period 1950-1970, high school enrollment more than doubled, and college enrollment, of even greater significance, more than tripled. Among the factors, also, must be included the extraordinary development of communications. At the time of the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, perhaps a thousand new books appeared in the world each year. Now, a thousand new books make their appearance each day. And books are the least remarkable development in communications. Auto, train, and airplane have multiplied the meetings of bodies around the globe, while telephone, radio, and television have linked mind to mind in almost instant communication everywhere. Although the first impact of improved communications is to homogenize society, its later impact is the reverse. The greater the facility of communication, the greater becomes the speed of cultural change and the greater the resulting differentiation of life-styles.

Reflecting the epistemological change, the science of history has become more subjective and therefore relative. It has also become more dominant. To the extent that reality comes to be viewed as a process, the historical view of reality becomes the only respectable view. The



Rockhurst Report (November, 1965), the watershed of the modern Jesuit theologate program, was noteworthy for its insistence that the historical approach to theological issues be accorded greater scope.

Furthermore, history itself was seen as a process. There could never be a "definitive" history of anything. Each generation had to recreate its own understanding of the past. If the modern historian had to choose between Heraclitus and Parmenides as the patron saint of the science, he would surely choose the former.

## 2. Philosophy

Modern philosophy has been characterized by its concern with the epistemological problem, and in this area has moved generally in the direction of greater subjectivity and relativity. Movement in this same direction marked the development of practically every other intellectual field--which may indicate that philosophy from its central position was able to influence all other activities; or that some fundamental change in man's view of reality was at work influencing all activities, philosophy included; or, most probably, both. At any rate, since epistemological change naturally leads to revolution, and since modern philosophy has been undergoing such a change, much of the philosophical development of the last few centuries is relevant to an understanding of the upheaval of the 1960s. An adequate understanding of the development would require going back at least to Descartes and Kant and working up through Hegel and a wide spectrum of more recent philosophers. While an adequate survey of modern philosophy is, of course, out of the question here, by way of illustration we may note the development of existentialism. Characteristics usually associated with this school of thought colored much of the art and literature of the 1960s and surfaced repeatedly in the interviews I conducted.

### a. Nature of Existentialism

Existentialism admits of many shades of meaning; indeed, it is more an approach or a mood than a fully articulated theoretical structure. It has its forerunners, such as Søren Kierkegaard, but in its modern form is chiefly connected with the names of a group of German and French philosophers

in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although Martin Heidegger is usually considered one of the founders of modern existentialism, he himself wrote a disclaimer explicitly denying that he was an existentialist. French Catholic existentialists like Gabriel Marcel differ markedly from their countryman Jean-Paul Sartre. Karl Rahner, also, although influenced by the movement, chiefly through Heidegger, rejected much of it.

The description of existentialism that follows has Jean-Paul Sartre in view principally. He illustrates the extreme existentialist approach, and principles come clearest in strong cases. Also, he is the most widely known of the existentialists, partly because, in true existentialist fashion, he did not confine himself to abstract, technical treatises but also presented his message through the medium of plays and novels.

Pure existentialism is Heraclitus redivivus. Reality resides in the moving moment. Becoming, not being, is reality. Essence is not distinct from existence. Natures, substances, the permanent--they do not exist outside the mind. Universal ideas do not express any objective reality. Since only change is real, change must be expected in everything.

For our purposes, existentialism may be described as an approach to every problem from the viewpoint of the consciousness of the individual person. In this approach, man is the center (individual man, not man in the abstract), and everything is considered in relation to his individual thoughts and feelings. To the question "What is a mother?" an essentialist might reply, "A woman who has borne a child"; but the existentialist would be more inclined to reply, "A woman who loves and takes care of me."

The existentialist criticizes modern Western culture for being dominated by the Hellenic concept of *essence* with a consequent enslavement to the abstract, the universal, the unchanging. He proposes instead to look at the concrete, individual, ever-changing phenomenon of human *existence*. Here is reality; it consists of consciousness, change, movement, feeling, involvement, and decision.

His emphasis on the individual leads the existentialist to define "authentic existence" in terms of striving to be oneself. The chief threat to authentic existence is to act because of tradition, convention, or--worst of all--authority. Sartre was very critical of the belief of the

monks that they could attain human perfection by doing the will of God as conveyed to them by the will of the superior. According to Sartre, the saint, the self-righteous man, and the scientist all have something in common: They seek to hand over their freedom to an external law--the saint to the laws of God, the self-righteous man to the law of society, and the scientist to the laws of matter.<sup>11</sup>

The commitment of which Sartre speaks is very different from the traditional meaning of the word. It is not commitment to a value given to one from outside oneself; still less is it commitment to an institution or a tradition; it is commitment to one's own freedom. Sartre's commitment is basically a negative thing: it is commitment to a denial of dependence on anything outside of self, especially a God; it is a commitment to a brave, "bloody but unbowed," recognition that there is no meaning or value in anything except that which I freely choose to attribute to it.

#### b. Influence of Existentialism

Existentialism may have been as much a reflection as it was a shaper of its times, as much an effect as a cause. Insofar as it was a cause, it may have exercised its influence as much, or more, through the popular culture and the arts as through formal philosophic instruction. In either case, it could have purified and strengthened some religious vocations as much as it confused and weakened others. Finally, as a system of philosophy, existentialism is vague, little more than an amorphous collection of emphases, and its popularity among philosophers is already waning.

In the light of these qualifications, what is left of the contribution of existentialism to an understanding of the decline in Jesuit membership? This much, I think. Existentialism had some characteristics which were antithetical to pre-Vatican II religious theory and practice; and it was newly popular (in this respect representing a change) in the 1960s. It thus had the two essential attributes for our purpose: it represented a change and this change could have disturbed some vocations. Insofar as it was a reflection of other forces at work, it still serves as a useful mirror in which to see these forces. That existentialism seems to be waning in popularity among philosophers does not detract from its significance for the earlier period.

The emphases of existentialism were the opposite of those which had characterized the post-Tridentine Catholic world. That world had shut out the innovating heretics, both Protestants and Modernists, by high walls spiked with anathemas. When the besieged garrison fought, it was under the banner of unchanging tradition. The concluding error condemned in the Syllabus of Errors (1864) read: "The Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile and adjust himself to progress, liberalism, and modern civilization." The definition of papal infallibility by Vatican I (1870) had deepened the Catholic's conviction that he possessed changeless truth. In *Aeterni Patris* (1879), Leo XIII had revived Thomism as the *philosophia perennis*. To the extent that existentialism found its way into such a world, it acted as a solvent, diluting certitudes, weakening structures, and in general imparting a sense of excitement and confusion. Along with the changes in theology, it worked toward creating an attitude of "everything is changeable."

The existentialist approach was capable of subjecting the traditional religious vocation to certain strains. The "Holy Rule" became ambiguous as a norm and an aid to human development. The complaint was heard often in the 1960s that the traditional formation programs, especially the novitiate, deformed human nature by forcing the individual person to conform to a preconceived, generalized, abstract norm of "perfection." This criticism undercut one of the principal advantages traditionally assigned to the religious life, namely that it provided a road to human development that was in some objective sense more effective; one could be surer of God's will by following "the rule" than by discerning one's own way. To the existentialist, this was an unacceptable approach. Many a superior had the experience in the 1960s of correcting an individual for violating a rule of the house, only to find himself corrected in turn for the attempt to fit a unique individual into a generalized pattern of action.

The existentialist strong emphasis on the individual tended to detract from another traditional characteristic of the religious state, namely, the team approach to the apostolate. The group undertook to perform a task and the individual found his fulfillment in becoming a part of the group endeavor. I recall an evening from my regency, when one of the priests (F.O.S., we called him, friend of the scholastics) was visiting

with us in our "rec" room. He developed the theme that the effectiveness of the Society lay in its tradition of committing itself as a group to a task and then plugging men into slots until, at whatever cost, the job was accomplished. All my fellow scholastics seemed to accept the thesis and probably felt a bit proud over it.

In the 1960s, many Jesuits, probably most of the young, would have felt offended by the thesis. They would have perceived it as inhuman, not sufficiently cognizant of the individual person, the ultimate value. I recall a seminar at the Cambridge Center for Social Studies in 1969, in which a young Jesuit priest with a doctorate in economics developed the opposite thesis and illustrated it by saying that if superiors attempted to use him in anything else but economics, he would feel obliged in conscience to leave the order because such an assignment would impede his personal development. His thesis, stated as something obvious, encountered no opposition in the group.<sup>12</sup>

The 1960s also produced a long list of successful challenges to community customs and life-styles. The bells were silenced that used to mark the times for community rising, prayer, and meals. Group vacations for the scholastics disappeared, along with such group experiences as litanies, reading at meals, and common recreation. Among life-style changes, probably the most significant was the substitution of personal choice of clothing in place of the former common garb. Whatever the eventual and total effect of such changes will be, one of their immediate and partial effects in the 1960s was to obscure the meaning and advantage of belonging to a group. As emphasis on group activity decreased and acceptance of group life-styles vanished, the significance of belonging to a group became less obvious.

Existentialism could have had an indirect impact on the clerical or religious vocation insofar as it contributed to the secularization of religion. The existentialist emphasis on the immediate present as the only reality tended to diminish interest in the hereafter. But death, and what lies beyond, has always been a core concern of Christian ministers--their stock-in-trade, so to speak. The existentialist approach tended to devalue this stock, and, with it, its caretakers. The existentialist message that "heaven is now" marked Cox's *Secular City*, a popular book

with many young Jesuits of the 1960s, Religion and its ministers were judged "relevant" to the extent they were engaged in the solution of secular problems. This secularization of the clerical or religious state may have lessened the attractiveness of the state by lessening its distinctiveness. Why adopt the abnormal life of the celibate religious if in other respects it differed so little from the secular state of persons "in the world"?

### 3. Psychology

The science and art of psychology are especially likely to have relevance for the religious state since both have the similar objective of understanding and advancing human perfection, precisely as human. Developments in modern psychology may have had a twofold connection--one philosophical, one theological--with the changes in Jesuit membership.

Beginning at least with Sigmund Freud (1856-1940) psychology has made Western society acutely aware of the subconscious and unconscious forces at work within the human psyche. It has thus reinforced the trend in modern philosophy towards a more relativistic epistemology. Modern man has become less certain of his motives and values. Consequently he feels less inclined to make a commitment (to anything outside himself) that is total in content or duration, and feels less obligation to honor previous commitments insofar as they reflect uncertain and therefore changeable values.

The other, and more direct, impact may have been through ascetical theology, the basis of the vowed religious state. The late 1950s saw the development of what came to be called humanistic or "third-force" psychology. In this movement, attention shifted from the abnormal to the normal, from the pathological to the healthy. Humanistic psychology asked: What is a healthy psyche? How is one achieved? This development brought psychology directly into relationship with ascetical theology, whose goal of human perfection includes a healthy psyche.

Of all the humanistic psychologists of the 1960s, Carl Rogers probably offers the most convenient illustration of the kind of impact the movement may have had on religious life. Rogers qualifies on two counts. First,

his was the name I encountered most often in my survey of the events of the 1960s. For example, it was Rogers who conducted a kind of sensitivity session for the community of the theologate at Alma, California, during the 1966-1967 school year; a Jesuit student of Rogers (the former Father Robert Willis) helped conduct a similar session for the English-speaking provincials in Rome; at the spiritual center at Wernersville, Pennsylvania, the team which conducted a number of "Communication Weeks" for religious was composed of three students of Rogers; and so forth.

Second, Rogers has provided a reflective analysis of his own development and guiding principles in his 1961 work, *On Becoming a Person*,<sup>13</sup> from which the following quotations are taken. While they do not cover all aspects of his life and work, they accurately reflect those aspects which are relevant to the present investigation.<sup>14</sup>

Rogers relates that, when he was a student at Union Theological Seminary, he joined a group which "felt that ideas were being fed to us, whereas we wished primarily to explore our own questions and doubts, and find out where they led. We petitioned the administration that we be allowed to set up a seminar for credit, a seminar with no instructor, where the curriculum would be composed of our own questions." He reports that this seminar "moved me a long way toward a philosophy of life which was my own. The majority of the members of that group, in thinking their way through the questions they had raised, thought themselves right out of religious work. I was one. I could not work in a field where I would be required to believe in some specified religious doctrine" (p. 8).

He turned to psychology and gradually developed his own principles, among which the following were preeminent. (Italics are as in the original text.) "*Experience is, for me, the highest authority . . . .* Neither the Bible nor the prophets can take precedence over my own direct experience" (pp. 23, 24). "Evaluation by others is not a guide for me. . . . The judgments of others, while they are to be listened to, and taken into account for what they are, can never be a guide for me" (p. 23).

"Religion, especially the Protestant Christian tradition, has permeated our culture with the concept that man is basically sinful, and only by something approaching a miracle can his sinful nature be negated

. . . , As I look back over my years of clinical experience and research, it seems to me that I have been very slow to recognize the falseness of this popular and professional concept" (p. 91).

He states his final "learning" thus: "*Life, at its best, is a flowing, changing process in which nothing is fixed. . . . To experience this is both fascinating and a little frightening. . . . there can be no closed system of beliefs, no unchanging set of principles which I hold*" (p. 27).

The following examples are not meant to prove causal relationships but merely to illustrate attitudes congenial to such Rogerian emphases.

(1) A long-time successful sodality director told me of attending national sodality meetings during the period 1965-1967 and finding everything, as he put it, upside down. The younger directors spoke enthusiastically of how much they were learning from the sodalists. Insofar as they were willing to teach anything, it seemed to be the subordination of "dry reason" to the emotions, the opposite of what this man had traditionally taught. In 1968 he was removed as sodality director at the insistence of three young Jesuit priests who went to the president of the university with their demand. All three later left the priesthood. (2) At a seminar I attended on the Spiritual Exercises, I heard two young Jesuit priests question the statement that the full title of the Spiritual Exercises included the phrase ". . . to conquer oneself." When convinced of its truth, they took the position that this was one of the places where a change, an *aggiornamento*, was clearly needed.<sup>15</sup> (3) Two experienced spiritual directors, one in a philosophate, the other in a theologate, told me they had moved in the direction of Rogerian emphases during the 1960s and regretted having taught much of the traditional ascetical theology. (4) I participated in a "Communications Week" conducted at Wernersville by a Rogerian team, one a former nun, and experienced an almost constant challenge to patterns of behavior I had learned as a Jesuit novice and scholastic.

Apart from the question of the correctness (not under consideration here) of humanistic psychology, many of its emphases were clearly calculated to disturb some vocations. They challenged the traditional bases on which the vocations existing in the 1960s had been built, opened up



all values for re-examination, and as the principal norm for conducting the re-examination proposed personal experience.<sup>16</sup> While some vocations would have been strengthened, others would have been shaken by exposure to Rogerian psychology, especially in an unstable period, when familiar landmarks were disappearing in other fields as well.

Other developments in psychology must be passed by for lack of space, although they may have had some explanatory value for the membership changes of the past decade. For example, the name of Erik Erikson surfaced frequently during my interviews with Jesuits, and the Wisconsin Province at one time explicitly adopted Erikson's stages of maturation as the guidelines for its program of formation. These same stages were cited in support of the thesis that the young men should reopen the question of their vocation from time to time--for example, when passing from regency to the study of theology--to ascertain whether their original choice still agreed with their present state of maturity. This approach obviously had implications for the perpetual quality of the vows.

#### 4. Theology

Developments in this field were especially significant. Because theology is directly connected with the foundations of the religious vocation, changes in theology are especially likely to have a "loosening" effect. When a religious begins to have a different understanding of God, of Christ, of the Church, of the sacraments, he must rethink his vocation in the new terms. The eventual result may, or may not, be a stronger vocation, but the transitional period is a period of risk.

There are numerous signs that the changes in theology were perceived as presenting serious problems for traditional Catholics. On my bookshelf are at least a dozen books with titles such as these:

*Biblical Reflections on Crises Facing  
the Church* (Raymond Brown)

*Theology in an Age of Revolution* (Bernard Cooke)

*The Future of Belief* (Leslie Dewart)

*The Survival of Dogma* (Avery Dulles)

*Catholicism Confronts Modernity* (Langdon Gilkey)

*The Crucible of Change* (Andrew Greeley)

*The Runaway Church* (Peter Hebblethwaite)

*Polarization in the Church* (Hans Küng & Walter Kasper, eds)

*The Remaking of the Church* (Richard McBrien)

*Stop the Church . . . I Want to Get Off* (Michael Reddy)

Scores of similar titles were published during the past decade, all reflecting a perception that a major theological upheaval had taken place with a consequent disturbance of faith and values.

The Jesuit provincials urged their members to attend theology workshops set up around the country to update those who knew only the old theology. Jesuits were also urged to make a change in their annual retreat, for at least one year. Instead of the traditional Ignatian retreat, they were invited to make a Better World Retreat--as a means of adjusting themselves to the new religious world and as a means of overcoming the deep polarization that had developed between those who accepted the new theology and its consequences and those who did not.

Two Jesuit priests of my acquaintance were "loosened" out of their accustomed retreat work, at which they had been successful for years. They found that their traditional theology was no longer acceptable to the retreatants. One returned from a retreat he had given to priests vowing angrily that he would never again accept such an assignment. He later left the priesthood and married. The other asked to be transferred into pastoral work because, as he cheerfully said, there must still be some of the older parishioners who could be helped by his old-fashioned theology.

In a 1975 volume entitled *Journeys* ten theologians attempt to discern the relationship between their personal life experiences and their theological positions. The production of such a volume itself reflects a judgment on the relativity of theology. But more to the point, all the authors perceive themselves changing as theologians during the past two decades. Gregory Baum sums up the experience thus: "Catholic theologians of my generation tend to find themselves in similar circumstances; we were trained in a style of thought we expected to last us a lifetime; yet as we took hold of the ecclesiastical renewal, or as this renewal took hold

of us, we found that the methods in which we had been trained were no longer adequate. . . . The Catholic theologians of my generation had to change their minds many times."<sup>17</sup>

It was the combination of two qualities that made the impact of the changes so shattering. One was simply the accumulation of change. If the same modifications had been made more gradually over the previous two centuries, their impact would have been less revolutionary. The other was the obvious resemblance of the changes to positions that the official Church had previously condemned. The generation teen-age and older at the time of Vatican II had grown up in a closed society that had a history of resolutely closing ranks against the Reformers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and against the Modernists in the nineteenth century. This sheltered generation was suddenly exposed to the unsettling experience of seeing positions it had faithfully learned to label "the enemy" belatedly presented as true after all. It was this aspect of the situation that probably was the more unsettling.

Changes in the Catholic understanding of the Sacred Scriptures were among the earliest and perhaps the most significant of the modern developments contributing to the upheaval of the 1960s. Although an early start seemed to be made in 1893 with Leo XIII's encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, the next 40 years nevertheless saw the Church adopt and maintain a stern anti-Modernist stance. The definitive change came as late as 1943, with Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, the scripture scholars' Magna Carta. During the next decade, teachers trained in biblical criticism began to move in large numbers into Catholic seminaries and colleges. By the mid-1950s, "the pursuit of the scientific method had led Catholic exegetes to abandon almost all the positions on biblical authorship and composition held by Rome at the beginning of the century."<sup>18</sup> This modern trend received additional official support from the 1964 instruction of the Pontifical Biblical Commission.

The changed understanding of Sacred Scripture moved, first slowly and then with quickening speed, from the confines of scholarly journals to the whole Catholic literate population. In general, the changes were in the direction of what since Trent had been considered the approach of

Protestantism and since the eighteenth century that of liberal Protestantism. Using the principles of cultural relativism and development, and applying tools of biblical criticism developed largely by Protestants, Catholic scholars challenged many interpretations previously identified as Catholic. They tended to agree that the Scriptures had to be "demythologized," a term with many degrees of meaning but usually implying a change in the traditional Catholic interpretation.

Partly because of the scriptural changes, partly because of other forces operating independently, nearly every aspect of the post-Tridentine structure underwent alteration. There were some who declared that the traditional God was dead. As popularized in Bishop Robinson's *Honest to God*, a book widely read by the young Jesuits of the 1960s, "God" (a term perhaps better abandoned now to free ourselves of past misconceptions) is to be found primarily in horizontal relationships with one's fellows rather than in a vertical relationship with a nebulous Someone-up-there. The traditional doctrines of original sin and of hell were questioned publicly by many theologians, and new--less literal, less absolute--interpretations were proposed. Since these doctrines were a significant part of the traditional rationale for the Church's ministry and ministers, their attenuation was accompanied by a corresponding attenuation in the traditional role of the priest.

The traditional Jesus was altered by giving greater emphasis to his humanity and seeing him as a genuinely limited human seeker who did not know he was founding a new church with a priesthood and seven sacraments. There was a marked tendency to question whether his miracles, including his resurrection, were historical events and, in any case, to subordinate their historical value, whatever it was, to their myth value.

In the field of moral theology, the existential position was growing in popularity, that morality was not a matter of abstract principles applied through the technicalities of casuistry but was the total response of the person at the moment of encounter with the concrete situation.<sup>19</sup> Where the priest had been accustomed to function as the channel of the official Church's definitive judgments and to enforce those judgments through granting or withholding the sacraments, he now heard arguments why he should abandon this role in favor of granting a greater freedom to the individual

conscience. As a result, the priest experienced a diminution in one of his most important traditional functions.

In the field of the sacraments, ordination was sometimes presented as a (temporary) contract to perform a function. The contract was viewed as between the community and the functionary, with the bishop acting as the community's authoritative spokesman. A priest was a priest only so long as he functioned as one. When a noted Jesuit sociologist who was setting forth this view was asked, "What of the irradicable character communicated by the sacrament?" he replied, "Let's talk about real things."

