III. Spiritual Direction: Its Interaction with Psychology

The Distinction between Psychological and Religious Counseling

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> The physicians of souls [of old] would be astonished if they could suddenly enter our world of today. They would find themselves in an environment in which their assumptions are ignored by many earnest and highly trained men who undertake the reconstruction of personalities damaged in the stresses of life.[1]
>
> A pastoral counselor of days gone by would not have known what you meant if you had said he was psychologically oriented, and if he did understand your meaning he would have been horrified.[2]

What contemporary "physician of souls" in parish ministry, convents and seminaries, or schools and universities could not sympathize in some way with the discomfort implied in these observations? Pastoral counselors, spiritual directors, and even confessors have had to struggle to maintain their ground in what has proven to be a vigorous tug of war with the behavioral sciences over the right to be of help to the human person. In reaction, some religious counselors deny the right of psychology even to be in the contest. Most, however, want "détente" but are confused by the power and success of a science that seems to intimidate them with a judgment of irrelevance. A few spiritual guides have sold out.

It is the aim of this article forthrightly to defend the position that there is a describable distinction between religious and psychological counseling.

Although this will require definition and clarification of many elements in both arenas, it need not spell antagonism and separation. What this study ultimately opts for is the integrity of both in "cooperative distinction."

The Province of Psychological Help

> *In terms of relative maturity, the human personality can have one of three basic statuses along a continuum of mental health and development, statuses which are fluid and admitting of regression as well as advance: abnormal, normal-developing and mature. Thus there are three forms of psychological assistance appropriate to the various personality statuses: psychotherapy for the abnormal, counseling for the normal-developing and guidance for the mature.*

Mental Health and Development

That the human person is a dynamic reality is particularly pertinent to the questions of psychic health and personality development.

> There are not one but two scales of mental health: the one running from the level of that very disturbed person up the scale to the minimum level of mental health, which involves only an absence of pathological process. But the second scale runs from this level up to the perfection of the mature personality.[3]

This "continuum model"[4] implies a range of three broad statuses of mental health which we will call "abnormal," "normal-developing" and "mature." Besides a certain fluidity within each of these statuses the movement from one status to another is fluid. There is

> . . . no sharp dividing line between normal and abnormal behavior, but rather a continuous and imperceptible gradation from good to poor adjustment and from apparent absence of symptoms to extreme pathology . . . the same individual may shift from time to time to different positions along this continuum.[5]

Like psychic health, psychic development is dynamic and relative. Progression towards maturity is characterized by successful achievement of appropriate developmental tasks at various stages of life. Yet the progression is subject to stress and potential regression.

Psychic health, then, has two obvious components: a relative absence of pathology and a relatively successful calendar of advance toward maturity—in other words, a sense of well-being and the ability to meet the demands of life.

As a concept, "normal" is difficult to define. For one thing, human nature appears so varied in existential reality that normalcy effectively escapes statistical definition. Moreover, to a large extent culture relativizes the concept by its acceptance or rejection of certain forms of behavior.[6] What would be considered "normal" in the heart of New Guinea might be considered otherwise in an American suburb. A *description* of "normal" in terms of our own society's expectations can be stated as

> . . . the freedom to adjust appropriately to changing signals, whether they arise from within the body out of changing tides or of biophysical and biochemical processes, or from changes in external circumstances. It means the capacity to sustain effort when this has any chance of achieving its goal, but free of a compulsive necessity to maintain the same effort when it has proved to be inappropriate or ineffectual.[7]

In other words, a normal person does a reasonably adequate job of coping with the major aspects of his life. While he experiences frustration, he keeps his life together and is recognized for his ability to do this.

To be "normal" does not necessarily mean to be "mature," since one can be a normal child or adolescent properly developing along the maturity continuum. For this reason mental health theorist Marie Jahoda discusses normalcy signs applicable to all developmental levels and indicating relatively successful progression: active adjustment (attempts at mastery), unity of personality (stable integration), and accurate self-perception.

"Normal" has its own range within which the individual can and sometimes does move. Should he move toward the minimal level, he may begin to be characterized as "abnormal." Abnormal behavior is generally recognized as an extension or exaggeration of normal behavioral tendencies.[8] In general, a person in the abnormal range is characterized by a notable discrepancy between his thoughts, feelings and actions and the requirements of external reality. Causes of such pathology or disturbances include *predisposing* factors like biology, temperament and learning, as well as *precipitating* factors like the stress and frustration of conflict. The broad range of abnormal adjustment is classified more or less hierarchically from least to most severe as follows:

(a) the inhibited personality, disturbed in an all pervasive way by excessive negative self-judgment leading to guilt and inferiority;
(b psychoneuroses, characterized by anxiety handicaps that express themselves in physical symptoms ("hysteria"), phobias, obsessions and compulsions;
(c) psychophysiological or psychosomatic disorders like ulcers, asthma, migraine headaches;
(d) personality disorders which exhibit a life-long, deeply ingrained pattern of maladaptive behavior that is troublesome, harmful or illegal, e.g., schizoid, paranoid and antisocial personalities;
(e) conduct disorders which are criminal or potentially criminal deviations relating to sex, alcohol and drugs, e.g., homosexuality and alcoholism;
(f) psychoses, sometimes called thought and affective disorders, in which an individual appears perceptually out of touch with himself and the world and is potentially dangerous, e.g., schizophrenia or manic-depression.

At the other end of the mental health continuum is the normal individual come to "maturity," that is, to more or less full adulthood. The mature

individual possesses "the essential characteristic of adulthood, i.e., responsibility augmented by good judgment and adequate insight."[9] He is reasonably self-directed, self-reliant and independent. He has achieved a certain intellectual openness and practical competence. He lives with a sense of security, realism and purposefulness in a social world where he communicates, gives and receives, cooperates with authority and tolerates frustration and routine. He has integrated his feelings and behavior, and has balanced his values. He is sexually mature and capable of self-donation. He has developed an appropriate sense of humor and can find his own recreation. But while the adult has "the capacity to respect, possess and at the same time give the self,"[10] his maturity is not synonymous with continuous contentment or peace of mind and it does not preclude emotional conflicts and upsets.

Helping Relationships

What is commonly called "psychological help" is appropriate for that dimension of the human being which we call his "psychic life."[11] There is a fairly wide consensus among psychological counselors that psychotherapy, counseling and guidance are more or less distinct from each other, although terminology is used interchangeably.

Psychotherapy[12] is a form of treatment for personality problems and maladjustments rooted in unconscious conflicts or traumatic experiences. It is a "reconstructive" type of therapy, accomplished through a rather extended relationship with a professionally trained psychiatrist (M.D.), psychoanalyst (non-M.D.), clinical psychologist, or psychiatric social worker.

There is a variety of psychotherapies that have differing emphases and use differing techniques, e.g., psychoanalysis, client-centered therapy, gestalt therapy and existential therapy. But all strive toward one or more of the following goals for people in the abnormal range:

(a) increased insight into one's problems and behavior
(b) a better delineation of one's self-identity
(c) resolution of handicapping or disabling conflicts
(d) changing of undesirable habits or reaction patterns
(e) improved interpersonal or other competencies
(f) the modification of inaccurate assumptions about one's self and one's world
(g) the opening of a pathway to a more meaningful and fulfilling existence[13]

The accomplishment of the goal of therapy, which may demand years of attention, depends on the quality of the relationship between the therapist and client.

Regarding the distinction between psychotherapy and counseling, it is generally recognized that while the former focuses its attention on clients in

the abnormal range of psychic health, the latter assists those in the normal range. "On a continuum based on this analogy of health and sickness, we can place counseling on the 'healthy' or normal side and psychotherapy over in the direction of the 'sickness' side."[14] Although the distinction is not held as hard and fast and often breaks down in the face of the complexity of the human psyche, it is accepted as helpful by most psychological counselors, many of whom work in both ranges.[15] Thus, we have "depth-therapists" and "strategic-problem" therapists; counseling characterized by intensity of emotional expression and counseling characterized by less emotional intensity and more cognitive and rational factors; techniques to restructure the personality and techniques to encourage utilization of present resources for problem-solving; "therapeutic" counseling for removal of deep-seated blocks which impede growth and achievement and "creative" counseling for fulfillment of positive aspirations and ideals, and so forth.

Counseling, then, is "supportive" and "re-educative" for individuals in the normal/developing range of psychic health. Its techniques "operate on a conscious level."[16] Hence, they aim not at alteration of basic personality structure but at the accomplishment of personal integration through assimilation of life-knowledge leading to better investment of self for personal well-being.[17]

Guidance, as the third form of psychological counseling, provides "personal information for an immediate situation and need."[18] It is an education-type assistance "in which the patient is taught—or, better, given an opportunity to learn for himself—more effective ways of dealing with problems and relationships.[19] That guidance seems superficial in contrast with the other two forms of psychological counseling should not distract from its unique place among the helping relationships. It calls for a certain "cooperative and responsible self-direction,"[20] characteristic of maturity. Although guidance is "oriented toward the whole emotionally committed person,"[21] it can be used effectively by psychotherapists and counselors at appropriate phases of their work with clients. Moreover, the guidance relationship has its own set of dynamics. Besides being an "expert" in his area, the guidance professional must have "a certain sensitivity peculiar to the guidance relationship itself."[22] His effectiveness can be blocked by lack of readiness in the client for his kind of help, which may require a referral to counseling or even psychotherapy. Another block may be resistance and resentment, the client feeling disrespected or his dignity threatened because of perceived superiority and authority in the "expert." Thus the professional in guidance has to deal with the psychological climate of the client approaching him for assistance.

The Tradition of the Cure of Souls

Religious faith adds a dimension and orientation to personality that differentiates it from a psychic life without faith. Because faith orientation expresses itself along a kind of continuum of its own, it may require special

> *assistance from a category of help traditionally called the* Cura Animarum, *or the* Cure of Souls. *Although the forms of the* Cura Animarum *are distinct from but not substitutes for psychological assistance, both must be mutually attentive, given the unity of the human personality.*

The Faith-Oriented Person

With the discussion below we leave the province of psychological help properly taken and begin an analysis of religious counseling. We are, in a sense, passing into another sovereign territory, into the world of faith-orientation. Its citizens share the basic constitution of human life with everyone else, respecting and embracing the psychic dynamics of personality no less than any other. But these citizens organize and govern themselves according to the unique and integrating factor of religious faith, which becomes the "supreme court of the land."

Personality is organized and sustained by a core of nuclear attitudes, emotions and impulse systems. Religious experience modifies this core, uniquely affecting the whole personality system and creating an existential condition, the description of which is not exhausted in psychic categories. As a matter of fact, there is no psychological surrogate for it and "nothing in the development of and research in counseling and psychotherapy would warrant such a suggestion."[23]

Faith-orientation grows out of a generally recognized need in man to satisfy hungers which cannot be satisfied in any other way."[24] It is rooted in a personal confrontation with the mystery of life and the universe, in "those comparatively rare moments in which a man's soul is filled with feelings that seem to carry self-authenticating guarantees of the presence of a reality that transcends the space-time world."[25] Religious experience is varied, but its context is always the total personality with its intellectual powers, previous experiences, education, temperament and culture. Moreover, like psychic development, faith-orientation, as an adaptation to a new internal and external "environment," matures only very slowly.

Religious experience invites the believer to an all-inclusive commitment, called for by the exigencies of the experience itself: the individual has come into contact with the Absolute Truth of Life. Now he begins to operate out of a new world-view that integrates the reality *behind* and *within* the universe with the reality *of* the universe. His self-perspective has changed. It is as though he were now "an amphibious creature who lives on two levels of existence."[26] His behavior is radically affected to include relationship with God, and a reassessed relationship with his fellows under God. In effect, the experience and the commitment have become an orientation for all thought and activity. "The basis of the religious attitude is constituted by the entire dependency and surrender to the highest transcendental Authority."[27]

In our culture faith-orientation is generally shaped by four elements

which tend to become a framework of belief: (1) an institution (even loosely taken as a community of intellect and experience); (2) revelation (a special record of some sort of God's speaking); (3) reason (including science, philosophy, and so forth); and (4) personal experience. Each element "corrects, complements and in part corroborates the others until a proportionate framework is achieved by which belief, being firmly established, issues as faith involving personal commitment."[28] These elements, then, are a prominent part of the consciousness of the faith-oriented individual and *any* helping relationship will have to take them into account.

Up to this point we have been considering faith-orientation in general terms, but the matter needs to be further specified in regard to *Christian* faith. "The Christian believer affirms that all things at all times are to be seen for what they ultimately and truly are when they are seen within the context of the light of divine creative and redemptive Love."[29] Christian faith takes "the teaching, work and person of Jesus Christ as its supreme norm."[30] Thus, the Christian believer in Christ is the subject of a unique experience of the revelation of God as Love. He perceives this Love as saving him, enlightening his mind and unifying the dimensions of his life toward God as the ultimate goal. Moreover, because the Christian believes that his faith-orientation is a gratuitous gift of God, even his consequent "religious development . . . is not something which can be acquired by one's powers, but always remains a gift of God."[31] In this lies the hope that envelops his whole existence.

A Catholic specifies his faith-orientation even further. The personal experience of Christ is an experience in the Church as well "because faith means adhering to the Word of God as proposed by the Church."[32]

> Personal experience is only safe if it is continually being reimmersed in the faith of the Church, continually referred to the Church's norms, continually judged by her infallible propositions and in ceaseless conformity with the movement of her life. It is the experience of one who is a member, and only on the condition that he wills to remain such can it find its "place" and be lived authentically, and grow into the supreme experience of a person delivered, sanctified, and fulfilled by Christ.[33]

In this light, it might be tempting to conclude that Catholic faith-orientation leaves little if any room for diversity of religious experience. Nothing could be further from the truth, as her schools of spirituality and calendar of saints can testify. Nonetheless, the Church is a vital and essential dimension for the Christianity of Catholics. "By the Word that nourishes their faith, the sacraments that restore and increase their love, the rules that govern their concrete activity, the Church lies at the root of their religious attitude, at the heart of their decision, at the source of their faith and their activity as Christians."[34]

Historical Survey

"The cure of souls is . . . the sustaining and curative treatment of per-

sons in those matters that reach beyond the requirements of the animal life."[35] The direction of faith-orientation has been a "vast historic enterprise."[36] As an art of helping and healing the "interior life" of man, the *cura animarum* as it is traditionally called, saw its primacy unchallenged for centuries.

The Christian cure of souls had roots in Jewish practice. For the Jew in the centuries immediately surrounding the time of Jesus, "God was available to the devout and his authoritative Word was an unfailing light."[37] Since God was the truest Physician of Souls, the sages of Israel backed away from the intimacy and control over the individual which they considered his privilege alone. As spiritual guides they "relied upon argument and reasoned admonition,"[38] encouraging the assimilation of his Wisdom recorded in the Scriptures. They were educators of conscience, supplying "the daily bread of instruction in reverent attitudes and moral habits, and gave stability and character to the people."[39] Their successors in the era of Jesus, the rabbis, continued a careful casuistry in their spirit.

Christian physicians of souls have always kept as their model the Divine Physician, Christ. Throughout the history of pastoral care, his concern for the respectful cultivation of the *individual* believer has always been the ideal of their approach. That he "made available the two great boons which we humans ceaselessly crave, spiritual renewal and spiritual repose,"[40] has likewise always defined their goal.

It is the spirit of Paul and the other writers of the New Testament "that the cure of souls is never merely a method, even a method derived from doctrine, or a task for certain hours in the week, but that it involves both the faith we live by and all our daily activities and contacts."[41] They themselves certainly acted as personal guides for souls in the new therapy of Christ, but also encouraged its communal accomplishment through mutual brotherly prayer, edification and correction.

In the period of the Fathers of the Church, the cure of souls was directed primarily toward the public, and later private, rite of the sacrament of penance, but it extended beyond those limits.

Various forms of extra-sacramental direction began to take shape at this time. Some of the Fathers like Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine were considered great personal spiritual directors, and private guidance had become common particularly among the anchorites and monks in community. There is some evidence that bishops of the East experimented with group methods of spiritual direction for religious in their dioceses. And many of the Fathers were known for their letter-writing ministry of consolation to Christians in persecution or grief. Yet, despite patristic pastoral vigor, some of the liberating power of the gospel seemed lost as the *cura animarum* became heavy with an increasingly systematized psychology.

> The pursuit of holiness took the form of ascetic discipline, wherein a few attained a high spirituality but the majority were earnestly engaged in a perpetual warfare with

> their besetting sins. . . . The "disorders" of the soul are now "sins"; the guide, or physician of souls diagnoses the patient's case in terms of sin, and applies the remedies in rebuke, counsel and penance.[42]

From the sixth to the thirteenth centuries the cure of souls became almost exclusively exercised in the sacrament of penance under the influence of the "new," controversial penitentials of the Irish monks. The Irish confessor was the *anmchara* or "soul-friend"[43] of the believer to whom he carefully applied the medicine of the books of the penitentials. Although there were abuses in the use of these penitentials, "we cannot doubt that they were instrumental in the recovery and rehabilitation of many who had made shipwreck of life, and in elevating and stabilizing the morals of many."[44] At the same time, in monasteries of East and West, a spontaneous and informal direction of souls was attended to even by nonpriest confessors. But this kind of private direction had already begun fading from the prominence it once had as a technique for the cure of souls.

In the centuries prior to the Reformation, the cure of souls was characterized by an increasing deterioration of the sacrament of penance. Poorly prepared confessors heard multitudes of sins confessed in minute detail and tended to abuse indulgences as a pastoral response. However, there was at the same time a "marked enrichment of literary materials available for the cure of souls"[45] that taught the lessons of how to live and die well. And it was an era which saw a rise in extrasacramental direction through the Dominicans and the Rhineland mystics, and such great saints as Anselm, Catherine of Siena, Bernard, and Bonaventure.

The Churches of the Reformation brought refreshment to pastoral technique. Lutheran and Reformed changes in Catholic practice have shaped Protestant practice to our day. Protestant pastoral care is noted for its revision of the sacrament of penance, its pastoral visitation of the faithful, and pastoral concern among laymen as an expression of the universal priesthood. The English, on the other hand, retained the sacrament of penance to a large extent, while heightening their pastoral sensitivities also in other directions. Indeed, "it is probably safe to say that no great communion has given more attention to the cure of souls, either in theory or in practice."[46]

After Trent the *cura animarum* of the Counter Reformation maintained two lines of practice, which have survived in much the same form down to the present. They are confession and extra-sacramental spiritual direction (although the latter was often practiced in the context of the former). Extrasacramental direction saw a great development beginning in the sixteenth century with Ignatius of Loyola. It was in this era also that it was to be shaped by its two great masters, Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross. Reaching its height in the seventeenth century under Francis de Sales and others, this kind of direction saw waves of interest and of decline in the centuries preceding our own when, under official encouragement, it seems to be reviving and flourishing.

The Impact of Psychology

Psychology itself was nothing new at the beginning of the twentieth century. It had always been an acceptable, subordinate branch of philosophy. What was new was that

> . . . now it emerged claiming to be a science in its own right. More than any factor or development since the Reformation, this had a profound influence on the more thoughtful clergy and religious leaders. . . . It invaded the very area of the soul; it dealt intimately with the inner life of the mind and personality.[47]

And a proud invasion it was—empirical, independent and vigorous. On the Continent, Freud was ready to say "that most religious phenomena are to be understood on the model of an obsessive neurosis."[41] In the United States the behaviorism of John Watson at the University of Chicago was in "direct and open opposition to everything for which the church stood."[49] Despite the amenability of others like Jung and Adler and the friendliness of William James and G. Stanley Hall, the new psychology was obviously throwing stones.

Generally, religious leaders defended themselves, especially against the excessive sex mentality of Freud. Some totally rejected any forms of the new psychology, while others accepted them partially and with caution. Most pastors of souls, however, remained indifferent—after all, their stance on human nature was long-standing and based on solid theological traditions wherein "human nature was seen as something . . . subject to sin, and its primary need was conversion and salvation."[50] Catholic opposition to the science of psychology was based on its separation from philosophy; its consequent insistence on dealing with the spiritual soul empirically (hence, the tag "psychology without a soul"[51]); the apostasies from the Faith which psychology encouraged; and the positivism and materialism which the new psychology defiantly espoused.

Rapprochement was slow in coming. Psychology piqued the interest of religion mainly, of course, for negative reasons. But its positive dimensions were also attractive. It gave new insights into human nature and made new methods and techniques available. Moreover, psychology offered the possibility of partnership with secular professionals for assisting with aspects of the *cura animarum* that had often proved baffling and difficult to pastors. Eventually religious defenses diminished and the promise of integration became more real as religious guides came to see and accept the fact that "the basis of pastoral work is no more purely theological than its techniques are exclusively supernatural."[52] Psychological science and its methods were seen as not just useful, but even sometimes necessary "not only to ripen and purify moral motivations, but to permit the inspirations of grace to their progressive incarnation."[53]

The antagonism of psychology likewise diminished. Although there have been studies pointing to religion as compromising psychic health, there have likewise been a considerable number of works in clinical psychology tending to show religion as beneficial to psychic health. Moreover,

> . . . the growth of pastoral counseling and the increasing cooperation with other professions revealed the fact that the minister had a unique contribution to make—one which no other man could make. . . . He is concerned not only with the preservation but with the enrichment of life, not merely with integration of personality but with integration on the highest levels, in terms of the loftiest ideals and the eternal and abiding values.[54]

Although there remains a residue of tension in psychology over religion (and vice versa), there have been some second thoughts among psychological therapists about the value of any psychology that divorces itself from religious reality.

> We psychiatrists finally demonstrated to the medical world that we know effective treatment for conditions which were formerly ignored or mistreated. But do we not repeat the error if we neglect the availability of help for some individuals whose sins are greater than their symptoms and whose burdens are greater than they can bear?[55]

That brings us closer to the point of this article—the distinction between religious and psychological counseling. "Obviously religion is both wider in extension than counseling or psychotherapy and fundamentally different in intent and purpose."[56] Hence its issues and concerns cannot be supplanted by psychological methods. Moreover, "the grace of God does not depend directly on the psychic dispositions, and can perfectly operate the sanctification of the neurotic man *before*, *during*, and *after* . . . *treatment*."[57] While it is true that the *fullness* of religious living "can only be realized when one has a normally intact human nature,"[58] psychic health is not necessarily a *prerequisite* for a basic religious orientation. In other words, "psychic normalization is required, not as a direct capacity for salvation, but as an indispensable way for the 'fruits of the Spirit' to be able to appear and manifest themselves more in man."[59]

As we have seen, psychological *insight* "can enlighten and facilitate phases of religious encounter, particularly in the light of personality factors of the one 'receiving' or undergoing this experience."[60] And psychological *techniques* can provide the traditional physician of souls with "increasing skill and understanding of many of the conditions by which genuine relationship is made possible."[61] In the end the very real distinction between religious and psychological counseling is a "cooperative distinction." "The empiricist has no meager service to render, but the religious guide has no reason to go into retirement. The work of the one should be integrated with that of the other."[62]

The Proper Sphere of Pastoral Counseling

Pastoral counseling is ordinarily a short-term assistance by an official of *the Church to the normal faith-oriented individual. Combining resources proper to itself with others from counseling, pastoral counseling aims at resolving situational crises either directly or indirectly for the sake* of *religious commitment.*

> **Definition** Pastoral counseling starts when the parishioner brings to his clergyman some problem that has arisen during the stress of marriage, parenthood, work, and so forth. The counselor and the troubled person then enter into an emotional relationship, in which God is the third party. . . . The counselor then acts as an auxiliary reasoning power. . . . In addition, he tries to lead the person being counseled to new religious insights that can change that person's understanding of the problem and of himself. He may use techniques that he has learned from the mental health field, but only those which can help him reach the individual with his own individual pastoral resources. . . . The goal of the process is to lead the person with the problem to more adequate goals and values and to a better understanding of himself as he relates to others and to God.[63]

Pastoral counseling is situated in the context of the general pastoral function of the Church which attends specifically to the faith- of its members. As an overall goal the pastor "wants all men to grow up in Christ and to develop into mature Christians."[64] In light of this he maintains constant liturgical, social and personal contact with his people, becoming a "physician of souls" in both public and private sectors of life.

The specific tool of pastoral care under consideration here, namely, pastoral counseling, is a helping relationship which provides the individual Christian[65] with a service "dealing directly with the crucially important vertical dimension (. . . values and ultimate meanings) in relationships as well as the horizontal dimension of physical and psychological interaction."[66] What makes the "counseling" in this situation "pastoral" is the focusing by Christian and pastor "upon the relation of God to the process of their lives."[67]

Pastoral counseling strictly speaking is accomplished by anyone "sent" into a pastoral apostolate by ordination and/or commission. This "official" status is a highly significant and contributing factor to the initiation, movement and success of a pastoral counseling relationship. It creates the pastor's "channel of access" to the Christian's personal life. "In the eyes of the counselee he represents God and the Church, and this fact is responsible for his being a counselor in the first place."[68] Thus, the pastoral counselor unambiguously accepts responsibility for being the representative of God who bears the tidings of God and becomes a "forerunner, anticipating the direct action of the Holy Spirit."[69] As a counselor he comes to the scene with personal warmth and a degree of psychological professionalism. As a pastor, "he has a metaphysic, a conception of the structure of the universe in which he can place his operational understanding of the human personality."[70] This, joined with his own faith and pastoral experience, equips him to be a unique "guide to human destiny."[71]

Who is the pastoral client? "The proper sphere of pastoral counseling is in ministering to the normal person who has emotional problems which interfere with his use of his inner resources in his human and spiritual functioning."[72] This does not mean to say that a pastor does not minister to *all* who approach him in the broader pastoral context, but it does imply that the

pastoral counseling relationship, properly taken, is ordinarily established and maintained with *normal* individuals. These are people in the normal/developing and mature ranges who are experiencing stress, confusion, and so forth, in their lives as Christians.