At the Santa Clara Conference in 1967, a theologian who later left the priesthood proposed a theory of divine providence that practically eliminated the notion of a divine call, a "vocation," to any particular state of life. One young Jesuit in attendance at the conference, who later left the Society, told me that he was greatly shaken by this novel (to him) doctrine and its apparent acceptance by the group.

There were still other theological developments tending to obscure or diminish the distinctiveness of the Catholic priesthood, and thus to decrease the inflow and increase the outflow of vocations. For example, as the concept of "Church" was broadened in ecumenism, the difference between the Catholic and other churches was lessened. The distinctive Catholic emphasis on the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist was muted in favor of the characteristically Protestant emphasis on a communal meal. The former priestly monopoly over the sacred species began to be shared with lay men and women, who were authorized to distribute communion at the parish masses. It was proposed to ordain women, and to abandon the Catholic practice of a celibate clergy for the Protestant option of a married clergy. Finally, as the authority of pope and bishop was devalued, the role of the priest as the official channel through which the hierarchy communicated with the laity was correspondingly undercut.

The sociologists of religion distinguish religions as being predominantly either "prescriptive" or "principled." The former provides detailed codes covering all important human activities, while the latter provides only broad guidelines. The Catholic Church has been a highly prescriptive system, especially since the Council of Trent. Under conditions of rapid

change, such a system finds it difficult to adapt its codes effectively and at the same time avoid a danger endemic to such a system: Once any prescriptions are modified, all prescriptions tend to be regarded as doubtfully binding. Such an attitude of doubt seems to have overtaken the modern Catholic community. "Does X still hold?" is a normal preliminary question when X is under discussion. It is this general confusion and unease that is perhaps more critical than any particular change.

### 5. Modern Art

The rout of Parmenides by Heraclitus which has taken place along the entire front of Western culture is reflected in modern Western art. This is only to be expected, since art reflects most purely the soul of a culture at its changing, growing edge. The art of modernity--for example, in painting and sculpture--what is it like? Beginning with Impressionism in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the history of art has been a succession of very transient, very subjective art forms--Cubism and Surrealism, Futurism and Fauvism, Abstract Expressionism and now Kinetic Art, whose very essence is transience. The popular magazine *Time* regularly devotes an article to the current exhibitions of outstanding painters and sculptors. A review of these articles during the 1960s reveals the almost complete dominance of an art that deliberately rejects tradition, objectivity, permanence.

Modern music and poetry exhibit the same characteristics. Ortega y Gasset has traced the journey of all modern art towards the goal of absolute freedom from restraint, especially the restraint of structure and tradition.<sup>20</sup> On the assumption that the art of the 1960s epitomizes the inner dynamism of the period, one may plausibly speculate that at least the initial impact of such a period would be disruptive of traditional structures--whether they be the family, the school, the military, or preeminently the church.

#### D. Various Occurrences and Circumstances

Under this general heading, we may conveniently review a number of explanatory factors which are not primarily intellectual developments,

although many of them were channels through which the influence of changing ideas flowed. Some of the events or occurrences belong to the Jesuit order, some to the general Church, and some to the secular society. Of those belonging to the Jesuit order, some relate to a particular grade in the order, while others relate to all grades.

### 1. The Young: Novices and Scholastics

The decline in the number of novices in the 1960s cannot be explained by a lack of potential applicants. Youth of high-school and college age made up a larger than normal proportion of the population in the 1960s. Neither can the decline be explained by the state of the economy during the period. The 1960s brought the longest period of prosperity in the history of the nation, but it is not clear how this unique event might be connected with the unique decline in vocations. Prosperity may plausibly be credited with two opposite effects. It frees young men from the responsibility of remaining at home to help the family economically; note the decline of vocations during the depression of the 1930s (Table 10). On the other hand, prosperity multiplies alternative prospects, especially that of college in easy, pleasant circumstances. As mentioned above, college enrollment tripled between 1950 and 1970. (And see Table 3.)

Changes in the Catholic family may have contributed to the decline in novice applicants. With growing affluence, Catholic immigrants moved from their ethnic ghettos to the suburbs, where their Catholic cohesiveness was diluted by a more secular and materialistic culture. As mentioned earlier, a decline occurred in the proportion of Catholic parents who would welcome a "vocation" among their children. Another family factor may have been a change in child rearing. Some families may have raised their children in an over-permissive atmosphere. This was the later judgment of Dr. Benjamin Spock, whose earlier writings had exerted a strong influence in this direction. The families with more education were the ones most likely to feel this influence, and were, of course, the families from whom modern Jesuit vocations would normally come. In her book *Liberal Parents, Radical Children*,<sup>21</sup> Midge Decter describes four types of youths raised in a very permissive atmosphere. It is clear that none of these types would be

likely to develop a lasting Jesuit vocation. In general, it is probable that in the last generation the gap had grown larger between ordinary family life and life in the Society.

Stemming probably from the same psychological and philosophical roots was a parallel movement in the educational system. In the 1960s, emphasis shifted from the teaching of skills and facts to the stimulation of independent thinking about issues. The new textbooks encouraged the students to free themselves of existing stereotypes and to reach new views. The books also supplied the students with materials for correcting traditional views. A typical high-school American-history textbook, for example, emphasized that the Indians discovered America, not Columbus, who "simply began a new wave of immigrations." It also stressed that the Iroquois "created the first federal system of government in America" and that "they valued women highly." It avoided the traditional heroic treatment that used to be given to the settlers of Jamestown. After reporting that the settlers "ate each other and often stole from the Indians," the book observed: "A measure of the quality of the recruits is that they lived next to some of the finest oyster beds and fishing grounds in the world--and starved."

This is only one example of scores that could be cited of how a more adequate and honest history was brought to bear on traditional views, views held by most of the students' parents. It was the secular equivalent to what was happening in catechism classes in the treatment, say, of the infancy narratives. Members of a generation systematically encouraged to question the society into which they were being introduced would have brought along a kind of universal solvent when they came to the novitiate. Here might be another cause of the great "loosening" movement of the 1960s, or at least another straw showing the general direction of the existential wind.

In my interviews with masters of novices who had preceded the major changes of the late 1960s, I asked them if there had come a time when the young men entering the novitiate had begun to seem different. Three replied in the affirmative, and after getting out old catalogs and studying names, reached judgments generally similar--that a change had begun to



appear in the late 1950s. I asked the same question of long-time elementary-school teachers and received similar answers. The children even in grades 1 and 2 began to be "different." In all cases, the difference was described in terms of a more intense individuality, a greater power of self-determination, and insistence upon it. It would seem that some very widespread influences were at work in American society affecting especially the young and gradually producing a type that the sociologists came to designate as the "new breed." The traditional novitiate, with its rigid structure and detailed regulations, would not have appealed to this type.

There is an opinion held by some with much experience that in the period following the Second World War the Society expanded its membership too fast. Under the pressure of an expanding apostolate, especially in the field of education, the provinces accepted applicants in large numbers but did not allocate a corresponding proportion of resources to the task of spiritual formation. In a highly structured and stable society, this mass formation was adequate. But when the great "loosening" occurred, it proved inadequate; an abnormal number of vocations, some of which should not have been accepted initially, collapsed.

According to an old Jesuit saying, the answer to the question "Who is holy in the Society?" runs like this: "Novices seem to be, but are not; the fathers do not seem to be, but are; the brothers both seem to be and are; the scholastics neither seem to be nor are." The saying reflects the position of the scholastics: some distance removed from the first fervor and carefully nurtured habits of the novitiate but not yet arrived at the stability of the fully formed Jesuit. It is only to be expected therefore that of all those with vows the scholastics would be most affected by a disturbed period.

In the 1960s, the peer group of the scholastics, the high-school and college population, was in an unusually turbulent state. I say "unusually" because those in this age group are always somewhat turbulent. They are by nature change-seekers, natural existentialists. The demographers have a saying that every society is invaded by barbarians at regular intervals. These barbarians are young males aged 14 to 24 who come crashing into society not yet knowing how to behave. They have to be taught how to be

members of the established society, but in the meantime they are a source of turbulence. In the 1960s this group grew at an extraordinary rate. In the 70 years from 1890 to 1960, the group grew by 10.6 million. In the next 10 years, the decade of the 1960s, it grew by 11.5 million. In the 1970s, it is expected to grow by only a half million. Definitely, American society was marked by an unusually large proportion of these "barbarians" in the 1960s.<sup>22</sup>

Not only was this secular group unusually large, but the scholastics were unusually open to its influence. The scholastics of this period had begun to move out of their isolated houses of study and into urban colleges, where they dressed like the other students and attended regular classes with them. They must have been influenced by this association. Certainly, it is striking how closely the moods of the scholastics and the timing of changes in their moods corresponded to developments on the secular campuses.

The availability of alternative forms of community service, such as the Peace Corps, may also be an explanatory factor. The corps had the glamour of novelty (a glamour that has already faded, to judge from the declining number of volunteers) and also the advantage of not requiring a lifelong commitment to celibacy. The competition of secular forms of social service was strengthened by the contemporary denial that the way of the vows is "a more excellent way." Also dating had become an earlier and more widespread experience among high-school boys; and sex stimulation in general had grown greatly in modern society.

The enlarged outflow of vocations must be included as a negative event helping to explain the diminished inflow. A ship which is being abandoned by its crew--not quietly, but with much fanfare--must expect to find the recruitment of new members more difficult. Among the explanatory factors, finally, must be included the reluctance of some Jesuit priests to encourage new applicants. I have, myself, encountered several such Jesuits, and their number must have been significant because the general of the order took public notice of the phenomenon in a "Letter on Vocations" of July 11, 1973. Greeley reports the existence of a similar attitude among diocesan clergy.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. The Priests

In 1964 Pope Paul VI issued a new directive regarding the laicization

of priests, which opened a door long closed.<sup>24</sup> Under the new regulations, almost any priest who wished could resign from the ministry and be freed of the obligation to celibacy. In any list of explanatory factors, this one must be accorded great significance. It had at least two effects. First of all, it allowed those priests to resign and marry who had previously wanted to but had been deterred by the considerations of social stigma and a lifelong exclusion from the sacraments. But second, by removing the penalty, it inevitably modified society's evaluation of the act to which the penalty had been attached. The act became thinkable and even, gradually, respectable. Where formerly a priest had to resolutely close his mind against marriage as a hopeless mirage, he now could entertain it as a realistic possibility. It would be strange if some priests in some situations did not begin to consider marriage who would never have considered it otherwise.

What influence the changed policy regarding resignations may have had on new vocations is difficult to say. To a young man frightened by the prospect of an inescapable commitment to celibacy, it could have been the removal of an obstacle. On the other hand, the prospect of leaving the priesthood and starting a layman's life in middle age might have little appeal to an idealistic young man, whereas the inevitable dimming of a heroic quality of the priesthood could have diminished its drawing power.

### 3. Channels of Influence

The forces of change, especially the intellectual developments, may be seen a little more concretely when viewed in relation to some of the channels through which they flowed. The most effective of these channels has already been mentioned, the "communication explosion." Jesuits were fully exposed to modern plays and movies and, of course, to the ubiquitous television. They were reading modern books and articles of every genre, and they were traveling to an unprecedented extent. Perhaps most important of all, they were studying for advanced degrees at secular universities, here and abroad.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to these general channels of communication between the modern world and Jesuits, there was a particular channel, the Jesuit

program of formation. The new theology made its appearance in the Jesuit theologates well before it reached the classroom of Jesuit universities and long before it reached the general Catholic population. In the philosophates, the new existentialist and personalist approaches came in chiefly through a course called the Philosophy of Man. The approach was early recognized as new, and initially as dangerous; at least two professors were quietly removed from their posts for this reason. Later the approach was accepted as a part of the modern world that had to be understood and assimilated. Some of the younger professors in the theologates and philosophates had studied at secular universities or at European Catholic universities where the new ideas had made an earlier appearance.

Whether humanistic psychology had a formal teaching channel through which to reach the Jesuit membership is difficult to say. Certainly, knowledge of it was widespread among those most active in the work of changing past patterns. Some of its tenets entered into the Philosophy of Man. Also, there probably were other situations similar to that in Oregon, where the Jesuit team of John J. Evoy and Van F. Christoph spent several weeks each year at Port Townsend, Washington, providing the tertians with a concentrated course in the new psychology. Their work is reported thus in the tertianship's triennial report for the period 1965-1967;

Fathers Van Christoph and John Evoy engaged the Tertians in discussion relative to the field of psychology. For some six or seven hours a day during a three week period, the Tertians divided into groups and took part in sessions termed "basic encounters" by Carl Rogers and worked for an increased knowledge and understanding of themselves and others, as well as a furthering of friendship and the development of warm interpersonal relationships with others in their group.

If one may judge from a paper delivered by Father Evoy to Jesuit students of theology at Alma, California, in 1962, these sessions included two of the characteristic emphases of the 1960s: exhortation to replace fear and guilt with a positive regard for self, and to replace immature dependence on authority and rule with responsible self-discernment,

Vatican Council II (October, 1962--December, 1965) was, of course,

a very significant channel of influence. As is well known, the original agenda prepared for the council were in the traditional mold. The council fathers themselves, led largely by the European bishops, insisted on controlling the agenda. Supported in their demand by Pope John, they turned the council around. The council's final documents put an unmistakable seal of approval on the general idea of "updating" the Church. The significance of the council lay as much in its encouragement of this general attitude as in the specific decrees it promulgated. After Vatican II, change was "in." The council began its pastoral constitution on the Church in the Modern World, with the declaration (in no. 5): "History itself speeds along on so rapid a course that an individual person can scarcely keep abreast of it. . . . Thus, the human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one,"

Addressing itself specifically to the religious life in its decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life (1965), the council directed (no. 3): "Therefore let constitutions, directories, custom books, books of prayers and ceremonies and such like be suitably re-edited." The following year, Pope Paul VI issued detailed instructions for implementing this desired adaptation in his Norms for Implementing the Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life (August, 1966). Each religious institute was to summon a special general chapter for this purpose and was to follow democratic methods by providing "ample and free consultation with all the subjects . . . by setting up commissions, by sending out questionnaires, etc." (nos. 3, 4). The institutes were invited to experiment freely, albeit prudently, and were given the assurance: "Experiments which run counter to common law will be readily authorized by the Holy See as need arises" (no. 6).

The 31st General Congregation of the Jesuit order (May, 1965--November, 1966) was another broad and potent channel of influence.<sup>26</sup> Although convened primarily to elect a successor to Father John Janssens, who had died, it was unmistakably affected from the very beginning by the prevalent spirit of change. More postulates for alterations in the Society's life were received by this congregation than had been received by all previous congregations combined. Faced with an extraordinary task, the

congregation followed an extraordinary procedure. It adjourned in July, 1965, and spent a year in further preparation before resuming work in a second session beginning in September, 1966,

The spirit of the congregation's final decrees is caught in the following examples taken from its *Documents*.<sup>27</sup> "It [the congregation] has determined that the *entire* government of the Society must be adapted to modern necessities and ways of living: that our *whole* training in spirituality and in studies must be changed" (Decree 2, no. 3; italics supplied). Regarding the formation of novices: "New experiments . . . ought to be prudently and boldly pursued" (D. 8, no. 14). "Superiors should provide that the novices . . . have sufficient social contact with their contemporaries, both within and outside the Society" (D. 8, no. 22). Regarding the scholastics: "True dialogue should exist between superiors, professors, and scholastics. It should be possible for all to express opinions and make suggestions. . . ." (D. 9, no. 10). "The scholastics should learn to read critically and to use prudently the works even of non-Catholics, especially of those who have great influence on the modern mind" (D. 9, no. 47). With regard to ministries, the congregation noted a worrisome disproportion "between Jesuit efforts and the results achieved," considered various possible reasons, and concluded that "the principal reason is our failure adequately to adapt our ministries to the changed conditions of our times" (D. 21, no. 1).

A direct result of the congregation was the Santa Clara Conference of the American Assistancy (August 6-19, 1967) devoted to the "Total Formation of the Jesuit Priest" and attended by all the American provincials. This conference, which was mentioned earlier in connection with the proportion of leaders who later left, produced six volumes of proceedings and had a strong influence on subsequent developments. It was to the authority of the Santa Clara Conference, for example, that the novices of Wernersville appealed when they prepared a 1967 "White Paper" for the Maryland provincial outlining their suggested changes in the novitiate.

The congregation was also followed by a flood of meetings at the provincial level called to plan the details of the updating process.<sup>28</sup> This planning activity took a quasi-permanent form when most of the

provinces established a province "congress" or "senate" or "assembly," whose members, elected from every grade of the order, continued to meet periodically. Finally, there was an extraordinary number of meetings within local communities, where most of the concrete action would necessarily have to occur. One result of all these meetings filled with proposals for change was a deep, often bitter, polarization of "liberal" and "conservative" Jesuits within each community.

An assistancy newspaper, *National Jesuit News*, begun in 1971, provides a picture of the polarization with a frankness that was itself a reflection of the extent to which traditional behavioral patterns were in flight. This newspaper, along with similar papers published by the provinces of Oregon and New England, did more than reflect the current debates. They were themselves strong stimulants of change and controversy. The history of the national paper includes the final item that the founding editor left the priesthood in 1972 and married a longtime friend.

Although, as pointed out previously, the basic forces at work in the period were deeper than any specifically American phenomena, contemporary events in American life, especially the Viet Nam War, certainly had a direct influence on the younger Jesuits. As I plan to detail elsewhere, the attitudes and actions of college youth are closely paralleled, even to the month, among Jesuit scholastics. Similarly the women's and blacks' liberation movements are closely paralleled by the demands of novices, scholastics, and brothers for fuller rights and privileges in the order. The parallel extends not only to the objects sought, but also the means used, which included confrontations, demonstrations, and direct action in violation of existing law. In both the secular and sacral spheres there was a similar atmosphere of excitement, change, and revolution. All institutions, including the Church, were judged to have lost credibility and relevance.

The Jesuit order was not exempted from this judgment. Many of those who left the order gave as one of their reasons that they despaired of the order ever making the adjustments demanded by the changing times. Thus the characteristics of the order were among the causes of separations. However, the inclusion of this element among the other explanatory factors presents two problems.

The first is the purely logical difficulty of listing this as an explanatory factor of the *changes* that occurred in Jesuit membership. This factor seems to lack the first requisite as an explanation of change: it, itself, did not change. The order rejected by the departing Jesuits of the past decade was substantially the same order as that accepted by preceding generations. The simple fact is that some individuals within the order changed. An accurate, if cumbersome, statement of the relationship would be: An absence of institutional change in a changing world was a cause of change (in their vocation) among those who themselves had changed (in their values).

The other problem is that the order did, as a matter of fact, change, at first slowly and then very fast, during the period under study. The results of this institutional change were varied. (1) Some Jesuits gave as their reason for leaving this very fact of change. The altered order was not the order to which they had vowed perpetual commitment. These cases were relatively few. (2) Other Jesuits left even after the kinds of changes they were demanding had been made on a large scale. Of these, some found that their problem was really with religious life as such, while others called for still more change (some wrote articles, for example, proposing that provision be made for married Jesuits). (3) Finally, there were some Jesuits who said they might have left if the changes had not been made but were now happy in their vocation. Of all these, probably only the first fits neatly within the paradigm of explanatory factors of the membership changes described in Part II.

#### E. Other Influences

##### 1. Personal Factors

The investigation here is necessarily confined to separations from religious life. Information on personal factors influencing entrances into religious orders during the 1960s is completely lacking. To obtain such information one would have to study a representative group of young men, including those who had never considered a vocation. An alternative approach would be to interview spiritual directors with extensive experi-



ence in counseling young men. But to my knowledge, no systematic information has been gathered from either source.

As regards the decision to leave the religious life, personal factors are obviously important. Within each generation, nearly all Jesuits were subjected to substantially the same external influences in the 1960s. That some persevered while others chose to leave is chiefly explainable, in all probability, by personal factors. That personal attitudes changed during this period is clear enough. In many cases, they changed substantively. In many more, they were at least allowed to surface more freely and to come to bear directly on events.

As so often is the case, the factors one would most want to know are the ones most difficult to know. Except in the case of priests, no records are maintained of the reasons why Jesuits leave. Even in the case of priests, these records are incomplete and inadequate. Some men simply walk out the door and offer no reason for their going. Many comply with the legal requirement and submit reasons why they wish to be dispensed from their vows, but the reasons are often mere formalities, much like those submitted in divorce actions. Furthermore, these records are kept in strictest confidence. I had access to only a general summary of the information contained in them.

Still another obstacle stands in the way of our search: simply, the complex inwardness of what we are searching for. Oftentimes, the man who leaves does not himself know clearly at the time the basic reasons why he wishes to change his life commitment; still less can he retrace the steps by which his change of heart came about. Of all the limitations on the search for explanatory factors, this is perhaps the principal one. Certainly, it limits considerably the usefulness of the questionnaire and even the interview techniques for gathering information in this precise area.

These techniques are further limited because they usually elicit only one side of the story of the broken relationship between the man and his order. As any one who has done marriage counseling knows, the version of only one party is rarely the complete and balanced history of the relationship.