What happens in pastoral counseling? It is the unique and, therefore, distinguishing characteristic of pastoral counseling that the dialogue is expanded to *three*, God being the eminent "Third Party."[73] This factor causes the dialogue itself to become symbolic, enhancing its effectiveness. First the availability of the pastoral counseling relationship inspires a peculiar kind of hope in the counselee regarding an ultimate potential for the solution of his difficulty. Secondly, success seems further assured by the close attention which the pastor, as representative of God, pays to the counselee's words. Finally, the interpersonal love between pastor and Christian becomes a sign and assurance of the love of God.

The whole character of the pastoral dialogue has developed much in recent years. Where it tended to be more authoritarian in times past, it is more democratic now. Where it was once intellectualist, it has become more affective in tone. Where before it was symptom-oriented and casuist, it now tends to he more positive and open-ended. Contemporary emphasis on interpersonalism has had a profound formative influence on the traditional *cura animarum*.

The counselee approaches the pastoral counseling relationship within the horizon of his more or less explicit faith-orientation. He has his own religious experience and theological viewpoint, his own "past and present religious affects and cognitions—distorted or adequate—which have influenced his present state of religious growth and maturity."[74] He accepts the symbolic role of the pastoral counselor as he perceives it. In the ongoing exchange with the pastoral counselor, he experiences a "re-presentation and reexamination of his God-centered convictions and belief,"[75] sifting and evaluating them "for their present personal and unique meanings to him."[76] He is thus able to "reorganize his relationships with himself, others, *and* with God."[77]

The pastoral counselor facilitates the relationship in an exercise of pastoral care. He brings his whole person to it with his faith-orientation and skills. His effectiveness depends on his ability "to speak in such a way that the other becomes more capable of perceiving within himself and without, the echoes of the divine Word."[78]

The pastoral counseling dialogue itself can be viewed in terms of three functions."[79] The first is the extension of genuine *welcome*. The counselor must be able to "welcome and accept each individual in the uniqueness of his development and personal history, to sympathize with his struggles, conflicts and aspirations, and to listen to his words and plans, and to discuss them with him."[80] The second function is the very delicate one of *guidance* by which the counselor bears witness to certain values through techniques of elucidation and clarification. If inappropriately managed, that is, when it becomes moral

constraint or psychological pressure, it can threaten welcome. Guidance must avoid creating dependency, promoting rather "the progressive awakening of the individual's . . . freedom when faced with objective values of morality and religion."[81] The third function is *mediation.* The counselor by self-effacement and by his patience with and confidence in the counselee directs him beyond himself and the counselor to God.

> The mediative function will be but poorly served if we limit ourselves to the material solution of a counselee's problem. . . . Thus, in the guise of charity and services rendered (highly praiseworthy, of course, and sometimes necessary), we are passing up an opportunity for directing the counselee toward the meaning of his ordeal, or of the disease which has come into his life.[82]

Despite tensions created for its counseling aspect, the pastoral counseling relationship that is not an expression of these three functions ceases to be pastoral.

The goal of pastoral counseling has become obvious. Simply put, it is to assist the normal believer in achieving a more wholesome life lived in faith. It is to help him overcome in the circumstances of his personal life the obstacles in his way to becoming what the community of the Church calls him to be.

Psychology in Pastoral Counseling

Pastoral counseling has such distinguishing characteristics that to speak of identical aims or techniques [with psychological counseling] is a mistake that can have unfortunate consequences."[83] It is the function of religious counseling neither to treat mental illness as such, nor to deal with religious problems simply by the application of psychological techniques."[84] Indeed the differences between the two arenas may be greater than their similarities.[85]

The *transpsychological* character of pastoral counseling is evidenced by the different ways psychological and pastoral counselors focus on the person.[86] The one is interested in emotional and mental well-being, giving assistance for overcoming serious psychological handicaps, for growing up and resolving problems or for promoting self-direction through guidance. Thus the forms of psychological help aim to help satisfy basic needs of safety, security, emotional stability, recognition, belonging and love. Pastoral counselors, on the other hand, assist the individual to *live well in reference to* what goes beyond the psychological dimensions of human living. The "Third Party's" participation in the dialogue becomes more prominent and exacting as counseling continues, with the pastoral counselor guiding "toward a partnership beyond emotional and rational understanding."[87] The pastoral counselor who does not operate on this separate and distinct level is no longer doing pastoral counseling.

A second characteristic of pastoral counseling which separates it from psychological counseling is its *setting.* The activity of the pastor at other lev-

els in the Church and society invites the counselee to approach him and serves as a preparation for pastoral counseling. Because of this unique pre-counseling relationship, mutual expectations are already set in a pastoral direction and become important in the counseling process. The pastoral setting is likewise highlighted by the unique professional training and performance of the counselor. He is a person who has assimilated and can communicate religious tradition and theology. But even more pertinent to his role as counselor is his ability to utilize mental health knowledge effectively through methods and ways proper to the traditional cure of souls (through use of the Scriptures, prayer, the sacraments, the doctrine and moral teaching of the Church, religious symbols, and more).

Finally what does *not* surround the pastoral counseling situation marks it as distinctive. The pastor does not ordinarily work in a "consulting room," have fixed hours, charge fees or establish lengthy counseling relationships.[88]

A third dimension of pastoral counseling, the *agenda*, is distinctive perhaps more because of its complexity than its simplicity. Five aspects of faith-orientation constitute potential agenda: the experiential (feelings, perceptions, sensations related to God); the ritualistic (practices); the ideological (commitment to values and beliefs); the intellectual (understanding of values and beliefs); and the consequential (secular effects).[89] Most agenda for pastoral counseling will concern the consequential aspect of religious living, i.e., matters of everyday life. In this sense topics will resemble the kinds of "strategic problems" that psychological counseling handles with normal individuals. Like psychological counseling, too, when the problem is adequately dealt with the pastoral counseling terminates.

Pastoral counseling is obviously complex because of the ever present psychological components of its proper agenda. We have seen that the *ultimate* goal of pastoral counseling is religious. Nonetheless, the counselee lives his religious orientation out of his total personality, the various dimensions of which do not exist independently of one another, but mutually affect one another, and may be distinguished from one another in the concrete person only with caution. Because of this, it is possible for pastoral counseling to include proximate secondary goals of a psychological nature appropriate to the normal range like reducing anxiety, achieving greater objectivity, advancing motivation, deepening self-insight, increasing communication skills, making decisions and choices and facing the future with confidence. But the inclusion deliberately serves the ultimate goal. Hence, pastoral counseling does concern the self, other persons and things, but "would . . . go beyond, to the Other . . . to enter directly and entertain in central focus those issues which emerge from an implicit and explicit involvement with a God-concept and the nature and consequences of religious belief and commitment."[90]

Psychology relates directly to pastoral counseling by performing for it several service functions. First of all it gives the informed counselor the ability to scan the psychic life of the counselee for emotional difficulty, allowing

him to make some judgment about where the counselee is in terms of mental health. Since pastoral counseling does not aim to do therapy, it stands to reason that the pastoral counselor will refer people who approach him with pathology to a therapist. He would likewise refer any normal individual who comes to him for "counseling" without any reference whatever to the faith-dimension. In cases where someone is referred, the pastoral counselor may still maintain a pastoral counseling relationship wherein the "strategic problem" becomes the success and religious meaning of the psychological assistance.

Psychology has a second cautious role to play. It gives the pastoral counselor an understanding of the dynamics of human relationships and the ability to interpret them in his situation. However, the revelation of these dynamics in the pastoral dialogue does not mean working through them, but placing ourselves in a better position to evaluate their religious significance."[91] In this way the counselor maintains the transpsychological nature of his work with the counselee.

The third contribution psychology can make is to equip the pastoral counselor with certain techniques for facilitating the dialogue and for accomplishing the goal of his counseling. We see this operative, for example, in the welcoming function. Some psychological techniques would not ordinarily be used (e.g., personality and I.Q. tests) while others would seem natural to the situation and advantageous. Here again, however, there must be caution. The application of psychology is

> . . . not just a simple transposition . . . but a radical alteration which will call for a great deal of human prudence and spiritual wisdom. Since the goals of pastoral work are quite different from those of clinical psychology, some of the techniques used for establishing a satisfactory relationship may have to be modified, or at least used in a fundamentally different perspective.[92]

What this means, in other words, is that

> . . . an interviewing technique of proved psychological effectiveness can he adopted as a pastoral technique only after careful consideration and the necessary modifications have been made, based on theological doctrine. . . . The technique in question should not be considered for its psychological effectiveness. . . .[93] [Emphasis mine.]

A good example of the need for this kind of caution relates to the use of the client-centered approach in pastoral counseling.[94] It is neither possible nor desirable for a pastor counselor to be simply client-centered. The approach at the level of theory implies an anthropology that is unacceptable to Christians. On the level of practice, it leaves little room for the pastoral exercise of guidance and mediation. On the other hand, if nothing else, the respectful spirit of this non-directive method can help the pastoral counselor set the *proper tone* for the guidance function so that it does not destroy welcome or interfere with the client's freedom. In this way the goal uses the technique; the technique does not re-direct the goal.

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is a more or less long-term assistance to the faith-oriented person at any level of mental health or development, given a minimum of contact with reality. As a quasi-guidance form it is increasingly more fruitful the more mature the believer. Its primary aim is the consistent cultivation of the life of faith and to this end it applies its own resources and those of the other helping relationships.

"Direction can be defined as the help one man gives to another to enable him to become himself in his faith."[95] Since spiritual direction is religious counseling *par excellence*, it will exhibit its distinguishing characteristics even more vividly than pastoral counseling.

In recent years spiritual direction has had bad press. Several factors have contributed to a kind of loss of confidence in what was once considered an eminent tool in the *cura animarum*. One such factor was its almost exclusively "spiritualist" or "theocentrist" image. Ours is a very incarnational age that finds it difficult to appreciate an "otherworldly" emphasis on spiritual life.

> Today, however, spirituality means the total of human life in its social as well as its religious dimensions. The role of spiritual direction tends to become at once more diffuse and less specific. . . . The presence of God is sought in human reality and in the human quality of a man's life.[96]

Other negative factors of the spiritual direction of the past include its authoritarianism (which is repugnant to the democratic and pluralistic worldview we live under), its mechanization and its elitism. But perhaps the greatest factor accounting for the disuse of spiritual direction in recent times is the "feeling that its role has been preempted by modern discoveries in psychological counseling . . . as the normal source of support and guidance."[97]

However justified the criticisms, spiritual direction, as we have seen, has nonetheless performed a great service in the history of man's religious life. Its practice seems to be universal and recurring throughout the centuries. Perhaps the renewed contemporary interest in it is a commentary on the quality and direction of our incarnationalism, pluralism and psychology.

Spiritual direction as a form of religious counseling shares much with pastoral counseling. But it is different in some respects.

> Spiritual direction is simply pastoral counseling with greater spiritual depth than is usually brought to the immediate situation. The ultimate objective of direction is not merely the solution of the present problem, but the release of the client's own spiritual dynamism for maximum growth as a person and especially as a Christian.[98]

Direction, then, is more explicitly and professionally involved with the spiritual. It is ordinarily a more permanent and continuing relationship that operates beyond "strategic problem-solving" in faith.

> Discussions of feelings and details of life will tend, therefore, to become briefer and less frequent as the direction goes on, and the discussion of what is happening in

> prayer, in key life-choices, and in overall attitudes will become longer. . . . What the director knows about Jesus Christ, his Father and the Spirit of Jesus steadily becomes more important than what he knows about human feelings and interaction, although the two areas of knowledge will never become totally separated.[99]

Pastoral counseling is problem-centered. Direction is process-centered. But both director and counselor run the risk of making serious mistakes if either ignores or slights the other's experience.

The term "spiritual direction" is somewhat descriptive of its function. "Spiritual" connotes the "inner life, the 'heart,' the personal core out of which come the good and evil that men think and do."[100] "Direction" implies going somewhere with the "desire to talk to someone on the way . . . to help him find the way."[101] Spiritual direction, then, is a helping relationship on the spiritual level. The ultimate goal of direction is to advance the unification of the believer's life with God, "to integrate the personal and social aspects of one's life with the religious dimension."[102] On the part of the one directed this requires an ability to encounter God—to truly pray from one's existence, to "contemplate." It requires an understanding of the nature of the dynamics of Christian holiness, as well as the ability to discern their operation in one's own life and verify personal religious experience and call. Finally, it requires growth in the ability to reconstruct in an ongoing way another's disposition for the spiritual journey. Put simply, spiritual direction cultivates faith-orientation by prayer, discernment and asceticism.

Dialogue with Psychology

Spiritual direction is placed in immediate dialogue with psychology because it is directed to the whole person who has a psychic life which must be religiously integrated as well. In this regard psychological science serves direction by affording it a fuller understanding of the person in direction.

In reference to mental health status, we have already seen that a psychically disturbed person can enjoy a spiritual life but an *effective* integration of religion and life will demand being maximally in touch with life and people. On the other hand, being normal and developing is not in itself enough to integrate the spiritual into one's life. "Completion is not perfection."[103] Ordinarily, spiritual direction will be sought by a person "when his spiritual limits cause a person enough dissatisfaction to make him seriously consider moving beyond them."[104]

The second factor placing spiritual direction in dialogue with psychology is its character as a relationship. Spiritual direction actually bears resemblances to all three forms of psychological counseling at the same time. It is an extended relationship as in psychotherapy, works in the conscious realm as in counseling, and it is a form of guidance for spiritual living. Moreover, it is listening to another in the finest sense of the word. It is an interaction built on trust and facilitating development through insight and change in attitude. For these reasons the theory and practice of psychological counsel-

ing can guide spiritual direction in establishing an effective relationship.

Yet the same cautions are in order for spiritual direction as for pastoral counseling. Spiritual direction is guided by pastoral norms from sources outside psychology, norms that require harmonization of all psychology used. And unquestionably, the most profound dynamic in the spiritual direction relationship is the activity of the "Third Party," the Holy Spirit, who transcends all human resources, director included.

> The advancing knowledge of depth psychology has both aided and hindered spiritual direction. . . . Depth psychology and guidance in the life of grace are different things. Neither need be a hindrance to the other, but both may gain by mutual confrontation if the possibilities and the limitations on both sides are properly understood.[105]

Since it is not the goal of direction to heal or improve mental illness, the director sets limits on his service to his counselee.

> The therapist helps a man who is ill to become free, autonomous and adult. The spiritual father helps a sinner, transformed by grace to encounter the Lord in all truth; to live, under Divine Providence, in faith, hope and charity; to live an active life, faithful to his commitments, as one baptized, confirmed. . . . The therapist is habitually an impartial witness, accepting his client's life, helping him to both understand his individual human truth and to assume responsibility for it. The priest receives his client and listens to him as to one with a unique destiny; in this, he is a witness to the Gospel, and leads to the Father in Christ.[106]

Moreover, what the psychological counselor and the spiritual director consider the source of healing distinguishes them.

> In counseling insight, healing and new directions result basically from the relationship between counselor and client. In direction they result basically from the directee's relationship with the Lord. The counselor does everything he can to protect and promote the integrity and freedom of his relationship with the client. The director does all he can to protect and promote the integrity and freedom of the person's receptivity to and response to the Lord.[107]

As with pastoral counseling, psychological techniques are tools in the hands of the director, to be used in accord with his goal.

> The new primacy of spiritual life demands that spiritual masters be both directive and non-directive: non-directive insofar as they can listen to the unique spiritual needs of each individual . . . and directive insofar as they must be courageous enough to discourage with authority . . . motives . . . that have nothing to do with true personal and spiritual values.[108]

The authority of the spiritual director is a delicate issue both theologically and psychologically. He must at once exercise authority and at the same time respect the freedom of the individual. To correct a traditional overemphasis on his authority, the director is characterized in various ways as father,

friend, colleague, companion, facilitator. Nonetheless, the spiritual director is for his counselees "a guide who is not only able to listen respectfully to their feelings but one who can also speak to them with authority and experience about the ways of the spiritual life."[109]

Granted the important distinctions, what makes for good counseling makes for good direction: expertise with warmth. When the director's theological and spiritual insight is coupled with his psychological sensitivity, he stands ready to effectively exercise the *cura animarum*.

Spiritual direction is best seen perhaps as a kind of quasi-guidance form. "Since the aim of spiritual direction is the immediate guidance of an individual to better spiritual life, it seems more desirable to include it under guidance than counseling."[110] As in guidance, spiritual direction can be more useful with those who have achieved a certain degree of maturity which minimizes interference from unmet psychic needs and allows a significant degree of self-direction. It is "instructional" (and we use the word with caution) in the sense that it teaches the application of spiritual truths. But it would be inaccurate to push the guidance model too far.

> The giving of spiritual direction is more than giving information. The atmosphere of such an interview is charged with psychological overtones. True, the director will make use of primarily cognitive and logical processes since he is teaching and the directee is presumed not to have any serious emotional problems blocking his learning (which would be a different case), but the motivational processes certainly cannot be overlooked since the director's teaching has *action* on the part of his hearer as its primary goal.[111]

Spiritual direction itself can have psychological goals if they are incidental, within the normal range and their accomplishment through the relationship can "at every moment take into account the task, methods and objectives of spiritual direction."[112] When psychological needs become an issue in direction, that is to say, when they preempt the proper goal of direction or block its effectiveness, then referral to professional psychological attention should be considered. Ordinarily it is unwise for the spiritual director himself to do the necessary psychological counseling, even if he is competent. "Playing a dual role tends to confuse the client and hinder the psychological processes."[113] If the director would do the counseling, however, it should be done separately from direction and the counselee should be aware of the difference.

Sometimes referral to counseling is in order early in the relationship. The one directed may not be mature enough to benefit from direction.

> Psychological counseling is likewise propaedeutic to life in the Spirit . . . a twentieth century means of bringing order and integration into one's affective life. . . . By removing obstacles and disposing for the Spirit, counseling is especially indicated for beginners, who are presumed to have more problems with maturity than the more experienced Christians.[114]

During the course of direction it may become evident that the one directed needs psychotherapy. The following signs may give such an indication:

(a) Morbid anxiety without discernible cause, or anxiety out of all proportion to its apparent cause
(b) A painful or intolerable sadness ("depression") without reasonable cause
(c) Loss of normal adaptation, e.g., a student who cannot study, a mother who cannot take an interest in her children
(d) An inverse relation between an individual's expressed aims and the means he adopts to achieve them
(e) Over-eagerness to verbalize conscious ego-directed efforts to achieve levels of aspiration out of all proportion to actual levels of achievement
(f) Too much sheer physical involvement, e.g., in prayer, or in overcoming temptation, esp. of a reflex organic kind
(g) Psychosomatic disturbances—severe headaches, localized anaesthesias, paralyses, fainting, nausea, and so forth
(h) Any threat of suicide[115]

After a referral and during therapy (or counseling) the director's role is more than supportive. "In order to fulfill his mission completely, the director must . . . help his subject to live in faith, to integrate in his spiritual life that human and quasi-religious experience which is psychotherapy."[116]

Criteria of Direction

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. If spiritual direction is an authentic helping relationship, what is the measure of its "cure" in the believer? Psychic maturity belongs to the province of psychological help. Solved problems of living in the faith belong to the sphere of pastoral counseling. How does the spiritual director know that he is effective? Are there any empirical criteria?[117]

One would expect that spiritual direction at least not diminish the humanity of the individual, that it would support good mental health and allow man to live well in community. But besides these secondary criteria, there are primary ones. The first of them is evident growth in the whole harvest of the fruits of the Spirit as recorded in Paul's letter to the Galatians: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control (Ga 5:22). A second primary criterion is an intensified relationship with Christ that enhances one's ability to live by conviction in the face of opposition; that deepens empathy for others regardless of their human status; that promotes a liberating trust in God; that motivates a stand for justice; that allows a person to live by the cross, leaving the realization of resurrection in God's hands. And a final criterion is a certain level of creative living in the unique circumstance of one's own life—a traditional criterion of

saintliness in the Church. This is the faith-oriented life which no human tool can create and before which the noblest of helping relationships is humbled.

> The recent development of the knowledge and techniques of psychology, like that of the knowledge of the universe, has been so astonishing that we find it difficult to think of any human activity . . . that can escape its explanations or laws. And what remains obscure today, progress will clarify tomorrow. Faced with this mentality, which is that of our time and in which he participates, the spiritual director remains the witness of an order irreducible to those of which science yields us the secrets. Without denying the dynamism of the individual or the group, he believes in that of grace.[118]

NOTES

[1] John T. McNeill, *A History of the Cure of Souls* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1951), p. 319.

[2] Eugene Weitzel (ed.), *Contemporary Pastoral Counseling* (New York: Bruce Publishing Company, 1961), p. 5.

[3] E.F. O'Doherty and S.D. McGrath (eds.), *The Priest and Mental Health* (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, 1962), p. 72.

[4] The "discontinuity model" of mental health holds that one is either mentally healthy or mentally ill, the distinction between them being definitive and qualitative. Most sources used in this article no longer accept the theory as accurate.

[5] Robert M. Goldenson, *The Encyclopedia of Human Behavior* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1970), II, p. 879.

[6] Goldenson, II, p. 879.

[7] Albert Deutsch (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Mental Health* (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1963), IV, p. 1315.

[8] Abnormal behavior may result from organic causes. For a good treatment see *Abnormal Psychology: Current Perspectives* (Del Mar, CA: CRM Books, 1972), pp. 324-370.

[9] Deutsch, I, p. 116.

[10] Charles A. Curran, *Counseling and Psychotherapy* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968), p. 95.

[11] It is important to note that although a person is a unity, his psychic life is not to be identified with his biological, moral or spiritual dimensions. It goes without saying, of course, that it must always be in dialogue and integrated with them. For a discussion of the other kinds of health besides mental, see André Godin, "Spiritual Life and Mental Health," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, XIII, pp. 582-587.

[12] Note that behavioral therapy differs both in theory and practice from psychotherapies; see *Abnormal Psychology* . . . , pp. 60-84 and 416-444.

[13] Goldenson, II, p. 1082.

[14] Charles A. Curran, *Religious Values in Counseling and Psychotherapy* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), p. 2.

[15] A few authors see no distinction between counseling and psychotherapy. See especially Gerald S. Arbuckle, *Counseling: An Introduction* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1961), p. 145.

[16] Goldenson, II, p. 1082.

[17] Curran, *Religious Values* . . . , p. 1.

[18] Curran, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, p. 183.

[19] Goldenson, II, p. 1113.
[20] Curran, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, p. 188.
[21] *Ibid*., p. 184.
[22] *Ibid*., p. 191.
[23] Curran, *Religious Values* . . . , p. 2.
[24] Stephen G. Spinks, *The Fundamentals of Religious Belief* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961), p. 34.
[25] *Ibid*., p. 150.
[26] *Ibid*., p. 165.
[27] J. J. C. Prick, "The Basic Relations of Man to His World," *Rencontre/Encounter/Begegnung* (Utrecht and Antwerp: Uitgeverig Het Spectrum, 1957), p. 395.
[28] Spinks, p. 203.
[29] G. W. H. Lampe (ed.), *The Phenomenon of Christian Belief* (London: A.R. Mowbray and Co. 1970), p. 20.
[30] *Ibid*., p. 29.
[31] Prick, *Rencontre* . . . , p. 396.
[32] Jean Mouroux, *The Christian Experience* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), p. 365.
[33] *Ibid*., p. 366.
[34] *Ibid*., p. 185.
[35] McNeill, p. vii.
[36] *Ibid*., p. 330.
[37] *Ibid*., p. 1.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] *Ibid*., p. 11.
[40] *Ibid*., p. 77.
[41] *Ibid*., p. 87.
[42] *Ibid*., p. 111.
[43] *Ibid*., p. 115.
[44] *Ibid*., p. 135.
[45] *Ibid*., p. 161.
[46] *Ibid*., p. 246.
[47] Charles F. Kemp, *Physicians of the Soul* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), p. 69.
[48] George Hagmaier and Robert Gleason, *Counseling the Catholic* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 959), p. 248.
[49] Kemp, p. 78.
[50] *Ibid*., p. 226.
[51] Henry Misiak and Virginia M. Staudt, *Catholics in Psychology: A Historical Survey* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1954), p. 5.
[52] André Godin, *The Priest as Counselor* (Techny, IL: Divine Word Publications, 1965), p. 22.
[53] Godin, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, XIII, pp. 586-587.
[54] Kemp, p. 241.
[55] Karl Menninger, *Whatever Become of Sin?* (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1973), p. 221.
[56] Curran, *Religious Values* . . . , p. 7.
[57] André Godin, "Therapeutic and Pastoral Work," *Life of the Spirit*, XII (October 1957), p. 162.
[58] Prick, *Rencontre* . . . , p. 396.
[59] Godin, *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, XIII, p. 586.
[60] Curran, *Religious Values* . . . , p. 12.
[61] *Ibid*., p. 10.