At the International Institute on Ignatian Spirituality, held in 1973 in San Francisco, one of the Jesuit speakers criticized the order for not giving native Jesuits in underdeveloped countries equality with European Jesuits. In support of his charge, he instanced the case of a young Jesuit priest, a native, who had courageously left the order in protest against this policy. He gave as his source the man's friends, who had it from the man himself. Then two Jesuit missionaries from the country in question rose to read a letter from the Jesuit superior of the mission. The letter disclosed that the young man had violated his vow of chastity in a grave matter, had been penanced and warned, had committed the same act two years later with another woman, and had thereupon been dismissed. All this had been kept a secret, as usual, and the two missionaries had been strictly enjoined to say nothing unless the charge was made publicly at this international meeting. This is one instance that accidentally became public, but there are other similar instances that never became public. In general, published data on reasons why priests leave are limited insofar as they present only one side of the relationship.

## 2. Surveys

One study which used the interview technique was that by E.J. Schallert, S.J.,<sup>29</sup> who reported on interviews with 317 separated priests, located chiefly on the West Coast, during the period 1966-1970. Interviews were simultaneously conducted with a control group of priests still in the ministry. The study sought to test the hypothesis that the two groups would show significant differences in their attitudes towards key decrees of Vatican II. The finding was negative: there was no significant difference between the two groups in this respect.

After reporting this negative finding, which is the main conclusion of his study, Schallert adds two observations that are very important but do not seem to be organically connected with the structure of the study. He states, first, that a characteristic of the separated priests was the absence in their clerical lives of "the crucial other," namely, someone "with whom the priest actually shared his inner feelings, his real joys and sorrows, his virtues and his vices, his successes and

failures, his hopes and his despair" (p. 58). He also states that "women become significant in the life of a Catholic priest only after he has made at least a latent decision to leave the clergy" (p. 59). This leads him in the next sentence to the unqualified generalization: "Having ruled out celibacy as a factor in the lives of the priests who have left the active ministry. . . ."

Probably because it was set up to test a different hypothesis, the study does not provide the evidence for this conclusion or even the criteria that were used. Presumably, the judgment rests on Father Schallert's very considerable personal experience in interviewing such a large number of separated priests. This experience carries much weight. Nonetheless, one would like some information on how this judgment was reached. Taken literally, the conclusion seems extreme. Official reports on separated priests show that at a time of separation some priests have had a history of sexual problems. It is not clear that in all such cases "celibacy as a factor" is "ruled out."

Perhaps what the study is saying is that the initial problem is not usually a physical attraction to venereal pleasure but a psychological need best described as loneliness. In this form, the proposition would agree with the findings of the study of the National Opinion Research Center cited immediately below; but is it possible to disassociate the problem of loneliness from celibacy?

During 1969-1970, the National Opinion Research Center carried out a survey of Catholic priests and bishops. The study was conducted by NORC under contract with the U.S. Catholic Conference, that is, the American bishops. This study, of which Andrew M. Greeley and Richard Schoenherr<sup>30</sup> were principal investigators, was the most inclusive survey of the Catholic clergy (diocesan and religious) ever undertaken.<sup>31</sup> It obtained questionnaire responses from 5,155 active priests, 750 separated priests, 165 bishops, and 155 religious superiors. The report was presented to the client bishops in 1971.

It was followed in 1972 by Greeley's condensed analysis, *Priests in the United States*,<sup>32</sup> in which the author reports: More than four out of five of the separated priests said they were very satisfied with their

decision to resign (p. 195). Only about 20% still went to church every week and considered themselves to be active members of the Church (p. 193). Four out of five were married at the time of the survey. Of their wives, 80% were Catholic, and over 40% were former nuns (p. 195). Approximately half of the wives attended church each week; the wives were, therefore, somewhat more religious than their husbands.

Contrary to their expectations, the directors of the study found no significant correlation between separation from the priesthood and such "institutional structures" as region of the country, size of the diocese, proportion of religious priests in the diocese, the authority structure of the diocese, the number of priests who had not become pastors, the length of time one had to wait to become a pastor, and many other similar structural items (p. 102). Greeley thought this to be "the most important negative finding of the study" (p. 103). Taken in combination with the negative finding of the Schallert study, it reinforces the importance of personal factors.

It was expected that priests who left would differ markedly from those who stayed in their attitude and relationship to authority. This did not prove to be the case. Relationships with authority did not provide a reliable predictor of separation from the priesthood. As the original report concludes, if steps were taken to solve the work and authority problems in the priesthood but the problem of loneliness remained unresolved, the desire to marry and the resultant resignations would fall only slightly. If, on the other hand, the loneliness problem could be solved, the desire to marry and decisions to resign would decline rather considerably, although the clergy's problems with authority would remain substantially unresolved.

When asked what crucial events may have been the turning points in their decision to leave, 12% mentioned realization that they had lost their faith. Only 14% mentioned the experience of encounter groups, T-groups, or sensitivity sessions. But 63% mentioned a relationship with a woman. "Whatever frustrations and difficulties may have preceded the decision to leave, for most resignees it was the experience of an emotional relationship with a woman that tipped the scales in the direction of resignation."<sup>33</sup>

According to Greeley: "The desire to marry is the main (though not the only) explanation of the inclination to leave the priesthood, and loneliness is the main (though not the only) explanation for the desire to marry." Greeley adds: "We may say that loneliness as a problem is 10 times more powerful as an explanation of a desire to marry than authority as a problem."<sup>34</sup> The study does not have a final answer to the further--and central--question why and how some priests changed until they found celibate loneliness too great a burden to carry.

Aside from the important finding that priests who had left the priesthood were the least likely to report having had frequent "religious experience,"<sup>35</sup> the study throws little light on what would seem to be a crucial area, namely, the piety of the priest. What was his prayer life like, in quantity and in quality? What were his practices of mortification? Did his life-style reflect priestly poverty? What were his virtues and vices as reflected in his confessions? How prudent was he in his recreations, in his reading, in his relationships with women? How open was he with his spiritual director, with his superior? Did the priests who persevered and those who left differ in their practices of piety? Generations of novices and seminarians had been trained in a life-style of piety and told that unless they lived in this style they would be risking their vocation. To what extent was the prediction fulfilled in the event? (Whatever the answer, it leaves open the further question whether that life-style was still appropriate to the modern world.)

According to the NORC study, work satisfaction had only a slight influence on the decision to leave the priesthood.<sup>36</sup> Certainly, no significant number of Jesuit priests left in order to carry through some important work from which they were barred by membership in the order. More often the separated Jesuit priest continued to perform exactly the same task as before, sometimes even going to court to retain his former job. This aspect of the departures confirms the impression that the principal explanatory factors are to be found in the area of personal problems. If the former priest did change jobs, it was usually to a task more ordinary, less idealistic. Often he was under economic pressure and had little choice,<sup>37</sup> but there is little doubt that, taken collectively, the jobs

at which former Jesuit priests are working supply no significant part of the explanation of why they left,

A potentially rich source of information would seem to be the experience of spiritual directors and superiors, who have dealt intimately with many men struggling with the decision to stay or leave. I talked at length to a number of such directors and superiors and came away with two conclusions. First, certitude in this area is practically unobtainable. My informants were in an excellent, perhaps the best, position to learn what forces were at work; yet they could claim no clear view of the situation. They were defeated by the variety of motivations involved and the impossibility of assigning weights to each motivational factor.

Second, the separated Jesuits were not a homogeneous lot. My informants were impressed more by the differences than by the similarities of the men who left. They rejected the very idea of a "typical" separated Jesuit. Instead they tended to think in terms of classes of men, without being able to assign relative weights to each class.<sup>38</sup> As I went over my notes, I became aware that my informants were describing four general categories of vocational crisis: two of growth and two of decline. The four do not, of course, comprehend all possible situations; they are merely those most frequently mentioned.

The first category is that of a vocation troubled from the beginning. This individual had pronounced his vows and was ordained under pressure of some kind, usually from family and friends. Whether or not the pressure had really been undue, it was perceived as such and felt as a powerful force. He had been aware for some time of his inadequate motivation, enough aware to be continually uneasy and unhappy in his vocation. He finally attained sufficient truthfulness to admit the situation and sufficient courage to act on it.

A poignant example of this category was described to me by the spiritual director in one of the theologates. The young man was in danger of death, yet refused to accept the last sacraments. As he later explained to his director (after he had recovered and had resolved to leave) he feared lest the reception of the sacraments would keep him from dying, and he wanted to die as the only way out of his dilemma of either leaving

and scandalizing his family, or staying where he knew he did not belong. The development here is more affective than cognitive, more a growth in the will than in the intellect. The modern existential thrust to find one's "authentic self," not in external status or role playing, but in absolutely free, individual choice would have tended to move such a Jesuit on to the moment of truth.

The second category is that of a man who experienced a development that was primarily intellectual, chiefly in the areas of theology and psychology. His understanding changed--of the Church, of the vows, of ordination, and of the process of human maturation. At that point, he reached the conclusion that the religious life and the priesthood were not what he really wanted. Such a man tends to describe his previous attitude as the pursuit of a mirage and his present attitude as the result of a process of demythologizing; he has grown out of an adolescent "triumphalism" that romanticized the religious or clerical state as intrinsically superior to the married lay state. I was acquainted personally with two young men who seemed to fit this category. They described their change and their reason for leaving by saying that they had grown in the same way as the Church herself had grown between Vatican I and Vatican II. Some went further and declared that the religious life as traditionally understood was doomed and would soon be unacceptable to any healthy personality.

This is the category most likely to condemn the traditional Society as being destructive of human freedom and inimical to the development of true personhood. A close acquaintance of mine spent six months at Esalen (California), which is a prime example of the union of existentialist philosophy and "third-force" psychology. After this experience, he declared that it would be impossible for him to return to the confining artificiality, as he had learned to see it, of religious life. He married a former nun whom he had met through Esalen.

The third category is characterized by a decline in intellectual clarity and a resulting confusion of mind. Men in this category were not scholars. Having never understood the basic reasons for the traditional positions, when these positions encountered challenge and change they lost their bearings--at first with some feelings of dismay, later with a euphoric

exhilaration of casting off restraints. This was the category most likely to be caught up in mass movements and to embrace changes without thinking through their implications, especially the implications for a life of celibacy. A man in this category would have been carried along automatically by the structure of the old regime. When he abandoned this structure and had to make multiple individual choices, it was easy for him to make choices that were "wrong," in the sense that they were inconsistent. Eventually his situation became so confused that he simply wanted out. When he left, it was often in a rush, with little or no previous consultation with superior or spiritual director. This category is the most likely to furnish examples of men who, looking back many years later, will regret their leaving in the 1960s. In my own limited experience, I encountered three cases of near misses, that is, men who had decided to leave, had been persuaded to postpone the action, and had ultimately decided to stay. As of present writing, they are still functioning in the order.

The fourth category is marked by spiritual decline. Genuinely called by the Lord to "imitate Him more nearly by the practice of the evangelical counsels" (Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life [1965]), they first accepted the call, but then lost their vocation through their own sins. Their decline may have been gradual, taking the classic form of infidelity to numerous graces inviting them to closer union, until they fell under the law that not to progress is to decay. One day they awoke to the realization that nothing in the religious life appealed to them enough to make it bearable.

Some of those in the process of decline would have been struggling with "middle life" (34-42 years of age), whose problems, Carl Jung had come to believe, are as severe as those of adolescence. Men in middle life are liable to depression and gnawing doubts about the validity of their life choices. The doubts arise from the disparity they perceive between their youthful aspirations and their current condition. They begin to look for a new job, a new wife, a new anything to escape the oppressive feeling of failure and decay. This common problem would be felt the more acutely by religious because of their explicit call to the "state of perfection" and because of their constant exposure to self-examination, as



demanded for example in their daily "examens" and in their annual retreat.

The forms of moral decline are as numerous as the capital sins and all their derivatives. Such decline is recognized as a real possibility from the beginning of the novitiate, and much of the early training is intended to provide safeguards against this ultimate tragedy. No one would be foolhardy enough to attempt to say who belongs to what degree in this category. On the other hand it is unrealistic not to recognize its existence.

There is little in the intellectual developments or in the events described in the earlier sections that would have led to a marked increase in this category. But even if no change occurred in the number in this category, the new Vatican policy adopted in 1964, whereby a priest could more easily be dispensed from his clerical obligations, including his obligation to celibacy, could be expected to increase the number of this group who left the priesthood, taking advantage of the new opportunity to escape from an impossible situation and make a new start.

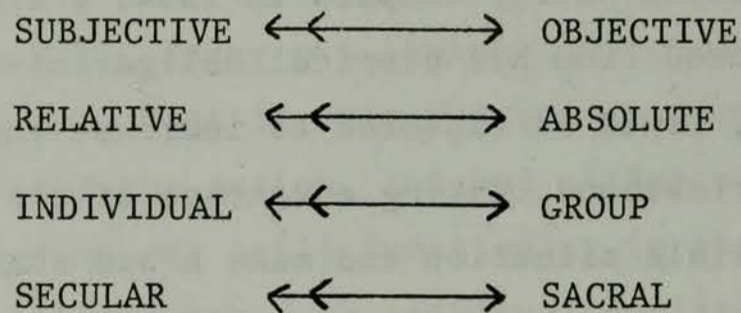
### PART III. A HILLTOP VIEW

The change in ideas and events described above may be viewed broadly as shifts along four axes of vital tension in the Western world. Because these tensions reflect basic understandings of reality, any change in them inevitably produces at least temporary dislocations in society. As shifts in the earth's crust have produced earthquakes, so shifts in these basic tensions have produced shocks felt by all the major social structures of Western society--by the family, the school, the military establishment, the labor union--but especially by the Church and its religious orders.

Just why religious orders were affected more than other social groups is an interesting question that must wait for an answer until another occasion. But it is clear that any answer must include at least three factors in the discussion: (1) There had been an accumulation of maladjustments, because of the previous long delay in making needed adjustments to modernity; (2) some of the modern developments are in direct and essential opposition to some of the principles of traditional religious life; and (3) religious orders are voluntary groups, whose members enter

and leave free from the kind of political and economic pressures which affect other groups such as the family, the state, and even the school and labor union. Each of these three factors calls for more extensive development, but not here.

The four shifts along the axes of vital tension are shown in the diagram below. The four are not adequately distinct, but are rather like the intertwining strands of a single cable. The arrows signify mutual interaction and (almost) constant movement. The double arrow indicates the direction in which the center of balanced tension has moved in modern times.



I have put the shift along the subjective-objective axis first because it seems to me to be the key movement, the one which, understood, leads most naturally to an understanding of the others. The move along the relative-absolute axis is very closely related to the increased emphasis on subjectivity. Together, these two shifts produced a giant, Heraclitean tremor that literally shook to its foundations the post-Tridentine Catholic world. The Jesuit order had its origin in that world and was especially shaken because its intellectual apostolate and flexible constitution made it especially sensitive to new developments.

The shift towards individualism was inevitably felt by all religious orders; for the religious order is the epitome of group life. In the traditional religious order, the individual did not determine his own order of the day, or his work, or his dress, or his travel. He allowed his mail to be opened and his faults to be reported. He gave up individual property and the hope of a family of his own. The shift towards individualism was felt especially by the Jesuit order insofar as one of its distinguishing characteristics is its special vow of obedience to the pope. If any one change could be said to mark the 1960s, it was the altered understanding of law, authority, and obedience.

The shift from the sacral towards the secular was of its nature, of course, disturbing to sacral institutions. This shift was the direct result of independent developments in Western culture, especially in the field of science. It was further fostered, however, by the other three shifts, which together tended to produce a Sartre-like type of individual: completely independent, the sole norm of reality. Such an individual does not dwell at ease in the realm of the sacral, which postulates an absolute reality on which all individuals are dependent and from which they derive their meaning.

These shifts and the resulting shocks to traditional structures inevitably affected some vocations. At any one time, a psychological snapshot of a religious group would show a certain number of weakened vocations. The weakness might be of long-standing origin or be recent; in either case, it might be temporary or quasi-permanent, and it might stem from a wide variety of causes. Such fundamental shifts as occurred in the 1960s would have toppled some of these weakened vocations. Even some previously strong vocations would have begun to show cracks and strains as the foundations on which they had been built shifted.

How the four shifts affected the inflow of vocations is less clear; but, in general, the shift away from the sacral would have worked against religious vocations. The effect would have been reinforced by the highly publicized outflow of vocations, which must have tended to confuse or discourage potential applicants. Also the uncertainty which some Jesuits began to feel about the nature of religious life--in the light of these basic shifts--was translated into a diminished, or even a negative, recruiting effort.

The initial impact of any force is often not the same as its long-run effect. What the long-run impact of the shifts in Western culture will be on the now changed structure of Jesuit life remains to be seen. I should think it would take at least another generation for the picture to become reasonably clear.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 I have in process a more comprehensive treatment of change in the Jesuit order, of which the present description of changed Jesuit membership forms a part.
- 2 Moreover, the trend of novice entrants is rarely smooth, but is subject to large irregularities.
- 3 Some estimates of the numbers of future Jesuit priests in education may be seen on p. 79 of Reference [1] as listed on p. 75 just below.
- 4 Note the difference between this Table 8 below, which is in terms of the year of entrance, and Table 7, which is in terms of the year of occurrence. Where Table 8 follows the fortunes of each entering class, from the time of its entrance to the end of 1975, Table 7 narrates events as they occurred in a given year, whatever might have been the year of entrance of the persons involved.
- 5 Seventeen of these were from entering classes before 1926 and hence do not appear in the totals of Table 8, which begins with the entering class of 1926.
- 6 Originally this paragraph ended with the following statement: "It is equally significant, however, that the other 80% shared many of the views of those who left, yet themselves remained in the order." The sentence was deleted because its function was clearly evaluative and hence outside the scope of the study. It does not help to explain the "recession," that is, the collapse in membership, which is the only objective of this study. However, the reader should recognize that if the purpose of the study were evaluation, balancing statements similar to the one deleted could properly be made at many places in the narration.
- 7 No Jesuit province could quite equal the experience of another religious order in the United States where the novitiate bulletin board carried a letter one Sunday morning from the rector of the house saying that he was leaving to be married and asking the prayers of the novices for himself and his bride, and the next Sunday morning carried a letter from the master of novices with the identical message.
- 8 The data for the Maryland-New York Province, although presented by year of entrance (Table 9), clearly reveal the same general trends.
- 9 *American Participation in the Second Vatican Council* (see Reference [2] on page 75 below), p. 436.
- 10 L'Heureux, *Picnic in Babylon* (Ref. [3] on page 75 below), p. 261.
- 11 King, *Sartre and the Sacred* (Ref. [4] on page 75 below), p. 123.
- 12 A distinct, yet somewhat related, attitude is reported in a 1972 survey of American priests. Of the religious-order priests surveyed, 44% selected the following statement as best expressing their

- attitude; "Religious life is so tied to institutions that its prophetic role is almost snuffed out" (p. 361 of [5] on p. 75 below).
- 13 See Ref. [6] below on p. 75.
  - 14 It should not be necessary, but it may be expedient, to remind the reader that the scope of this analysis is limited to that which helps explain the statistical history presented in the first section. The various intellectual developments reviewed here may have had other, and rather different impacts, as well as the possible impact considered here.
  - 15 They could have quoted Rogers: "What does becoming oneself mean? It appears to mean less fear of the organismic, nonreflective reactions which one has; a gradual growth of trust in, and even affection for, the complex, varied, rich assortment of feelings and tendencies which exist in one at the organic or organismic level" ([6], p. 102), p. 75.
  - 16 An extreme example of this attitude was reported by a spiritual director in one of the theologates. The young man, a second-year theologian, argued that he ought to have the experience of sexual relations with a woman. Since one really knew only what one had personally experienced, how could he know what celibacy entailed without the experience of the alternative? Would not his ordination be rendered invalid by such ignorance?
  - 17 Baum himself was almost "loosened" out of his vocation by his changed views, but then found satisfactory answers to his problems in the writings of Karl Rahner and Maurice Blondel ([7], pp. 22-23), p. 75.
  - 18 R. E. Brown, p. 7 of Reference [8], below on p. 75.
  - 19 In 1950, when Gustave Weigel and Norris Clarke were both teaching at Woodstock College, the former wrote to the latter to express his uneasiness over what might be the fruits of the existential philosophy which Father Clarke was introducing to his students. Father Weigel was afraid that for at least some of the students the end result might be a form of situation ethics. He was also afraid lest "the irrational id be released on the young men of the province."
  - 20 In his book in [9] below, on p. 75.
  - 21 See [10] below, on p. 75.
  - 22 A popular song of the period was "Fifty-one Percent," a reference to the time when young voters would constitute a majority and would take over the country. Their sheer numbers encouraged the ebullient, revolutionary spirit of the young in the 1960s. On balance, this spirit was probably a bar to consideration of entrance into the confinement of a novitiate.
  - 23 P. 203 of [11], below on p. 75.
  - 24 Pius XII had quietly begun an enquiry into the possibility of easing the lot of former priests leading good Christian lives but barred from the sacraments. Pope John was opposed to the idea and halted the

investigation, Pope Paul reopened the issue and made the final decision to change the traditional practice. This pattern of action is the opposite of that popularly associated with these three popes.

- 25 As much as a century previously, the Jesuit General, Father Peter Beckx, had warned that the education of Jesuits could not be confined to traditional philosophy and theology, but must be extended to all modern knowledge. In the United States, this direction was given gradual implementation, at first by introducing some modern courses into the houses of studies. Then, beginning about a generation ago, superiors began to send their men to outside universities for graduate degrees. The multiplied effects of this fateful step are still developing.
- 26 The 30th General Congregation (1957) should perhaps be included as a negative explanatory factor insofar as, in compliance with Pope Pius XII's opening message, the congregation pretty much held the line on proposals for change and repressed what was perceived as a growing restlessness. The eventual updating, when it came, was probably the more disturbing because of the postponement.
- 27 See [12] on p. 75 below.
- 28 Some of the provinces, beginning with the Chicago Province, hired professional consulting firms to help them in the planning task.
- 29 See [13] below, on p. 75.
- 30 Richard Schoenherr left the priesthood at about the time the study was published. He thus joins Bernard Cooke and Carl Armbruster as priests who left the ministry after having been commissioned by the bishops to study the American priesthood.
- 31 The study is listed in [5] below, on p. 75. It is reviewed, rather critically, by Thomas M. Gannon, S.J., in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 12, No. 2, June, 1973.
- 32 No. [11] below, on p. 75.
- 33 See p. 281 in [5] below, on p. 75.
- 34 Pp. 183, 185 in [11] below, on p. 75.
- 35 P. 75 in [5] below, on p. 75.
- 36 P. 369 in [5] below, on p. 75.
- 37 In the July, 1976, issue of *Money*, the situation of Frank Gutowski, a former Jesuit priest at John Carroll University, is described in detail. Although possessed of a doctorate in physics, he was reduced to supporting his new family, a divorcee with four children, on a \$10,000-a-year county job and had reached the point where he was willing to subordinate his job-seeking efforts to those of his wife. The NORC study reports that two-thirds of all separated priests were earning less than \$12,000 yearly; one-third, less than \$9,000 yearly.
- 38 They were spiritual directors and superiors, not trained psychologists

who, having constructed a model of expected behavior, would have kept the kind of records needed to test the model.

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APPENDIX OF STATISTICAL TABLESPreliminary Statistical Note

The data presented in the following tables, pages 78 through 104, are reliable enough for the generalized analysis employed here; but the reader who might wish to refine the analysis must be prepared to do so at his own risk. Small differences may be more apparent than real, and some data are as likely to belong to an adjoining year as to the year in which they actually appear. Not infrequently, equally official publications carry slightly different figures for what purport to be identical categories.

The chief original sources of the statistics are the Jesuit province catalogs and the annual reports made by each province to Rome. A catalog--say, 1959--generally reflects the situation as of the beginning of a year--say, January, 1959. Since both sources contribute to the data, the time reference of some of the data is slightly ambiguous. One master of novices may include in his report all entrants, even those who stayed only a few days, while another may include only those novices still in the novitiate at the time he makes his report, late in the fall or early in January. Other statistical problems, not always perfectly solved, relate to the transfers of men between provinces and grades, or to the determination of the exact year in which a Jesuit is "separated" from the order. However, the very general propositions developed on the basis of the tables shown here are not dependent on a greater degree of accuracy than may reasonably be attributed to the data.

A. TEXT TABLES

Table 1. Changes in Membership of the Society of  
Jesus, American Assistancy, by Selected  
Grade, by Year, 1958-1975.

Year	Scholastic Novices				Scholastics			Priests		
	Entrants		Separations		Number beginning year	Separations		Number beginning year	Separations	
	No.	Index <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>		No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>		No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	
1958	341	100	91	14.9	* 2431	73	3.0	4381	2	0.05
1959	* 408	120	97	15.9	2294	58	2.5	4236	6	0.14
1960	407	120	113	16.4	2430	76	3.1	4515	5	0.11
1961	384	113	112	16.3	2345	68	2.8	4405	5	0.11
1962	396	116	*130	19.2	2376	73	3.0	4504	6	0.13
1963	359	105	123	19.2	2396	87	3.6	4592	7	0.15
1964	356	104	129	21.7	2391	111	4.6	4692	7	0.15
1965	257	75	101	17.0	2316	111	4.7	4768	7	0.15
1966	213	62	104	20.6	2266	131	5.7	4845	17	0.35
1967	202	59	69	19.5	2110	173	8.1	4749	14	0.29
1968	161	47	88	24.4	2053	*184	8.9	4980	41	0.82
1969	128	38	68	23.3	2012	181	8.9	* 4988	81	1.62
1970	85	25	49	20.6	1812	147	8.1	4968	*96	1.93
1971	90	26	35	18.9	1587	125	7.8	4888	74	1.51
1972	96	28	30	17.1	1390	71	5.1	4868	67	1.37
1973	89	26	26	14.1	1206	76	6.3	4835	68	1.40
1974	128	38	32	15.6	867	65	7.4	4882	59	1.20
1975	127	37	47	21.2	744	66	8.3	4801	49	1.04
<u>1958-1975</u>										
Total	4227		1444			1876			611	
Average				18.5			5.4			0.7
1975/1958(%)	37				31			109		

Source: Same as Table A-1.

\* Peak year

<sup>1/</sup> 1958=100

<sup>2/</sup> Number separated during calendar year as percent of all (novices) (scholastics) (priests) at the beginning of year.

Table 2. Changes in Membership of Coadjutor Brothers in American Assistency, by Year 1957-1973

Year	Novice Brothers			Vowed Brothers				
	Entrants		Separations	Number at Beginning of Year	Index <sup>1/</sup>	Separations		
	No.	Index <sup>1/</sup>				No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
1957	33	132	10	16.3	603	102	9	1.5
1958	25	100	3	4.7	593	100	8	1.3
1959	27	108	4	7.6	573	97	13	2.3
1960	* 52	208	10	21.2	600	101	2	0.3
1961	40	160	13	25.4	617	104	3	0.5
1962	38	152	18	26.8	614	104	4	0.7
1963	34	136	11	15.2	616	104	6	1.0
1964	41	164	17	32.0	647	109	6	0.9
1965	31	124	18	29.5	656	111	14	2.1
1966	31	124	12	21.8	653	110	3	0.5
1967	23	92	17	38.6	* 671	113	12	1.7
1968	13	52	5	13.1	668	113	13	1.9
1969	5	20	9	31.0	650	110	22	3.3
1970	3	12	3	20.0	635	107	18	2.8
1971	1	4	2	22.2	609	103	10	1.6
1972	6	24	3	75.0	585	99	11	1.8
1973	10	40	2	40.0	562	95	13	2.3

Source: [1], pp. 60, 61.

\* Peak year

<sup>1/</sup> 1958 = 100

<sup>2/</sup> Number separated during calendar year as percent of all (novices) (vowed brothers) at the beginning of year.

Table 3. Educational Level of Scholastic Novices in American Assistancy, by Year, 1960-1975

Year	Percent with no college	Percent with some college	Percent with college degrees
1960	62	38	14
1961	62	38	16
1962	58	42	15
1963	62	38	10
1964	61	39	10
1965	64	36	10
1966	67	33	15
Average <sup>1/</sup> 1960-1966	62	37	12
1967	54	46	18
1968	45	55	27
1969	37	63	34
1970	41	59	36
Average <sup>1/</sup> 1967-1970	44	55	28
1971	24	76	43
1972	23	77	35
1973	23	77	49
1974	26	74	44
1975	22	78	54
Average <sup>1/</sup> 1971-1975	23	76	45

Source: Annual Survey, Educational Origins of Scholastic Novices, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities.

<sup>1/</sup> Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100 percent.

Table 4. Numbers of Sisters, Brothers, Seminarians and Priests in the United States, 1954-1975

Year	(1) Sisters Number	(2) Index <sup>3/</sup>	(3) Brothers Number	(4) Index <sup>3/</sup>	(5) Seminarians Number	(6) Index <sup>3/</sup>	(7) Priests Number	(8) Index <sup>2/</sup>
1954	158,069	96	8,752	90	32,344	85	46,970	89
1956	162,657	99	9,300	96	36,468	96	49,725	94
1958	164,922	100	9,709	100	38,005	100	52,689	100
1960	170,438	103	10,928	113	41,871	110	54,682	103
1962	177,154	107	11,968	123	47,574	125	56,540	107
1964	179,954	109	12,271	126	*48,992	129	58,632	111
1965	*181,421	110	12,255	126	48,046	126	59,193	112
1966	176,671	107	*12,539	129	45,319	119	*59,892	113
1967	176,341	107	12,261	126	39,838	105	59,803	113
1968	167,167	101	11,755	121	33,990	89	59,620	113
1969	160,931	98	11,623	120	28,819	76	59,191	112
1970	153,645	93	10,156	105	28,710	76	58,161	110
1971	146,914	89	9,740	100	22,963	60	57,421	109
1972	143,054	87	9,201	95	21,780	57	56,969	108
1973	139,963	85	9,233	95	19,348	51	56,712	107
1974	135,225	82	8,625	89	17,802	47	58,909	111
1975	130,995	79	8,563	88	17,247	45	58,847	111

Source: Catholic Directory

\* Peak year

<sup>1/</sup> Includes religious preparing for ordination.

<sup>2/</sup> Includes ordained religious

<sup>3/</sup> 1958 = 100

Table 5. Estimated Separation Rate <sup>1/</sup> of Diocesan Priests  
in the United States,  
by Year, 1966-1973

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rate</u>
1966	0.43
1967	0.98
1968	1.76
1969	2.03
1970	1.57
1971	1.77
1972	2.03
1973	1.62
Average 1966-1973	1.52

Source: Adapted from [16], Table 1.

<sup>1/</sup> Number separated in a calendar year as percent of total active priests at beginning of year. Estimated by Schoenherr on basis of two surveys.

**Table 6.** Women Religious Separated from Their Orders, as Percent of Total in Orders at Beginning of Year, United States, by Year, 1965-1972

Year	Number Beginning Year (est.)	Separations	
		Number	Percent of Column (1)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1965	128,809	1,062	0.82
1966	125,436	1,421	1.13
1967	125,202	2,417	1.93
1968	118,689	2,768	2.33
1969	114,261	3,558	3.11
1970	109,088	3,672	3.36
1971	104,309	3,085	2.95
1972	101,568	1,979	1.94

Source: Sister Margaret M. Modde's study, reference [14] on page 75 above.

Table 7. Selected Changes in Membership of New England Province,  
by Grade and Year, 1927-1958.

Year	Scholastic Novices				Separations of Scholastics		Separations of Priests	
	Entrants		Separations		No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>
	No.	Index <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
1927	38	136	5	7.2	3	1.20	0	0
1928	39	139	8	11.7	1	0.39	0	0
1929	41	146	9	12.6	5	1.90	0	0
1930	40	143	4	5.1	2	0.78	1	0.47
1931	43	154	5	6.2	2	0.76	0	0
1932	35	125	4	5.2	1	0.36	0	0
1933	40	143	4	5.7	1	0.33	1	0.35
1934	36	129	2	2.7	1	0.32	0	0
1935	31	111	5	7.9	2	0.64	0	0
1936	26	93	7	14.0	3	0.97	2	0.58
Average 1927-1936	36.9		5.3	7.8	2.1	0.76	0.4	0.14
1937	25	89	1	2.0	7	2.31	0	0
1938	25	89	6	13.0	2	0.68	1	0.26
1939	17	61	4	10.8	3	1.05	0	0
1940	34	121	5	10.8	2	0.74	0	0
1941	29	104	3	5.2	4	1.61	1	0.22
1942	26	93	6	12.2	5	2.10	0	0
1943	34	121	6	10.9	5	2.19	0	0
1944	28	100	0	0	4	1.94	0	0
1945	23	82	7	14.8	3	1.42	4	0.71
1946	43	154	6	10.3	2	0.96	0	0
Average 1937-1946	28.4		4.4	9.0	3.7	1.50	0.60	0.12
1947	37	132	10	14.9	2	0.94	0	0
1948	37	132	8	13.1	2	0.87	0	0
1949	36	129	6	9.0	7	3.01	2	0.32
1950	34	121	11	19.2	1	0.40	4	0.64



Table 7. (Cont'd)

Year	Scholastic Novices				Separations of Scholastics		Separations of Priests	
	Entrants		Separations		No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>
	No.	Index <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1951	36	129	6	10.0	7	2.83	4	0.64
1952	25	89	8	15.3	2	0.78	3	0.47
1953	31	111	3	5.5	5	1.92	0	0
1954	31	111	5	8.6	2	0.79	1	0.15
1955	33	118	5	8.6	9	3.48	1	0.15
1956	33	118	6	10.7	4	1.51	2	0.30
Average 1947-1956	33.3		6.8	11.5	4.1	1.65	1.7	0.26
1957	28	100	8	15.3	3	1.16	2	0.29
1958	28	100	6	11.7	2	0.77	0	0

Source: Unpublished data compiled by Robert F. Hoey, S.J., Boston, Massachusetts, December 29, 1975.

1/ 1958=100

2/ Number separated during calendar year as percent of all (novices) (scholastics) (priests) at beginning of year.

Table 8. Entrances, Ordinations, and Separations by Entrance Year, New England Province, 1926-1975.

Year	Entered		Ordained		Separated			Persevered <sup>2/</sup>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	
	No.	% col.	No.	% col.	No.	% col.	No.	% col.	No.	% col.	No.	% col.
1926	37	78	5	14	2	6	2	7	28	76	28	76
1927	38	68	9	24	3	10	1	4	25	65	25	65
1928	39	71	10	26	0	0	1	4	28	71	28	71
1929	41	78	5	12	2	6	3	9	31	75	31	75
1930	40	70	5	13	6	17	3	11	26	65	26	65
1931	43	77	0	0	9	21	1	3	33	76	33	76
1932	35	86	4	11	1	3	0	0	30	85	30	85
1933	40	78	5	13	4	11	1	3	30	75	30	75
1934	36	78	4	11	3	9	0	0	29	80	29	80
1935	31	71	6	19	3	12	2	9	20	64	20	64
1936	26	77	4	15	2	9	3	15	17	61	17	61
1937	25	80	3	12	2	9	1	5	19	76	19	76
1938	25	68	5	20	2	10	2	12	16	64	16	64
1939	17	65	2	12	3	20	0	0	12	70	12	70
1940	34	68	6	18	5	18	2	9	21	61	21	61
1941	29	72	7	24	1	5	1	5	20	68	20	68
1942	26	73	2	8	5	21	5	26	14	53	14	53
1943	34	68	6	18	4	14	11	48	13	38	13	38
1944	28	78	2	7	4	15	5	23	17	60	17	60
1945	23	69	5	22	2	11	4	25	12	52	12	52
1946	43	67	8	19	6	17	7	24	22	51	22	51
1947	37	43	12	32	9	36	5	31	11	29	11	29
1948	37	70	5	14	6	19	4	15	22	59	22	59
1949	36	56	9	25	7	26	3	15	17	47	17	47
1950	34	62	9	26	4	16	6	29	15	44	15	44

1951	36	24	67	10	28	2	8	6	25	18	50
1952	25	17	68	3	12	4	18	3	18	15	60
1953	31	24	77	3	10	4	14	4	17	20	64
1954	31	14	45	3	10	15	54	2	14	11	35
1955	33	21	64	9	27	3	13	9	42	12	36
1956	33	11	33	8	24	13	52	3	27	9	27
1957	28	14	50	4	14	9	38	3	11	12	42
1958	30	13	43	6	20	11	46	2	15	11	36
1959	44	16	36	13	30	15	48	2	13	14	31
1960	44	13	29	15	35	16	55	2	15	11	25
1961	40	6	15	10	25	20	67	0	0	10	25
1962	41	10	24	12	29	15	52	0	0	14	34
1963	29	6	20	9	31	10	50	0	0	10	34
1964	32	4	13	12	38	10	53	0	0	10	31
1965	25	2	8	9	36	10	63	0	0	6	24
1966	23	1	4	8	35	6	40	0	0	9	39
1967	25	3	12	8	32	5	38	0	0	12	48
1968	29	1	3	8	28	5	24	0	0	16	55
1969	22	1	5	10	45	3	25	0	0	9	40
1970	10			1	10	0	0	0	0	9	90
1971	10			2	20	0	0	*1	n.a.	7	70
1972	8			2	25	0	0	0	0	6	75
1973	11			4	36	0	0	0	0	7	63
1974	8			1	13	0	0	0	0	7	87
1975	11			1	9	0	0	0	0	10	90

Source: Unpublished data, compiled by Robert F. Hoey, S.J., Boston, Mass., Dec. 29, 1975.

1/ As a percent of vowed novices (column 1 minus column 4).

2/ As of December 29, 1975.

\* Novice priest.

**Table 9. Entrances, Ordinations, and Separations by Entrance Year, Maryland-New York Province, 1926-1942, Maryland Province, 1943-1960.**

Year	Scholastic Novices			Ordained		Separated as Priests		Persevered <sup>1</sup>	
	Entered	Took Vows		No.	% col. (2)	No.	% col. (4)	No.	% col. (1)
		No.	% col. (1)						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1926	57	46	81	41	89	1	2.4	40	70
1927	63	51	81	42	82	2	4.7	40	63
1928	67	54	81	47	87	1	2.1	46	69
1929	42	38	90	27	71	2	7.4	25	60
1930	60	46	77	40	87	1	2.5	39	65
1931	67	58	88	49	84	1	2.0	48	72
1932	82	74	90	67	91	1	1.4	66	80
1933	68	56	82	41	73	1	2.4	40	59
1934	55	46	84	41	89	2	4.8	30	55
1935	68	63	93	50	79	3	6.0	47	69
1936	43	34	79	25	74	1	4.0	24	56
1937	59	51	86	45	88	4	8.8	41	69
1938	68	58	85	43	74	1	2.3	42	62
1939	70	56	80	49	88	5	10.2	44	63
1940	58	51	88	44	86	4	9.0	40	69
1941	24	24	100	17	71	1	5.8	16	67
1942	50	42	84	36	86	5	13.8	31	62
1943	32	26	81	19	73	5	26.3	14	44
1944	23	17	74	14	82	1	7.1	13	57
1945	39	31	79	23	74	5	21.7	18	46
1946	51	35	69	30	86	4	13.3	36	71
1947	30	23	77	19	83	5	26.3	14	47
1948	52	38	73	27	71	6	22.2	21	40
1949	35	31	89	24	77	6	25.0	18	51
1950	44	33	75	28	85	4	14.2	24	55
1951	43	28	65	22	79	7	31.8	15	35
1952	33	23	70	15	65	3	20.0	12	36
1953	37	22	59	14	64	1	7.1	13	35
1954	25	16	64	9	56	3	33.3	6	24
1955	39	33	85	17	51	2	11.7	15	38

Table 9. (Cont'd)

Year	Scholastic Novices			Ordained		Separated as Priests		Persevered <sup>1/</sup>	
	Entered	Took Vows		No.	% col. (2)	No.	% col. (4)	No.	% col. (1)
		No.	% col. (1)						
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
1956	31	21	68	15	71	4	26.6	11	35
1957	40	28	70	9	32	0	0	9	23
1958	31	21	68	8	38	0	0	8	26
1959	56	39	70	19	49	2	10.5	17	30
1960	39	22	56	11	50	0	0	11	28

Source: Unpublished data compiled by Charles G. Neuner, S.J., Baltimore, Maryland, 1976.

<sup>1/</sup> As of January 1, 1976.

Table 10. Entrances and Separations of Scholastic Novices in the the American Assistency, by Year, 1930-1958.

Year	Entrants		Separations	
	No.	Index <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>2/</sup>
1930	292	86	34	8.0
1931	330	97	52	7.5
1932	294	86	60	10.3
1933	243	71	34	6.4
1934	219	64	45	9.4
Average 1930-1934	276	81	45	8.3
1935	201	59	40	10.0
1936	191	56	31	8.6
1937	203	59	31	8.5
1938	246	72	46	12.5
1939	218	64	43	12.0
Average 1935-1939	212	62	38	10.3
1940	224	66	39	9.1
1941	218	64	37	9.1
1942	265	78	35	8.5
1943	261	76	36	8.0
1944	191	56	37	8.3
Average 1940-1944	232	68	37	8.6
1945	222	65	44	11.4
1946	303	89	78	19.1
1947	296	87	71	14.9
1948	360	105	69	13.0
1949	319	93	55	9.4
Average 1945-1949	300	88	63	13.5
1950	346	101	72	11.9
1951	350	103	77	12.6
1952	302	88	84	14.4
1953	279	82	77	14.4
1954	252	74	62	12.6
Average 1950-1954	306	90	74	13.1

Table 10. (Cont'd)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Entrants</u>		<u>Separations</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index<sup>1/</sup></u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate<sup>2/</sup></u>
1955	322	94	84	15.4
1956	322	94	70	12.5
1957	390	114	99	17.0
1958	341	100	91	14.9
<b>Average</b> 1955-1958	344	101	86	14.9

Source: 1930-1957: Replies from provinces.  
1958: Same as Table A-1.

1/ 1958=100

2/ Number separated during calendar year as percent of all novices at the beginning of year.

B. APPENDIX TABLESTable A-1. Scholastic Novice Entrants, Number and Index<sup>1/</sup>,  
by Province and Year, 1958-1975

Year	California		Chicago		Detroit		Maryland		Missouri	
	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index
1958	26	100	28	100	23	100	31	100	28	100
1959	45	173	*45	161	18	78	*57	184	36	129
1960	*50	192	44	157	*27	117	39	126	*42	150
1961	47	180	29	104	15	65	35	113	40	143
1962	48	184	37	132	22	95	44	142	35	125
1963	43	165	34	121	33	143	25	81	31	111
1964	43	165	40	143	32	139	36	116	31	111
1965	34	131	20	71	23	100	24	77	18	64
1966	24	92	24	86	13	56	23	74	17	61
1967	22	85	19	68	13	56	22	71	17	61
1968	30	115	13	46	14	61	14	45	9	32
1969	13	50	6	21	8	35	13	42	10	36
1970	11	42	4	14	3	13	6	19	9	32
1971	9	35	9	32	4	17	11	35	4	14
1972	15	58	8	29	2	9	5	16	6	21
1973	10	38	5	18	6	26	10	32	7	25
1974	27	104	2	7	5	22	13	42	13	46
1975	25	96	3	10	7	30	25	81	9	32
Total	522		370		268		433		362	

Source: 1958-1967: [15]

1969-1973: [1], worksheets

1968, 1974, 1975: Data from individual provinces.