[62] McNeill, p. 321.
[63] Dana L. Farnsworth (ed.), *Psychiatry, the Clergy and Pastoral Counseling* (Collegeville: St. John's University Press, 1962), pp. 5-6.
[64] Michael J. O'Brien, *An Introduction to Pastoral Counseling* (New York: Alba House, 1968), p. 23.
[65] Group counseling is certainly possible in pastoral work but is not considered in this article.
[66] Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., *Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling* (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 27.
[67] Wayne Oates (ed.), *An Introduction to Pastoral Counseling* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959), p. 11.
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[69] Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 64.
[70] Seward Hiltner, *Pastoral Counseling* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 32.
[71] *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[72] O'Brien, p. 27. See also P. Baute, "The Work of the Pastoral Counselor," *The Pastoral Counselor*, I (Fall 1963), p. 19. See also Raymond Hostie, *Pastoral Counseling* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), p. viii.
[73] Curran, *Religious Values* . . . , See also John R. Cavanaugh, *Fundamental Pastoral Counseling* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1962), p. 8. See also Armen D. Jorjorian, "Reflections Upon and Definitions of Pastoral Counseling," *Pastoral Psychology*, XXIII (May 1972), p. 12.
[74] Curran, *Religious Values* . . . , p. 269.
[75] *Ibid.*, p. 272.
[76] *Ibid.*
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 280.
[78] Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 6.
[79] "Godin's *The Priest as Counselor* serves as the basis for the discussion on the dynamics of the pastoral dialogue. It seems to be the most adequate analysis from the psychological and theological points of view.
[80] Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 4.
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 59.
[82] *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.
[83] Louis Linn and Leo Schwartz, *Psychiatry and Religious Experience* (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 5. See also Hostie, p. ix, footnote.
[84] Fred Hollander, "The Specific Nature of the Clergy's Role in Mental Health," *Pastoral Psychology*, IX (November 1959), p. 13. See also Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 16.
[85] Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 20.
[86] "Richard Vaughn, *An Introduction to Religious Counseling: A Christian Humanist Approach* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 24.
[87] "Lefebre, "Human and Extra-Human Relationships," *Psychology Today*, II (November 1968), p. 47.
[88] Our concern here is not the priest who is a psychological counselor *by profession*, which is a different matter from the priest who does religious *counseling as a priest.*
[89] Vaughn, *An Introduction*, p. 20.
[90] Curran, *Religious Values*, p. 276.
[91] "Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 21. See also Godin, *Life of the Spirit*, XII, p. 163.
[92] Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 5.
[93] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[94] "For a treatment of the factors involved in this difficulty see the following: Talcott Parsons, "Mental Illness and the 'Spiritual Malaise,'" *The Ministry and Mental Health*, ed. Hans Hoffman (New York: Association Press, 1960), p. 43; James H. Van der Veit and Robert Odenwald, *Psychiatry and Catholicism* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1952), pp. 241 ff.; Arbuckle, pp. 89 ff.; Linn and Schwartz, p. 89; and Godin, *The Priest as Counselor*, p. 59.

[95] Jean Laplace, *The Direction of Conscience*, trans. John C. Guinness (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), p. 26.
[96] E. Larkin, "Spiritual Direction Today," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, CLXI (September 1969), p. 205.
[97] *Ibid.*
[98] Laplace, p. 10.
[99] William Connolly, "Contemporary Spiritual Direction," *Jesuit Studies* (May 1975), pp. 119-120.
[100] *Ibid.*, p. 99.
[101] *Ibid.*
[102] Larkin, *American Ecclesiastical Review*, CLXI, p. 209.
[103] Josef Rudin, *Psychotherapy and Religion*, trans. Elizabeth Reinecke and Paul C. Bailey (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), p. 191.
[104] Connolly, *Jesuits Studies* (May 1975), p. 121.
[105] K. A. Wall, "Direction, Spiritual," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, IV, p. 890.
[106] C. Bouchard, "The Spiritual Direction of a Subject in Psychotherapy," *Insight*, VI (Winter 1968), p. 39.
[107] Connolly, *Jesuit Studies* (May 1975), p. 119. See also J. Harvey, "Spiritual Direction and Counseling," *Guild of Catholic Psychologists*, XI (January 1964), p. 20.
[108] Adrian van Kaam, "Spiritual Direction and Counseling," *Envoy*, VII (November 1970), p. 169.
[109] *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117. See also Connolly, *Jesuit Studies* (May 1975), p. 122.
[110] O'Brien, p. 5.
[111] J. Byrne, "The Counselor and the Spiritual Director," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, LIX (March 1959), p. 539,
[112] Hostie, p. 13.
[113] Byrne, *Homiletic and* . . . , LIX, p. 541.
[114] Larkin, *American Ecclesiastical Review*, CLXL p. 208.
[115] O'Doherty and McGrath, pp. 85-86.
[116] Bouchard, *Insight*, VI, p. 41.
[117] Connolly, *Jesuit Studies* (May 1975), pp. 108-109.
[118] Laplace, p. 188.

Depth Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction

Eugene Geromel

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Feeling that I needed to know more about myself if I were to do counseling, I found myself entering psychotherapy while in seminary. Midway through this very rewarding experience I happened upon St. Francis De Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life.* The more I read, the more convinced I became that if I had a spiritual director such as this I would learn as much about myself as I did in therapy. More importantly I would be deepening my relationship with Jesus Christ.

Spiritual direction is often defined as "The help one person gives an other to enable him to become himself in faith."[1] Merton describes it as "a continuous process of formation and guidance, in which a Christian is led and encouraged in his special vocation, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit he may attain to the particular end of his vocation and to union with God."[2] In much more flowery rhetoric, St. Gregory of Nazianzen calls it "the diagnosis and cure of our habits, passions, lives, wills, and whatever else is within us, by banishing from our compound nature everything brutal and fierce and introducing and establishing in their stead what is gentle and dear to God, and arbitrating fairly between soul and body."[3] Spiritual direction can be simply defined as a formal relationship in which an individual is guided closer to God. The emphasis here on the individual. This does not mean that the only guiding done by the Church is on an individual basis. Fr. Isabell in his monograph[4] on direction, points out that direction occurs on various levels. There is the general level in which the Church as a whole guides through her teaching, morality, and rituals. There is the institutional or group level in which religious

communities or groups, e.g., Marriage Encounter or Cursillo, direct the faithful to God. There are the hidden directors, or those individuals who have influenced our lives. While these three levels will not be examined in this paper it must be recognized that direction does occur on various levels.

Individual direction seems to have begun with the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. In the eleventh chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke our Lord deals with the question of Prayer. Over and over again he deals with problems of individuals and their relationship to God. Later in the church we find examples of men such as St. Anthony of the desert who aided others in their quest for a deeper relationship with Christ. The early bishops of the Church, Gregory I, Gregory of Nazianzen, and St. John Chrysostom, deal in their writing with the problems involved in direction. Spiritual direction as a formal process seems to have been expanded and nurtured within the monastic environment.

Having defined spiritual direction and given a very brief history I would like to explore and compare this relationship with that of counseling or psychotherapy. Since all light comes from the giver of Light it behooves us to use whatever knowledge is available to help individuals deepen their relationship with Christ. Therefore we might ask ourselves, "What are the things we learn in psychotherapy which apply to Spiritual Direction?" One way in which this can be done is by describing those factors which aid healing in the counseling process and relate them to spiritual direction. The curative factors described here, with a few revisions, are those of Dr. Irvin Yalom. These are described in great length in his book *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*.[5] It should be noted that the experimental work done to develop and analyze these factors occurred in groups; they are the curative factors of group therapy. However on a concept level, I believe, the ones described here are also valid on an individual basis. Some of his factors will not be used in this paper. For instance, group cohesiveness is a very important factor in group therapy. It would obviously not occur on a one-to-one basis. However, it should be noted that in terms of the general direction of the Church, it has dramatic impact.

The eight factors which shall be discussed here are: the instillation of hope; universality; imparting of information; altruism; imitative behavior; interpersonal learning; catharsis; and existential factors. The three factors which shall be omitted are: group cohesiveness, development of socializing techniques, and the corrective recapitulation of the primary family group. It should be remembered that the purpose of relating these factors is for exploration, not to prove that direction is analogous to group therapy. The curative factors will be defined and then related to direction.

The Instillation of Hope

If therapy is to be effective, Yalom contends, the patient must believe that hope exists. Hope must be instilled and maintained if growth is to ensue. Unfortunately this very simple and "obvious" factor is often overlooked. Unless a patient believes he can "get well," why should he continue or even begin therapy?

In St. Athanasius's life of St. Anthony, we see many examples of the instillation of hope. When speaking with those who wished to know Christ as he did, his encouragement was great. "To begin with, let us all have the same zeal, not to give up what we have begun, not to lose heart." Later we are told, "As Anthony discussed these matters with them, all rejoiced. In some the love of virtue increased, in some negligence was discarded and in others conceit was checked."[6]

One of the questions that must be asked is "Do we instill and maintain hope, so the goals of direction can be reached?" It is important that in the process of spiritual direction a sense of hope be present.

Universality

Many individuals who enter therapy have a sense that their problems are unique to them. They "alone" have these fears and anxieties. "The disconfirmation of their feelings of uniqueness is a powerful source of relief."[7]

How often do we encounter individuals who are so paralyzed by the feeling that they alone have this malady, that they are unable to work through the problem. Their despair over this "uniqueness" only adds to their alienation. In fact it can take on greater significance than the actual problem. Recently in an adult education class the subject of forgiving others arose. Nearly a third of the class was relieved to find that they were not the only ones who had difficulty in this area. Once they removed this burden they were able to deal with the actual problem of forgiveness.

This "negative" sense of uniqueness can often be a barrier to growth. It is often dealt with very simply. But not until one recognizes how very important and destructive a feeling it can actually be.

Imparting of Information

Explanation and clarification are often effective curative agents in therapy. "Under this general rubric I include the didactic instruction about mental health, mental illness and general psychodynamics given by the therapists, as well as advice, suggestions or direct guidance about life problems offered either by therapist or other patients."[8]

For many centuries Spiritual Direction had a very strong emphasis on instruction. It often appears to have taken autocratic forms. Merton states that in "the earliest days of Christian monasticism the spiritual fathers did much more than instruct and advise. The neophyte lived in the same cell with him, day and night, and did what he saw his father doing. He made known to the father "all the thoughts that came into his heart" and was told on the spot, how to react."[9]

One has the impression that because of the abuses of the past instructional aspects of spiritual direction are down played. Greater emphasis seems to be on "freedom" and the "relationship." Perhaps we need to re-examine the value of instruction in spiritual direction.

Altruism

"In therapy groups, too, patients receive through giving, not only as part of the reciprocal giving—receiving sequence but also form the intrinsic act of giving."[10] Individuals must transcend themselves and become absorbed in someone or thing outside themselves to grow.

Since the time of our Lord the goal of the Christian is to go beyond himself. "He who seeks to save his life will lose it, and he who loses it will be saved." "I live not for myself but for Jesus Christ." Thomas Merton suggests that a "contemplative is not one who takes his prayer seriously, but one who takes God seriously, who is famished by truth, who seeks to live in generous simplicity, in the spirit."[11] Our liturgy, our ethic, our total life in Christ seeks to lead us beyond ourselves. It might be of immense value to remember that altruism is not just a philosophical concept but that which brings man to wholeness.

Imitative Behavior

Social psychologists such as Bandura have suggested that modeling behavior after another person can be therapeutic. Yalom believes that imitative behavior, learning by imitating others, is one of the curative factors.

Undoubtedly, imitative behavior seems like an anathema to the modern mind, especially those involved in direction. We no longer wish to reproduce that system whereby, as quoted earlier, individuals are told what to think and do. Modern direction demands freedom. It stresses the uniqueness of the individual. Our clinically trained minds associate imitation with transference (which will be dealt with later) and respond with disgust. Yet perhaps we have overreacted.

If it is natural for a pipe-smoking therapist to have patients who try pipes, perhaps we should expect that the director will be imitated. His style of prayer or relating to others might be tried. Imitative behavior might allow the directee to try various styles of prayer or behavior. This would only be dangerous if they were locked into it or if we strongly encouraged it.

Interpersonal Learning

"Interpersonal learning, as I define it, is a broad and complex curative factor representing the group analogue of such individual curative factors as insight, working through transference, the corrective emotional experience."[12] This is that aspect of therapy which is written about so often and thoroughly. It is exposing the patient, under better circumstances, to experiences which were difficult in the past. It is the interpretation of actions and dreams. It is the working through of transference. It is the gaining of insight.

Obviously this also occurs in direction. Insight into our nature, needs, and feelings as well as those areas of blockage, must be gained in order to grow in our relationship to Christ. "But the whole of our treatment and exertion is concerned with the hidden man of the heart and our welfare is directed against that adversary and foe within us, who uses ourselves as weapons against ourselves."[13]

An understanding of our relationships with others, past and present, reflects our ability to relate to Christ.

Fr. McCall[14] has suggested that there are various types of remarks in the spiritual dialogue. There are *continuation remarks* which encourage expression. There are *strengthening remarks* which support the directees in their progress. There are *explanatory remarks* which impart information. Lastly, there are *interpretative remarks* which seek to improve insight.

Throughout the ages much has been written on the process of spiritual direction. While they may not be couched in terms such as the "corrective emotional experience," these issues have been dealt with.

Catharsis

This is the open expression of effect or emotions. The spilling out, if you will, of feelings. Since 1895 when Freud and Breuer published their work of Hysteria, the "talking cure" has been in evidence. Few theorists, however, believe that catharsis is enough. It does not automatically bring about change. Yet there must be a freedom of speech; a freedom to express one's needs and feelings, before growth is experienced.

"But those who are over others should show themselves to be such that their subjects may not blush to disclose even their secrets to them."[15]

While many of the spiritual directors have emphasized directing, there seems to have been, and still is, an emphasis on the directee's freedom to express himself. However, this has been seen more as a way for the director to come to know the other. Perhaps we could recognize that besides improving the relationship, catharsis allows the directee to bring feelings, fears, and needs out into the open.

Existential Factors

Much to his amazement one of the foremost curative factors discovered by Yalom was this one. His first instrument for exploring what brought about a cure excluded existential factors. Yet, man's ability to find meaning in life, came to be considered an important curative factor. "Several issues are represented in this cluster: responsibility, basic isolation, contingency, the recognition of our own mortality, and the ensuing consequences for the conduct of our life, the throwness or capriciousness of existence."[16]

One of the interesting phenomena of our time is that the secular world has begun to deal with the questions of existence, life and death, meaning and commitment, because the church has down played these issues. While this may be a simplistic view, listening to sermons on Sunday morning would show that it contains truth.

Viktor Frankl has emphasized the healing power of meaning. In his book *Christotherapy*, Bernard Tyrrell affirms this need and reminds us that the gospel strongly proclaims it. "Christotherapy is fraternally related to Frankl's logotherapy in its basic emphasis on the healing power of meaning. But it dif-

fers in insisting that meaning itself has been made flesh in Christ and that the light of Christ is able to heal all those who are open to its beneficent presence."[17]

The Relationship

Nothing is more written of in the field of psychotherapy than the relationship between patient and therapist. Studies indicate that there are common characteristics in the "successful" relationships regardless of the therapist's orientation. For Yalom, group cohesiveness is the key to success in group work. In individual therapy the key remains the relationship between patient and therapist. The relationship is to be one with an atmosphere of acceptance in which there are high levels of empathy, warmth which is non-possessive and with a sense of genuineness. In this atmosphere of acceptance openness is encouraged and maintained. It is one in which self-knowledge and self-realization materialize.[18] It is an atmosphere in which the patient is treated with "unconditional positive regard," to use a Rogerian term. He is treated as a unique human being, not categorized and classified. Lastly, it is a professional relationship. Confidences are kept and trust is high. A relationship nurtured in this environment is a very important curative factor.

Just as much has been written on the relationship in therapy, so also has much been written on the relationship in spiritual direction. Modern writers emphasize strongly the freedom and acceptance of the directee. "We see, then, that the dialogue of direction, whether it is envisaged in its early stages or at a later point in the spiritual life, cannot develop unless it respects the freedom of the other. Direction is not an arbitrary matter; it must pay attention to the personal development and possibilities of an individual."[19] "The director is not to teach his own way, nor indeed any determinate way of prayer, but to instruct his disciples how they may themselves find out the proper way. . . . In a word, he is only God's usher and must lead souls in God's way, and not his own." "What we need to do is to bring the director into contact with our own real self, as best we can, and not fear to let him see what is false in our false self. Now this right away implies a relaxed, humble attitude in which we let go of ourselves and renounce our unconscious efforts to maintain a façade."[20] These writers contend that the relationship must contain openness, trust, and acceptance.

The stress is also upon unconditional positive regard and the uniqueness of the individual. "A true director can never get over the awe he feels in the presence of a person."[21]

The early church fathers laid heavy emphasis upon the fact that all individuals were different and must be treated as such. The great works on the priesthood and the episcopate by Gregory the Great, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Gregory of Nazianzen stress that all persons are aided and treated varying ways. "So also are souls treated with various instructions and guidance. To this treatment witness is borne by those who have experience of it."[22] All three of these church fathers have long lists of the different types of people that might

be encountered, lists which go on for pages, pointing out the uniqueness of every individual.

Spiritual direction is also a professional relationship. The word "professional" raises many eyebrows and frowns. It is looked upon with disfavor. Perhaps we are overreacting against a pompous image, rather than recognizing that it is a role in which demands are placed upon the director. It is a relationship in which whatever is said must be kept in confidence. It is also professional in that it is not a "peer" relationship." No matter how much transparency (to be described shortly) the relationship has, the director is in a professional role. He is there to share the gifts God has given him with another. This is done with a sense of responsibility, it is a relationship in which it is the director's responsibility to evaluate the progress being made.

Transference and Counter-Transference

Transference is a term which has been developed in psychoanalytic thought and practice. In its strictest sense it refers to the tendency of the patient to displace onto the therapist feelings, ideas, and so forth which originate with previous figures, often parental, in the patient's life. In the less strict sense, it is the tendency to displace onto another feelings, ideas, and so forth of other relationships. Harry Stack Sullivan refers to this as parataxic distortion. In essence, when a person is transferring to us, he is placing another's face upon us. To my knowledge, this phenomenon is not discussed by early Christian writers. (Which means, undoubtedly, that after the final draft of this paper is typed, someone will offer such a reference.)

In therapy, transference is dealt with in various ways, depending upon the school of thought to which the therapist subscribes. Some, such as Freudian psychoanalytic, encourage transference, believing that the working-through is an important curative factor. Others, such as the Rogerian, have developed ways to seek to eliminate it. Some believe that Rogerian therapy was developed to avoid transference. Others such as *Gestalt* therapy, also seek to eliminate it, by living in the here and now.

It appears that the more aloof and neutral a figure the therapist is, the greater the tendency to transfer. The more transparent a therapist is, the less transference will occur. Transparency refers to the tendency of a therapist to show his true self and feelings. In short, the more a therapist is himself, the more difficult it is to put a face on him. It should be recognized, however, that even when transparency is present, transference still occurs, but to a lesser degree.

In spiritual direction it seems unlikely that transference would be sought or encouraged. It would be more of a barrier. It would therefore be of value if the director were able to make himself more transparent. However, there is a caution. Sandor Ferenczi, an early student of Freud's who experimented with this issue, suggests that disclosure (transparency) not take place too soon in the process.[24] It might well be that disclosure of weakness and limitations too early

negates the instillation of hope and undermines trust.

Counter-transference occurs when the therapist relates to the patient as though he were some other individual, or when the therapist's needs or emotions become involved in the relationship. This can obviously be destructive. Therapists have sought to control counter-transference in three ways. The first is through self-exploration and self-knowledge. Freudian analysts are required to undergo a didactic analysis of their own. Other schools stress that the therapist should know himself. They suggest rather than require, personal therapy. The second way is through the use of supervision and consultants, in which the therapists can share the work they are doing and explore personal needs and motives. The third is by trying to have enough patients that one's life does not become overly involved in one patient. Frieda Fromm-Reichman suggests that a new therapist always have more than one patient.

There is little doubt that counter-transference occurs in direction. André Godin's book *The Priest as Counselor*[25] provides a list of warning signs which might indicate when counter-transference is occurring. Certainly such examination should take place in all our pastoral work, especially counseling and direction. We might also learn from those involved in psychotherapy. It might be of value to find some method of self-exploration. It certainly would be of value to find a mentor; someone with whom we could reflect upon the work we are doing. And it certainly would be important to have more than one individual for whom we are director.

Counseling vs. Direction

It is important to have a clear distinction of the difference between counseling, or psychotherapy, and spiritual direction.

"The approach of spiritual direction accents, more than counseling or psychotherapy, advice and exercises to help a person experience God and people in depth."[26] This definition is based on what happens, the methodology or technique used, to explain the difference. Its only limitation is that the methodology of some schools of therapy is based on advice, instruction and exercises.

"A person needs counseling when he or she absorbed in some partial aspect of life. I say 'absorbed' to indicate that the individual is preoccupied with this to such an extent that other values or aspects of life are neglected.[27] This is a very practical guide to determine whether an individual needs therapy rather than direction. It is a good rule of thumb, but we're still left with an incomplete definition.

"The focus in counseling is more on problem solving, of effecting better personal integration and adjustment in the process of human maturation. The focus in spiritual direction, on the other hand, is more on growth in prayer and charity."[28] This brings us closer to the difference.

It is doubtful that any behavioral therapist, who used instruction, advice and exercise, would see as the end goal "to help a person experience God and people in depth." However, it is possible. A definition based on intent or focus

will transcend methodology. Both therapy and direction, if they are good, deal with the whole person; both may use varied techniques and methodologies, but the *stated* intent of spiritual direction is growth in "prayer and charity" to the fulfillment of one's discipleship.

Qualities of a Director

The qualifications of a therapist vary from school to school. All seem, however, to have two general requirements. The individual must have an awareness of self as defined by that school. He must also have an understanding of man as perceived by that school of thought. For example, a Freudian analyst would undergo psychoanalysis and have an understanding of the theories of psychodynamics, pathology, and methodology.

Writers on the subject of direction seem to emphasize that the director be a man of prayer and a theologian. He must be a whole person; his theology and life of prayer are integrated so that he lives his faith.

"His first duty, if he wants to be an effective director, is to see to his own interior life, and to take time for prayer and meditation, since he will never be able to give to others what he does not possess himself.[29]

St. Theresa stresses over and over again that a director must be a theologian. She seems to have been upset often because she could not find directors who had a good theological background.

Morton Kelsey emphasizes that a pastor must possess four things in order to teach the faith. These are: 1) Knowledge of the limitations and possibilities of the church; 2) must know and understand the world view of the people with whom he deals; 3) must have experience—a prayer life and knowledge of mystical tradition; 4) a knowledge of depth psychology.[30] (These I believe also apply to direction.) In essence, a director must know where his people are, must know both God and his church, and have insight into the workings of the individual.

The emphasis on knowing the individual is a valuable one. It also has implications for our theological ability. Often when referring to a person as a theologian, we conjure up images of an academician, primarily because the theology we are taught tends to be philosophical theology. Martin Thornton suggests that there are five types or functions of theology:

> "First, theology has a prior revelational function; the disclosure and proclamation of revealed knowledge.
>
> "Second is practical or straight theology, the implications of which are obvious and which necessitate a spontaneous reaction.
>
> "Third, is pastoral theology, or that which is employed by Christian pastors in ministering to their flocks. Pastoral theology, as a subject of study,means the drawing out of the practical implications of theological statement and formulae.
>
> "Fourth is applied theology, sometimes called ascetic theology, which guides, or is used to guide, individual Christians in their unique-

> ly personal interpretation of discipleship, according to temperament and circumstances.
>
> "Fifth, is what I should call the negative or testing function of theology which guards people and communities from error in prayer, and therefore in practical life."[31]

We are told if we are to be with our people then we must have an understanding of where they are. This implies that we are able to speak to where they are. It indicates that the type of theological expertise necessary is not (1) or (2), above, but rather pastoral and applied (3 and 4). The director must have the ability to instruct in the faith so that it can be both understood and applied to life.

We also, I believe, need to learn from the dynamic therapies. We need some form of continual direction for ourselves or at least a mentor with whom we can share our work.

As I began the work for this paper, I felt that the insights of psychotherapy would provide "new" material for spiritual direction. This is obviously not the case. Much of our "new" insights have been known for centuries. They may have been couched in different terms, disguised in flowery rhetoric, but nevertheless present in the works of the fathers. It is, I believe, one of the "heresies" of our time to believe that we are the discoverers of new information and that what went before does not relate to the present.

This does not exempt us, however, from being aware of the insights of depth psychology. They provide us with methodology which can bring what we do into focus. We are provided with information on the workings of a dynamic relationship. We are given an understanding of conscious and unconscious motivation. They show us ways of monitoring our own work. In investigating Yalom's work, we are allowed to examine what we do in light of research. This work shows us the value of the various aspects of direction which promote growth. It is growth which is sought; growth which leads to wholesomeness in and through Christ.