<sup>1/</sup> 1958 = 100

\* Peak Year



<u>New England</u>		<u>New Orleans</u>		<u>New York</u>		<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>All Provinces</u>	
<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>
28	100	28	100	* 77	100	29	100	43	100	341	100
43	154	* 36	129	65	84	21	72	42	97	* 408	120
*43	154	28	100	73	94	30	103	31	72	407	120
41	146	29	104	62	80	28	96	* 58	135	384	113
39	139	29	104	58	75	* 40	138	44	102	396	116
29	104	27	96	60	77	37	127	40	93	359	105
32	114	21	75	53	68	33	114	35	81	356	104
25	89	26	93	39	50	22	76	26	60	257	75
23	82	15	54	40	52	11	38	23	53	213	62
24	86	13	46	31	40	24	83	17	39	202	59
29	104	13	46	17	25	7	24	15	35	161	47
23	82	10	36	22	28	12	41	11	26	128	38
10	36	10	36	8	10	8	28	16	37	85	25
10	36	14	50	10	13	8	28	11	26	90	26
8	29	8	29	13	17	17	58	14	32	96	28
11	39	7	25	15	19	10	34	8	19	89	26
8	29	18	64	8	10	20	69	14	32	128	38
11	39	14	50	11	15	10	34	12	28	127	37
437		346		662		367		460		4227	

Table A-2. Scholastic Novice Separations, Number and Rates  
by Province and Year, 1958-1975

Year	California		Chicago		Detroit		Maryland		Missouri	
	No.	Rate <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>1/</sup>	No.	Rate <sup>1/</sup>
1958	10	19	9	16	7	13	8	13	8	15
1959	17	34	9	15	6	12	9	14	10	2
1960	4	7	13	20	10	26	26	31	13	24
1961	14	17	9	12	6	15	14	17	6	10
1962	13	16	10	17	21	60	12	18	10	14
1963	10	13	14	25	5	24	15	21	13	21
1964	12	17	9	17	11	25	12	23	8	17
1965	15	21	6	9	16	31	13	23	2	4
1966	13	22	19	35	6	15	12	24	9	19
1967	8	20	7	21	9	37	5	14	5	16
1968	14	45	15	42	3	10	8	21	8	42
1969	15	41	6	35	6	26	2	6	7	28
1970	6	22	3	27	4	23	2	7	11	58
1971	3	15	4	36	2	25	6	32	1	10
1972	3	16	1	9	1	12	3	14	3	50
1973	1	4	6	33	0	0	5	36	0	0
1974	4	16	3	17	1	13	0	0	1	5
1975	3	9	0	0	1	8	8	3	3	14
Total	165		143		115		160		118	
Average										
Separ.										
Rate <sup>1/</sup>		19.2		20.1		22.6		19.4		18.1
Loss										
Ratio <sup>2/</sup>		32.6		38.6		42.9		36.9		32.5

Source: Same as Table A-1.

<sup>1/</sup> Number separated during calendar year as percent of all novices at beginning of year.

<sup>2/</sup> Number separated any time during novitiate as percentage of all entrants, total period 1958-1975.

New England		New Orleans		New York		Oregon		Wisconsin		All Provinces	
No.	Rate $\frac{1}{2}$	No.	Rate $\frac{1}{2}$	No.	Rate $\frac{1}{2}$	No.	Rate $\frac{1}{2}$	No.	Rate $\frac{1}{2}$	No.	Rate $\frac{1}{2}$
4	8	15	33	10	9	10	17	10	17	91	15
7	13	7	17	17	14	3	6	12	8	97	16
4	6	9	17	17	11	4	7	13	20	113	16
14	18	11	22	16	14	9	19	13	22	112	16
11	14	10	20	11	10	15	30	17	23	130	19
10	14	13	31	15	14	13	24	15	20	123	19
11	18	10	26	20	19	18	31	18	29	129	22
11	22	11	31	8	9	11	21	8	13	101	17
5	11	9	25	20	25	8	20	3	6	104	20
6	15	5	17	10	23	9	42	5	11	69	20
8	20	1	4	15	21	10	33	6	16	88	24
4	8	3	16	17	40	2	13	6	20	68	23
5	10	2	12	8	30	5	29	3	14	49	21
7	19	1	6	6	27	1	6	4	16	35	19
3	11	4	18	5	36	4	18	3	12	30	17
2	9	0	0	4	20	2	10	6	25	26	14
3	13	3	13	3	10	6	26	8	44	32	16
6	26	8	30	7	23	6	21	5	29	47	19
121		122		209		136		155		1444	
	14.1		20.4		15.9		20.1		18.9		18.5
	27.6		35.2		31.6		37.1		33.6		34.1

Table A-3. Scholastics Beginning Year, Number and Index<sup>1/</sup>,  
by Province and Year, 1958-1975

Year	California		Chicago		Detroit		Maryland		Missouri	
	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index
1958	260	100	168	100	140	100	*296	100	211	100
1959	239	92	165	98	151	108	258	87	218	103
1960	235	90	175	104	155	111	258	87	223	105
1961	216	83	177	105	151	107	249	84	241	114
1962	230	88	184	109	158	113	248	84	235	111
1963	237	91	203	121	* 158	113	247	83	240	114
1964	245	94	205	122	138	99	238	80	*255	121
1965	243	93	194	115	138	99	224	75	242	114
1966	249	96	197	117	133	95	215	72	234	111
1967	*260	100	*210	125	130	93	213	72	222	105
1968	230	88	180	107	112	80	196	66	219	104
1969	228	88	167	99	99	71	212	71	207	98
1970	201	77	144	86	85	61	188	63	206	97
1971	189	73	149	89	79	56	164	55	160	76
1972	178	68	120	71	66	47	147	50	124	59
1973	158	61	91	54	56	40	129	43	115	54
1974	109	42	47	28	42	30	101	34	79	37
1975	102	39	26	15	34	24	80	27	71	34

Source: Same as Table A-1.

\* Peak year

<sup>1/</sup> 1958 = 100

<u>New England</u>		<u>New Orleans</u>		<u>New York</u>		<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>All Provinces</u>	
<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>
258	100	162	100	514	100	212	100	210	100	*2431	100
*259	100	168	104	395	77	*225	106	216	103	2294	94
251	97	167	103	*519	101	216	102	231	110	2430	100
246	95	*168	104	439	85	224	106	234	111	2345	96
246	95	172	106	440	85	221	104	242	115	2376	98
248	96	167	103	447	87	209	98	240	114	2396	98
251	97	164	101	446	87	196	92	*253	120	2391	98
246	95	160	99	445	86	172	81	252	120	2316	95
227	88	147	91	434	84	185	87	245	117	2266	93
208	80	138	85	323	63	167	79	239	114	2110	87
195	75	127	78	371	72	159	75	264	126	2053	84
226	87	111	69	361	70	163	77	238	113	2012	83
211	82	109	67	317	61	144	68	207	99	1812	74
180	70	104	64	258	50	128	60	176	84	1587	65
147	57	106	65	220	43	122	57	160	76	1390	57
128	50	92	57	187	36	112	53	138	66	1206	50
96	37	72	44	134	26	79	37	108	51	867	34
92	36	65	40	109	21	68	32	97	46	744	31

Table A-4. Separations of Scholastics, Number and Rate<sup>1/</sup>,  
by Province and Year, 1958-1975

Year	California		Chicago		Detroit		Maryland		Missouri	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
1958	12	5	3	2	4	3	12	4	7	3
1959	5	2	2	1	5	3	10	4	6	3
1960	10	4	6	3	2	1	8	3	7	3
1961	4	2	4	2	3	2	9	4	8	3
1962	6	3	6	3	6	4	4	3	7	3
1963	4	2	4	2	12	8	17	6	3	1
1964	10	4	12	6	5	4	6	3	12	5
1965	7	3	7	4	9	7	8	4	9	4
1966	10	4	12	6	9	7	11	5	8	3
1967	24	9	20	10	19	15	15	7	18	8
1968	18	8	23	13	15	13	14	7	16	7
1969	18	8	17	10	12	13	21	10	15	7
1970	10	5	20	14	3	3	19	10	5	7
1971	5	3	11	7	7	9	6	4	33	21
1972	6	3	5	4	3	5	6	4	11	9
1973	11	7	8	9	0	0	6	5	5	4
1974	12	11	3	6	5	12	8	8	7	9
1975	7	7	3	12	3	9	11	14	5	7
Total	179		166		122		191		182	
Avg.		4.7		5.9		6.0		5.2		5.1

Source: Same as Table A-1.

<sup>1/</sup> Number separated during calendar year as percent of all scholastics at beginning of year

<u>New England</u>		<u>New Orleans</u>		<u>New York</u>		<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>All Provinces</u>	
<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>
2	0.8	5	3	15	3	5	2	8	4	73	3.0
6	2	2	1	11	3	7	3	4	2	58	2.5
10	4	5	3	7	1	14	6	7	3	76	3.1
8	3	3	2	10	2	10	4	9	4	68	2.8
10	4	5	3	9	2	10	5	10	4	73	3.1
8	3	4	2	13	3	14	7	8	3	87	3.6
9	4	7	4	24	5	12	6	14	6	111	4.6
13	5	14	9	35	8	7	4	2	1	111	4.7
13	6	9	6	30	7	11	6	18	7	131	5.7
11	5	16	12	25	8	13	8	12	5	173	8.1
12	6	23	18	33	8	13	8	17	6	184	8.9
18	8	10	9	36	10	13	8	21	9	181	8.9
21	10	7	6	28	9	16	11	18	9	147	8.1
19	11	6	6	16	6	8	6	14	8	125	7.8
11	6	4	4	5	2	8	7	12	7	71	5.1
9	7	7	8	4	2	12	11	14	10	76	6.3
4	4	4	6	7	5	8	10	7	6	65	7.4
4	4	5	8	18	17	4	6	6	6	66	8.3
188		136		326		185		201		1876	
	5.0		5.6		5.1		6.2		5.3		5.4

Table A-5. Priests Beginning Year, Number and Index<sup>1/</sup>,  
by Province and Year, 1958-1975

Year	California		Chicago		Detroit		Maryland		Missouri	
	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index
1958	421	100	339	100	250	100	416	100	364	100
1959	402	95	346	102	254	102	411	99	372	102
1960	426	101	355	104	249	100	418	100	378	104
1961	435	103	359	106	248	99	437	105	373	102
1962	445	105	368	108	259	104	450	108	383	105
1963	458	109	367	108	274	110	467	112	391	107
1964	473	112	367	108	277	111	482	116	398	109
1965	486	115	373	110	282	113	498	120	412	113
1966	496	118	384	113	293	117	499	120	421	115
1967	490	116	390	115	295	118	510	122	435	119
1968	500	119	385	113	300	120	*517	124	*441	121
1969	*501	119	388	114	297	119	516	124	438	120
1970	497	118	390	115	302	121	506	121	436	119
1971	488	116	381	112	282	113	499	120	437	120
1972	483	114	371	109	*387	115	499	120	434	119
1973	486	115	369	108	278	111	499	120	424	116
1974	487	115	*418	123	285	114	506	121	414	113
1975	485	115	373	110	282	113	509	122	415	114

Source: Same as Table A-1.

\* Peak year

<sup>1/</sup> 1958 = 100



<u>New England</u>		<u>New Orleans</u>		<u>New York</u>		<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>All Provinces</u>	
<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Index</u>
690	100	314	100	*900	100	340	100	347	100	4381	100
701	101	318	101	734	81	342	101	356	103	4236	97
718	104	325	103	929	103	348	102	369	106	4515	103
728	105	326	104	770	85	356	105	373	107	4405	100
737	106	337	107	783	87	361	106	381	110	4504	103
747	108	315	100	806	89	376	111	391	113	4592	105
755	109	326	104	830	92	382	112	402	116	4692	107
768	111	326	104	834	93	385	113	404	116	4768	109
780	112	333	106	839	93	392	115	408	118	4845	110
799	115	*335	107	667	74	406	119	422	122	4749	108
*808	116	330	105	866	96	*408	120	425	122	4980	114
799	115	328	104	878	97	405	119	438	126	*4988	114
795	114	324	103	875	97	405	119	438	126	4968	113
772	111	318	101	869	96	393	116	449	129	4888	111
767	110	315	100	868	96	393	116	451	130	4868	111
756	109	308	98	868	96	387	114	460	132	4835	110
760	109	311	99	845	94	392	115	*464	134	4882	111
735	106	310	99	838	93	392	115	462	133	4801	109

Table A-6. Separations of Priests, Number and Rate<sup>1/</sup>,  
by Province and Year, 1958-1975

Year	California		Chicago		Detroit		Maryland		Missouri	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
1958	2	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1959	3	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1960	0	0	0	0	2	0.8	0	0	1	0.3
1961	1	0.2	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
1962	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
1963	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	2	0.4	0	0
1964	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	1	0.3
1965	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	1	0.2
1966	1	0.2	0	0	3	1.0	3	0.6	1	0.2
1967	1	0.2	0	0	1	0.3	3	0.6	4	0.9
1968	5	1.0	8	2.1	4	1.3	6	1.2	7	1.6
1969	15	2.9	5	1.3	9	3.0	10	1.9	12	2.7
1970	12	2.4	3	0.7	2	0.7	14	2.7	6	1.4
1971	7	1.4	7	1.8	3	1.0	7	0.1	9	2.1
1972	5	1.0	7	1.9	3	1.0	4	0.8	10	2.3
1973	10	2.1	8	2.2	4	1.4	5	1.0	6	1.4
1974	4	0.8	5	1.2	1	0.4	7	1.4	6	1.5
1975	5	1.0	5	1.3	3	1.1	6	1.2	0	0
Total	71		51		35		69		64	
Avg.		0.83		0.75		0.70		0.79		0.86

Source: Same as Table A-1.

<sup>1/</sup> Number separated during calendar year as percent of all priests at beginning of year.

<u>New England</u>		<u>New Orleans</u>		<u>New York</u>		<u>Oregon</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>All Provinces</u>	
<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Rate</u>
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.05
2	0.3	0	0	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	6	0.14
2	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.11
1	0.1	0	0	2	0.3	0	0	0	0	5	0.11
0	0	2	0.6	0	0	2	0.6	1	0.3	6	0.13
0	0	2	0.6	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	7	0.15
0	0	1	0.3	0	0	1	0.5	2	0.5	7	0.15
1	0.1	0	0	3	0.4	0	0	1	0.2	7	0.15
0	0	2	0.6	3	0.4	2	0.5	2	0.5	17	0.35
2	0.3	1	0.3	2	0.3	0	0	0	0	14	0.29
3	0.4	0	0	4	0.5	1	0.2	3	0.7	41	0.82
7	0.9	3	0.9	8	0.9	6	1.5	6	1.4	81	1.62
18	2.2	5	1.5	19	2.1	9	2.2	8	1.8	96	1.93
16	2.0	5	1.6	9	1.0	3	0.8	8	1.8	74	1.51
13	1.6	6	1.9	11	1.2	5	1.3	3	0.7	67	1.37
8	1.1	3	1.0	10	1.1	7	1.8	7	1.5	68	1.40
13	1.7	6	1.9	9	1.1	3	0.8	5	1.1	59	1.20
12	1.6	0	0	10	1.1	7	1.8	1	0.2	49	1.04
98		36		90		49		48		611	
	0.72		0.62		0.60		0.71		0.65		0.72

Table A-7. Total Membership of Society of Jesus and Selected Grade<sup>s</sup> by Year, 1958-1975

Year	<u>All Grades</u>		<u>Priests</u>		<u>Scholastics</u> <sup>1/</sup>	
	No. (1)	Index <sup>2/</sup> (2)	No. (3)	Index <sup>2/</sup> (4)	No. (5)	Index <sup>2/</sup> (6)
1958	35,936	100	18,727	100	*11,118	100
1959	34,272	96	18,039	97	10,468	94
1960	35,219	99	18,779	101	10,594	95
1961	35,812	100	19,167	104	10,642	96
1962	36,046	101	19,493	105	10,536	95
1963	35,788	100	19,626	106	10,259	92
1964	35,968	101	20,026	108	10,074	91
1965	*36,038	101	20,301	110	9,865	89
1966	35,929	101	20,592	111	9,515	86
1967	35,573	100	20,798	112	9,019	81
1968	34,762	97	20,958	113	9,263	74
1969	33,828	95	*21,025	114	7,383	66
1970	32,898	92	21,113	114	6,528	59
1971	31,768	89	20,992	113	5,720	51
1972	30,860	86	20,908	113	5,054	45
1973	30,030	84	20,828	112	4,486	40
1974	29,436	82	20,822	112	4,032	36
1975	28,856	81	20,627	110	3,770	34

Sources: 1958 - 1962, [15]  
1963 - 1975, Province Catalogs

\* Peak Year

1/ "Scholastics" includes novices.

2/ 1958 = 100

Changes in U.S. Jesuit Membership, 1958-1975

SECTION II, OTHER REACTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS  
FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS

Editor's Foreword to Section II

Before the reader advances very far into Section II of this symposium, he will observe that the approach of these authors differs markedly from that used in Section I. Hopefully this will give a balanced presentation of a complex topic and be more satisfying to our readers.

Father Becker tried, as has been stated above, to present the phenomena or statistical data of the changes in numbers and an analysis or search for their causes, without evaluating the changes as good or bad. He regarded this approach as a professional necessity, or at least a desideratum. But the other writers have not felt themselves under any such necessity. Hence instead of striving to confine their remarks to further analysis of the same statistical data, they are presenting, each from his own experience and vantage point, reactions to Father Becker's paper as a whole, or to one or several aspects of it, or to the general situations existent before or after the changes. It is important for readers too to be conscious of this change of focus. Otherwise they may easily misunderstand the true thought of one or another writer--as the Seminar members learned by experience.

Is it humanly possible to present an analysis like Father Becker's in Section I without evaluation? That he succeeded at least to a considerable extent is indicated by an incident in our discussion. One member stated that he had read the paper twice in order to discover--but without success--which changes Father Becker regarded as good and which bad. Others, however, found themselves, as they were reading, happy about the changes they liked or regretting those they disliked, or thinking that the author was evaluating. Many thought that an author aiming to be non-evaluative does make at least some implicit evaluation by the very selection of the materials he includes or omits. Nevertheless, it should be

remembered that the explanations Father Becker advanced did not spring from his own mind alone. They are chiefly those which appeared most frequently in the notes from which he worked, recording his several hundred interviews with persons who had been active during the period of the changes.

Be all that as it may, the Seminar members finally thought that to present other opinions from different vantage points would be a good balance to Father Becker's phenomenological presentation. It would also be a procedure more pleasing to many readers who naturally wonder how others are appraising the rapid developments of our era, and who may thus be guided to clearer vision and confidence in charting their own paths.

Many readers, too, may well have their own explanations or reactions which they would like to add to those presented here. Especially since this is a preliminary and tentative presentation, they are invited to send them in. It seems best to mail them directly to Father Becker or the other writers, though they may also be sent to the undersigned editor for forwarding. A later pooling of such comments may become feasible.

The discussions in our last symposium, on Evangelical Poverty in March-May, 1976, were printed according to the alphabetical order of their authors' names. Hence an inverted alphabetical order is used on the present occasion.

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1. SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE DIFFICULT TASK  
OF EVALUATING A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

by

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When anyone is writing about the history of one's own religious community, especially over a relatively short time-span which includes the recent past, in one way or another one finds oneself struggling with the evaluation of that community. Today this is a common task. After years of experimentation, many communities want to do this evaluation; and rightly so. They want to bring meaning and understanding into the movement of ideas in the last decade--into the events that caused a loss of members, or an absence of candidates, or a new increase in vocations, or whatever the case may be.

Indeed, it is virtually impossible to write about religious communities, their progress or decline, their rise or fall, or even about their life in general, without formulating value judgments. Nothing is wrong with that; we doubt it can be done in any other way.

A religious community arises out of the option of a group of Christians to pursue specific values, such as chastity, poverty, obedience, community life, and dedication to an apostolic purpose, and so forth. Any history or story about the group is by necessity a report about their relation to their own chosen values, about their perseverance in upholding them, or about their change of mind when they turn away from them--even if the turning away means to choose other values such as lay Christians seek.

Therefore the subject matter of nearly any inquiry about religious life consists of a structure of values that cannot be treated or talked about in the same way as we talk about facts and figures in non-value-oriented sciences.

Besides, no historian or reporter can legitimately take up an attitude

that would indicate that he is detached from, or indifferent to, values. Nor is he required to do so. Histories and stories are written by living persons who bring their own understanding to bear on the external facts and events, and then present the reader with a critical report that, since it deals with a topic that revolves about values, will inevitably contain value judgments or evaluations.

We should not be afraid of such procedure: we should be free enough to accept it. Religious communities need value-oriented histories and reports perhaps more today than ever. But they need also tolerance, patience, and a feeling of understanding toward one another, so that all of us can speak freely and profit from the response of the others. After all, how can we ever progress in the freedom of God's children, if we do not grant freedom to one another to speak with truth and simplicity? Besides, how can a member progress in the discovery of the truth if he cannot speak freely to his brethren, so as to be helped, challenged, and comforted by them?

But how can anyone evaluate his own community? It seems to be an impossible task. The natural attitude toward our human family is to love it, to protect it, and to help it in every conceivable way--but not to evaluate it with a detached judgment after cool observation.