NOTES

[1] J. Laplace, *Preparing for Spiritual Direction* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975).
[2] T. Merton, *Spiritual Direction and Meditation* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1960).
[3] St. Gregory Nazianzen, v. 7, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 7 (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1894).
[4] D. Isabell, *The Spiritual Director* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1976).
[5] New York: Basic Books, 1975.
[6] St. Athanasius, *The Life of St. Anthony* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1950), pp. 34, 57.
[7] Yalom, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

[8] *Ibid*., p. 9.
[9] Merton, *op.cit*., p. 9.
[10] Yalom, *op.cit*., p. 13.
[11] Merton, *op.cit*., p. 33.
[12] Yalom, *op.cit*., p. 19.
[13] St.Gregory Nazianzen, op.cit., p. 209.
[14] In Isabell, op.cit.
[15] St. Gregory the Great, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968).
[16] Yalom, *op.cit*., p. 85.
[17] B. Tyrrell, *Christotherapy* (New York: Seabury, 1975), p. 28.
[18] K. Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950).
[19] Laplace, *op.cit*., p. 28.
[20] Merton, *op.cit*., pp. 12. 24.
[21] Ibid., pp. 25-26.
[22] St. Gregory Nazianzen, op.cit., p. 211.
[23] S. McCarty, "On Entering Spiritual Direction," REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS 35, 6, pp. 854-867.
[24] Yalom, *op.cit*.
[25] Techny, IL: Divine Word Publications, 1968.
[26] W. Kraft, "Psychology and the Religious Life," REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS, 35, 6, pp. 889-896,
[27] Isabell, *op.cit*., p, 32.
[28] McCarty, *op.cit*., p. 858.
[29] Merton, *op.cit.*, pp. 19, 20.
[30] M. Kelsey, "Interview: Morton Kelsey," *Your Church*, 23, 2, pp. 11-14; 67-71.
[31] M Thornton, *The Function of Theology* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1968), p. 26.

Staging, Typing, and Spiritual Direction

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> *For though it is right to urge one to enter the religious state in which he knows that vows* of *obedience, poverty, and chastity are taken . . . nevertheless, it is necessary to consider with great care the condition and endowments* of *each individual, and the help or hindrance one would experience in carrying out his promises (Spiritual Exercises,* n. 14).

St. Ignatius's perceptive words come right after his reference to the "unstable of character" who should be forewarned and admonished lest they act without due consideration.

Ignatius knew only too well that the making of a promise is one thing and the keeping of it is quite another matter. Ardent desires are easy to come by; the inner resources to correspond with God's grace must surely be what was in his mind when Ignatius wrote about the "condition and endowments" of each individual as well as the "help or hindrance" occasioned by the "condition and endowments."

We are all painfully aware of the abyss between our desires and the facility with which we can put them into practice. Put another way, the gap between word and deed is a wide one for us, and the bridging of it is a daily sacrifice. Spiritual direction is a means whereby we are helped, first of all, to see and appreciate the gap, and, secondly, to do something remedially practical about it.

Seeing the Gap

It is possible to be deceived in discernment. No one is rash enough to attach to a discerned decision any theological note more daring than "prob-

able." We try to ascertain *as far as we can* which of the spirits leads us to God's will and to a more apostolic service of the neighbor—to paraphrase part of Malatesta's classical definition. "As far as we are able" keeps us humbly on our toes, and any assertion that "we have discerned" must be devoid of any traces of smugness. We are all practiced in the art of self-deception—directors as well as those seeking direction. When both are aware of this we are disposed to seek and live the truth humbly.

Directors use the word "empathy" very much, and rightly so. But there is always the danger that we listen too hard to the other, and are unable to keep separate what is *you* and what is *me* in the encounter. Empathy and projection are pale cousins, and it is quite possible to "hear oneself into" the other, and thus engage in an unproductive monologue. When directors assume or are given a guru quality, it is all too easy to invest them with extraordinary qualities that in fact they do not possess.

It is also possible to have an overdone style of accepting the one who is seeking direction, and so fall to challenge him or her on his or her way of seeing things. It is a truism to say that when one hears another speak of relationships, one hears one side only; all the evidence is not in so as to form a considered assessment. Yet we tend to rush to judgment, and often arrive at unwise conclusions.

It is crucial to try to construe events as the other construes them but it is equally crucial to construe them in the light of the evidence available.

Thus we may feel we fully understand another, but as Liam Hudson so well put it, "The psychologist's target is a moving one, and, as human as anyone else, he moves too."[1] He goes on to add that this is more than a reminder of a textbook illustration of the theory of relativity. It is more elusive, for "in representing events to ourselves, we all—plain men and psychologists alike—protect ourselves systematically from truths that are too painful or inconvenient to bear." For "psychologists," read "director" and "directed."

Blinkers, then, are only too easy to wear and too hard to detect. And when we realize that how we see things necessarily suffers from incompleteness, we become more than ever alert to the possibility of our fallibility.

Hence the abyss between word and deed may hardly be seen or if seen, seen poorly. One cannot help noting the immediate relevance of Lonergan's idea of religious conversion, and the appropriateness of this in the context of spiritual direction.

Other-Worldly Falling in Love

Religious conversion is "being grasped by ultimate concern."[2] For Christians, this conversion "is God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us." Lonergan goes on to see with Augustine that this is a gift of grace. Operative grace replaces the heart of stone with the heart of flesh, while cooperative grace is the heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human freedom. Thus operative grace is conversion; cooper-

ative grace is the gradual movement toward a full and complete transformation of the "whole of one's living and feeling, one's thoughts, words, deeds and omissions."

This conversion is not simply a 180-degree turnabout. It is not a matter of seeing something new, but of a new way of seeing what amounts to a new vision. This new way of seeing is with "the eye of love"—faith, which is born of this religious conversion.

Living Out This Seeing

We have seen how this splendid vision can be dulled and how our way of seeing, suffering as it does from angular distortion, can never be the whole vision. We have seen also how, in the encounter of spiritual direction, the way is wide open for us to be duped, the best of intentions notwithstanding. The almost lyrical words of Lonergan beckon us tauntingly—the "subject [is transformed] into a subject in love, a subject held, grasped, possessed, owned through a total and so an otherworldly love" (p. 242). But Lonergan is too practical for mere lyricism. He knows how our sinfulness—that radical dimension of lovelessness—"can be hidden by sustained superficiality, by evading ultimate questions, by absorption in all that the world offers to challenge our resourcefulness, to relax our bodies, to distract our minds. But escape may not be permanent and then the absence of fulfillment reveals itself in unrest, the absence of joy in the pursuit of fun, the absence of peace in disgust—a depressive disgust with oneself or a manic, hostile, even violent disgust with mankind" (p. 243).

It is painfully true that what Lonergan describes is the normal lot for so many. William James' classical dichotomy fails utterly to catch the middle ground—the not-so-happy hunting ground for most of us. James spoke of the perfectly harmonious and the totally dissonant persons in his chapter on the "Divided Self":

> Some persons are born with an inner constitution which is harmonious and well balanced from the outset. Their impulses are consistent with one another, their will follows without trouble the not excessive, and their lives are little haunted by regrets. Others are oppositely constituted . . . their spirit wars with their flesh, they wish for incompatibles, wayward impulses interrupt their most deliberate plans, and their lives are one long dream of repentance and of effort to repair misdemeanors and mistakes.[3]

Actually these two extremes are rare: in between there dwells a race of people—the common man and woman—who ply their lives in an uneven lowly state. James, in speaking of Augustine, shows how the "divided will" worked in him so that "the higher wishes lack just that last acuteness, that touch of explosive intensity . . . that enables them to burst their shells, and make irruption efficaciously into life and quell the lower tendencies forever."

Many years ago, I heard a major superior speak of "importing" a Greene-like whiskey-priest to offer as model. We are less apologetic about matters today, for we know that the Greene character stands for all of us who are capa-

ble both of high heroism and low betrayal. We have our best times and our worst times, and both, to take a phrase from Yeats, can be "full of passionate intensity" or "lack all conviction." We are aware of these moments that seem to mock any kind of progressive staging, or easy typing, and we know only too many very good people who are bedeviled with so many upsurgings of their lower selves in so many unpleasant ways. So many need so much in the way of things, "breaks," endless companionship, and, sadly, so many lack the ability to sustain a friendship at any decent level of reciprocity.

We do well to acknowledge the prevalence of such divided people in whom the division runs deep and dark, and to know that they seem to make a mockery of any kind of developmental approach to spiritual growth. These are the saints with a lower-case *s*, for whom growth seems to be a matter of spurts and spasms. By the same token, they make it well-nigh impossible for a director to assess the "condition and endowments" they have, as their very personality itself seems to be more a hindrance than a help (see *Spiritual Exercises*, n. 14 supra).

They would surely show up in the lower stages of any developmental scheme, yet their conduct at times would put them at the highest.

Mary Craig in her moving book[4] quotes a survivor of Buchenwald:

> This for me was the first lesson of the camp—that it made beasts of some men and saints of others. And the second lesson is that it is hard to predict who will be the saint and who the beast when, the time of trial comes. Only one thing prevailed—strength of character. Cleverness, learning, all went clown~ only real goodness survived *(The Real Enemy*, Pierre d'Harcourt, London: Longmans).

More than we might wish to admit, the beast and the saint are closely related under the skin of everyone, and many observers have noted it takes only the flimsiest of excuses to provoke the beast. The lion and the lamb make unpredictable appearances, and situations have a way of bringing out the best or the worst in us. We are living in the century of the Holocaust—an atrocity that would be impossible without thousands of cooperating individuals, who, living in another time and place, might have been peace-loving people.

Pelagian Behind the Door

It has been said that a Pelagian is behind the door of every spiritual director's office.

It is an experience with a value to direct a person who is moving ahead despite ups and downs. Directors feel bad over failure, yet so many seeking their help have endless cycles of success and failure. This faltering forward and backward marks the religious pilgrimage of most people.

Here we touch one of the potent objections made against a developmental view of spiritual progress.[5] The developmental view postulates an even-tenored scaling of various stages so that we grow in a progressively cumulative way. This falls to catch the uniqueness of the individual. Hopkins[6]

reminds us that we cannot condition God to go follow *our* plans and schemes. He comes in his own good time and we cannot manipulate him:

For I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand.

It is clear by implication that there will be days when we will not meet him, no matter at what stage of faith or moral development we find ourselves, and there will be days when we will not understand him. We cannot fit God's special comings to us into a neatly formed scheme. He comes when he comes.

A staged approach to moral or faith growth goes a long way in mapping out the terrain to be traversed. But the map is not the terrain and it is well known that many battles have been fought in the white spaces of overlap between maps.

The significance of individual experience that can alter one's whole life is overlooked in a stages approach to spiritual growth. As Vaillant[7] notes in his study of successful graduates:

> Lives change and the course of life is filled with discontinuities. What at one point in time appears to be a mental illness, at another point in time may appear quite adaptive . . . As this book unfolds, it will become clear that no life [follows] an entirely predictable trajectory.

A "typed" basis for direction suffers the same problems. For in typing, we allocate the individual to a group of similar people and lump them all into a clearly labeled category. No matter how we ring the changes by permutation and combination within types, we still fail to touch the mystery of the person. Thus the Myers-Briggs, to name one such typing approach,[8] is a helpful instrument to give some clues about oneself. But, as a typology, it leans too heavily on the notion of sameness with others to catch the individual richness o the person.

Typing can be a way of controlling or emptying the individual of his mystery and dealing with him as a "problem." This is a pernicious process, according to Marcel. But it is also a kind of playing God. Over two decades ago, Brunner[9] said it all so well:

> Man has again and again to be pulled back from the desire to obtain domination over others, even when the intention is to make those others happy. It cannot be too often repeated: only he can influence other men's hearts who is not seeking to do so, working on other men for their good is God's preserve. For He alone has the free access to a man's innermost soul. Men have intimate influence on one another only to the degree that they are selflessly open to God's action through them.

To imagine that we are wired-in from birth so as to progress evenly through stages, given the right environment, makes spiritual direction a kind of detective work where we are inclined to do more deduction than detection.

Stages and Stages

In many ways, our words touch on the much disputed area of how to

study the individual person. Many seek for an "average," and then sight off the individual against this so-called "normal" construct.

Others believe in the intense study of the individual whose "thisness" is unique. One is reminded of James' wry comment on the crab who would be disgusted should he be called just a crustacean. We prize our individuality.

Yet these two modes of study are not necessarily mutually exclusive. We can, so to speak, have the best of both worlds: we can surely know much about people-in-general as a help to know this-person-in-particular. No man or woman is an island, for all our uniqueness, and we can truly be known only in our lived contexts. We live with others and toward others. "Others" have much to say about the kind of person we strive to become.

One can prize one's uniqueness to the point of being bizarre about it: hence the corrective of seeing oneself as like others is essential. Or we can become so like the Common Man or Woman, we may be lost in the faceless crowd.

We have much to learn from the longitudinal study of people as they grow towards maturity in developmental stages, be this in the area of morality or faith or simply general development. A study of types can also offer much help as long as its innate deficiencies are kept in mind. But we do not lock step and move forward *en masse* to a goal. We make our journey inward and forward in our own way. Hurdles we all have to face, and each one takes each in his or her own way. Being rigidly tied to a staging or typing concept unwittingly gets us to calibrate progress "according to type." Thus, we may easily put demands on people that are not challenges.

Directors whose expectations are subtly imposed will surely be disappointed when their "charges" are not shaping up. This imposed program is a form of domination, a seeking to influence others' hearts directly.

A modest use of stages and typing is helpful in the matter of spiritual direction. At the same time, a careful appraisal of the "condition and endowments of each individual" will make sure we do not pay excessive attention to stages or types, thus enabling others and ourselves to grow to that full maturity that Christ has in mind for us (see Ep 4).

Notes

[1] *Human Beings*, by L. Hudson (Herts, England: Triad/Paladin, 1975), p. 18.

[2] *Method in Theology*, by B.J.F. Lonergan (London: Barton, Longman, and Todd, 1971), pp. 241-242.

[3] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, by W. James (London: Fontana, 1960), p. 173.

[4] *Blessings*, by M. Craig (London: Coronet-Hodder and Stoughton, 1979), pp. 139-140.

[5] *Vision and Character*, by Craig Dykstra (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), pp. 63 ff.

[6] The Wreck of the Deutschland" in *Gerard Manley Hopkins: The Major Poems*, ed. W. Davies (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1979).

[7] *Adaptation to Life*, by G.E. Vaillant (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1977), p. 29.

[8] *Manual* (1962), *The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*, by I.B. Myers (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service).

[9] *A New Creation*, by E. Brunner (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1955), p. 97.

Jungian Typology and Christian Spirituality

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In recent times there has been much written and discussed around the topic of integration. One hears of the need to integrate one's daily experiences into one's prayer and the need to grow as an "integrated person." There is also much more emphasis today among theologians and writers on Christian spirituality on the *relationship* between God and the individual Christian, speaking of the Father precisely as a father, the Son as brother and companion, and the Spirit as that love which unites all human beings and transforms their lives as each progresses on his or her own spiritual journey.

In all of this, I see a very serious attempt to overcome that subtle form of dualism which all too often in the past has crept into personal spirituality causing a real separation between the so-called *sacred* and the *profane*. Such a separation inevitably gives rise to a mentality which compartmentalizes one's life in such a way that certain areas are seen to be completely divorced from others due to the apparently vast difference between them. As a result, the individual winds up living a fragmented existence without even being conscious of it.

In particular, this has often been the case in the relationship between psychology and theology. It is only quite recently that it has been possible to use psychological studies to enrich our understanding of theology and personal spiritualities. I propose to do just that in this article by looking at the results of some studies on the psychology of the individual and his or her personality and its relatedness to the relationship which develops between God and the

individual Christian, as well as the manner in which this relationship transforms the Christian into the "new creation" of which St. Paul speaks. In order to do so, I will focus upon prayer in the life of the individual in such a way that it takes into account the *whole* of the person and relates to his or her psychic constitution, understood in terms of Jungian typology. Furthermore, I also hope to show how that relationship, established in prayer, gives rise to a Christian *giftedness*, what St. Paul describes as the gifts of the Spirit, in such a manner that we can more easily understand their role in the lives of all Christians rather than simply confined to members of the charismatic or pentecostal movements.

In his article, "Prayer and Celebration In the Christian Community," Gerard Fourez makes a very important distinction between Prayer (the profound attitude of heart of the Christian in the presence of God) and prayer (those particular behaviors through which the Christian tries to foster Prayer).[1] Although I will be dealing most of all with prayer as that particular manner in which the individual relates with God, I think it first appropriate to comment upon Fourez's notion of *Prayer*.

Prayer as an attitude or stance before God, says Fourez, can be expressed in our lives in many ways. It can be expressed in a stance of openness, acceptance, intimacy, silence, awe, respect, and so forth. But it is always expressed with an awareness of the presence of God. He maintains that our Prayer is not meant to make God aware of us, but rather to help us to foster and retain an awareness of his presence in our lives.[2] This awareness is a conscious realization that there is a transcendent meaning in our lives, a dimension to human existence which goes far deeper than our own understanding. Prayer, then, is an attitude of an individual before the Divine who seeks to draw that individual into an ever deeper relationship with himself and give meaning to that transcendent dimension on a personal level. And it is precisely because Prayer is an attitude of an *individual* that we must deal with the conscious awareness of the individual. Prayer as a conscious event is also a psychological event.

The central question in the life of the Christian is: Who am I in relationship with God? In his little book, *Depth Psychology and Religious Belief*, Christopher Bryant leaves no question as to the importance of bringing one's whole personality to bear on one's attitude toward one's relationship with God. There is an essential unity in one's psychic life which cannot be ignored if one is to strive for an integrated existence. "The secret of success, or at least of getting the best out of yourself . . . lies largely in getting your unconscious to work in harmony with your conscious mind."[3] To do so, it is very important for the individual to come to some realization of how he or she functions as a conscious, intending subject. This is a very great responsibility for the individual, for only such an awareness will create the possibility of bringing the unconscious into harmony with the conscious. Only in this way may the individual relate to God in a holistic rather than fragmented manner; and only such a holistic prayer can make one's essential stance in Prayer authentic.

In speaking of prayer, then, we are speaking of the individual relating naturally and spontaneously with God in such a way that he not only clarifies for him the basic attitude he has in the presence of God, but that his prayer also becomes formative of that stance. It is only natural then that how the individual relates and functions in his or her everyday life will have some bearing upon how that same individual relates to God.

In C.G. Jung's psychiatric practice, he was struck by the fact that his patients not only displayed individual differences in their lives, but typical differences as well. It was thus that he began to formulate his theory of psychological types, a theory which was intended to help facilitate an understanding of how individuals perceive and relate in their lives. In general, he was able to distinguish between two basic attitudes or orientations with which the individual approaches life: *extraversion* and *introversion*. He made the further distinction that, within each of these basic attitudes, there were also two quite distinct modes of perception *(sensation* and *intuition)* as well as two ways of evaluating and ordering that which was perceived *(thinking* and *feeling)*. The use of any one of these four functions, he held, necessarily excludes the use of its opposite within the pair. It is important to note, however, that, while every individual has access to all of the functions, it is the *habitual* use of one to the *habitual* exclusion of another which will constellate the psychological type of the individual. It is my conviction that a proper understanding of these basic dispositions of the personality and these four functions will contribute greatly to a healthy understanding and directing of one's personal giftedness, prayer and spirituality in general.

The Attitudinal Types: Extraversion and Introversion

As with the "functional types," it is the habitual preference of orientating oneself either extravertedly or introvertedly which determines the "attitudinal type" of the individual. That attitude which is not habitually preferred will recede more or less into the individual's unconscious.

When I speak of an extravert, then, I am speaking of one who consciously is primarily interested and at home in the world of people, material things, and action.[4] In his adjustment and reaction pattern, the extravert orients him or herself predominantly by the outward, the collective norms, "the spirit of the times."[5] Being so outwardly directed, one's actions have a character that is always adapted to the actual circumstances in which he finds himself, and the moral laws governing his actions coincide with the demands of society or the prevailing moral standpoint. The extravert is the individual who always appears to be "normal" due to his ability to fit into existing conditions with comparative ease. He does what is needed or what is expected of him and refrains from all innovations the demands for which are not entirely self-evident, or which exceed the expectations of those in the immediate environment.[6]

The danger of which the extravert must beware is that the more extreme his extraverted attitude becomes, the more likely it is that he may lose him-

self in his attachment to the outer world. Neglect of unconscious introversion may compensate in a display of childish egoism which may become ruthless and brutal in one's dealings with others and the environment.

"The introvert, on the other hand, is more interested and at home in the inner world—the world of ideas and reflection."[7] For this person, the ego and the subjective psychological process are primary. He insists upon being a codeterminer of the world in which he lives, selecting his own, subjective determinants as being the decisive ones. Whereas the extravert may be described as one who keeps things "up front," the introvert is classically the "deep" person. This person is often misunderstood by the extravert as being two-faced because so much goes on "behind the scene." This generally forces upon the introvert the psychology of the underdog.[8] Because of their differences, the introvert can also mistakenly view the extravert as "shallow."

The danger which the introvert faces is that his unconscious extraversion makes itself felt as an absolute and irrepressible tie to the objective world. Thus,

> the more the ego struggles to preserve its independence, freedom from obligation, and superiority, the more it becomes enslaved to the objective data. The individual's freedom of mind is fettered by the ignominy of his financial dependence, his freedom of action trembles in the face of public opinion, his moral superiority collapses in a morass of inferior relationships, and his desire to dominate ends in a pitiful craving to be loved.[9]

The Irrational Functions: Sensation and Intuition

The "irrational functions" are those functions through which one perceives, or registers, the input of data from the outside world. Whatever they do or do not do is not based in any way upon a rational judgment, but simply upon the intensity of the perception. As functions of the conscious mind, they can take upon themselves quite a distinct twist in their manner of operation, depending upon which attitudinal preference is utilized.

According to results from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, 65-79% of the population of the United States use "sensation" as either the main or as an auxiliary function,[10] sensation being that function which basically relies upon the perception of the five senses. The sensate most easily perceives concrete objects and facts (how things are) and focuses primarily upon the present moment. When presented with a problem, he or she most often seeks to arrive at a practical, workable solution.

If sensation is combined with an extraverted attitude, the person will be a master for noticing details and will be unequaled as a realist. "Value" in the objective world is dependent upon the stimulation of sensations and their intensity. This individual experiences a great need for enjoyment, and his or her morality is oriented accordingly. Because of their capacity for enjoyment, the sensate make for very good company and, if "normal," will be conspicuously well-adjusted to reality.[11]

The danger with such a type, however, is that if sensation is allowed to run wild," the person can become a crude pleasure-seeker or an effete aesthete who ruthlessly exploits the object, squeezing it dry, since its sole use is to stimulate sensation.[12] Repressed intuition may erupt in a mood of melancholy, or a feeling of dark and sinister possibilities lurking in the background, whose source is impossible to locate.[13] In the religious sphere, such an emerging shadow will quite often take the form of pharisaism or religious superstition.

If sensation is accompanied by an introverted attitude, a somewhat different picture emerges. Marie-Louise von Franz compares the introverted sensate to a highly sensitive photographic plate which absorbs every detail coming to it from the object.[14] In processing the data subjectively, this individual often acts as a sort of "equalizer," raising what is too low, lowering what is too high, dampening enthusiasm, restraining extravagance—in general, keeping all influences within necessary bounds.[15] Due to the introverted nature of the sensation, such a person gives the impression of being rather slow. One simply is not aware of all that is going on within him or her. The subjective influence of the introversion does, however, give the person the ability to perceive the mythological and archetypal components of reality. If the individual can learn to convey his or her impressions in some form, he or she can become a great artist, either in painting or in writing "psychological" novels, because of such a keen impression of reality.

The dangers inherent in this type also stem from overindulging in sensation and from an explosion of underdeveloped intuition. Overindulging in sensation can lead one to become trapped in an inner world of either benevolent deities or malevolent demons.[16] Underdeveloped intuition may erupt in the form of prophecies marked by a sinister and pessimistic character which may either accurately fit the situation or miss the mark by miles.[17]

"Intuition," the other irrational function, is characterized by its perception of possibilities in things and situations rather than in details *per se*. It looks toward the inner meaning of events and their possible implications and effects, bringing the dimension of the future into focus.

If this function is accompanied by extraversion, the individual will be very creative in the outer world, possibly as one who can create the future, either for his own environment or for the others in it. This person is the type who will recognize the value inherent in another and be able to direct sufficient attention toward it. As such, the extraverted intuitive can be a maker of great men or women and a tremendous promoter of new enterprises. The only problem is that quite often, before a particular enterprise has time to reap its benefits, he or she is off on another venture. Thus, one may

> fritter his life away on things and people, spreading about him an abundance of life which others live and not he himself. In the end, he goes away empty.[18]

An overextension of intuition could also lead to not attending to one's own physical needs and quite often results in exhaustion. Following one's nose, one exempts oneself from all laws of reason, only to be victimized in the end by neurotic compulsions which give free reign to a low order of pleasure-seeking on the sensual level.

The introverted intuitive is one who perceives the slow processes which go on in the collective unconscious and archetypal changes, and communicates them to society.[19] Because of the future direction of intuition, however, this person can usually be understood only in later generations as a representative of what was going on in the collective unconscious of his time. Such a person does experience a moral problem when trying to relate himself to his vision, attempting to participate in its life:

> He feels bound to transform his vision into his own life. But since he tends to rely most predominantly on his vision, his moral efforts become one-sided; he makes himself and his life symbolic . . . but unadapted to present-day reality. He thus deprives himself of any influence upon it because he remains uncomprehended.[20]

The shadow of this type will be characterized by intemperance, difficulty in controlling the appetites of the body, and ignorance of its true needs.[21]

The Rational Functions: Thinking and Feeling

Thinking and feeling are considered "rational" functions because they assess the data brought to the individual through his perception. They organize what has been perceived and indicate to the individual how to act upon it. Thinking seeks to apprehend the world and adjust to it through an evaluation by way of thought or cognition. Feeling apprehends the world through an evaluation based upon one's scale of values.[22]

Thinking involves logic, systematic thought-processes. One whose main function is thinking will be one who likes things well-ordered and systematized. Solutions to his or her problems are always very logical. Such a person is a great planner, for he or she can outline a particular project step-by-step and is always very fair.

The extraverted thinker is the one who can clarify the objective situation and keep things well-ordered. This is the one whose constant endeavor is to make all activities dependent upon intellectual conclusions which have at their basis external or objective facts or generally accepted ideas.[23] The ruling principles which this one obtains from these conclusions are extended by him to cover his entire environment. Being so governed by logic and principle, the extravert thinker is the least personal of all the types.

The shadow of this type comes into play as personal formulas become more and more rigid and the individual attempts to form all things and people in the same mold. Repressed feeling may emerge in the form of a subtle, self-seeking twist which distorts one's own search for truth and value. The end begins to justify the means, or "the guardian of public morals" discov-

ers himself in a compromising situation.[24] Another problem which such a one might face is that after a life-time of settling problems and stating things clearly, he may well wake up one morning in despair, wondering what it all really meant.

> For the introverted thinker, new views rather than facts are the main concern. He is concerned with logical ideas. This is the philosopher who is trying to return to basic concepts and discover what the subject is really doing mentally. This person is usually very impractical, and his subjective bent drives him or her away from any form of publicity. He makes a poor teacher, due to his preoccupation with the material rather than its presentation.
>
> Because the repressed feeling in this type is extraverted, its shadow may come forth in the form of devastating emotional attachments to persons and things. The individual becomes brutal and vicious when someone or something for whom there is such an attachment comes under attack or criticism. If thinking is overextended, the introverted thinker will tend to form very black and white judgments about the reality of things based upon the abstractness of his or her ideas.
>
> The final function with which we must concern ourselves is "feeling." "The feeling function is the instrument with which we sort out the genuine and the spurious."[25] Persons, situations, objects, or moments are appreciated in terms of value and, as such, it is the most "personal" of all the functions.
>
> If feeling is accompanied by an extraverted attitude, then it will seek to establish harmony with objective values, with traditional or generally accepted values. Such persons make for great patrons of the arts, and they move amiably in society. They spread an atmosphere of acceptance, making people feel wonderful in their presence, often sacrificing themselves for the benefit of others.[26]

Since thinking will tend to be repressed, such a type dislikes dealing in the abstract, with philosophical problems or ideas. When thinking is called into use, it will often come forth in a negative manner, becoming very critical or even cynical. Thus, paradoxically, the warmest of all types can also be the coldest. Where feeling is pursued to an extreme, this type can become very fickle, unreliable, and moody, indulging in whatever may strike him to be of value at the moment.

When feeling is introverted, we have one of the most misunderstood types in our culture. Introversion causes this one to seek his values within, and it is thus that he may seek after his own vision, finding great difficulty in giving outward expression to it. The outward demeanor is "harmonious, inconspicuous, giving the impression of pleasing repose, or of sympathetic repose, with no desire to affect others, to impress or influence, or change them in any way."[27] In order to communicate with others, this type must be able to arouse similar feelings in them and relate on that level. Such being the case, the introverted feeler exercises a very strong, but hidden, influence on those around him and quite often will be the ethical backbone of the group.[28]

Such an influence, however, can also be extended to become rather cruel and domineering in the individual's frantic effort to remain on top of the situation, or superior to other people. Because his thinking tends to remain

rather primitive, it can become fixated around one or two thoughts or facts. If kept in check, however, such a person could develop a real gift for being very clear, simple and intelligible.

The Inferior Function and Spirituality

Within the explanation of the various types, it has already been mentioned that the habitually repressed or undeveloped function (the inferior function) may suddenly burst forth at times, making its presence known in most undesirable ways. Due to its lack of utilization, it remains the least differentiated of the functions and thus tends to have a rather primitive or archaic nature. Such being the case, the inferior function has a natural ability to act as a bridge to the unconscious, often through its role as a major factor in the constellation of the individual's "shadow" and other neurotic complexes.

> Many people discover relatively soon in life that the realm of their inferior function is where they are emotional, touchy and unadapted and they therefore acquire the habit of covering up this part of their personality with a surrogate pseudo-reaction. . . . You can always observe these "covering-up" reactions by the fact that they are impersonal and banal and very collective. They have no convincing personal quality about them.[29]

When any one of the conscious functions is overdone, the inferior function will arise to thwart and falsify it, making its presence unmistakenly felt and calling the individual to the realization that there is more in his or her life which needs to be integrated. Within the life of the Christian, this is often experienced as the "call to conversion." It is inferior function which reveals that person's cross, which points to shallowness and a need for greater personal growth in the individual's life.

In keeping with Bernard Lonergan's notion of the particular grace which we all need at the point where we experience moral impotence, keeping in mind, too, Sebastian Moore's reflections on the self within that is hated because of the discomfort it causes, I would say that it is precisely in the realm of the inferior function where the depth of one's commitment to his relationship with God, in humble acceptance of himself and desire for transformation, meets the real test. The religious experience of conversion will always be accompanied in some manner by an eruption of the inferior function as it reveals the individual's state of disintegration, rendering him helpless and in need of the healing of God's love and acceptance in grace.

This aspect of the inferior function is most important for the individual in his or her spiritual journey because it enlightens the personal meaning of that biblical phrase which again and again appears in the Old Testament, the "two-edged sword." All human giftedness (including God's Word) in the hands of our fragile psyches can either be life-giving or destructive, depending upon the balance which exists in our psyches. As a compensating factor within the structure of the psyche itself, the inferior function helps to maintain the balance between personal inflation and self-depreciation which is essential to human growth and development in all facets of human related-

ness.

Donald Gelpi maintains that the Christian experience is the experience of the Jesus event and the Pentecostal experience which came out of it.[30] This experience is central to the life of each Christian. It is the experience of religious conversion, and the broadening of one's horizon as a result of that experience. The overall effect of living within this experience is that one's natural gifts and potentialities are raised to a new level and become "spiritualized" by attaining a new dimension in the realm of meaning.

St. Paul, in reflecting upon the Pentecostal aspect of the conversion experience, speaks of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as an integral part of the Christian's life, flowing from prayer and his new relationship to God through Christ. Such gifts are an essential part of the transformation of the individual into a son or daughter of God. However, one must really exercise a good deal of caution in speaking in such terms, for such a change cannot be seen as "miraculous" in the common-sense notion of the word. Rather, the "miraculous" nature of this transformation derives more from the gifted awareness of the transcendent nature of *all* human giftedness.

If these reflections are applied to typological considerations, there are tremendous implications for our whole approach to spirituality which do not only affect one's approach to prayer, but the responsibility attached to the concretization of one's faith life as well.

We have already seen that *intuition is* more concerned with potential and possibility than with concrete reality. This being the case, in the light of faith and the individual's relatedness to God, such a natural tendency to perceive potential would be further developed to the perception of the potential good in people and situations. Traditionally, we have referred to such an ability by saying that the individual had the gift of wisdom.

If the individual tends more toward introversion, the focus of intuition will be interior, toward the inner self. In prayer, this will reveal itself in a natural bent toward contemplative prayer, or types of prayer experiences which will yield a sense of the permeating presence of God. The ability of the individual to perceive archetypal changes at work will be refined in the light of God's grace and yield a realization that such changes have a profound influence and are very intimately connected with the presence of God in the working out of salvation history. In such a move from the archetypal to the anagogic the person of the prophet emerges.

To be a prophet carries with it its corresponding shadow over the individual, however. The light of grace does not automatically take care of the individual's struggle with the disintegrated inferior function. In this case the "future scope" of the prophet's vision must be tempered by his extraverted sensation which will cry for attention to the immediate details of his situation, restraining him from becoming lost in a future vision on the positive side, and overwhelming him with insignificant details on the negative side. In such a negative case the individual is called upon to struggle with the shortcomings

of the present in a loving manner rather than to merely condemn them and walk away feeling superior.

The extraverted intuitive's prayer will be more "outward" in scope, and will realize itself more in concrete service to others. Such an individual will be drawn more to a "prayer-in-action" type of spirituality in which private prayer will assume the character of meditation-seeking-insight for future action or direction. Such an individual's wisdom, having an extraverted orientation, will tend to be more practical, and thus, this person makes for an excellent leader who can rally others to his or her cause, which cause will be characterized by his or her relatedness to God. The danger for such an individual can either come from his sense of inflation (in which he begins to try and become God, rather than remain in relationship to God) or from the interference of his inferior function (introverted sensation), which may distort his activities with a neurotic compulsiveness which will finally lead to exhaustion.

Turning to the *sensate*, we have an individual who is much more in touch with concrete reality than the intuitive. The special feature which this individual may bring to his life is a simplicity of life and life-style.

As an introvert, this individual will tend toward the use of religious icons, pictures, rosaries, etc., in prayer.[31] Such types of devotional prayer find their meaning within the individual, and his giftedness will be marked by a deep sensitivity to others and the various situations in which he may find himself. Simplicity, and the ability to act as an "equalizer" in extreme situations give way to the virtue of prudence in this individual. In the case where extraverted intuition makes itself felt this prudence may give way to a type of "prudishness," causing the individual to cling to a static rather than simple way of life for fear of the possible dangers in anything not already integrated into that pattern.

Due to the reliance of the extraverted sensate upon the five senses, he or she will be the type to revel in the presence of God in the beauty of nature or other sensual experiences. For this person, prayer will focus more around liturgical worship, and the sacraments will provide a center for the development of his spirituality. Practical, meaningful, sacramental ministry, in whatever capacity the individual may be able to exercise it, will mark the giftedness of this individual. Repressed intuition may result in this case with the individual having to struggle with a tendency toward Jansenism. If sensation becomes inflated, on the other hand, the danger of a tendency toward pharisaism or superstition will have to be dealt with.

The *thinker* with his natural inclination to logic and reasoning will find theology very important. Such a one will naturally be given to meditation and will tend to show concern for justice in the world because of the value which reason and fairness hold in his or her life.

When thinking is introverted, the inclination to deal with ideas and concepts will give way to prayerful meditation upon the mysteries of the faith.

This prayer gives rise to the gift of knowledge in the person of the theologian. The inferior function, feeling, may well make its presence felt in his attachment to his own thought and speculation such that the introverted thinker becomes trapped in the systems and structures which he has helped to create. Thus, the individual may lose all creativity in his attempt to defend his thought, warping all other facts and ideas to fit into it rather than by adapting it to whatever new knowledge may have come to light.

The extraverted thinker is more naturally suited to teaching than would be the introverted thinker due to his or her natural orientation to the outer world. He or she is also quite gifted with respect to the organization of the community. Because of his rational sense of fairness, this person is also more geared to deal with matters of social justice. Ethics and moral behavior would be of great interest to such an individual. The sense of duty and obligation which this person displays would also extend somewhat into his prayer and, combined with the extravert's general interest in the traditional or generally accepted, his prayer tends to be more traditional with an emphasis on vocal prayer (traditional or spontaneous). A very good example of this is the individual whose private meditation consists of "talking to God." The Divine Office, as the Prayer of the Church, would also be very important, and as a priest or religious, he could develop scruples about "getting-it-in." A definite advantage for this person is that his tendency to have a well-organized life also reaches over into the regularity of his prayer. But, just as rigidity can become destructive in other spheres of his life, so too can it interfere with the natural flow of life here. Much anger and tension may result if a spontaneous situation calls for some rescheduling of either prayer time or some other important activity.

A *feeler's* sense of value finds its expression in prayer most often in meditation through intercessory prayer, prayer with others in prayer groups and such rituals as the Eucharist, which emphasize intimate relationships in the presence of God."[32] Because of the "personal" nature of the feeling function, the feeler has the ability to sense in others and to give joy to others.

When feeling is accompanied by introversion, the individual naturally tends toward becoming a mystic, seeking solitude to explore and bask in the intimacy of his or her relationship with God. As earlier stated, the introverted feeler is one of the most misunderstood types in our culture because of his inability to articulate his experience. Thus, the mystic who cannot always articulate himself nevertheless can develop the facility of being truly "present" to others. This gift of presence is of vital importance to the community because of the joy, peace, and standard of values which he or she non-verbally radiates outwardly to those to whom he or she is present. When inferior thinking interferes, however, one must be cautious not to center his joy and peace around one or two experiences. This can result in a mindless, naive, and basically empty joy which is satisfied with saying: "Jesus loves me and all is right with the world." The genuine joy and peace which this individual must

share with the world must be such that it can be sustained in the face of unpleasant truths as well as those which are pleasant.

Because of its sensitivity to atmosphere, sense of rightness, sense of appropriateness, and the sense of the values inherent in a given situation, extraverted feeling will have a marked tendency toward affective prayer, very often manifesting itself in intercessory prayer. This individual's spirituality will grow out of his or her ability to read situations in the light of value and, focusing upon what is addressed to the heart, such a spirituality will give rise to the gift of discernment. If, however, the primitive thinking of this individual should emerge, the most natural thing for it to do is to distort discernment with a "plotting" character, degenerating it (and his approach to intercessory prayer as well) into manipulation.

It is extremely important to note that these tendencies associated with each type are not exclusive. In one's psychic constitution, the main function will always be accompanied by auxiliary functions which, although not developed to the same proficiency as the main function, also operate within the conscious intentionality of the individual. Thus, there are a number of possible functional combinations which together make up one's psychological type, and these combinations will also affect the individual's natural inclination toward an increasing variety of spiritual experience.

The Use of Psychological Studies

Many insights are to be gained from the use of psychological studies which definitely can be of value to the individual in his spiritual journey. Our concentration upon Jungian typology, as it has been summarized here from Jung's writings as well as from the work of Marie-Louise von Franz, helps one to see that the Christian religious experience has a very human foundation. The manner in which one relates to others and the world around one says a great deal about what it means for that particular individual to relate to God. The considerations of typology also help one to be a little more aware of those areas in which he experiences a need for conversion. Furthermore, they enable the individual to see that the transformation of the ego through faith does yield certain gifts or talents which are in accord with the natural bent of his personality. He is enabled to see that, due to his natural tendency to delight in what he can do easily and well, ongoing conversion is necessary not only in newly emerging areas of his life, but in order to avoid inflation as well.

Lastly, because groups of people are made up of human individuals, one cannot ignore the role which typology plays in the communal setting as well. The most recurring type among the individuals in a group will have an impact upon the character of that group and will determine the "type" of the group. Those individuals whose type may well be in the minority will definitely feel the effects of such a situation and may well be called upon to act as the "inferior function" of the group. Thus, within the group there is still a great need

to look for the complementary to be found in other types in order to avoid that inflation or degeneration which can occur in a group just as well as in an individual.

Christianity, as a communal religion, cannot afford to overlook this fact. Specifically with regard to prayer, Fourez states:

> . . . prayer is a celebration leading to a growing awareness of God's presence in our lives. It will be expressed in various ways according to individual psychologies, educational background, cultural heritage. To realize that there are different ways of praying—and that they are all limited—is, perhaps, an essential aspect of the experience of God. But any celebration, any awareness, would be unfulfilled if it were only an individual experience. That is why there must be communal prayer, i.e., a communal celebration culminating in a communal awareness of God's presence among us.[33]

It is essential that one realize the limitations to each particular gift or form of prayer, just as there are limitations to any individual personality. There is therefore a need for the communal aspect or communal complementary to our individual lives. Christian prayer needs to be communally celebrated as well as individually. This means that our diversity of approaches to prayer, as well as the diversity of our giftedness, must also be shared in order for each person to relate more fully to God.

> Remembering the categories of personalities proposed by Jung, we can see that a good communal celebration will try to provide a variety *of* symbols so that each type *of* person can find something to which to relate: there must be silence for the *feelers*, some vision for the *intuitives*, something to understand for the *thinkers*, and something to *do* for the "pragmatists."[34]

Conclusion

There is still much work to be done in this area. Such considerations as I have tried to provide here can only be seen as foundational at best. Even so, there is much which has been omitted and condensed. However, I believe that the relevance of such matters for personal growth within the Christian context is clear. Naturally, as with all knowledge, one may attempt to manipulate psychological studies and thus increase the already present fear of their relevance to the area of spirituality. But in a world such as ours today, Christians must begin to value knowledge (especially self-knowledge) over ignorance and begin to assume the responsibility for directing their own self-development through insights gained from that knowledge in humble and intimate companionship with God.

NOTES

[1] Gerard Fourez, "Prayer and Celebration In the Christian Community," *Worship:* Vol. 46, Number *3*, 1972, p. 141.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 142.

[3] Christopher Bryant, *Depth Psychology and Religious Belief* (Wakefield, England: West Yorkshire Printing Co. Ltd., 1972), p. 28.
[4] Morton Kekey, "Personality Types and Meditation." *Transcend*, Number 13, 1978, p. 2.
[5] Jolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 18.
[6] C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, The Collected Works, Vol. 6 (Princeton: Princeton Universal Press, 1971), p. 334-335.
[7] Kelsey, p. 2.
[8] Jung, p. 392-393
[9] *Ibid*., p. 378.
[10] This figure was quoted by Barbara Kelsey at a workshop entitled: "Christian Education for Wholeness," given in Toronto, through the Center for Christian Studies, in June, 1979.
[11] Jung, p 364.
[12] *Ibid*., p. 365.
[13] Marie-Louise von Franz, "The Inferior Function," *Jungian Typology* (Irving, Texas: Spring Publications Inc., 1979), p. 23.
[14] *Ibid*., p. 27.
[15] Jung, p. 397.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] von Franz, p. 29.
[18] Jung, p. 369.
[19] von Franz, p. 33.
[20] Jung, p. 402.
[21] von Franz, p. 34.
[22] Jacobi, p. 12.
[23] Jung, p. 346.
[24] *Ibid*., p. 449.
[25] James Hillman, "The Feeling Function," *Jungian Typology* (Irving, Texas: Spring Publications Inc., 1979), p. 82.
[26] von Franz, pp. 43-44.
[27] Jung, p. 389.
[28] von Franz, p. 48.
[29] *Ibid*., pp. 11-12
[30] Lecture given by Donald Gelpi on "Jungian Personality Theory and the Theology of Gifts" at Berkeley, California, April 28, 1977.
[31] Kelsey, p. 6.
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] Fourez, p. 147.
[34] *Ibid*., p. 148.

Jungian Types and Forms of Prayer

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It is well known that Jungian spirituality—approaches to human and Christian development which draw on the insights of Carl Jung—is experiencing a high point of interest and influence.[1] More specifically, the Jungian psychological types are attracting many, especially as these types are identified by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a preference measurement perfected over several decades by the late Isabel Briggs Myers.[2] More particularly still, there is considerable interest in describing forms of prayer which correspond to the categories of the Jungian typology.[3]

In this context the present article seeks to identify and reflect on ways of praying which correspond to the functions and attitudes of the Jungian schema; it will also offer some suggestions and cautions towards the further exploration of such correspondences. It is written not only for those who are already acquainted with their MBTI types, but also for those seeking a basic explanation of this instrument in its usefulness for prayer.

These observations are based on a dozen retreat/workshop experiences of six days which have sought to aid Christian growth by correlating Jungian type-categories with Gospel themes and Christian practices. They are also meant to supplement what has been said in a recent book transposing the retreat/workshop into print.[4] The scope of this article is quite limited. First, it does not profess to know how people or groups belonging to any one of the sixteen types actually prefer to pray or, still less, ought to pray. Secondly, it does not seek to correlate each of the sixteen types with one or more forms of prayer. The basis of the correlations here suggested will be the four functions, with some consideration of the attitudes of introversion and extraversion.

The article does, however, go beyond the previously mentioned literature in three ways. First, it will speak not only of the prayer of individuals but also, though less in detail, of prayer in groups and in liturgical assemblies. Secondly, it will raise the question of prayer as a form of leisure, hence as a time for making friends with the shadow side of one's personality. And thirdly, it will raise the question of forms of prayer for individuals at different stages of life's journey.

A Preliminary Observation

One final preliminary remark needs to be made, on the method of correlation followed in our retreat/workshop, in the chapters of *From Image to Likeness*, and in the present article. Jungian theory and the Christian Gospel are two quite distinct and heterogeneous interpretations of what it means to be human. The properly behavioral and the properly religious dimensions of life are irreducible one to the other. Even where common terms, drawn from either sector, are used, we must be wary of assuming a univocal sense. Carl Jung presented himself principally as pursuing the science of the soul. Jesus Christ is God's Word of salvation, the founder of the faith community which bears his name. Nevertheless there are between the insights of Jung and the teachings of Jesus significant affinities, likenesses, analogies. As in the case of Plato and Aristotle, Darwin and Marx, penetrating Jungian insights into the human condition can meet, and be met by, facets of the Gospel. The method employed here, then, is one which centers on such resemblances. My impression is that much of the energy generated within Jungian spirituality today derives from the exciting discovery that these two basic perceptions of our humanity often converge in remarkable ways. The convergence on which we will focus here is that which obtains between the characteristics of each of the Jungian functions and different forms of Christian prayer.

The Jungian Types

My guess is that most readers of this article have already been introduced to the Jungian types either directly or through some such instrument as the MBTI. But a brief summary may be helpful, at least to those not acquainted with the types.

Carl Jung's clinical experience acquainted him with the fact that while we all engage in common forms of behavior we also differ notably from one another in our behavioral preferences, and hence in the way in which we grow humanly.

He used two generic terms, *perceiving* and *judging*, to designate the alternating rhythm, present in each person, of a) taking in reality, being shaped by it, and b) shaping reality, responding to it.

Each of these two postures was specified, Jung postulated, in two contrasting *functions*. Perceiving (P) was specified as either *sensing* (S), the function through which, with the help of the five senses, we perceive reality in its par-

ticularity, concreteness, presentness; or as *intuiting* (N), the function through which, in dependence on the unconscious and with the help of imagination, we perceive reality in its wholeness, its essence, its future potential.

Judging (J) was also specified, in either *thinking* (T), by which we come to conclusions and make decisions on the basis of truth, logic, and right order; or in *feeling* (F), which prompts conclusions and decisions attuned to our subjective values and sensitive to the benefit or harm to persons—ourselves or others—which may result from our behavior.

All four of these functions, Jung affirmed, can be exercised by way of *extraversion* or by way of *introversion*. He invented this now celebrated distinction to describe the flow of psychic energy in any given instance of behavior. In extraverted behavior the flow of energy is from the subject towards the object of perception or judgment. In introverted behavior, the flow of energy is in the opposite direction, that is, from the object towards the subject. What makes the difference is not precisely whether the target of our perception or judgment is something outside ourselves or within ourselves, but which way the energy is flowing. Rather commonly, the impulse to share one's perception or judgment immediately with others or at least to give it bodily expression, signals the presence of extraversion (E); while a tendency to gather the perceiving or Judging behavior and to deal with it within oneself marks introversion (I).

Working independently of Jung, and on theoretical foundations previously explored by her mother, Isabel Briggs Myers developed an instrument which, on the basis of a preference questionnaire, indicated how the respondent prefers to behave in given situations. The typology is based on four sets of polar opposites: extraversion/introversion; sensing/intuiting; thinking/feeling; judging/perceiving. In tabular form:

E – I
S – N
T – F
J – P

The four pairs of opposites in varying combinations yield sixteen types, each of which is identified with its code e.g. ESTJ; ISFP; ENFJ. In the process of decoding, which we cannot describe in detail here, one arrives at the order of preference of the four functions (described as dominant, auxiliary, third, and inferior), as well as the attitude (introversion or extraversion) of the dominant function. Thus one person's most preferred behavior will be extraverted feeling, another's introverted intuiting, and so forth. Also worth noting is that when the dominant function is a perceiving function (sensing or intuiting), the auxiliary function will be one of the two judging functions (thinking or feeling), the third function will be the other judging function, and the inferior function will be the perceiving function opposite to the dominant function. A corresponding pattern will obtain where the dominant function is a judging function.

This is one way in which Jung's view of "compensation," or the tendency of the psyche towards balance, is verified.