Yet whether we like it or not, life itself compels us to make an evaluation, or at least to attempt one. We must know if we are progressing or declining, if we are heading for life or death. Our ongoing life postulates action in accord with sound evaluation.

Let us ask therefore: What is the purpose of evaluation? Obviously, it is a means toward improving the health of the community, its fidelity to its origins, its movement toward God, its dedication to the cause of the gospel, and any connected factors.

The next necessary question is: How can such evaluation be carried out?

1. The first condition for evaluating the progress or decline of a community is knowledge of the facts. We must ask what has been happening over the years. But the reporting of facts should not be a selective process. Facts can be hard to accept. Instinctively we reach out for



those that are comfortable and, without quite realizing it, we push aside, beyond the limit of our consciousness, those that we find disturbing. Perhaps this is the reason why so many communities like to discuss their hopes and are reluctant to face coolly the facts of their history. Yet there cannot be any evaluation without faithful reporting of what happened. Such reporting, however, is merely laying the foundation for further work.

2. The second condition is to determine the criteria for evaluation. The facts must be referred to certain norms so that they can be weighed, measured, and judged. Let us recall also that most facts in our case are concerned with the choice of moral values; therefore, the criteria cannot be anything else than values.

There are traditional values in a community that, as long as it wants to remain in good health, it cannot give up. Each group must remain faithful to its origins.

Yet each group must listen to new inspirations as well. They may come through the ministry of the universal Church, through God's obvious actions in human history, or through the insights of the members. In our own case, as Jesuits we must remain faithful to the traditional values expressed in the *Exercises*, and also be alert to new inspirations that, through testing, have been found to be fruits of the Spirit. We must be obedient to the Church and love it as Ignatius did, and we must be aware of the spiritual and material needs of the world. The gathering of facts would be useless unless the information collected could be measured by the right criteria of evaluation.

3. The evaluator himself must fulfill the famous conditions that Ignatius so wisely set down for those who are making an election. He must have a detached mind and heart, not wanting rather these or those results but keeping his mind in perfect equilibrium, wanting to find only the conclusions that follow on the factual information according to the criteria of evaluation. Such great detachment is the privilege of saints; but lesser people should at least keep the ideal in mind and thus aim at having as much impartiality in their judgment as they can.

4. The evaluator should remember also that there is always a field where he cannot reach the facts or be quite clear about the criteria. This

is the field where God's grace meets human freedom, where a human person can answer God with a yes, or can say no to a divine call. We know little about how that happens, since the freedom of God and the freedom of man are the source of the event. Therefore, all evaluators must learn to stand in awe in the presence of a mystery that is not given to us to know or understand in depth.

Even before we start our evaluation, it is wise to keep in mind some general knowledge about religious communities (including our own Society) as they existed, not ideally, but concretely in Christian history. The evaluation should be carried out with some presuppositions which we know from our perception of religious life as it manifested itself historically in the Church.

1. A religious community is not an association of perfect people; rather, it is a community of sinners in whom God's strength is gradually overcoming human weakness. Therefore, a community is a living body in which different forces are operating, some for good and some for evil. On this point, no one should have any illusion. It was always so ever since Pachomius gathered monks around him, in the desert. To presume that a community is all good is to pursue a mirage; to assume that it is all bad is to ignore the power of God's grace.

In reality the community is like a living human body in which contrasting forces operate, some for good and some for evil. The purpose of evaluation is precisely to locate the operating forces and to determine their nature; to know which ones aid toward health so as to strengthen them; to learn also which are leading toward an illness so as to stop them by appropriate remedies.

Any good evaluation is likely to present a mixed picture.

2. As periods of good health in a living body alternate with periods of bad health, in a religious community too there are seasons of strength and seasons of weakness, rich years and lean years. At times good health is apparent, at times bad health is obvious. But the state of the patient cannot be decided by external static symptoms only. There are mysterious forces underneath; there can be strong movements in one direction or the

other. A seemingly strong man may collapse suddenly; and an apparently sick man may recover rapidly--if proper medication is given. Therefore, a true judgment can never be formed by taking into account only the external signs and symptoms. They tell us a great deal but they do not always reveal the direction of internal forces.

3. Any evaluation, no matter how carefully it is done, will be a synthesis of some facts, some principles, and of the personality of the evaluator himself, including his learning and critical capacity. It cannot arise in any other way. The qualities of the observer determine much of the conclusion that he presents at the end of his investigation. It follows that his results should never be looked at as final and absolute, but rather as temporary and relative, subject to correction when the need for such correction is established. Of course this built-in relativity can be substantial or fractional. To find out the degree of relativity, the evaluation should be checked all over again. There is a need to evaluate the evaluators, as there is often a need to guard the guards (which is not an uncommon practice today). This process, however, must stop somewhere; it cannot go on forever. But when it stops, it is good to recall that our conclusions are not yet the full eternal truth, but a reasonable human attempt to reach it.

4. Religious life is one of the many manifestations of the abundance of life in the Church. The source of that life will never fail; it will never diminish. It is within God's mysterious providence to call men and women to fulfill a particular task in the service of the Church as it is most needed in a given age.

Thus he raised up the monks of old to build cities of God among the cities of man. Then he called Francis and his friars to speak about the humility and humanity of our God, while Dominic and his companions proclaimed the old message anew. Later God sent the friends and disciples of Ignatius to spread the faith to new continents. And later still He called many others for other new tasks.

We are all in his hands. He gives life to us according to his own good pleasure. We can only take it, and be grateful for his gift.

2. REFLECTIONS ON FATHER BECKER'S ACCOUNT OF THE CHANGE  
IN NUMBERS OF JESUITS FROM 1958-1975

by

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1. My Perspective

One of my beliefs is that there are significant and important differences--historical, spiritual, psychological, and social--in the different regions of the Society of Jesus in the American Assistency, perhaps even in the different provinces. For that reason I think it useful to preface my remarks with a brief sketch of my background and history.

I entered the Society of Jesus in 1934 at Milford, Ohio, out of St. Ignatius High School, Chicago. Milford was the new novitiate and juniorate of the Chicago Province, which had recently been divided from the "mother province," Missouri. The Detroit and Wisconsin Provinces did not yet exist as separate units of the Society. After the usual two years of novitiate and two years of juniorate at Milford, I went with my class to West Baden College, the former glamorous West Baden Springs Hotel, which had been closed for two years and which the Chicago Province had acquired by way of gift. In my second year at West Baden the philosophate was joined by the newly established theologate, a separation from St. Mary's College in Kansas.

At the conclusion of my ecclesiastical studies in philosophy, I was sent to Fordham University to study for a doctorate in philosophy. This was in 1941, the year of Pearl Harbor, an event which changed life on our university campuses drastically. I received the degree in 1944, and returned to Chicago for one year of the traditional high-school regency at Loyola Academy, which then was still on the campus of Loyola University. At the end of that year, 1945, the year of the end of the Second World

War, I returned to West Baden for the usual four years of theology, with ordination at the end of the third year, 1948. Theology was followed by tertianship at St. Stanislaus, in Parma, near Cleveland, Ohio. On the "status" at the end of that year, 1950, I was assigned to the faculty of philosophy at West Baden and continued in that assignment until the summer of 1957--though I had a "sabbatical" in Europe for 14 months, 1955-1956, to study contemporary philosophy. My doctoral studies had concentrated on Greek, Patristic, and Medieval philosophy, and I had written my dissertation on the Greek Father, St. Gregory of Nyssa.

One year after I had returned from the sabbatical, I was appointed Chicago Province prefect of studies in all three areas: high schools, colleges, and universities--plus the area of Jesuits in special studies. This was an after-effect of the division of the provinces in 1955 (Missouri-Wisconsin, Chicago-Detroit), and the tragic death in an auto accident of Father J. Barry Dwyer, S.J., newly appointed Chicago Province prefect of studies. During this period I resided at the Provincial Residence in Oak Park, Illinois. After four years, in 1961, I was reassigned to the faculty of philosophy at West Baden College, though I continued to be province director of special studies. I was part of "Bellarmine School of Theology" when it moved from West Baden to another hotel, the Hilton Inn in North Aurora, Illinois, within commuting distance to Chicago. This was in 1964. This was the time when all theologates moved from the country to the city and to university campuses. The philosophate moved with the theologate and, with Weston, was the last philosophate to be in the same institution as the theologate. This continued until 1969 when the juniorate was separated from the novitiate and joined to the philosophate in a "collegiate program" at the University of Detroit, with quarters in the Jesuit Residence there. The Chicago and Detroit Provinces continued to share their scholastic studies, students, faculty, and administration. In 1971 the two provinces also rejoined their novitiates, first in Colombiere College, which had been built by Detroit after the division of the provinces, and then in Berkley, Michigan.

I was appointed provincial of the Chicago Province in 1967 shortly after the 31st General Congregation. I was not a member of that Congregation.

However, in the year prior to my appointment I was a member of the planning committee of the first Santa Clara Conference, which is mentioned in Father Becker's account, and with the other provincials was present at the conference in the summer of 1967. At the end of my period in office as provincial in 1973, I spent a semester teaching philosophy, part-time, at LeMoyne College in Syracuse, N.Y., and then joined the department of philosophy at Loyola University of Chicago. I was a delegate to the 32nd General Congregation.

I imagine it is clear from this sketch that I lived through, was at the center of, the developments that led up to the changes of the period 1958-1975 which is being studied, and of the changes themselves. I suppose I could write my own recollections and analysis of what took place, but this is not the occasion for that. Here I want to reflect rather on Father Becker's account. With reference to the history given above, let me make only these observations.

When our class moved from Milford, Ohio, itself about twenty miles from Cincinnati, to West Baden Springs, Indiana, in 1938, it was a glamor place to go. There was no dismay at moving deeper into the country, but rather a lot of excitement and happiness. But then, West Baden-French Lick was, or had been, a resort area. When I returned to West Baden in 1956 from the sabbatical in Europe, Baden seemed to be at the high point of contentment and satisfaction, though I may be reflecting my own happiness with that year. In 1961 when I returned to Baden again after four years in the office of prefect of studies for the Chicago Province, the mood had changed considerably. I am tempted to say that it had changed completely. There was an all-pervasive restlessness in the scholastics and it began to be shared by faculty and administration. Being at West Baden now meant isolation from the world, and the isolation became something like a neurosis, a mood that was shared at the other theologates in the country, as I learned in a series of workshops at the different scholasticates that year. Besides the depression over isolation, there was another change in mood. Earlier, even though there was restiveness and complaint about restrictions, class schedules, and the like, the total pattern was generally accepted as part of the formation of a Jesuit. Now

there seemed to be an inability to accept any longer. Explanations and justifications did not satisfy. And the mood developed from inability to be satisfied to resistance and challenge. And this covered everything from isolation in the country to life-style to scholastic philosophy. What brought about that change in mood? It did not come from the teaching, whether spiritual or academic, because the teaching had not yet changed. Rather it manifested itself in reaction to the teaching.

## 2. Explanation versus evaluation

Father Becker makes an important distinction between explanation and evaluation. He sets his intention in his analysis of the change in numbers on explanation and not evaluation. His question is not: Were the changes good? Are we in a better situation because of the changes? His question is rather: What caused the changes? What was it that brought about the sudden and dramatic reversal in vocations in the Society, both in the numbers separating from the Society and in the numbers applying for membership in the Society?

I approve Father Becker's intention, but it is not an easy one to fulfill, and perhaps it cannot be fulfilled totally. One difficulty is that it is not easy to deal only quantitatively with numbers in a society of persons. It is all too easy to assume that an increase in numbers is good and a decrease is bad, but "good" and "bad" are immediately ambiguous for many readers of such a statement. "More" simply is "more," and not of itself good or bad. In fact, for some societies and for some judges, "more" may be "bad."

Secondly, it is difficult, especially if one has been part of the history, to avoid at least an implicit evaluation of the situation before the change. Even to ask the question "What happened?" may manifest an implicit evaluation. If one's experience of the time and situation before the change was personally good and satisfying, if "things were going along fine," then when a sudden reversal takes place, such a person is likely to ask "what happened," and he is likely to look to external causes. If, on the other hand, one's evaluation of the past situation was that it was unhealthy or destructive or simply inhibiting of personal growth, then he

will not ask what happened, but simply express relief that change has come. (See, for example, the 200-page book of Juan José Coy, *Requiem por el Jesuitismo*, [Salamanca: Ediciones Sigueme, 1974]. Juan was a Spanish scholastic in South America who did his philosophy studies at West Baden.)

Thirdly, everyone has at least an implicit view or attitude about social and historical change, and it is difficult to keep this attitude out of the analysis of causes, especially if the attitude remains implicit. I'd like to point up two different points of view or attitudes which seem to me to be operative in the present study of change in the Society.

One view tends to put social change largely within the free choice of the changers, and to consider it largely a rational and deliberate act. Thus, from this point of view an investigator will ask: What were the *ideas* that brought about the change? Specifically, what were the *new* ideas? because if new ideas had not been introduced, the old ideas would have maintained the status quo. Consequently, from this point of view one will look for the teachers of new doctrine and judge that the new doctrine was the cause of the change. Or, if this point of view does admit the existence of social pressures, it will nevertheless judge that change came about because superiors did not have the wisdom, or the courage, or the strength to withstand the changes, but that they could have done so. Another judgment that proceeds from this point of view is the principle that change should be admitted or introduced only when it is change for the better. Behind this principle is the judgment that change can always be stopped and made rational.

Another view tends to see social change frequently as the result of other forces than the rational free choice of the changers. Sometimes those forces are outside of the group that is affected, as, for example, the effect of a major war on the colleges and universities of a country, or on the mood and reactions of the young people of a country. This point of view may also recognize feeling as a cause of social change, feeling that is not controlled by reason and is in fact prior to and an influence on reason. Rationality itself is seen to be a kind of feeling. In the face of feeling or mood, people of reason are generally disconcerted and puzzled when their reasons are not accepted, and especially



when they are not responded to by counter-reasons. From this point of view a social process or value can be acknowledged as good, or having been good in another time, but no longer possible at this time. Thus, a classical education may be acknowledged to be of high value, but no longer possible for a majority of students, either because the teachers cannot be found for it, or the students do not respond to it, or other educational needs do not permit it. From this point of view some movements of history and social change cannot be stopped; they may, however, be directed, the way a pilot directs a ship on the high seas.

Though these differences of attitude towards change may not be sharp and well defined in any individual or group, when one is looking for and identifying causes of change, it makes a difference which of these views is dominant in his personality.

### 3. Freedom and expansion

An instance of an interior dynamic making for change might be the thrust for "freedom, fraternity, and equality" which would seem to be in all men. Father Becker's account of the pattern of formation and religious life of the Society in the United States before Vatican II, which those of us who are old enough can verify in the middle United States, describes a way of life that was highly restrictive of freedom. Movement from place to place was very much limited. Communication with society in general, except for apostolate, was discouraged. The internal life of communities was highly structured. The intellectual life during the years of studies was strongly focussed, and access to books was limited. There was little input from the individual about assignments to forms or place of one's ministry; one was expected to go where one was sent. Given the constant human thrust for freedom, the question perhaps should be not what brought about the change, but rather, how was the existing pattern able to be sustained for so long, or at all. In fact, as Father Becker indicates, it was not only sustained, but accepted with enthusiasm. The analogy used to be drawn between the Society and the military, which likewise accepted rigorous training and restriction of freedom, and exalted obedience in the service of country. The model of the Jesuit in those days was the *miles*

*Christi.* It was part of the glory of being a Jesuit. The whole culture of the Church in those days, especially in the United States, supported it, and the prestigious image of the Jesuit in general society supported it.

It would be reasonable to expect, however, that the thrust for freedom and personal recognition would always be present and would break the surface as soon as signs appeared that it need not be that way, that there may be other ways of doing things, as soon as any change began to appear in the supporting culture. The very announcement of the Second Vatican Council did that.

I suggest also that the expansion moves of the Society in the United States in the 50s contributed to the collapse of credibility of the system of structures and to the assertion of freedom. The period after the end of World War II (1945-55) saw an extraordinary expansion of our educational institutions, of provinces, and of intrasociety institutions of formation. This was part of the general boom in the educational world after the war. Our universities and colleges entered upon an era of internal development and expansion with which the Society could not keep pace, even with increasing numbers, at least not according to the model of a Jesuit college or university which prevailed before the war. Provinces opened more high schools and increased the capacity of existing high schools. Part of the motivation was, it seems, that vocations were needed to serve the expanding educational apostolate, and more and larger high schools, it was thought, meant more vocations. It is true that concomitantly novitiates became crowded. Provinces became large, and were therefore divided. That entailed the building of new novitiates and juniorates in the country according to the model of the past, but larger, more institutional, and still separated, if not more so, from campus and city.

The division of provinces and the expansion of our educational institutions meant that the number of options for the ministry of Jesuits was reduced rather than increased. As long as the policy remained that the ordinary assignment of a Jesuit would be within his own territorial province, a number of provinces became a "tale of two universities." At the same time the expanding high schools would need more Jesuits, some of whom may have aspired to college or university. It became clear that the ministry of

everyone for the immediate and distant future would be the educational ministry, and that within definite limits. A feeling of being closed-in developed. Personal recognition became more remote.

Implicated in this development was the thrust toward higher degrees for Jesuits. This was the need of the Society and it was responded to by the scholastics. During the time of studies the ultimate goal which focussed all interest became the doctorate. Priesthood was desired, but to some it seemed to be valued more as a context or condition of professorship rather than a goal itself. The required ecclesiastical studies in philosophy and theology were frequently seen as a block and a hindrance to the pursuit of the professorship. At the same time university studies in the United States had developed to the point where it was no longer as easy as it once had been to pursue two programs of study. It became more of a strain to do the full course of ecclesiastical studies in the Society and also do a doctorate in physics or psychology or English.

It might be added that with the internal expansion and complexification of our educational institutions, especially our universities, the need for highly qualified Jesuits with special capacities for management and leadership increased. Devoted and committed Jesuits of good or median ability were no longer enough.

Father Becker asks: What went wrong in the 60s? I suggest that part of the answer might be: We expanded in the 1950s beyond the capacity of the Society in the United States to maintain its interior spirit, its diversity of apostolates, and its mobility to respond to the needs of the changing culture and Church. Perhaps the most important of these was the Society's inability effectively to continue its concern for and recognition of the spiritual and personal capacities and needs of Jesuits, especially Jesuits in the process of incorporation, but also those already in the field.

It might be responded that we really had no choice, that we had to expand in those days, and that, though there was risk involved, it is the way of the Jesuit to live with risk. It may also be argued that the expansion was true progress, that our universities, for instance, are now much greater and more influential educational institutions than our colleges

of a former era ever were, and thereby a much greater apostolic instrument. That may be, but that is evaluation, and here we are concentrating on the causes for the collapse in Jesuit numbers. I am suggesting that the expansion of the 50s, the increase in numbers of Jesuits themselves, was a contributing cause to the collapse of the 60s. However, at the same time it is not clear that, if we had not expanded, we would have known what was needed to prepare for the 60s.

#### 4. The End of the Neoscholastic Revival

I'd like to point to another historical movement, this one within the Church, which came to an end in the 50s and its ending made way for the changes of the 60s. I refer to the Neoscholastic Revival. I am not referring to scholastic philosophy and theology; that can continue at all times. I am referring to the intellectual *movement* which was stimulated by the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* of Leo XIII in 1879 and which dominated ecclesiastical studies in the Church generally and philosophical studies in American Catholic colleges and universities during the first half of this century. It was almost totally a revival of Thomism, and was the second such revival since the days of St. Thomas himself. The other was the Spanish and Italian revival of the 16th century, the Second Scholasticism.

Intellectual movements of this sort have a limited life span, and often it is relatively short, from fifty to a hundred years. Moreover they are generally identified with a cluster of outstanding men, almost of one generation. For example, there is the age of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, or of Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Basil, or of Bonaventure, Aquinas, and Scotus.

It was inevitable that the Neoscholastic Revival should run out. Some would say that it was not a true movement because it was imposed and sustained by ecclesiastical authority. Though it can be conceded that authority had a strong hand in the movement, there were a large number of philosophers, theologians, and historians who entered into the movement with enthusiasm and confidence that something of real value was being developed. Usually when a movement "catches on," it is shown by its

inventors or discoverers to have a fascinating potential for new understanding and new knowledge which is not only new but also responsive to the needs and spirit of the times. The Neoscholastic Revival was of that sort. The riches of the 13th century were extensive and fascinating for a people that had been cut off from them for generations. The philosophy of Thomas Aquinas especially generated enthusiasm. In an age of revival ("back to Kant," "back to Hegel") and traditionalism, when system and reason was a high value, Thomism provided a coherent and clarifying system, with a sense of tradition. And it offered an ontological existentialism to counter the personalist existentialism of Kierkegaard and Sartre.

However, after a while the new knowledge gets to be generally mined out, at least for this particular time and its interests, and a researcher has to dig hard to find more that is significantly new. Furthermore, after the new knowledge has been largely mined out, then its limitations also begin to be attended to, and searchers begin to turn elsewhere for answers to their questions. The leaders of the movement grow old and die, and as happened with Pericles, their sons do not carry on the excitement.