Extensive research and testing, especially with respect to the professions chosen by people of various types, enabled Isabel Myers to construct profiles of the sixteen types. These in turn have won for the MBTI an extensive use in the fields of career guidance, personnel policy, and the dynamics of groups and organizations. The key psychological insight on which the MBTI capitalizes is that people's behavior, development, and relationships are strongly affected by their preferences in perceiving and judging, as well as by the extraverted or introverted character of the respective preferences. If one makes the assumption that persons are capable of enlightenment and growth through free exercise towards more human ways of living, this psychometric too] then becomes a vehicle of human development. Such is the conviction which has sparked enormous interest in the MBTI in recent years. Out of the work of these two American women has emerged the Association for Psychological Type, whose membership has reached 1500, and which has sponsored five biennial conferences for discussing numerous aspects of the typology. One of the interest areas provided for in APT covers religious education, spiritual growth, prayer styles, missionary service, and similar themes.[5]

With this brief outline of the various functions and the two attitudes which qualify human behavior, we now turn to correlating each of the four functions with forms of Christian prayer. In the case of each of the functions we will ask: What are some of the forms of prayer—individual, group, and liturgical—which correspond to this function?

Sensing Forms of Prayer

Forms of prayer corresponding to the sensing function will be, in general, those ways of praying In which we pay attention to present reality in a focused way, whether with the help of the five external senses or through a simple perception of interior reality. Here are some examples of what we may call sensing prayer.

1) *Vocal prayer*, such as the recitation of the psalms or the rosary, will be sensing prayer when the posture of the one praying is characterized by simple attentiveness, a certain contentment with each passing phrase, and an eschewing of rational thought, imaginative scenarios, and strong emotional investment. Sensing prayer tends for the most part to be simple, quiet, undramatic, contemplative, and down to earth. Vocal prayer, whether the words are recited aloud, gently murmured, or just expressed within, are apt vehicles for exercising this side of our personality.

2) The "*prayer of simple regard*" is a traditional term used to describe a kind of prayer which, I would suggest, has the characteristics of sensing prayer. It consists in just "being there," present to present reality, especially to God within the mystery of divine presence. It needs no words (except perhaps to recall

one from distraction) and does not involve strong yearnings of the heart, but in simplicity accepts the "sacrament of the present moment."

3) The prayerful "*application of the senses*" may also be an exercise of sensing prayer. But here I understand this term as referring to the use of the five exterior senses, or any one of them, on their appropriate objects. The first part of Fr. Anthony de Mello's widely ready book *Sadhana* contains many such exercises which he lists under "Awareness."[6] The sense of touch, for example, may be prayerfully exercised just by letting myself become aware of bodily sensation, beginning perhaps with the shoulders and working down to the soles of the feet. Touch is also exercised when I attend to how, in breathing, I feel the air as it enters and leaves the nostrils.

Listening to sounds in a quiet posture of receptivity and enjoyment is another instance of sensing prayer. Provided I have entered this exercise with faith, I do not need to have recourse to the thought of God or to any devout feelings, even though, as Fr. de Mello suggests, a variation of this exercise might consist in hearing the sounds as God sounding in all the sounds made by nature and humans. Thus the chatter of voices, the purr of a motor in the basement, or the thunder of a ride on the New York subway, can be grist for the mill of sensing prayer.

Something similar may be said for gazing as a form of sensing prayer. I may look at objects of devotion, at pictures in a book or album, at faces in a crowd, at the beauties of nature. Even taste and smell can be vehicles of prayer for a person exercising faith with a heightened consciousness.

4) Sensing prayer can also draw upon the *interior sense*, our capacity for paying attention to what is going on within us. Focusing on our breathing or our heartbeat can be a point of entry. Then we may choose simply to attend to what is happening in inner consciousness, to the words, images, or feelings which spontaneously bubble up from the unconscious. Sometimes this kind of exercise can induce a gradual slowing or cessation of inner chatter, and we can for a while just listen to the silence within. We may even come to a happy interior verification of the Quaker motto, "Don't speak until you can improve on silence."

Sometimes people ask with regard to such exercises, "Is it really prayer?" Even if it were not, it would not be a bad way of disposing ourselves for prayer. But when it is situated within a life of faith and for the purpose of expressing and deepening our faith, it can be prayer—excellent prayer—even though we do not name God, converse with God, or experience any devout surge of the heart.

Sensing Prayer in Groups

So far I have been suggesting sensing forms of prayer for the individual. But groups can also pray with an accent on sensing. Various kinds of vocal prayer such as litanies or the Office in common, especially when they are engaged in with simplicity and even with a certain routine, enable the members

of a group to meet God and one another through the sensing function. It also possible to create prayer services in which each of the five senses has its place, as, for example, by listening to the tinkle of a bell or to a guitar quietly strumming; by devoutly kissing a crucifix or extending a handclasp of peace; by smelling incense or flowers; by tasting a sip of wine; by focusing on the fighting of a candle. Sensing prayer in common leaves aside what is highly cognitive or interpersonal or imaginative. It calls the group to be together with a great deal of simplicity and quiet awareness of God, one another, and the environment.

Sensing in Liturgical Prayer

There are times when people come together in larger groups to pray, and particularly to participate in the official or public prayer of the Church. When we celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments and the divine Office in large assemblies, prayer takes on what I would call a societal character, in contrast to the interpersonal character of prayer shared in small groups.[7] The general thesis which I would propose is that a well-celebrated liturgy needs to attend to all four functions. Ideally, each participant and the congregation as a whole should have the opportunity to exercise both sensing and intuiting, thinking and feeling, in extraverted and introverted ways.

In the present aspect, sensing prayer, liturgical celebration will meet our humanity when it evokes the exercise of the five senses in a congruous way by inviting the participants to look, listen, touch, taste, and smell, all in a fashion which nourishes their faith and deepens their solidarity. There is no need here to detail how apt the celebration of the sacraments in the Christian and Catholic tradition is for meeting this need of human personality. My impression is that consequent upon Vatican II the effort to break out of liturgical straitjackets sometimes brought an "angelism" insensitive to the importance of the senses in good eucharistic celebration. Heightened attention to the homily tended to move celebration excessively towards the cognitive, to the neglect of the sensate, elements of good celebration. To some degree we are today recovering the importance of the life of the senses in liturgy. This Jungian approach to societal prayer can assist in that recovery.

Intuiting Prayer

Intuiting prayer may be described as contemplative prayer drawing upon fantasy and imagination, as well as what might be called the prayer of emptiness or the prayer of the vacant stare. The Jungian tradition uses the term "active imagination" to designate those behaviors in which we let images and symbols freely emerge from the unconscious and flow in consciousness. The term "active" could be misleading, if taken with a connotation of control or shaping reality. There is a sense in which this use of imagination is not active but passive, as the person's posture is one of receptivity. The orientation of such prayer is to what might be, to futures dreamed of rather than planned. As the five sens-

es and the interior sense are the vehicles of sensing prayer, so the gift of imagination is what carries intuiting prayer.

But, in my opinion, the intuiting function can be at work in prayer even when images are not freely flowing. The vacant stare into space aptly symbolizes a contemplative posture in prayer which is aptly subsumed under intuiting prayer. In such prayer the mind is not occupied with thoughts, the imagination is not delivering images or symbols, and the heart is not strongly surging toward the good. Such prayer of emptiness appears to differ sharply from the prayer of a simple regard, even though both forms are characterized by an absence of thoughts, images, and strong feelings. The difference consists in the focused or unfocused character of the gaze. To use a playful distinction which I once heard Brother David Steindl-Rast employ, in the prayer of simple regard we are *now/here*, fully present to the present actuality of life, whereas in what I call the prayer of the vacant stare we are *no/where* (recall that the Greek term for nowhere is *Utopia*).

Centering Prayer

In this context it is worth asking just where "centering prayer" as developed by Fr. Basil Pennington is best situated from the standpoint of the four Jungian functions.[8] My own inclination is to view it as a form of intuiting prayer. It is true that centering prayer makes use of a word in the journey to the center; and, as we shall see, the word in prayer belongs primarily to the thinking function. But here the word is functioning not as a mediator of rational meaning but as a carrier of the spirit to the beyond. Centering prayer has a predominantly unfocused character and brings us to a certain emptiness. Hence I would put it with intuiting prayer.

All of this having been said, here are some examples of intuiting prayer for the individual.

1) We have just discussed a first form, centering prayer in the proper sense.

2) The familiar "contemplations" of the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* are appropriately listed under intuiting prayer. But it needs to be noted that these contemplations of the mysteries of the life of Jesus belong also to feeling prayer, as we will see. The imagination is exercised with freedom, but with a view to drawing the heart in love. It is the feeling function, we shall see, which relates to the past through reminiscence. Perhaps a large part of the power of the Ignatian contemplations consists in the fact that both the dreaming imagination and the heart are drawn on to energize the retreatant engaged in the process of "election." Something similar may be said of the contemplation of the mysteries of the rosary. The imagination freely recreates a scene which contains in symbolic form deep Christian values.

3) Various kinds of fantasy in prayer have an intuitive character. Anthony de Mello's book here again contains some interesting exercises, Christian and non-Christian, under the general heading of "Fantasy." Some which might appear at first to be quite macabre can be a source of intense joy and peace:

attending your own funeral, or the "fantasy on the corpse" which Fr. de Mello borrowed from the Buddhist series of "reality meditations."

4) Ira Progoff's "Intensive Journal," both in the sections devoted to dealing with dreams and in the various kinds of dialogues, offers an abundance of forms of intuiting prayer. The dialogues may be said to combine intuiting and thinking prayer, the latter because of the dialogue form of the prayer.

5) Praying with the help of *symbols* engages the intuitive function in a way that can energize us greatly. The journey, the cave, the house, the tree, the Cross, the City—these are just a few of the symbolic possibilities of intuitive prayer. Books of the Bible such as the Fourth Gospel and the Book of Revelation are a source of abundant Christian symbols which can be explored in prayer.

6) Finally, one may prayerfully explore God's call by asking the question, "What would it be like if . . . ," envisaging oneself in alternative human situations, dreaming of new ways of one's pilgrimage.

Intuiting Prayer for Groups

Many of the approaches to intuiting prayer just described for the individual can be adapted for groups which are praying or prayerfully reflecting together. For example, a community which has gone off to the country or to the shore for some time together might have a very meaningful time of common prayer by having each member bring back some nature object which symbolizes something important for that person. In planning for the year ahead, a community might put to itself the question, "What would it be like if . . . ," making sure not to become too quickly pragmatic and sensible in dealing with the dreams of particular members for life in common. Another exercise of intuiting prayer in common might be to invite each member to select a Scripture passage which is symbolic of some aspect of the community's life, and to share the passages, taking care to be contemplative, without the need for discussion or response.

Intuiting in Liturgical Prayer

Lyrics from two well-known religious songs aptly characterize the Intuitive element which ought to be present in any liturgical celebration. "Take us beyond the vision of this moment . . ." and "Look beyond the bread you eat

This note of "beyond," or (in Hopkins' poem, "The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo") "yonder," corresponds to the eschatological quality of Christian faith. In sacramental celebration, it is the complexus of ritual gestures and of symbols which principally contains the invitation to dream, to be open to a limitless future which is God. Psychologically, this facet of good liturgy is effectively present when the congregation as a whole shares, in joyful hope, this unfocused contemplative expectation of future blessing. Though it may find verbal expression, for example within the readings of the celebration, its primary vehicle will be symbol, inviting to the "vacant stare."

Feeling Prayer

Forms of prayer which correspond to the feeling function are rather easily described. They will be exercises of prayer characterized by affection, intimacy, and the devout movement of the heart. More specifically, feeling prayer takes place when the exercise of memory in gratitude or compunction brings us back to the roots whence our values are derived, when we come back home, so to speak, in the mysteries of the Gospel, the origins of a particular religious heritage, or the sources in our own personal life through which the gift of faith came to us.

The third section of de Mello's *Sadhana* contains an abundance of such exercises of prayer. Here is a briefer listing of some forms:

1) Any form of prayer in which affective dialogue takes place, with God, with Jesus or Mary or any of the saints, or with those who have been important in our personal life, verifies this kind of prayer. In the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, the contemplation of the mysteries leads to such affectionate "colloquy," in which the grace being sought includes a growth in intimate love.

2) Aspirations, when they are repeated with a view to stirring the heart, are a second way of exercising feeling prayer. The "Jesus prayer" of the Eastern tradition, when said with a view to engaging the affections, is a major example.

3) One can also wander "down memory lane" in one's own life, recalling the persons, the experiences, the behaviors, which have had great influence on one's growth. Such prayer of the heart can often be combined with the exercise of imagination, as we recreate a scene of childhood, for example, or tender moments later in life which make us grateful. Gratitude and compunction are the two distinctive graces of such kinds of prayer. For each one of us, the past contains both the gifts of God, especially in the form of the goodness of persons, and our failure to respond trustingly and generously to those gifts.

4) All of us have favorite hymns and songs, and sometimes in solitary prayer our hearts can be deeply moved by singing them quietly, or letting their melodies flow through our inner consciousness.

The Feeling Function in Group Prayer

When groups pray together with some regularity, it can help occasionally if the prayer is directed toward the heart. This calls for discretion, of course, for even when the members know each other well there will remain considerable differences in the ability and desire to manifest emotion in common prayer. But experience will show just what is possible and desirable. Music and song is an easy vehicle, usually unembarrassing. The group might listen to an endearing hymn, or to some instrumental music which appeals to the heart.

Story telling, the sharing of personal history about a theme important for the faith life of the group, is another simple and easy way of being together in an affectionate way.

Spontaneous prayer, in which people are free to pray aloud and from the heart, can also deepen the bonds of affection within a community, and strengthen the common commitment to shared values.

This is an appropriate place to mention the relationship of spiritual direction. At least in a broad sense it is part of the prayer life of both the director and the one being directed. It calls for the engagement of all four of the functions. But, inasmuch as it is an intimate relationship of two persons of faith and aimed at the fostering of Gospel values in the life of the person being directed, it calls particularly for the exercise of the feeling function. This is not the place to discuss the question of friendship within this relationship of spiritual direction, apart from observing that there are contrary views on the subject. But, whatever discretion may be called for to preserve the character of the dialogue as one of spiritual direction, it remains a situation where the feeling function is expressed interpersonally.

Feeling in Public Prayer

From what has already been said readers will be able to describe for themselves the aspects of liturgical prayer and other forms of public prayer which correspond to the feeling function. There is significant difference, of course, between the face-to-face prayer of a small group and the largely anonymous quality of public prayer in large assemblages. There will be corresponding differences, therefore, in the ways in which this side of our humanity finds expression.

In my opinion, one of the imbalances of recent years with regard to our expectations of liturgy is that we have often expected it to nourish intimacy in ways beyond its power. Concomitantly, we have tended to lose contact with the deep enrichment which can come to our affective life from such experiences of faith. However one may be personally disposed toward the large gatherings of charismatics which have become such an important part of public prayer and worship, it needs to be said that the charismatic movement is more effectively in touch with this facet of our humanity than most people are. Some of the scenes in which John Paul II has been involved in his worldwide travels provide a further illustration of the energy which flows from religious values through societal prayer and worship. In particular, hymns sung by thousands of voices can be memorable in their impact, as anyone who has been to Lourdes or Rome can testify.

The Thinking Function in Prayer

I have left the thinking function till last for a few reasons. One is that I find it to be neglected and even, at times, disparaged. Why this is the case is understandable in relationship to the rediscovery of the life of feeling which has taken place in Roman Catholic circles in recent decades. Prayer had, in many respects, become too "cognitized," partly through a reduction of the Ignatian tradition to what was conceived as *the* Ignatian method of prayer as exemplified

in the well-known schema of a nineteenth-century Jesuit general, John-Baptist Roothan. In any case the thinking function in prayer has a rather poor press nowadays. Even Anthony de Mello writes,

> A word about getting out of your head: The head is not a very good place for prayer. It is not a bad place for starting your prayer. But if your prayer stays there too long and doesn't move into the heart it will gradually dry up and prove tiresome and frustrating. You must learn to move out of the area of thinking and talking and move into the area of feeling, sensing, loving, intuiting.[9]

Fr. de Mello is faithful to this conviction, for his book is divided into three parts, corresponding more or less to the sensing, intuiting, and feeling functions. There is no section on thinking prayer.

Doesn't something more positive need to be said about our capability of meeting God through the rational mind? Surely it is no less important a part of God's image in us than the life of sense, feeling, and imagination. And, within the unity of the person, it is intimately linked in its workings with the operations of these other facets of our humanity.

But instead of arguing theoretically for a place for thinking in prayer, let me offer some examples of how one may pray with the rational mind.

1) A clear instance of thinking prayer for the individual is the famous "First Principle and Foundation" of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola. I can ponder it during a period of prayer and, first, try to appreciate its simple logic in the linkage of purpose, means, and attitude. After savoring its truth I can then examine my life to see where there is order and where there is disorder, and just what area calls for the struggle to be free from inordinate affections. Knowing that I cannot free myself, I can turn to ask God's help. Then I can make a few practical resolutions touching some steps on the road to freedom. Such highly cognitive activities in prayer are really prayer, and not merely preliminaries to prayer.

2) Prayer may also take the form of setting down a personal charter or set of basic principles by which I wish to live, e.g., "Every human being I meet is worthy of my respect." Periodically I can review this set of principles in order to evaluate and improve my fidelity.

3) I may choose also to draw up for myself a plan of life, which would include a daily or weekly schedule of prayer, reading, provisions for work and leisure, practice with respect to money, and so forth.

4) From time to time I may wish to take a book of the Bible, and, with the help of a good commentary, carefully and systematically over a period of some weeks seek a deeper grasp of God's word, attending to the structure of the work, its cultural setting, the precise meaning of terms, and so forth. I may wish to write my own paraphrase of the book, or use the text as the basis of my own reflections. Most of us are accustomed to contrast prayer and study. But when study of God's word takes place within a life of faith and for the purpose of fostering faith, I believe that it lacks nothing of the reality of prayer itself.

Thinking Prayer in Groups

Not all group prayer needs to be self-revelatory and strongly interpersonal in its character. The common recitation of the Office or prayer of the Church is a good example of communal thinking prayer. Such prayer is characterized by clear structure, orderly procedure, and the absence of strong emotions. While it would be untrue to say that affectivity is absent, what prevails is a sense of meaning and purpose. Especially when such prayer includes reading a passage from Scripture or from some other source, the mind's desire for meaning is being fed. Spiritual reading, which is another form of thinking prayer for individuals which might have been mentioned, can also take place within a group united in faith.

Thinking in Liturgical Prayer

Liturgical celebration, especially when it occurs in larger assemblies of people, takes on a societal or public character. The very term *liturgy* conveys this, of course. Inasmuch as the movement from the private to the public in all dimensions of our life involves a significant shift of behavioral attitudes, it brings to the fore the thinking side of our personality. As we begin to relate to people outside the circle of intimacy, it becomes necessary to create conventions, etiquettes, structures, which provide us with supports and safeguards as we relate to larger and more anonymous gatherings of people.

It is for such reasons that our liturgical celebrations contain a good deal of structure and ritual gesture, and tend to be less highly personal than informal prayer in small groups. More of the thinking side of our humanity needs to be engaged when we celebrate the Eucharist and other ceremonies on a large scale.

Similarly to what was said previously about sensing prayer in public worship, I think that we can be helped to understand both the tensions and the failures which have characterized our experience of liturgical worship during the past few decades if we bring to bear on them an understanding of personality types. At the risk of being simplistic one might say that the Tridentine liturgy had become ossified and institutionalistic in its absolutizing of the thinking mode of public worship. This made it understandable that, in the swing of the pendulum in recent decades, we experienced some loss of the basic sense of structure, decorum, and ritual which needs to preside over our public prayer. Some (not all) of the negative reactions to the kiss of peace probably stem from an uneasiness lest the distinction of private and public worship be overlooked.

The present juncture, I would say, is a time when we need to recapture, without returning to rigorism and institutionalism, the rich energies of a thinking kind contained in our sacramental and liturgical traditions. We will pray much better in public if we prize this aspect of our humanity and of our Christian prayer.

Further Considerations

Up to now this article has offered principally a correlation of forms of prayer, chiefly individual but also interpersonal and societal, with the four functions of the Jungian personality types. As has already been said, we should be wary of too easy identification of any of the sixteen types with one or other preferred way of praying. It is not one's type alone but a variety of factors which affect our attractions in prayer. Two of these factors will now be discussed briefly. They concern 1) prayer as an exercise of leisure; 2) prayer in the stages of human development.

Prayer and Leisure

One plausible theory which one hears voiced in Jungian circles would have it that, when we turn from the areas of work and profession to the exercise of leisure, there is a spontaneous inclination in the psyche to move from a more preferred to a less preferred side of our personality. In terms of the functions this would mean, for example, that a person whose work or ministry calls for a great deal of extraverted intuiting-being with people in situations which call for a good deal of creative imagination-will spontaneously seek relaxation after labor by some quiet exercise of sensing: baking a cake with careful attention to measurements, or working at one's stamp collection, or hooking a rug according to a given pattern. Similarly, someone whose work is highly analytical and impersonal, let us say in dealing with a computer, might want to relax by sharing a Tchaikovsky concert or a TV sitcom with a few friends.

Such a suggestion makes a good deal of sense, especially in view of the natural mechanisms of compensation which seem to be built into our psychic fife. If one then adds the similarly plausible suggestion that prayer is or ought to be an exercise of leisure, then we would appear to have a useful criterion for evaluating our forms of prayer, and for suggesting new approaches to prayer, particularly when we seem to be getting nowhere. In such a view, we might profitably ask ourselves from time to time whether our behavior in prayer does not tend to be too much a compulsive continuation of the kind of behavior which we prefer in our work or ministry. And we might, if such is the case, deliberately seek ways of praying which helped to disengage us from such compulsive patterns. Someone whose primary gift, for example, is introverted intuiting, and who spends a good deal of time in the course of the day exercising that gift, might deliberately choose some extraverted sensing forms of prayer, for example, praying the rosary with simple attention to the words, the touch of the beads, and so forth. Or someone whose ministry makes heavy emotional demands—caning for the senile or the retarded, or counseling disturbed people, for example—might find some interior exercise of thinking prayer to be balancing and eventually attractive.

One small suggestion regarding this experiencing of leisure in prayer. It should take place, like all prayer, not by violence but by attraction. It might well be that, though one appreciates the value of shifting gears when one approach-

es prayer, it is not so easy to disengage from one's favored behavior. One might have to make an entry through the preferred function, especially an auxiliary function, before learning to exercise a less preferred function, especially the inferior function, in prayer.

This use of the auxiliary function to wean us away from too exclusive a reliance on the dominant function is part of a Jungian strategy of individuation. It would seem to be applicable to strategies in prayer. For example, if thinking is my dominant function and I exercise it abundantly in my work, I may find myself attached to it even when I come to prayer. Instead of directly trying to rouse myself to feeling prayer, I might begin by letting my auxiliary sensing direct my gaze to particular objects, interior or exterior, which in turn and in due time may stir my heart to affective prayer. The philosophy of non-violence has an important area of application in prayer.

Prayer and Development

Numerous are the theories which, in the present century, have sought to plot the course of human development, in its cognitive, affective, social and ethical aspects. The well-known names of Piaget, Maslow, Erikson, Fowler, and others have provided rich insights into the various facets of growth. One characteristic of a Jungian perspective on development is that, in the light of the diversity of personality types, it will be wary of imposing a monolithic pattern on the wide variety of human preferences. When prayer is viewed in this light, there are some salutary cautions and perhaps some qualifications of long-standing assumptions about progress in prayer.

Dr. W. Harold Grant has, for some years, been investigating the hypothesis of our periods of differentiated human development, starting at age six and ending at fifty, with major switching points taking place at twelve, twenty, and thirty-five. In each of the four periods, according to the hypothesis, the person would be developing one of the four functions: the dominant in childhood, the auxiliary in adolescence, the third function in early adulthood, and, from the age of thirty-five on, the inferior function. The hypothesis includes also an alternation of introversion and extraversion in the successive periods. Prior to age six and subsequent to age fifty development would be taking place more randomly, and not selectively, as in the four periods between six and fifty.

If one accepts this as a plausible hypothesis, some implications for forms of prayer at the different stages of life would seem to be present. First, one would be open to the possibility that the spontaneous employ of sense, imagination, reason, and affection in prayer may not be uniform for all persons or types. Any such prevailing assumption that growth in prayer takes place first by the use of reason and imagination and then, in a dark-night experience, by their cessation, might have to yield to a view which acknowledges more diversity in the way in which the attachment/detachment phenomenon takes place in different types of personalities.

Secondly, the hypothesis may help to throw light on crisis periods in people's prayer lives, by suggesting that the emergence of a new function—especially of the inferior function about the age of thirty-five—may be signaled through the decline or collapse of previously fruitful ways of praying. It might also suggest that the person involved in such a crisis might do well to explore some alternative ways of praying, ways which would be in keeping with whatever function was seeking to find its place in consciousness. Let us think, for example, of persons in whom feeling is dominant, experiencing something of a crisis in prayer around mid-life. They might do well, with the help of a director, to exercise their thinking side in prayer, for example, by keeping a journal in which reflection on the meaning of what they are experiencing, or meditation on the meaning of some scriptural passages, was cultivated.

It should be obvious that these two factors, touching the question of leisure and the question of diversity in human development, do not exhaust the sources which make for different experiences in prayer. Factors stemming from each person's unique personal history will be at least as important in deciding what course we wish to chart in prayer. And ultimately, as has already been said, it is the attraction of the Spirit of God at every juncture of life which is the primary determinant of how we choose to pray.

Conclusion

But if it all comes down at last to attraction, why bother consulting the Jungian types for help in praying? For two principal reasons. First, such a consultation will make us wary of being misled by stereotypes of prayer and of progress in prayer, and particularly of the monolithic character of many descriptions of growth in prayer, even among the great classics. And secondly, when persons are in a time of crisis or barrenness in prayer, they may be helped in dealing with the situation if they have had some practice in a variety of ways of praying, and if they realize the affinity between these various ways and the different functions within the Jungian personality types. With the reservations we have indicated in this article, acquaintance with one's type through the MBTI can help foster better praying.

NOTES

[1]See, for example, Morton Kelsey, *The Other Side of Silence*, (New York: Paulist, 1976), and *Transcend: A Guide to the Spiritual Quest* (New York: Crossroad, 1981); John Sanford, *Healing and Wholeness* (New York: Paulist, 1977), and *The Invisible Partners* New York: Paulist, 1980); Wallace B. Clift, *Jung and Christianity: The Challenge of Reconciliation* (New York: Crossroad, 1982); John Welch, *Spiritual Pilgrims: Carl Jung and Teresa of Avila* (New York: Paulist, 1982); Robert Doran, "Jungian Psychology and Christian Spirituality," REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS 38 (1979), pp. 497-510; 742-752; 857-866.

[2] See Isabel Briggs Myers, *Gifts Differing* (Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1980).

[3] See Christopher Bryant, *Heart in Pilgrimage: Christian Guidelines for the Human Journey* (New York: Seabury, 1980), pp. 182-195; Robert Repicky, "Jungian Typology and Christian Spirituality," REVIEW FOR RELIGIOUS 40 (1981) pp. 422-435.

[4] See W. Harold Grant, Mary Magdala Thompson, Thomas E. Clarke, *From Image to Likeness: A Jungian Path in the Gospel Journey* (New York: Paulist, 1983).

[5] APT publishes a newsletter, *MBTI News*, for its membership, and is based at 414 S.W. 7th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32601.

[6] See Anthony de Mello, *Sadhana: A Way to God*, (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1979).

[7] See Thomas E. Clarke, "Toward Wholeness in Prayer," in William R. Callahan and Francine Cardman, *The Wind Is Rising: Prayer Ways for Active People* (Hyattsville, MD: Quixote Center, 1978), pp, 18-20.

[8] See Thomas Keating, M. Basil Pennington, Thomas E. Clarke, *Finding Grace at the Center* (Still River, MA: St. Bede Publications, 1978).

[9] De Mello, p. 13.

The Spiritual Direction of "Thinking" Types

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Literature on the Jungian personality types as refined in the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory continues to multiply. By this time a basic familiarity with the types can be assumed, and there is no need to summarize all of them here.[1] As an admirer of this system of personality typing, I have found much of it helpful over a period of ten years. As a spiritual director and directee, I am especially appreciative of its application to spirituality, and have found the typology illuminative for providing initial and continuing insights into myself and others.

Consequently, as an introvert with a strong thinking auxiliary, I have become increasingly aware that most literature on prayer, spirituality and spiritual direction is written by "feelers" for "feelers." Likewise the majority of members of most religious communities and others who seek spiritual direction, as well as those who become spiritual directors, are feelers. The present article consists of reflections from my own experience on the advantages and pitfalls of being a "thinker" in today's religious culture of feelers, or: How to Survive in Religious Life As a Personality Type Minority.

Others have recently written well and in detail on methods and styles of personal and communal prayer suitable and helpful for thinkers.[2] The present reflections concern more general issues for prayer and community life that are likely to arise in spiritual direction. They are intended to encourage other thinkers to more confidently put their special gifts at the service of others, and to help feelers who deal with them to better understand them.

Some Preliminary Remarks

For a brief reminder of what characterizes the thinking function, let us turn first to Jung himself, who says that the life of a thinking type—is mainly governed by reflective thinking so that every important action proceeds, or is intended to proceed, from intellectually considered motives."[3] From a more recent author: "thinking relies on *principles* of objective *truth*" which it attempts to articulate clearly. It values order and justice which give to each his or her due. "Thinking is firm, tough-minded, logical, cold or at least cool, unwavering, assertive, critical, wary, questioning, adversarial, distant, impersonal, and forbearing."[4] If forced to choose, thinkers would rather be respected than liked; they would prefer to be honest and authentic rather than warm and accepting.

First, there are certainly many more variables involved than the thinker-feeler difference. Even within the Myers-Briggs typology, there are sixteen possible combinations. Sensate thinkers react differently from intuitive thinkers, introverts from extraverts, judgers from perceivers. Whether thinking is a dominant or auxiliary function makes a difference. Gender differences, whether biological or cultural, are also a factor. Beyond all this, there are the unchartable individual differences that deny any kind of classification and render each person unique. All that is attempted here is to describe how a thinking type, whether dominant or auxiliary, is likely to see and act in the world of Christian spirituality and relationships, inasmuch as such a person is responding out of the thinking preference.

Second, we are, of course, as with any system of personality typing, potentially dealing with stereotypes. Essentially we are not so much speaking of persons as of functions which all are capable of exercising but which some prefer over other functions. But it is also more than simply a question of preference, as though we could consciously choose how we will respond to the reality that confronts us. Perhaps for the fully individuated person, such freedom would be possible. In the real world, however, each of us lives within and operates out of our preferred functions as though from a familiar place that is valued as part of oneself. Thus we are speaking of factors that have directly to do with one's sense of personal identity

Third, the preposition "of" in the title of this article both objective and subjective. While the bulk of material will deal with the directee, the final section will discuss some of the advantages and liabilities of doing spiritual direction as a thinker.

Religious Life, a World of Feelers

The Catholic ethos, and within it the lifestyle of vowed religious in pre-Vatican II years, regardless of the type preferences of persons in authority, was a culture of thinkers. Objective norms of right and wrong, emphasis on rational approaches to decision-making, belief in discipline as requisite for a well-ordered life, the attention given to forms of discursive meditation and

vocal prayer—all these characteristics and more contributed to a way of life dominated by thinking values.

The religious revolution of the past twenty years has turned most of this around. Dominant values in American culture at large, outside the legal, political, and business worlds, are largely those of the feeling type, and religious life is no exception. Warmth, personal approachableness, intersubjectivity, and affective prayer are the prized values of religious life. The feeling mode is the norm for community life and popular spirituality, often with a vengeance. Many feelers who lived a long time under the former thinking mode are now reacting against the oppression they endured from it. Certainly this reaction was stronger in the seventies than now, but has not totally subsided. One who does not readily fit the expectations of the dominant feeling culture can easily become suspect. Questions are raised about whether he or she really has "a religious vocation."

For the thinker who has lived some years in community, especially one whose own experience has bridged the transition from one mode to the other, the challenge is adaptation, for the environment has changed from one in which he or she felt at home to one which is largely characterized by otherness. Even if the thinker is convinced that most of the structural changes that have happened are for the better, still there is a way in which he or she has had to become accustomed to a social world with some significantly different values than would have been naturally preferred.

For the younger person who has entered religious life since the shift has taken place, the set of problems is somewhat different. This person has never known a community value system in religious life that is totally congenial to his or her own. This may produce a sense of otherness, alienation, and isolation which complicates the vocational discernment. It is not only a question of determining whether God is calling one to religious life, but of whether one can fit into this value system with these people who seem to think and feel so differently from oneself. For the person with a strong inner sense of call to religious life but without a strong dose of self-confidence, the question becomes whether there is something wrong with me because I do not seem to fit.

Certainly adaptability is a quality necessary for everyone to develop who intends to live community life. It is especially crucial that the thinker, whose native tendencies are not known for their flexibility, become flexible with opinions and judgments. The thinker in contemporary religious life who has not learned to translate important convictions into language and styles of expression compatible with the normative feeling style will not be taken seriously by his or her community companions. The result is that the thinker will be seen as marginal and irrelevant, and will develop feelings of alienation, isolation, and bitterness.

What is needed to prevent this happening is some significant effort from the other side as well: drawing on their capacity for empathy, feelers must make some attempt to understand the experience and language of their

thinker community members, and to take them as seriously as they deserve.

Prayer

Nearly every thinker has had the experience in spiritual direction, a directed retreat, or shared prayer, of saying something of profound personal significance, the result of searching prayer or thrilling inspiration, and receiving as a response something that says more or less explicitly: "That's fine, but can't you get out of your head and into your heart?" With this kind of response, the thinker is tempted to draw the analogy of casting pearls before swine! That at least is the angry aspect of how it feels, but there are other levels as well: deflation, discouragement, a sense of being misunderstood in the deepest capacity for self-expression.

To hear from a person with whom one is trying to grow in trust the admonition to "get out of your head" or "stop thinking and start feeling" is simply devastating. I wish to assert in the strongest terms, both from my own experience and that of many others, that this should *never* be said to the thinker about prayer, unless by someone with whom there is a long relationship of mutual trust and confidence and the assurance that the directee is able to supply a context for the remark. Outside such a context, saying this is equivalent to saying: "Your experience of God is not valid."

There are many ways in which the literature of prayer and spirituality insinuate that the thinking function is spiritually inferior, useful only for *preparation* for prayer, and incapable of "true" prayer. A good example is a favorite traditional mystical treatise, *The Cloud* of *Unknowing*, which states in Chapter Four that knowledge cannot fully comprehend God, but that love can; the author drives home the same point in many other ways elsewhere in the text.[5] A more recent example is an otherwise excellent popular book on prayer which tells us that the head is not a good place for prayer, that prayer which stays there will only lead to frustration, and that real prayer must move from thinking to just about everything else: "feeling, sensing, loving, intuiting."[6]

What spiritual writers who do not have a strongly developed thinking function fall to comprehend is the ecstatic spiritual experience of knowing *truth*, which is knowing God. It is an experience of God just as surely as is loving, and can shake the person to the roots of one's being every bit as profoundly. The expression of it must be just as respectfully received.

All of this is not to deny that one of the directions of growth in prayer for the thinker is toward deeper affectivity. On the contrary, it certainly is, for the capacity for feeling is usually "relatively undeveloped and unreliable"[7] in the thinker who is still growing toward maturity. Feeling is unrefined and untrusted, and thus difficult to use as a vehicle of prayer or discernment. The ability to draw upon feeling to understand the action of God is usually underdeveloped. Sensitivity to movements of the spirit detected through feeling needs to be encouraged and expanded. The thinker needs to make friends with the powerful force of feeling which in many cases has been primarily

experienced in disruptive outbursts of negative emotion: anger, fear, impatience. He or she needs to learn that feeling can be a supportive and helpful function in the search for God as well as a hostile and disturbing one.

The issue of control is a major one. Most thinkers do not consciously work at it; they simply have a great deal of it and take it for granted as a good thing. They need to learn gradually that it is not always helpful to be in full control of ones feelings, thoughts, and actions. The experience of emotional vulnerability and powerlessness will be even more frightening than for the feeler, until the thinker is convinced that this too is an expected part of the spiritual life. Once the rationale becomes clear, the experience can be accepted.

The important point for the director, though, is that all of this is a lifelong process, not something the thinker must be able to do immediately to be "normal." It is a question of both/and, not either/or. A director who communicates that *not* the head *but* the heart is the place for prayer and relationship puts the thinker-directee in the position either of trying to be something she or he cannot be, or of having to decide that the director does not understand the directee and thus cannot be trusted.

Images of God

Images and symbols which portray God and Jesus as strong, just and reliable relate especially to the thinking function.[8] The Hebrew notion of *emet* (true, faithful, dependable) expresses well this constellation of characteristics. Jesus as he is depicted in the prologue of the Gospel of John bears many of the attributes that are appealing to the thinking function: he is Word, Truth, Light.

Logos Christology, the theology of Jesus as the Word incarnate, the Wisdom of God, the perfect icon of God, tells it all. "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:32). Knowledge of the truth brings liberation; the pursuit of truth is a fundamental thirst and lifelong search. Reason is one of the most powerful means of attaining to that truth—reason not understood as something dry and sterile, devoid of vibrance, but as a significant gift of God which excites and challenges.

It has been suggested that one whose God is Logos cannot fully enter into the experience of dark night and abandonment which comes from suffering: "The night of being abandoned by God is not experienced in this case: it is impossible to be forsaken by the God *Logos* (Reason)."[9] On the contrary, the encounter with the sheer irrationality of injustice and suffering brings its own dark night. Loss of control, powerlessness, the chaos of life not governed by reason, the need to surrender to forces that do not respond to reason: these are sufficient cause to produce the sense of being abandoned by God. The eventual result is a new integration of the person who has discovered dimensions of life beyond the previously accepted limits.

Relationship and Community

Learning to live in growthful harmony with a group composed predom-

inantly of feelers requires certain different skills of thinkers. First of all comes language. The terminology of interrelationship and patterns of communication prevalent in the culture of religious community are the language of the feeler's world. One of the thinker's most helpful questions is often perceived by feelers as a threat at best and an attack at worst. The question is: "Why?" When asking, the thinker simply wants to know the reason behind an action or a statement; the feeler interprets the question as a judgment that he or she should not have acted in that manner. The ensuing misunderstanding results in less trust on both sides if it is not talked out: the feeler feels unaccepted and attacked, the thinker feels mistrusted because the feeler will not communicate the requested information.

Thinkers are thus usually perceived as highly critical, and indeed they are, for they easily see what needs improvement, or at least what they *think* should be improved, and see no reason why, if such changes are possible, they should not happen. Their tendency to be critical will be seen as a negative attitude, when actually it may be the only way they know to cope with their environment. Immature or insecure thinkers may adopt an attitude of "Love me, love my ideas," and not be able to distinguish between acceptance of their ideas and acceptance of themselves as persons by others. Introverted thinkers particularly will appear cold and aloof because they must analyze a situation before they can become involved in it. Since they do not progress in their thinking by verbalizing, it may be quite some time before anyone can get out of them what their opinion is, but when it comes, it can wreak havoc if it is straightforward and honest. Extraverted thinkers at least find it easier to let others in on the thought process, but because of the power of their expression and their apparent total assurance of what they are saying, they too appear threatening and inexorable. People who are less sure of their opinions may find them hard to withstand.

Thinkers need actually to learn feelers' language and to change their pattern of communication so as not constantly to threaten. Those who succeed have learned to be tentative in verbalization, to ask questions instead of making statements, to precede important communications with long introductions, and to check out the mood or emotional atmosphere of a group before saying anything significant. These kinds of caution, which come more naturally for feelers, usually have to be acquired skills for thinkers, who more naturally assume that anyone wants to hear or speak the straightforward truth at any time.

The good news about this required adaptation is that persons develop other aspects of their personalities in interaction with others different from themselves, and all are enriched in the process. The bad news is that some of the same dynamics can be operative here as with any minority group that has to survive in a majority culture. Thinkers can learn to cope by simply acquiring the external behavior that will be acceptable, by doing what is expected in order to get by. Pleasing and gaining personal approval are not especially

important to them, so they will not do it with this end in mind. But being treated fairly and accepted without constant questioning about their behavior is of considerable importance to them. Out of frustration, they may change their behavior simply to be left alone, and not out of any conviction that such change will really make them more complete persons. Moreover, they may seldom see or at least be convinced that those with whom they live and work are really interested in seeing life from their side, or see any value in being as they are.

Most thinkers are less susceptible to feeling guilty for not pleasing another than are feelers, and are thus less likely to be motivated to do for others for the sake of approval. This adds to their profile of aloofness, for others are often at a loss to be able to motivate them by appeal to their sympathy or sensitivity to social pressure. They are, however, more susceptible to guilt for failure to be sincere, honest, and faithful to their own rules of conduct. They usually have a keen sense of justice, violations of which can often swing them into committed action where no appeal to compassion has succeeded.

It follows that, while feelers find it more difficult to forgive, thinkers find it more difficult to admit they are wrong and ask forgiveness.[10] Others' hurt feelings are too subjective, and simply not enough evidence that an apology is in order. Only if their own rules of right conduct have been broken can they easily recognize that they have been wrong. Acknowledging the need to apologize and seek forgiveness when they have no sense of having trespassed is another bit of learned behavior which thinkers must acquire if they are to live in harmony with feelers.

Thinkers are usually more reticent than feelers about open displays of affection, whether in giving or receiving, which contributes to their reputation for aloofness. They may still, however, have the same needs for affection and support, of which they may or may not be aware. Such supportiveness is often more comfortably given and received in indirect ways: compliments, thoughtful deeds, favors foreseen. A thinker is more easily won with sincere respect and consideration than with any amount of care and concern, which can often be felt as overwhelming and smothering.

Thinkers are less likely to blame themselves when things go wrong than to blame others. The innate feeler's reaction, "There must be something wrong with me," does not come as naturally to the thinker as to say, "It's their problem." When spoken, this attitude reinforces the impression of independence, invulnerability, and critical attitude. Because they are less susceptible to the need to win the approval of others, they also find it easier to cut off those whom they feel do not accept and respect them. A healthy respect for one's own fallibility, an essential part in anyone's maturing process, helps to counteract this tendency.

A thinker is probably less likely than a feeler to say when confronted with a truth about oneself: "I know it with my head, but not with my heart." The thinker is more likely to know the insight intellectually, and simply not know

what he or she feels about it. Long delays in recognition of feelings, while certainly not limited to thinkers, are characteristic of them. Closing the gap between realization and feeling is an important part of personal integration.

Special Implications for Formation

Thinkers who are still in the formation process and have not yet been finally accepted into the congregation or living group are in the position of having to look to others as role models, but they may find few with whom they can identify in their approaches to prayer, relationship, and life. They may be told that their aloofness or critical attitude is an obstacle to their community life and admission to permanent membership. What comes across to the feeler as distancing and removal from the situation is in reality the thinker's need to analyze before jumping in. What is seen by the feeler as a negative, judgmental attitude may only be the thinker's defense against the insecurity of his or her formation status. While these tendencies need to be moderated for successful community living, they cannot be changed at will, but only by years of striving toward personal integration. The formation director must judge whether the *potential* for sufficient moderation, not complete change, is present.

Thus a vicious circle ensues if the issue is not talked through and resolved: being told they are in trouble in the formation process because of their negative attitude and emotional distance can make thinkers in formation more insecure, which makes them react by feeling more critical and distant. When formation personnel require honesty of them, they can either be honest and critical or dishonest and less critical. The first can exacerbate the communication problem; the second can cause personal guilt. The only way to break the circle is for both sides to realize the defense that is being used, and for the thinker to have the courage to soften it through reliance on other kinds of support. But at the same time the thinker's exercise of critical judgment must be respected and allowed legitimate outlets.

Subtype and Gender Differences

No one, of course, is a pure thinking type, but everyone operates out of a combination of preferences and often even from less preferred functions. Intuitive thinkers, more common in religious life than sensates, strive for depth and context of meaning. Many are born group leaders. They are best at reading an entire situation, providing an analysis, and projecting possible outcomes and strategies. When they exercise leadership, their clear sense of strategy makes them run the risk of blocking the creativity of the group by anticipating and controlling every move and thus not allowing sufficient freedom for initiative on the part of others, They must acquire the patience to let others arrive more slowly and participatively to conclusions they have already seen by bypassing parts of the process.

Sensate thinkers, who are less commonly found in religious communities, strive for precision and clarity. Their best gift is close and detailed analysis of

the fine points of a situation or proposal. They are especially prone to rigidity, literalness, and hairsplitting, which can frustrate feelers and intuitive thinkers alike. They must learn the hard lessons that not everyone is as captivated by detail as they are, and especially that few can be as explicit and clear as they would want to demand. Flexibility, compromise, letting go of perceived truths for the sake of cooperation—these characteristics come to them not by nature but only by grace.

Women thinkers will probably find themselves more readily able than feelers to adapt to an environment shaped by men: business, law, research, academics, church administration, seminaries. Male culture in our society, regardless of the preferred functions of individual members of it, is generally shaped by the values of the thinking preference. Women thinkers may indeed find that they not only adapt well to a male environment, but that they even prefer it. Like male feelers, they may experience themselves somewhat as bilingual or as citizens of two worlds, able to bridge the gap between "the female system" to which they belong by upbringing, and "the male system"[11] with which they feel perhaps even more kinship. This realization need raise no questions about a woman's gender identity or femininity. It is simply that her natively endowed preferred psychological function matches the dominant characteristics of male culture.

Male thinkers already have the "match," that is, their preferred function is well-suited to the environment in which they probably have to function. They will have an especially difficult time acknowledging and expressing feelings of weakness and vulnerability, since they have two counts against them in this regard: temperament and cultural pressure. The tendency to deny most feelings except those which convey power will be very strong unless counteracted by other factors which encourage sensitivity, flexibility and compassion. Friendships with women, proximity to suffering and death, and the highly relational culture of religious life as lived in most communities today are examples of such factors.

For both female and male thinkers at midlife, the challenge presents itself to develop the other side of their preferred preference, namely, feeling. This can be frightening or exciting, depending on how open and nondefensive they have grown to be up to that point. But most thinkers will never completely change over into preferred feelers, no matter how great the personal growth, nor should they be expected to do so. As with feelers who are called to develop more concretized and analytical skills, it is a question of personality expansion, not diminishment.

Thinkers as Directors

Thus far the objective genitive, the consideration of thinkers as *directees.* Now for the subjective genitive: what kind of *directors* do they make? Again, thinkers are in the minority, but certainly not unknown among the ranks of spiritual directors.

In brief, the director with a well developed thinking function will be better at getting the emotional distance needed to reflect directees back to themselves. The director will need to carefully cultivate the ability to convey the empathy needed to let directees know they are understood.

What has been said above about the way in which thinkers are perceived as aloof and critical is a factor here as well. The necessary skill of careful listening before speaking comes easily to the introverted thinker, who may even cause discomfort to the directee by overdoing the silence. Such silence may be construed by a feeler directee as judgment or nonresponse. In reality the director may simply need more time to put the pieces in place. The extroverted thinker's tendency to leap in with a completed plan needs to be curbed.

Similarly, the thinking director may dismay and overwhelm the feeling directee by blunt and pointed questions which could be interpreted as disapproval or attack. The famous question "Why?" is especially high on the list. A climate of trust must first be established before the thinking director can let loose with his or her forceful and penetrating questions. Once that climate is present, such questions will be better appreciated.

The thinking director working with a thinking directee is probably freer to challenge directly and know that the question will be received as helpful inquiry rather than attack. The interchange may be much more immediate, direct, and to the feeler who might hear it, objective and perhaps even impersonal. In addition, the director may have to supply much of the participative, subjective feeling quality in the relationship, at least until there is a comfortable level of trust established.

The strength of the thinker as director is the ability to lay out, analyze, and assess a situation from an objective point of view and reflect it back dispassionately to the directee, without the director's own subjective feelings getting in the way. Once that is done, the director must bear in mind that the directee may care little for objective facts, until they are claimed and valued as part of one's own life. All of the comments made throughout this article about the need for thinkers to acquire certain skills and learned behavior, not only as persons striving for integration, but also as members of a minority in a world of feelers, apply even more so to the thinker as director, since it is not only oneself and one's own relationships at stake but the lives of others as well.

Conclusion

As was stated at the beginning and must be repeated here, such descriptions as these necessarily deal in stereotypes. In detail, they are to be taken up where helpful and dropped where not.

The central point of this article, however, is not for optional consideration. It is this: that thinkers who are called by God to live their lives In an environment which is a dominantly feeling subculture must not be expected to abandon their basic psychological preferences to be accepted. They will

likely relate, communicate, work, and pray differently. Both they and the feelers who surround them must learn to value their distinctive gifts and the richness that their perspective brings. When this does not happen, we are all the poorer for it.

NOTES

[1] See Carl Jung, *Psychological Types* (Collected Works vol. 6; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971); David Kersey and Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: An Essay on Temperament Styles* (Del Mar, CA: Promethean Books, 1978); Isabel Briggs Myers with Peter B. Myers, *Gifts Differing* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1980); W. Harold Grant, Magdala Thompson, and Thomas E. Clarke, *From Image to Likeness: A Jungian Path in the Gospel Journey* (New York/ Ramsey, NJ: Palest Press, 1983); norms E. Clarke, VS., "Jungian Types and Forms of Prayer," Review for Religious 42:5 (Sept.-Oct., 1983) pp. 661-676.

[2] Notably, Grant, Thompson, and Clarke, *From Image to Likeness*, *pp.* 102-106; T. Clarke, "Jungian Types and Forms of Prayer," pp. 670-672.

[3] C. Jung, *Psychological Types*, p. 346. For the thinking type, see pp. 342-354, 380-387, passim.

[4] Grant, Thompson, Clarke, *From Image to Likeness*, p. 70.

[5] The theological and social context of *The Cloud* which provoked this viewpoint is not relevant here. The point is the effect it has had in the history of spirituality, and it is but one of many examples. Nor can loving and the feeling function be fully equated, but the example is still illustrative.

[6] *Sadhana: A Way to God* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1978), p. 13. Example cited by T. Clarke, "Jungian Types and Forms of Prayer," p. 671.

[7] I. Briggs Myers, *Gifts Differing*, p. 66.

[8] See *From Image to Likeness*, pp. 81-87.

[9] Dorothee Soelle, *Suffering* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), p. 100.

[10] *From Image to Likeness*, p. 70.

[11] See Anne Wilson Schaef, *Women's Reality* (Minneapolis, MN: Winston, 1981). This book is an indispensable aid for understanding the differences between male and female cultures in our society.