As Father Gerald McCool, S.J., has pointed out, the Neoscholastic Revival had two movements, one rising from Joseph Maréchal, S.J., and becoming what is now popularly known as "transcendental Thomism," and the other expressing a more classical approach and finding its leadership, especially in this country, in Gilson and Maritain. The leaders of the "transcendental" movement, Karl Rahner, S.J., and Bernard Lonergan, S.J., are still vigorous and on the scene, but neither is young. Will there be any replacements for them? Even if there should be, the Thomism they represent is a modern Thomism which accepts the perspectives of post-Kantian modern philosophy. It is therefore a suspect "Thomism" in the eyes of the classicists. It is moreover largely a Jesuit movement. On the other hand no Thomistic replacements have appeared for Gilson and Maritain, who made Thomism visible on the secular philosophical scene. One test of the vitality of a movement is the list of publications the movement produces. One hardly sees a study of the philosophy of St. Thomas anymore, except for the flurry of commemoration in the septicentennial year of Aquinas and Bonaventure. The signs are all around that

the Neoscholastic Revival as a movement has ended.

Extrinsic factors may have hastened the end of the Thomistic revival. The Second World War in Europe, especially in Germany, destroyed a span of young scholars and professors that might have kept the movement going. An exception is Johannes Metz, who survived because he was taken prisoner of war and interned in the United States; but others were not so fortunate. However, in the postwar era Husserl, Max Scheler, and Heidegger had begun to draw attention and the phenomenological movement had begun. Moreover, phenomenology (of which existentialism is a particular version) had Christian and Catholic relationships. One of its leading concepts, intentionality, had come from Franz Brentano, a former priest inspired by Aristotle. Early disciples of Husserl and Scheler, such as Edith Stein and Dietrich von Hildebrand, became Catholic converts, as did Scheler himself for a time. Romano Guardini and Caspar Nink, S.J., were part of this movement. Phenomenology as practiced by the Germans developed the intentionality of the emotions in a way that Aristotelian scholasticism had not done. Kierkegaard came into popularity in this same period, and his phenomenology of the act and attitude of faith began to replace the rational demonstration of the *preambula fidei* as a foundation for religion.

The categories of scholasticism were reason and system. At the time of the rise of scholasticism at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, these categories fitted the temper of the times. Despite the distinction between the preambles of the faith and faith itself, in practice it was considered to be the role of philosophy to prove the foundations of the faith in such a way that rational individuals could not, consistently at least, not believe. Philosophy proved the existence and nature of God, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and the natural law, all by "reason alone." That was its function. Theology built on that. In ecclesiastical studies professors of theology expected, even demanded, the prior demonstration of scholastic philosophy. Maritain and Gilson tried to mitigate this excessive rationalism and argued, especially Gilson, that true philosophy presupposed a believer and did not convert him. This was the issue of "Christian" philosophy. Many, especially the theologians, would not accept it, but today the pendulum has swung away from objectivist rationalism.

As the Thomistic revival went on, pressure to release the absoluteness of the Thomistic system as the philosophy of Catholicism began to build up. Some will remember the encyclical *Humani Generis* (not to be confused with *Humanae Vitae*), which appeared in 1949 and tried to bring out into the open and restrain some underground beginnings of pluralism in Catholic philosophy and theology. Even Jean Daniélou got burned a little in this action. However it was not possible to stem the tide, though the dams were really opened with the announcement of Vatican II. The council itself was not needed; its simple announcement was enough to bring forth all sorts of projections of ways to update the Church. Vatican II did not simply release the waters, but it did not hold them back either. It gave them direction, a direction not always heeded but frequently appealed to as pointing the way to a new era.

There were other pressures to break through the exclusive control of scholasticism, as Father Becker has indicated, notably the biblical and liturgical movements. A timeless metaphysic, correct as it may be, was not what was needed to deal with the historical and personalist categories of Scripture, and the diversifications of liturgical worship in the vernacular around the world. Among all the aspects and influences of change, it was probably the changes in the liturgy, one of the first acts of the council, which most symbolized the change from a Church above time with a complete and total system of language and doctrine to a Church in history with many languages and many approaches to philosophy and theology.

The exclusive teaching of scholasticism and Thomism could not continue in that situation, especially since the situation also involved a radical change in the use of and response to authority.

I might conclude these lengthy comments with a verse from a song of World War I: "How y'gonna keep them down on the farm, once they have seen Paree?"

3. A PRIEST-PSYCHIATRIST'S COMMENTS  
ON FATHER BECKER'S STUDY

by

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Father Becker has, in my opinion, developed some extremely interesting and thought-provoking observations about the prevalent conditions which surrounded and possibly influenced the departure of a shocking number of Jesuits from our ranks. I would like to comment briefly on his assertion that in all probability personality factors provide the bulk of the explanation why some Jesuits persevered while others chose to leave. He makes this statement immediately after reminding us that "within each generation, nearly all Jesuits were subjected to substantially the same external influences in the 1960s." I want to express my general agreement with these remarks, but I also think that some degree of amplification and clarification is warranted.

Working clinically as a priest-psychiatrist attempting to be of help to many Jesuits in several American provinces at a time when they were making decisions to stay or depart during the past decade, I was often profoundly struck by the variety of ways in which our men were reacting to the same threatening or adverse stimuli. I found myself repeatedly reflecting on the fact that we Jesuits, like all human persons, respond with painful emotions, such as anger or fear, to certain external forces which distress us; and these affective reactions can be compared to the way in which we and all people are distressed by *physically* painful stimuli. But different individuals manifest different degrees of tolerance for inflicted emotional pain. One man is emotionally devastated by the same event or situation which his brother in the Lord is able to encounter with significantly less intense personal suffering. Moreover, some men prove to be capable of



tolerating intense discomfort (whether physical or emotional) for a longer period of time than others can; they are far less inclined to disengage themselves from or abandon the pain-provoking circumstances. I have seen some Jesuits endure for almost unbelievably prolonged periods the same frustrating, disappointing, or disillusioning life-situations which other men, finding themselves totally incapable of tolerating, had to escape after a relatively brief period of unbearable interior suffering.

To be more specific, I saw some Jesuits leave the Society resentfully complaining that the Church and our order were not adapting themselves rapidly enough to meet the desperate needs of countless people in our world today. Their patience had been tested beyond its breaking point. The painful anger they were experiencing as a result of frustration of their deep and strong desires had become escalated to a degree of intensity which they simply could no longer go on enduring. But other Jesuits, who were equally convinced that the Church and our Society were at the time revealing themselves as unadaptable and insensitively lethargic, were at the same time, while looking at the same world situation, demonstrating a personal capacity to endure their deep emotional distress for a longer period. These were able, in spite of their frustration and anger, to remain Jesuits and continue their apostolic lives and work while the others were despairingly leaving. Similarly, I saw some men depart from our ranks in a state of heart-crushed disappointment and despondence when the institution where they had been working underwent some personally upsetting organizational change. Other men in identically the same situation survived. For some reason their capacity to *endure* was not as limited or vulnerable.

Let me hasten to add at this point that I am fully aware that, through years of fidelity to their practice of spiritual exercises, many Jesuits successfully prepare themselves to accept and endure even severe degrees of suffering in union with our Lord. But I would certainly be reluctant to conclude or imply that those who by leaving the Society disengaged themselves from the arena of their ordeal and their pain, were presenting evidence that they were less prayerful or less "spiritual" men. What has struck me again and again during the work I have had a chance to do in

behalf of departing Jesuits is the fact that they have virtually all revealed a life history which made their eventual leaving intelligible in the light of earlier life experiences which predisposed them to react to contemporary circumstances in the abandoning way they did. For example, those who became intolerably enraged over bureaucratic foot-dragging had generally in their childhood years felt chronically resentful over being deprived of a satisfactory parental response to some of their urgent desires or deeply experienced needs. Those who found themselves unable to tolerate specific losses or disappointments in their adult years without leaving the Society had become, as it were, *hypersensitive* (or you might say *allergic*) to such experiences by undergoing profoundly traumatizing, emotionally scarring, and frequently recurring disappointments or losses at a much earlier age. Those who left while bitterly complaining about what they considered to be reprehensible unresponsiveness on the part of superiors to their strenuous work-efforts and accomplishments presented invariably a personal life history which disclosed the development of an excessive need for signs of parental approval and acceptance in order to sustain their fragile sense of self-esteem and self-confidence during their childhood years.

One might feel inclined to hope that a person's early-life experiences of loss, disappointment, failure, or some other painful type of event would prepare him to take in stride a repetition of the same kind of happening at a later stage of life. Immunity might conceivably be acquired. But this is not generally the case. Quite to the contrary, an early-life experience that is emotionally traumatizing, especially if repeated, will predictably prepare an individual to experience a later-life similar experience with hyperintensified impact. Vulnerability is thus amplified rather than decreased. The pain felt now--as the noxious stimuli hit their softened-up target--is, you might say, *reinforced* or compounded by what has been suffered in the past. The repetition of a familiar type of painful event is usually handled psychologically less well for being just that--a reopening of an old emotional wound, like a raw nerve irritated excruciatingly at the site of an incompletely healed previous injury.

I am certainly not trying to say that all the men who left the

Society were departing in a state of obvious pain. Despite the fact that everyone I interviewed was to some significant extent experiencing disappointment or disillusionment over the fact that the hopes and dreams of his youth had failed to become concretized and fulfilled in his current life-circumstances, many left us because they felt sure that *something was missing* in their lives; but they were not angry, hostile, resentful, anxious, or depressed. Rather, they were *hopeful* that the lack would be eradicated or remedied in the process of their seeking a new life-situation and a different life-style. Some had entered the Society from families in which they had been experiencing a quality of deep and affectionate interpersonal interaction which they were not able to find reproduced in their community chapel, refectory, or even recreation room. They were leaving us in the hope (usually *unconscious*) of regaining a lost childhood or youth. Generally it was marriage (but not parenthood!) that appealed to them as the situation which promised to fulfill their emotional yearnings and needs. Perhaps not as many would have made their move in that direction had not others, departing around them, provided an example (or *model*) of the courage to do so while explicitly declaring their belief that "God wants us to find happiness" and "in marriage a man can find love and fulfillment." Irresistible music that could hardly fail to enchant a very lonely man's heart!

More frequently those whom I saw leaving us were men who had come into the Society to attain a sense of meaning, worth, and fulfillment through a life of service to others, but who eventually discovered--to their deep disappointment--that their goals appeared destined to remain unachieved. Now, with others leaving honorably around them, they felt free to seek satisfaction of their desires elsewhere. For example, many of the men I interviewed had entered and persevered in the Society with a conviction that a celibate life would be possible and personally rewarding to them as long as they were given a complete Jesuit's formation and education, and then a chance to apply themselves diligently to a consistently challenging apostolic activity. They eventually came to realize that this combination was inadequate for them, and they went away feeling somewhat mystified, disappointed, frustrated, and sad. They left asserting that

what they needed is a wife and a deep sharing of affection. What they failed to invest their efforts in--many of them were just beginning to recognize--was the area of interpersonal relationships. They had failed to develop strong and rewarding friendships within the Society, and thus they lacked an abiding, reassuring sense of "belonging." At the deepest levels of their heart, emotions, values, and convictions, they felt *unknown* and consequently unloved. While preaching love they had been concentrating virtually all of their efforts upon their work and what they considered their religious duties. But when they departed, with thoughts of love and marriage on their mind, I usually found myself wondering whether they would not inevitably continue to be principally task-oriented workers in the future--men who would automatically assign lower priority to values such as sociability, deep interpersonal sharing, openness, empathy, and mutual disclosure of feelings, with work still established firmly at the top level as regards their investment of their time, their energies, and their lives.

Much more could be said about the way many who entered the Society tended to find support for the task-orientation of the personality which they brought into our novitiates. They heard friendship and companionship in the Lord proclaimed extensively; but they perceived hard workers as getting the substantial recognition and personal rewards, not those who sought above all else to become great at being "friends." Very much more could be written about the problem of integrating a Jesuit's work with his prayer, with his friendships, with his continuing investment in his development as a whole person, without sacrificing any one of these essentials for the sake of any other. But not right now.

Before going further, I would want to state clearly that I never talked in depth with a departing Jesuit who did not give me the impression that the motives for his leaving were indeed complex, never simple; and (as Father Becker so well pointed out) many of the motives of these departing brethren remained in the realm of their *unconsciousness* while life-shaping decisions were often being made too rapidly and sometimes even superficially. For example, many men left with a conviction that they would make excellent husbands, even though they had found living

with other Jesuits as "companions" relatively unrewarding. They were, I found, unaware that their inability to recognize and meet the human needs of those close to them (geographically, not emotionally) had contributed strongly to their sense of frustration and their departure. Would they fare any better with their future wives? They weren't asking this question, just assuming they would.

At times those who were departing were far less aware of the possibilities latent within the situation they were leaving than they were conscious of what they expected to experience outside the Society. Among these were the Jesuits who left saying that what they needed was to be allowed to function as adults, free to seek their own personal development, not tied to institutions, free to make choices and to participate in the making of decisions which would affect them, free to assume responsibility for their own life, and free to express openly and spontaneously their deepest feelings and desires. Their assumption was that such human development, maturity, aliveness, and fulfillment could not be experienced by them within the Society, at least not with its current membership, structures, and leadership, and the change-resistant tendencies and factions which they were perceiving at the time they left. They could picture their possible future in the Society as involving for them more of dying than being fully alive. They chose *life*, and most of them left without blaming.

Obviously, I have not mentioned all the reasons or situations which men saw themselves confronting when they were departing from our midst in droves. Father Becker has shown us the sweeping external changes which were transforming so many areas of human experience from ecclesiology to transportation to social behavior. The reasons and situations of departing Jesuits which I have treated above are merely representative samples. They attempt to show that whether the extensive changes from 1958 to 1975 were affecting Jesuit decision-making as causes, or conditions, or merely occasions, there was, as he noted, a general climate of rapid transition created which generated in many of our men a deepening anxiety and insecurity. Such feelings prompt human beings to find a way to regain their inner composure, to transform their losses into gains, to stave off further pain, and to bring their lives under their own personal control. Many left

the Society to achieve these aims. They were those who were suffering more unbearably. While deciding, they felt quite sure that they were escaping victimhood and serving their own best interest. But for us who remain, there is one lesson which I hope the Spirit will somehow teach us now as we reflect upon Father Becker's fine paper. We lost priceless treasures in these brothers of ours who departed. We need to *learn why*. We don't want this loss to happen to the Church again in the future, if it can be prevented. Storms will certainly arise, and the winds of change will undoubtedly blow fiercely again *sometime*. We need to prepare ourselves better. Brittle branches are snapped off the tree when the gusts get strong. How can we preserve in ourselves the suppleness of springtime and pass the secret along to those who come after us?

#### 4. FROM THE WINDOW OF THEOLOGY

by

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As a professionally trained theologian, I would like to express my own understanding of the events which took place in the area of theology during the 1960s.

Father Becker noted in his study that, when he consulted spiritual directors who were in office during the 1960s, he found that they were not too helpful in leading him to a generalization of causes for departures of Jesuits. I, too, find such generalization difficult. I work more from individual cases where often enough I see the good reasons for a particular decision, and so I cannot express the perspective of a more general effect and its potential harm or damage. I can be very sympathetic to a particular man and woman caught up in a destructive marriage relationship and so appreciate that for the health of both parties separation or divorce is the better decision, but at the same time I should be aware of the harmful effect of each divorce on the social structure of marriage and on the faith ideal in the sacrament of matrimony. In a similar way, when I deal with individual departures from the Jesuit order, I can be very much aware of the correctness of this particular man's decision to leave the priesthood or religious life, yet when the overall picture must be drawn, I have to become aware of the destructive and debilitating effect on the vocational ideal of the priesthood and on the permanent commitment to the vowed life. It is in this area of reconciling the individual case which can be valued as good and the general effect which can be presented as harmful that I find that I want to qualify Father Becker's explanation of his statistical data.

Let me begin by telling where and when I received my later Jesuit training for the priesthood. I pursued my theology in a Jesuit theologate,

St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas, from 1962 to 1966. Then I witnessed the changes within the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus in England during my tertianship year, 1966-1967. Next I did my work for the doctorate in theology at the Catholic University of America from 1967 to 1969, after which, finally, I was assigned as spiritual director of the Jesuit theological students in their community at the School of Divinity of St. Louis University from 1969 to 1971. I was rector of that community from January, 1972, to June, 1976. Close friends, teachers, superiors, and counselees have made up my own experience of Jesuit departures. Theology courses, whole curricula, and community life-patterns were changed by the demands of the scholastic group of which I was a part. My vision of this period of Jesuit history, then, comes from a variety of stances within it. I believe that this variety has been important for nuancing my own reflections upon the events of the 1960s.

Father Becker has made the observation that it was the combination of two factors in theology which made the impact of changes in the 1960s so shattering. One was the "accumulation of change"; the other was the "obvious resemblance of the changes to positions that the official Church had previously condemned." Concretely, I can identify the problem involved in "accumulation of change" both with the content of theology and with the way in which it was taught. For example, the ecclesiology which was taught in a Jesuit theologate in the fall of 1962 was not even included in the subject matter of the examination for the licentiate degree by the spring of 1966, because the Constitution on the Church of Vatican II had superseded the content and the approach of the traditional theological manuals--textbooks which had remained basically unchanged for a hundred years. To exemplify the second factor, the seeming reversal of long-standing Church teaching, I experienced, in a very different environment, the acute anguish of many English Catholics. They felt that the faith itself--which so many of their forebears had suffered for, sometimes in the form of loss, even in physical torture and death, more often however in the form of a still-persisting personal humiliation deriving from their own lesser status in society--was now being expressed in practices and theological language common to their Protestant countrymen. Although I could instance other



examples of these two factors pinpointed by Father Becker, I would do so only to lend support to what I consider to be his own perceptive observation.

In order to understand the changes more adequately, however, I would take a different approach towards filling in the content of what was taking place in theology itself during the 1960s. When Father Becker himself begins to note individual authors or books or to describe a particular incident as representative or summary of the 1960s in theology, I feel a certain unease and dissatisfaction. As he himself recognizes, there is a necessity for professional theologians to try to provide, from within their own field, a more adequate perspective on the events he treats. I would like to start that process, knowing that I will be more often qualifying than correcting his observations and that I will be attempting to explain his statistical information with my own generalizations about the theological field.

There is no question about the importance of the development of studies in Scripture within the Roman Catholic community. As others have noted before, without the more remote important changes initiated by Pope Pius XII, such as the renewal of scriptural study promoted by the encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* in 1943, Vatican II itself could not have been the momentous council which it has been in the history of the Church. The biblically trained experts went about their work with such a thoroughness and soundness, building upon the work in the fields of exegesis and biblical criticism in which their Protestant counterparts had been engaged for a far longer time, that relatively little upset was caused, in view of the significance of the development. In fact, the scriptural renewal in the Roman Catholic community had a comparatively long development of some twenty years before the 1960s, and the strength of its foundation shows in the steadiness and sureness of its continued development today. Yet in the 1960s to study the Bible as a book of historical faith, and not as a book of history, was a new challenge presented to the student in theology. Historical facts can be memorized and retained; faith demands prayer and a personal commitment. Rather than point to the new content of scripture study, I would emphasize the personal involvement called forth from the Jesuit in theological studies by the new scriptural methodology. Although

the study of Scripture now demanded a much more scientific, critical approach in comparison with the previous, more pious use of "proof texts," the effect of such a methodology which takes a historical, non-believing stance was to raise the very question of personal faith. In more general terms, Father Becker noted the importance of the shift from the objective to the subjective attitudes. I desire to focus on this trend as a major struggle which flows consistently through all the turbulent change in theological studies.

Once the Bible began to be critically examined, there had to be an effect in the two allied studies proceeding for us from Scripture itself-- Christology and ecclesiology. As Father Becker remarks, books such as Bishop Robinson's *Honest to God* and Harvey Cox's *Secular City*, by their wide popularity, indicate in an effective way the spirit of the 1960s. But the influence of these books in themselves upon the Jesuit theologian, both teacher and student alike, can be overemphasized. The fuller context of the theological field as represented, for example, in the writings of Karl Rahner, Charles Davis, Teilhard de Chardin, Henri de Lubac, and Bernard Lonergan would give a far better picture of the new horizons opening out in the dogmatic, ecclesial, and spiritual areas.

In former times, theology for the Jesuit was often enough just another academic study similar to the philosophy previously learned, demanding theses and argumentation, with comparatively little call for personal response or investment beyond one's head. For the Jesuit trained in earlier years, his personal life with God, Jesus, and the Church found its source in his devotions and not in his theology. In the 1960s the old-style devotions had been rejected, and theology itself began to be presented in a way to speak to both heart and head.

This period saw the rise of a personalism which could generally be described as a focusing upon the human person and its potential for growth and development amid its relations with other persons and with the world. Because of the pervasive influence of this kind of personalism in psychology, philosophy, and theology, the given humanness, along with its potential for growth, was presumed in a far deeper way both individually for the person of Jesus Christ and socially for the institution of the

Church. The questions asked about Jesus were aimed less at knowing *about* him and more at knowing him--"a man like us in all things but sin." Knowing self to better know Jesus and to know Jesus in order to better know self were all mixed together in this approach. Yet to enter into this struggle was to enter more deeply into the demands of a reflective faith. As in other areas of theology, the necessary step which had to be taken was that of going from a storehouse of answers about Jesus to an actual knowledge of him through a studied faith. But as many Jesuits discovered, it was not a simple transfer of knowledge systems. The difficulty came in the crossing-over from an objective set of truths which had traditional expression and made no demand on one's personal investment to some kind of personal experience, still difficult to formulate, around the very basics of one's Christian faith.

The demand to make this kind of cross-over came to every theological student through the milieu of the 1960s--a demand arising especially from the humanistic emphasis on personal relations and personal fulfillment. In great part this explains why the focus on the person of Jesus was upon the reality of his relation to oneself just as personal fulfillment was now being judged in a more total life system as reflected in and expected from the social body of one's particular ecclesial community. Whether a man did not cross over, or in crossing over expected to find the same kind of objective knowledge assurance, the strain was equally severe.

Theologically there was, in this more personalized approach, a natural flow from the relation of self to Christ and self to the Church to the whole area of moral behavior. It is even more difficult in the moral area than in the dogmatic to single out one author whose writings would best reflect this change in attitude--probably not a Bonhoeffer, Tillich, Niebuhr, Fletcher, or Fuchs. Perhaps Bernard Häring, with his monumental work *The Law of Christ*, had the greatest influence on the knowledgeable Catholic layman and the Jesuit teacher and student in the 1960s, and helped to set a whole new tone for Catholic moral theology--but one still in contact with the roots of our Catholic tradition. Significantly, the more seriously one attempted to follow up one's study of Scripture and of the person of Christ with faith, the less prescriptive appeared

Christianity in its roots and the more personal and situational in its behavioral approach. In this way the development of moral theology was continuous with the changes in Scripture, Christology, and ecclesiology--all of them attempting to challenge now both the heart of man and his head. I believe, then, that to note the change in theological content is only the first step in assessing the crisis of this period. The deeper challenge lay in the comprehensive effort which the new theology was trying to call forth--requiring not only rethought formulations and expressions but also a personal investment on the part of student and teacher alike.

Finally, we could focus the theological challenge and crisis of the 1960s as represented by the particular understanding of the priestly vocation and ministry. I think that Father Becker has explained well some of the problems which had surfaced. Whereas privilege and position had been a usual concomitant of the priesthood in the Catholic environment up through the 1950s, at this time "equality" and "no difference," based on the leveling notion of personhood, became the bywords. The greatness of the more common sacraments for building up the Christian community, that is, baptism and marriage, received the attention. The sacrament of orders, which specialized the identity and role of a comparatively small group within the Church, was deliberately downplayed. This process of democratization within the sacramental system of the Church came as a shock to many priests or men-in-training-to-be-priests--who consciously or unconsciously had a common expectation that the priesthood would give them an increased assurance of personal value or a status acknowledged by the Catholic community. Even the documents of Vatican II dealing with priesthood gave little help to priests struggling with their own "aggiornamento." Again I would like to highlight the consistency of this change: It was to move from a theology of priesthood which appeared to stress "externals" (such as indelible marks assuring the priest of a cultic status, with the personal identity left for the most part to individual piety) to a theology which attempted to call a man to some sort of an internalization or deepening of the meaning and worth of priesthood.

To complicate further the process of understanding priesthood, one prevalent idea at this time was that of the hyphenated priest. Because of

this idea, the priesthood was highlighted as a function and made to appear as a job to be done rather than a vocation to be lived. This abortive attempt at a theoretical explanation of the priestly life made clear, beyond what the limited older teaching had done, the real possibility that one might live without genuine personal involvement in his priesthood. The theory of the hyphenated priest caused a great deal of strain in the lives of many Jesuits, who wondered whether the goal of Jesuit training reached its culmination in a secular professional degree or in ordination to the Catholic priesthood. If the secular goal was reached first, why bother with these further studies for priesthood? Or if priesthood were only an adjunct to one's ordinary professional life, why not cast it aside if it gets in the way or drop it if it adds a burden? These kinds of questions, which had occurred to other Jesuit priests during four hundred years, made for added anxiety and doubt in an age of personalism and personal fulfillment.

In order to grasp a little better some understanding of the vocational crisis and loss in the 1960s, I believe that naming a few books or authors in theology or describing a few events is not very helpful or adequate. I have tried, rather, to show that all the changes which occurred in each theological area were making one common demand: They were calling for an effort to combine a theology with a spirituality; and thus to bring about a deeper internalization or realization in the man himself. It cannot be stressed too much that an environment which centered on a personalistic approach to the whole of life--to God, one's fellowman, one's Church and world--had a profound effect on the Jesuit theological student and priest. But this personalism as a theoretical context or environment only served to reemphasize the centering on a practical internalization and meaning. What, then, lies at the heart of the theological problematic of the 1960s? It is, I think, what I have described in the words "crossing over"--from an objective set of traditionally expressed expectations and memorizable formulations to an open-ended challenge to personal commitment aimed at living with the implications of what one knows, and to seeking value and worth in what one is and expects.

DECREASE IN NUMBERS AND THE RENEWAL OF  
THE JESUIT *SPIRITUAL* TRADITION

by

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Decline in Jesuit membership over the last ten years is a fact that has deeply influenced the life of every American Jesuit. It has disturbed us<sup>1</sup> as individuals, as a community, and as an institution. Moreover, it is not only the quantitative change in our membership that has disturbed us. The Christian sincerity, intellectual ability, creativity, and force of character of many of those who left the Society in those years represent a qualitative loss that, although it can never be measured, is certainly prodigious.

And we lost friends. For many of us between twenty-eight and fifty-five, the departure from the Society of close personal friends represents a greater personal loss than the general decline in numbers. Many of these friendships had come to maturity over years, even decades, of companionship in a common enterprise and had formed a personal environment that made life and work in the Society both supportive and challenging. We lost close collaborators, men whose critical acumen and Christian vision helped us to make sense of the tumultuous events of a time of sweeping social and religious change. We lost models, for some of the men who left were more than usually inventive, hard-working, zealous, reflective. They were often the kind of men we would have liked to be, but felt we were not.

The extent of human loss the age group between twenty-eight and fifty-five suffered was enormous. When men have suffered deep and extensive personal loss, they have to reflect on the implications of that loss.

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1 The footnotes will be found below, on page 149.

Inevitably their sense of the loss they have suffered affects their relationship with God, whether they realize it or not. Many of us, then, have not waited for a statistical study to reflect on the meaning for us and for the Society of the decline in membership. Reflection, and often prayer, have been forced upon us for years.

Father Becker's statistical work, although it does not initiate reflection on the decrease in our membership, does provide a good focal point for discussion. It invites us to share our reflections, and evokes a common starting-point for such sharing. We can begin to share only when we have something in common. In the experience indicated by these statistics we have a common starting-point.

That experience and the statistics that remind us of it can be looked at from many points of view, however. Father Becker chooses to seek the causes of the decline in numbers in the historical, cultural, social, philosophical, theological, and personal atmosphere and events of the '60s. Despite his balanced and nuanced analysis, his viewpoint can leave the impression that the decline in numbers occurred because of this atmosphere and these events. Plausible explanations of painful events have a way of dulling the anxieties aroused by those events and permitting us to consign them to history without addressing the crucial issues they have raised. We believe that Father Becker's point of view overlooks, or at most only hints at, the most important factor in the "loosening" he speaks of: the religious weakness of the Society of Jesus as it entered the '60s. And we believe that his analysis can hinder us from grasping the salvific opportunity offered us by the upheaval we have experienced.

He observes that numerical decline can be a prelude to new growth. He also indicates that the Society of Jesus was limited as well as fostered by the Tridentine Church of its origin. What he fails to emphasize is that the Society of Jesus may have needed an upheaval if it was to have a chance to survive as a vibrant religious community.

This article will suggest that through the tumultuous and painful events of the '60s and early '70s the Society was given a chance to regain a freedom, an availability it had lost. The chance is still there, but it is not yet clear that the Society will whole-heartedly grasp it. We

will not grasp it if we do not genuinely believe that the experience we have undergone, however painful and difficult it might be, can be a "kairos" for us.

A religious community must be judged on its ability to create an atmosphere in which free personal and institutional response to gospel values is encouraged. Judged by this standard, there is ample evidence that the American Society for several decades preceding the '60s was in a state of malaise. There was a great deal of good and a creditable amount of excellence in its life and work; men grew personally and institutions were founded or developed that have contributed signally to Christian life. There was noteworthy creativity in academic life, and numerous men made an incalculably valuable contribution to the Church by their steady, dedicated work in classrooms, in scholarly enterprises, in pastoral work. But there was also a widespread malaise to which our experience attests.

Despite an increasing breadth in intellectual formation, the typical formation program was inflexible, narrowly conceived, and distinctly lacking in ability to prepare men to meet the conditions in which the '60s and '70s would require them to live and work. It did not, for instance, encourage the personal suppleness and openness to others' views and feelings that would enable them to work as team ministers; it did not prepare them to collaborate as peers with the women who made up more than half the ministerial force of the American Church; it prepared them to teach the laity, but not to act as co-workers for the Kingdom with them; it did little to form them to a mature personal prayer that would sustain them in their personal and apostolic lives when they lived and worked outside the field of force provided by strong institutional structures; it did not encourage them to integrate their aggressivity into their spiritual lives; it did too much to encourage them to see life through institutional eyes and too little to enable them to see and respond to the varied and rapidly changing non-institutional needs of God's people.

The most compelling evidence for the accuracy of these statements is our experience--and each of us, if he wants to understand the upheaval of the last ten years, must uncontentiously consult his own experience and listen to the experience of others. Supplementary evidence, however, is



provided by the psychological study of the American priesthood conducted for the United States Catholic Conference by Eugene C. Kennedy and Vincent J. Heckler.<sup>2</sup> Admittedly this research covered a sample of all priests, not just religious or Jesuits. Nonetheless, the sample was unbiased, and there is no indication that religious or Jesuits form a class drastically apart from the rest of the priests of the United States. The interviews upon which the results were based were completed by early 1970. Thus they can give us a perspective on the products of seminary training up to that time, with most of the priests interviewed having been trained before 1960.

The authors are careful to note that the priests of the United States are ordinary men and that their study should not be taken to indicate less psychological development among priests than among other American men. This prudent observation, however, cannot keep us from noting with some dismay that almost 75% of those interviewed were categorized as either maldeveloped (8.5%) or underdeveloped (66.0%). The category of maldevelopment comprised those who had severe and long-standing psychological problems. The underdeveloped priests manifested their lack of development in the following areas: they had few, if any, deep friendships; their relationships with others were distant, highly stylized, and frequently unrewarding; they were generally passive, excessively docile men whose major source of identity was the role of priest; they were generally unable to articulate a deep level of personal religious faith. The authors make the point that the life-style of priests allowed them to stay underdeveloped since it was not necessary for them to become responsible for another person or other persons.

Insofar as this study accurately described the personality development of American priests, one can say that as a group we had widespread deficiencies and were ill-equipped to meet the changing conditions of the '60s. It would be unfair to put all the blame on seminary training, but it would also be myopic not to see formation and life-style as contributing factors.

When the post-conciliar period began, then, and Jesuits found themselves asked to cooperate with laymen as well as to preach to them, to work with women as peers, to base their lives and work more fully on their

personal convictions and personal integration, and to be not only intellectually cognizant of, but emotionally responsive to, a new range of social and individual values, they often were unable to do so without a profound, often violent, change of attitude, a change that was made more difficult by lack of suppleness in the training they had received.

The fact that the American Society has taken so many new initiatives in the last ten years can make us forget that at the end of Vatican II one of the issues in Jesuits' minds was the question: Even given the most cogent reasons for serious adaptation, would the Society, especially its superiors, be capable of change? The question did not depend for its force on the envisioning of any particular change. It was more basic than that. It really came to: Had we as a community lost the ability to make decisions based on discernment?

If decisions are to be based on discernment, real options are required. The discerning person has to be able to see these options as practically possible, even though difficult, but--to allude to only one factor in our institutional life--the number, size, and institutional momentum of our schools, colleges, and universities made it impossible in the early '60s to plan pastoral apostolates that would employ significant numbers of men who were also capable of teaching in our schools. It was the experience of the New England Province in the early '60s that men under forty-five could not be spared for full-time retreat work, for instance. The need of the schools for teachers was too pressing. And the situation showed few signs of amelioration. Instead, the willingness of the province to establish new schools made it clear that there might never be a supply of talented men available for non-school apostolates. The needs of the Church for creative pastoral thinkers and workers were clearly increasing; the areas of American life that required pastoral investigation and experimentation were becoming more numerous as the culture changed. But if you could teach, you taught. The practical likelihood of decision-making based on discernment was, under such conditions, extremely limited both for the Society and for the individual.

Somewhere in our consciousness we knew in the early '60s that something was seriously wrong with the Society. Too few men spoke of prayer

as a joyous experience. Too few spoke of prayer at all, except, as in the case of Mass, litanies, and the office, in terms of law or rule. Too many men lived in a fear of various authorities that was clearly immature. Too many men fatalistically assumed that significant, vivifying change could not occur in the Church or in the Society. We became accustomed to the human and religious suffering around us because we had neither the vision nor the will to do anything about it. The Society was in crisis,<sup>3</sup> and the crisis centered on a lack of religious vitality. When the Society, based as it is on the ability to discern and make decisions based on discernment, loses its ability to discern, it is in crisis. If it is to regain that ability, upheaval may well be necessary, and upheavals are bound to be painful.

Many changes have been introduced into American Jesuit life in the last ten years. A more diversified apostolate has developed. Large numbers of men in each American province are still committed to high-school or college work, but the number of schools has ceased to grow and pastoral apostolates have become more vital, better manned, and sometimes more original.

The change in style of government, both on the province level and in the local houses, from a more vertical to a more fully consultative model has encouraged Jesuits to take a more responsible part in decision-making, and has given them incentive to take more responsibility for their lifestyle and their work. This change in style of government has urged men to increase the scope and depth of their interior freedom. A Jesuit has far less excuse now for feeling that he lives an adequate Jesuit life if he does only what he is told to do, and does not take personal responsibility for searching out the most vital ways in which his life and abilities can serve God and his people.

Since about 1970 superiors have encouraged individual Jesuits to take more responsibility for the way they interact with others. The development of small communities with collegial or semi-collegial government and the development of working teams with the members taking joint responsibility for the total enterprise have contributed significantly to the growth of the sense that one's affectivity and ability to relate wholeheartedly to

others play an important role in the development of vital, responsible communities and apostolic endeavors.

Against this background of change in the external circumstances of Jesuit life, there has come about since 1970 a shift in emphasis in the promotion of interior life that eventually may represent a change in the American Society that will be of far deeper and more sweeping consequence than the decrease in membership. The Jesuit has been encouraged, and often newly enabled, to recognize in his own religious experience an unparalleled source of personal spiritual vitality. Many Jesuits, especially but not exclusively those on the lower age levels, have come to see, often for the first time, their own experience of God as the basis of their sense of religious identity and of their personal decision-making. Directed retreats aimed at helping men to recognize their religious experience and use it as a basis for and a source of life, the renewal of spiritual direction that takes up this facilitating task on a long-term basis, the marked increase in the use of Ignatian contemplation as the basic model for prayer, the resulting increase in sensitivity to "movements" in prayer: all these new developments point to the growth of a new way of spiritual life that, if it continues, will have a profound effect on the quality and direction of Jesuit life and mission. The experience of failure and success in the last decade has produced this way of spiritual life and gives it its tone of immediacy. Yet, like all authentic Christian spiritual movements, it is deeply rooted in ancient tradition and has as its major elements spiritual doctrines that were firmly held by that tradition.

New experience arising from a new situation has come, on reflection, to remind Jesuits of Ignatius' own experience and his reflections on it, and has sent them back to reexamine his insights with fresh attention.

Not that those insights had ever been completely lost. The spirituality of the pre-seventies encouraged us, for example, to reflect on our experience. But we were to study it for signs of sin. The newer emphasis encourages us to look at our experience more holistically, and first of all to look to God's action in our lives, to do, in other words, what creation, redemption, and Catholic teaching on the gratuity of grace have always urged on the Christian: to look to God as giving, enabling,

speaking before the recipient has anything to give or to say himself. This action calls for response. His contemporary experience is showing the Jesuit that his response is the quality of his whole life and mission, and includes especially his worship and the choices he makes in life and in prayer. His sensitivity to his own experience leads him to try to shape-- or let God shape--his conscious, willed life, and, as far as he can, his unconscious, involuntary life in as individual a way as any contemplative tries to shape his interiority.

The new emphasis sees the person's life and work stemming basically from his inner life, which is conceived of as a living dialogue with God. In propositional terms this change is hardly revolutionary. Ignatian spirituality always has had at its core the individual's experience of God. God still communicates, the person still strives to let himself be freed of attitudes and situations that will hinder full receptivity to His communication and hamper his desire and ability to respond, and he still moves to make decisions on the basis of this communication from the Lord. None of these bases have changed. But the atmosphere in which the person tries to listen and respond has changed.

The mature Jesuit can now be expected to be more sensitive to his experience because he has paid more attention to it, and taken it more seriously. He can be expected to be more aware that the obstacles to hearing the Lord and responding to Him are not all named in the traditional lists of sins. He can know, for instance, that a refusal to consult the action of God as it appears in his experience can alienate him from prayer and so from a consciousness of God. He can know that an unwillingness to take seriously the gifts of personality and life-history he has received from God can also block his awareness of God. He can come to know that unwillingness to admit before God his feelings of anger, however contrary to reason they may seem, will result in tedious prayer and may finally nullify his attempts to pray. The formulations have not changed, but he is likely to be more alert to the levels and twists of his motivations, more aware of options available to him. He is more likely to know the vivifying influence of the imperfect desires he actually has and the deadening effect of attempts to do what he thinks he should do but

does not really believe in doing. He can thus become less a man who lives by institutional obligations and more a man who lives by personal desire that stems from his experience of God. His life of prayer is more likely than it once was to be marked by surprises, deep contentment, flashes of joy, impulses to live the gospel more fully and engage in more ardent ministerial endeavors.

He is more likely to be free of the Jesuit institution. Not that it has ceased to exercise authority over him. But he recognizes the validity of his own experience when he talks to a superior and he expects the superior both to recognize the validity of that experience and to help him to respond more authentically and integrally to the Lord's way with him. He can expect, in other words, that his Jesuit superiors will challenge *him*. He can hope that they will do so, and thus help him to enlarge his openness to God's initiatives. When he is true to his experience of God, the last thing he wants his superiors to do is concede continually to his weakness.

Obedience, then, is anything but destroyed by the new emphasis on freedom and personal responsibility. Rather it comes to be lived more fully as it becomes more personally vivifying. A Society in which the basic reality of religious obedience is not a burdensome conformity to law and command but a vital acceptance of one's responsibility to a common vision will not be a Society of disobedient men. It will rather be more clearly the Society Ignatius envisaged. He thought when he wrote the preamble to the Constitutions that law would help. But we must take him at his word when he says that it was the divine action on the Society and the charity and love of Jesuits that he believed would advance and preserve the community.<sup>4</sup> It is this recognition of the divine action and personal responsibility for one's charity and love that the new spirituality uses as the basis for Jesuit life. And this, when it is lived, changes the entire texture of Jesuit life. Law is differently administered because, although important, it is not the most fundamental basis for Jesuit life; men become happier and more ardent; and the "magis," which is a function of love rather than of law, can become our vivifying principle.

A spirituality does not become fully enflashed, fully realized, until it has generated individual and corporate structures that appropriately embody it. Otherwise it remains excessively vulnerable to illusion, self-interest, boredom, and irresponsibility. This work of embodiment has begun in the Society, but is far from complete. Its incompleteness does not negate the reality of the salvific opportunity but rather points out ways in which we must grasp it.

In our recent experience of spiritual direction, the experience, that is, that we have had since we began to ask directees what happened when they prayed, many of us have become used to the fact that most people become passionately engaged in prayer and are open to significant personal change only when an upheaval has occurred that has left them somehow disoriented. They have lost the bearings they lived by. The disorienting event can be dramatic: A space engineer loses his position with NASA and can find no other position that will allow him to work in his field; a hard-working teaching religious is told by her community's personnel director that her services are no longer needed in the classroom; a priest is told he is an alcoholic; a married man falls in love with his secretary. The disconcerting event need not be dramatic in itself. It may be entirely interior. The person may, without precipitating external circumstances, recognize that his life is going awry. Normally, however, it seems that a change in external circumstances is needed to bring a person to face the need for a new direction in his life, and the more dramatic the change, the more likely he is to pay attention to it.

The Society in the last ten years has met with dramatic events that have precipitated a facing of itself and that may be resulting in a new interior encounter with its Lord. The statistical study has put into quantitative terms the magnitude of that precipitating event. Every spiritual director knows people who thank God for events, even personal disasters, that have put an end to expectations that meant a great deal to them, because those events precipitated an encounter with the Lord that led to a fuller, more authentic life. They believe that without the events they would never have known such a fuller life. In sociology textbooks such processes may not make much sense. But there is evidence all around

us that it is the way the Lord chooses to work, perhaps has to work, with many of us. Why should his way with communities and institutions be different?

If our reflections are valid, a dramatic event probably had to occur if the Society was to realize its need for a new direction and act on that realization. An indication that a salvific opportunity has been given is the fact that the Society has been able both to experience the pain of the event and to look with realism and hope to a changed future. The Society has survived, perhaps barely survived. If the event has brought about a genuine encounter with God, however, the most important result of the "loosening" may be a greater openness to him and his challenges.

#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 Our own viewpoint, as writers of this article, is colored by our experience as members of the New England Province, a province whose experience of the fifties and sixties is probably not completely typical of the American Assistency as a whole. Its narrow geographic area, its history of provincialism, and the fact that a very high percentage of its members had had their formative experience as Catholics and Jesuits in the twenties and thirties--all those are factors not common to the assistency in its totality. Our viewpoint is also influenced by our work as retreat directors, spiritual directors, and tertian instructors.
- 2 Eugene C. Kennedy and Victor J. Heckler, *The Catholic Priest in the United States: Psychological Investigations* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1972).
- 3 We are using the concept of crisis much as Thomas S. Kuhn uses it of the period prior to a scientific revolution in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
- 4 *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, Translated, with an Introduction and a Commentary, by George E. Ganss, S.J., (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970), [134] on p. 119.



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