IV. Spiritual Direction: Its Beginnings

Beginning Spiritual Direction

On Entering Spiritual Direction

Letter to a Beginning Spiritual Director

Letter to a Person Beginning Spiritual Direction

Beginning Spiritual Direction

David L. Fleming, S.J.

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With renewed interest in the role and importance of personal spiritual direction for religious men and women, many questions arise about the preparation for such an undertaking. Questions from those who are considering entering into a spiritual direction relationship include: (1) What should I do to get ready? (2) Will my spiritual director tell me what to do? (3) What should I expect from such a session?

Preliminary Considerations

Spiritual direction aims at helping a person to make a more wholehearted response to the drawing power of God's love which continues to be active in each person's life until the day of ultimate union with the Trinity has been accomplished. This way of defining spiritual direction, like every definition, presupposes a number of attitudes upon the part of those who enter into a spiritual direction relationship. It is obvious that we should have some awareness of our own presuppositions before we begin, since what we presuppose greatly affects the kind of answer we will give to our questions. Although there are many ways of summing un expected attitudes preliminary to direction, one helpful pattern would include the four areas of: (1) a faith context, (2) God's care, (3) Incarnation now, and (4) continual vocation. Let us examine each of these areas.

A Faith Context

In Christian spiritual direction, life is viewed far more as a mystery of God's forgiving love to be lived than as a problem or a series of problems of personal

development to be solved. Both director and directee enter into this spiritual counseling relationship within a faith context. Faith as God's gift provides a way of knowing which on the one hand cannot ignore the human knowledges, which we are capable of attaining, but on the other hand is not bound by the limitations of such knowledges. For example, there is a way in human maturity for a man to come to a certain acceptance of his limitations and even of his own evil tendencies and actions. He comes to claim them as his own and is not incapacitated by them even though he feels helpless before them. There is another whole process in faith by which man the sinner can accept the evil and powerlessness which is a real part of him. This man has a confidence, not directly in himself, but directly stemming from a faith which experiences the power of a love-acceptance by a redeeming God. Consequently, this faith context invades every avenue of our approach to life. Without it, spiritual direction becomes mere counseling—a good, but not a Christian treasure which direction is meant to be.

God's Care

As a Christian believer, each of us sees a world that truly is held in the hands of a provident Father. More than that, the idea that every hair on our head is numbered gives concrete expression to a God whose concern for each man touches every area of his personal life. When a person enters into the process of direction, he brings an attitude that at least at the level of belief, if not at the more desirable level of experience, allows him a certain "relaxedness" before God. Although spiritual direction may have to help correct some crippling notions of a man's images of God, minimally he gives a notional assent to being wrapped round by the loving care of God. Without some basis of trust, great doubt will cloud even the feasibility of trying to search out God's lead for the good of one's life. Spiritual direction flows out of the presumption that God will ever remain faithful not only in His provident care for a world He has redeemed but also in His personal concern for the sinful person that I am, one who has been formed by his word to call Him "Abba."

Incarnation NOW

Another presupposition to the notion of Christian spiritual direction lies in the acceptance that salvation for all men continues to be mediated through their fellowman. This presupposition is just another way of stating the one double commandment which leads to eternal life: love of God and love of neighbor. By God entering so fully into human history that we recognize Jesus Christ as true God and true man—the same who took on the human condition so completely even to death on a cross and now to an everlasting resurrection, man has so clearly become a part of God's way of salvation that we acknowledge the mystery of people even anonymously mediating the saving presence of Christ. The explicitness of this belief is portrayed

not just in the last judgment scene of Matthew 25 or Saul's conversion in Acts 9, but also more especially in the Pauline doctrine of the Body of Christ. Priests, preachers, and confessors have always been recognized by the Christian community to be particularly caught up in this mystery of God's mediating power. Spiritual direction, too, is one of these specialized instances when we enter into that mystery of God's ordinary working through our fellowman to lead us along the path of salvation.

At the same time, we as Christian believers remain aware that God does touch us very directly in experiences that are penetratingly clear in their effect, while we remain confused to find words which might help us to express it or concepts which might lead us to understand. Knowing the obscure power of our own religious experience, we enter into spiritual direction because we expect that it will gradually aid us in understanding, expressing, and responding to the signs of God's action. In the spiritual direction situation, we know a confidence not primarily in the theological training or counseling technique of a particular director, but rather in the faith that God ordinarily has us work out our salvation through just such a human director with all his own personal faults and virtues. And so with both parties being caught up in this now-experience of the Incarnation, the director in prayer and in humility will try to assist in uncovering and more deftly identifying the direct and indirect movements of God in one's own personal life.

Continual Vocation

It has always been evident in the Jewish-Christian tradition that special callings are made to various men and women by God. Although some controversies have arisen about the seriousness of the obligation to respond to such a calling, it has never been denied that such a call on God's part comes from love and can be answered on man's part only from the same free gift of love in return. Particularly as we view our lives of specialized service in the Christian community, we religious are concerned to respond ever more fully to the continual promptings of a jealous God who desires nothing more than the total gift of ourselves. Because we believe this is the context of faith in which we live, we enter into spiritual direction desirous to be ever more aware of this continuing call from God. We have in direction the very method and means by which we can come to an understanding of how we not only have reneged on our response but also how we can give answer more full-heartedly. We become accountable in a most incarnate way, and so we are given new eyes to see with and new hearts to make our response.

These presuppositions to spiritual direction, which we have selected, already identify much of what the direction sessions will continue to be about. After all, the four areas cover attitudes which take us to the full depths and heights of our Christian vocation. Perhaps, still, it would be helpful to point out a few of the other main elements around which spiritual direction is focused from its very beginnings.

Approaching the First Interview

Presuming that I have begun to clarify in my own mind the presuppositions of spiritual direction given to me by my Christian faith horizon, I should focus my first concern upon the area of my prayer life. Do I pray? Do I attempt to pray? Do I at least say some prayers? Such questions as these may well be the subject matter of the initial session. But they can also be questions I check myself on before I enter into the spiritual direction period. Some directors state dramatically that they do not take someone into direction unless they give evidence that they pray. A basic condition for spiritual direction is the sincere desire to lead a life of prayer. Certainly without the fundamental context of prayer the reality of spiritual direction so fades that it quickly falls into trifling talk or gripe sessions. Prayer always remains like the water source which irrigates the entire area so that growth can take place. No matter what crises may arise in the spiritual life, prayer itself ever remains at least as an essential part of the resolution. And so spiritual direction is concerned with the prayer life of an individual from the first session till the end of one's life.

Since prayer is the speaking out of my love response to God, it often needs the objectification and clarification which a spiritual director can give or help me to make. As I try to tell a director about my prayer life, perhaps I will be made aware if I use words to hide behind because I am fearful to remain quiet in the presence of God. Or perhaps I am fooling myself by trying to hold myself in great stillness where God too is being kept without. There are many ways in which I can find myself in doubt or confusion about my own prayer life and its rhythms of growth. For religious, spiritual direction is meant to be of special help in this area more than in any other.

In beginning spiritual direction, I also may be asked to sum up my personal history, concentrating especially upon my religious journey up to the present. Each of us does have a personal salvation history, and the director may find it very helpful if I can fill him in on God's action in my life both through human situations of family and education as well as religious experiences of prayer, retreats, and good works. There is no doubt that my response to God is lived out in all the areas of my life—my physical well-being, my emotional and intellectual framework, my social contacts, along with those specifically religious practices of Mass, sacraments, and prayers.

Expectations

To move into spiritual direction, then, is not so general that it is a matter of "finding someone to talk with." At the same time, spiritual direction, like prayer, is not some esoteric practice that has a fixed and rigid agenda of things-to-be-done. Between these two extremes, we are now trying to respond to a practice embedded in Christian spiritual tradition with renewed vigor and interest. Within a faith horizon, spiritual direction takes in the whole of my life so that I as a total person might grow in my loving relationship with God. Once I am in this process, I realize that some spiritual directors will be more helpful

at a particular time in my life than others. I realize, too, that there is no one indispensable director other than God himself. I become aware that ongoing spiritual direction is of greater need in my life some times than at others.

My expectations of spiritual direction are reflected in my understanding of Christian growth. No instant magic, just life-giving grace. Occasional breakthroughs that may be dramatic, but always solidifying growth that needs the patience of time. To hold myself accountable to a human director, to find objectification, clarification, and sometimes instruction—these are true and valuable expectations, and they remain expectations to be fulfilled throughout the course of my life.

An Enduring Value

Spiritual direction has no time limitations on it. We never totally outgrow it, and so it does not become outmoded according to the progress we have made in the spiritual life. The need is present throughout our lives because we are Christians who journey by faith. The regularity or intensity of spiritual direction in our lives does vary, and the advantage of recognizing its continuing importance will allow us to seek it as a matter of course during such moments of greater need.

Spiritual direction is one of the ways we most immediately touch the Incarnation in our own lifetime. For us to ever approach it lightly or to reject it as of no value is to find ourselves undermining the deepest roots of our Christian faith.

On Entering Spiritual Direction

Shaun McCarty, S.T.

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It was H. D. Thoreau who once said, "If you see someone coming to do you a good deed, run for your life!" I suspect similar sentiments in times past have made many wary of entering into the field of spiritual direction, either to give it or to receive it. Yet, more recently there seems to be renewed interest in and more of a felt need for this venerable ministry of individualized spiritual help. This article is an attempt to reflect on some of the questions and issues involved when one considers entering a spiritual direction relationship. I mean to deal with the topic more experientially than theoretically, that is, by using people more than books as my primary source.

Why the Current Interest?

There are a variety of reasons why people are seeking spiritual direction today. For some it has always been an expectation of the religious groups to which they belong. For others, it's the thing to do, a badge of belonging to an elite group of the "spiritually mature."

Yet for many people today the motivation seems more genuinely interior. It has for many been generated by deeply moving religious experiences occasioned by intense spiritual events like directed retreats and by participation in charismatic movements like *Cursillo*, Marriage Encounter, and Charismatic Prayer Groups.

Younger religious today perhaps feel the need for spiritual direction as a result of more individualized programs of spiritual formation. Older religious have been led to a rediscovery of this value because of the ambiguities and ambivalences experienced in this post-Vatican II Church. Not a few have

felt a sense of drifting rudderless in the stormy sea of "personal responsibility." People are seeking direction as a result of crumbling structures that once provided it. For example, in the Church today there are fewer specific regulations; a lower role for authority figures as dimensions of collegiality and subsidiarity develop; a decline in the frequent use of the sacrament of Penance; a shift in prayer patterns from common prayer forms and devotions toward less formal corporate prayer and more personal quiet prayer.

Whatever the reasons, I believe that the renewed interest in spiritual direction is indicative in many quarters that the Spirit is moving and that people are becoming more sensitive to his presence and power in their lives as well as more aware of how difficult it is to listen alone and unguided. And it is striking that this interest and need are not limited to religious and clerical circles. More than a few of the laity are sensing a call to a more profound spiritual depth and intimacy with the Lord.

Where Are the Resources?

At the same time, however, it appears that the resources for providing spiritual direction are not adequate to meet the needs. And there are reasons for this. The lack of availability of willing and able spiritual directors is a universal complaint. Those already active in this ministry are usually overextended as it is. Unrealistic role expectations or job descriptions for the spiritual director which list a formidable array of qualities and qualifications necessary might make the Lord himself hesitate to undertake the task! Such heroic and romantic expectations scare off many ordinary people who might well be apt helpers in spiritual growth for others. And ironically, these same grandiose job descriptions for spiritual directors sometimes attract self-styled "gurus" from whom it *would* be a good idea to "run for your life!" Add to these reasons for meager resources a lingering fear of the involvement demanded and dependency risked and it is little wonder that needs and resources do not always meet—not to mention the number of those "gun-shy" of direction due to bad past experience with distorted varieties of "spooky" phenomena mislabeled "spiritual direction."

In addition to those who *want* direction and can't find it, there are also those who *need* it and either won't look for it or won't accept it. In some instances, sound spiritual direction would mean the difference between staying with or leaving commitments.

In other cases, it may mean the difference between mediocrity and fervor. So many people allow passion to leave their prayer and their relationships and settle for lifeless loves. Ingmar Bergman's film "Scenes from a Marriage" is a chronicle of a commitment gone awry for want of passion in a love relationship between a man and his wife. How many commitments in and outside marriage burn out for want of a bellows to fan the flame of passion that should energize a love relationship? How many relationships never survive the inevitable periods of disaffection? And how many pilgrimages of

prayer die in the desert? I would submit that spiritual direction can be a bellows for one's fervor, an oasis in the desert.

What Is Spiritual Direction?

Before we can talk about entering into spiritual direction meaningfully, we need to know more precisely what it is we are entering into. But before saying what spiritual direction is, it might be helpful to consider some things it is *not*.

In a way both words, *spiritual* and *direction*, can be misleading. Spiritual direction is not "spiritual" in the sense that it is concerned with the life of the spirit or the life of the soul as somehow disengaged from mind and body. One's response to God is as one whole person. Body, mind and spirit and are not separate parts of faculties of a person, but three different ways of looking at the same, integral person.

St. Paul expresses this integral unity of the person in a parting blessing to the Thessalonians when he says: "May the God of peace make you perfect in holiness. May he preserve you *whole and entire*, spirit, mind and body, irreproachable at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Th 5:23). A biblical use of the word "body" *(soma)* would suggest the person as viewed in his rootedness in and relatedness to this world, his solidarity with the rest of creation. "Mind" *(psyche)* would suggest the person viewed as being above the animal kingdom, as having the power of self-reflection, as having been called to a lordship and stewardship over the rest of creation. "Spirit" *(pneuma)* would suggest the person's outreach, his or her native openness to the transcendent, the point of a person's origin and contact with God. It is precisely under this aspect of one's openness to the beyond that a person has the ability to get in touch with something or Someone bigger than himself or this world.

In a person's day-to-day living there are resonances of one aspect of life in all the other aspects of that person's life. For example, when I have *a* headache, it is not just my body that aches. I ache and it has effects on my thinking and my prayer. Or if I have been wounded in spirit, it can lead to a cynical bent of mind and even a sour face!

This holistic view of person, so vital for sound spiritual direction, is helpful in that it enables one more easily to make distinctions without separation, and to maintain unity without confusion. Jacques Cuttat speaks of it:

> Greek as well as Oriental thought oscillates between two poles. Both are characterized on the one hand by a dualism which tends towards separation and, on the other hand, by a monism which tends towards fusion. The tendency that was predominant, first during the pre-Socratic era and later during that period of Christian thought when Stoic influences were strong, was that of uniting and even fusing fundamental dualities such as being-nonbeing, being-becoming, unity-multiplicity, intelligible world-sensible world, Logos-nature, knowing-known. Until the third century this monistic tendency marred the Christian philosophy of the Apologetic Fathers who

> sought chiefly to overcome Gnostic dualism. But from the time of the great ecumenical councils, especially those of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (451) which defined the unity without confusion and the distinction without separation of the two natures in the one Person of Christ, we witness for the first time in the history of human understanding the dawn of a new form of thinking. It consists in "keeping together," that is, in "maintaining the tension" rather than "resolving antithetic terms such as the one and the multiple, being and becoming, the same and the other, soul and body, spirit and nature.[1]

There is an interesting convergence of both biblical and these ancient conciliar understandings of wholeness with some contemporary psychological discourse that also stresses the unity of the human person. Perhaps the wheel has been rediscovered!

There are serious implications for spiritual direction which stem from a truly holistic conception of person. This, of course, does not mean that a spiritual director should be ready to function as physician, psychiatrist or even social secretary for anyone! Indeed, there is a focus on the "spiritual" dimension of the person, but with an awareness of and an attentiveness to the fact that other dimensions of the person's life can help or hinder growth in holiness.

Nor is spiritual direction "direction" in the sense of being overly directive. Of course its style will be fashioned by one's personality, training and demonstrated effectiveness. But the director does not tell people who they should be or what they should do. And this fact, if grasped, precludes fostering an unhealthy dependence of directee on director. Too often people in helping ministries, perhaps even unconsciously, tend to meet their own need to nurture more than the need of the person seeking their help.

Nor should a spiritual director impose on or coerce (however benignly) a person to a spirituality not his own. Of course it is true that there are some universal norms applicable to all the People of God, and there are even some common ones for members of a specific religious tradition, like Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, Augustinians, Carmelites, and others. But most importantly of all, the form of a person's spirituality should be shaped by his own idiosyncrasy. His or her own uniqueness, as well as a freely chosen value system and an ordering of personal gifts, are the basis for fidelity. Each gives praise to the Lord best by being fully himself or herself, not by becoming a carbon copy of someone else (however holy) or by being shaped on someone else's pottery wheel—unless, of course, God is the potter!

Personally, I do not subscribe to an egalitarian notion of direction that would create a false and simplistic sense of equality between director and directee. This will become more obvious later when I describe some activities that a spiritual director actually does. The presumption in spiritual direction is that there is a certain "inequality" of experience, training, objectivity or whatever it is that urges one person to seek the help of another. Otherwise isn't there danger of the blind leading the blind? However, this

relationship of inequality ought not be viewed as the inequality between superior and inferior. As a matter of fact (and I can testify from my own experience of helping others), the person helped may be more gifted, smarter, holier than the director. But *in the relationship of spiritual direction*, I do not see them as peers. This does not preclude the possibility of mutual ministry. What director has not been helped, edified, taught by those who come to him or her? I find it a salutary confrontation to be privy to another's burgeoning relationship with the Lord. In a word, I think a spiritual director should avoid either a condescending superior-inferior, or a one-sided helper-"helpee" relationship and try to experience the ministry more as a kind of traveling the road together, as being a gracious receiver as well as a generous giver!

Nor is spiritual direction co-terminus with the sacrament of penance. Distinct, they are not necessarily separate. Though matter for healing may often emerge naturally in spiritual direction and even, at some point, be put within the context of sacramental absolution, I think it is helpful not to confuse the two operations. It has been the close connection between the two in the past that has been at least partly responsible for identifying the ministry of spiritual direction fairly exclusively with the priesthood. And I think this has led to some dysfunctional telescoping of two important means of spiritual growth, one sacramental and the other non-sacramental. When people are clear about the distinction and habitually differentiate the two, it seems easier to do both in the same setting.

Likewise it is important to maintain a clear distinction between spiritual direction and counseling. When the lines of distinction are fuzzy, this readily leads to the trivializing of one or both kinds of help. The focus in counseling is more on solving problems, of effecting better personal integration and adjustment in the process of human maturation. The focus in spiritual direction, on the other hand, is more on growth in prayer and in charity. It deals more explicitly with the faith dimension of human existence. It is true that some counseling does often occur in a spiritual direction relationship, but this is not the *focus* nor the basic orientation of the relationship.

What, then, *is* spiritual direction if not any of the above? There are almost as many definitions as there are people writing and talking about it. Jean Laplace is as concise and precise as any when he defines spiritual direction as "the help one person gives another to enable him to become himself in his faith."[2] Spiritual direction is a special ministry which involves certain gifts or charisms along with a set of skills which help to make the gifts operative. "A gifted presence to help a gifted self emerge," that is how I see spiritual direction. This ministry of spiritual direction, then, calls for a reverence for the mystery of the other person and genuine hope for the "more to come" that is in him or her. Any genuine spiritual help should aid a person

to be more open to the calls of the Holy Spirit in the events of life which summon that person to continued conversion and toward a deepening union with the Lord. Through the real presence of one to the other, the presence and power of the Spirit of God can be better discerned.

What Happens in Spiritual Direction?

Perhaps it is more realistic to deal with the activities proper to spiritual direction inductively rather than deductively, that is to say, by observing what actually does happen when people get and give direction, rather than by speaking about what should happen theoretically. I am not disdaining theory. As Kurt Lewin says, "There is nothing so practical as good theory." But "good theory" comes from reflection upon real experience, both good and bad! I think it is important to be habitually reflective about what we do and don't do so we can at least learn to make new mistakes, not the same ones over and over again. Some people think too much and get removed from reality into their ivory towers. But others act too much without thinking and get overwhelmed by a surfeit of the unprocessed data of experience. Both extremes are equally oppressive. As a piece of conventional wisdom expresses it: "Thinkers think and doers do. But until the thinkers do and the doers think, progress will be just one more word added to an already overburdened vocabulary of talkers who talk." With that word of advice in mind, let us proceed with observations of what actually goes on in spiritual direction. A variety of things happen at different times. They include:

(1) *Listening.* This is perhaps the most important skill (or art) needed: reverential listening to the unfolding mystery of another person's story—not just with the ears, but with the heart; not just to words, but to melody. Listening can do more to help a person clarify who God is and what God is asking of him or her than any other activity (or passivity) I know. This takes a big ear and a closed mouth. Sometimes it seems that the best we can do as spiritual directors is to stay out of the way of the Holy Spirit as he moves in another person's life. Good listening helps clear the static so people can hear the Spirit speak.

(2) *Affirmation.* An important function of the director is his affirming the other person in his or her own giftedness. Many need help in identifying, developing and using their gifts. Often these gifts are buried beneath a crust of poor self-image so that people are not really in touch with the deeper level of their own unique giftedness. These gifts (charisms) are truly visible evidence of the Spirit in people's lives. A good director can help a person affirm such giftedness. There are few ministries more rewarding than of helping a person in the search for his or her gifts. For it is "gift" that truly makes a person come alive from the inside out.

(3) *Confrontation.* Yet the discovery of gifts presumes not only affirmation, but testing for validation. Growth requires that each party keep honest in the search, that they unmask illusions which are often subtly deceptive.

Angels of darkness often appear under the guise of angels of light. Keeping someone honest in his or her relationship with God and others-unmasking the demons-these are ways of describing an important task for the spiritual director. In order that a person be able to listen to the Spirit in an undistorted way, that person must be concerned with the issue of inner freedom. How open-handed is he or she before the Lord, how unshackled by self-concern, how ready for whatever God asks? A good director will help uncover areas of "unfreedom" and lead a person to an appropriate ascesis. For effective confrontation, however, the previous communication of loving concern and gentleness on the part of the director is presupposed.

(4) *Accountability.* Checking in regularly with a director can help a person avoid some of the pitfalls that come with "solo" assessment. It can prove difficult to persevere in self-evaluation for such reasons as being too busy, too tired, too unfocused. One can become easily discouraged when growth is not visible, or when one is too general and vague in setting goals or choosing means. Regular spiritual direction can provide the impetus for realistic specification, as well as concrete occasions to reflect on progress or regression.

(5) *Clarification.* A significant factor in growth is the ability to reflect upon the experience we have so as to gain insights from it. Someone has said that the unreflective life is not worth living. The experience of grace and of faith-life is always going on, but it can stay on a relatively primitive level of unawareness or unconnectedness. A good director will be able to help a person bring his or her religious experience to the level of reflective awareness and get in touch with the trajectory of his or her past. To put it another way, for spiritual growth, a person needs to know his own story, to string the beads of past epiphanies so as to perceive the pattern of his relationship with God. This kind of activity, whereby a person can see more clearly the shape of his or her spiritual history, provides a touchstone against which to test the authenticity of a present decision or judgment. It helps the person to say with greater certainty "This is the Lord speaking" or "This anticipated response is an expression of the real me." Recently I received as a gift a little book of blank pages with the question on the cover, "How can I know what I know until I see what I say?" Perhaps a good director helps a person to see what he says so that he can know what he knows!

There is another area of clarification that needs attention. It is in reference to a person's value system. One grows to the extent that he lives consistently with his value system. This presupposes that the person is both identifying and ranking values for himself. For this ordering help is often needed. And as values get clarified there must be on-going challenge to make the values visible. A person realizes his values in the visibility that is given them. I use the word "realize" advisedly, meaning both to discover and to make real. It is important that the values be one's own and not those of the

director. In developing a healthy Christian spirituality, of course, one's values ought to be continually confronted with Gospel values which should gradually correct, modify, undistort, and ultimately lead a person really to put first things first.

One final area for clarification is that of clarifying who God is for the person under direction. The whole shape and orientation of a person's spirituality is deeply affected by the operative image of God in that person's life. Although professing belief in a personal, providential and compassionate Lord, many people tend to put God at a distance from their lives or are scared to death of him. A director can help a person clarify that image.

(6) *Teaching.* Sometimes there are gaps in a person's understanding of issues related to growth. These gaps call for the help of one more learned and/or more experienced to instruct in the area of ignorance. Enlightenment is another factor that can free a person for further openness and growth. But there is a mutuality of ministry here as elsewhere. The director ought to approach every teaching situation as learner as well as teacher.

(7) *Integration.* People's lives can become very scattered in the complexity of modern society, in the maze of renewal, in the frenetic activity of busy apostolic lives. They need to keep centering themselves, finding their "still-point" in Christ. With all the books and talks and workshops that have been part of renewal, some have tended either to tune out or to become passive. They listen somewhat attentively, take copious notes, but have difficulty in integrating into actual living what they hear and agree with. Things can remain in the idea stage rather than on the level, not only of hearing, but of evaluating and eventually owning. It is easy to get hooked on a "head-trip" whereby one thinks "renewal" comes simply from reading or talking about it. A director can offer the challenge, "What are you going to do about what you've heard or read?"

(8) *Counseling.* Even though it is important not to confuse counseling with spiritual direction, the fact is that a significant amount of counseling goes on in many spiritual direction relationships. Sometimes the Lord speaks to a person through a problem which is perhaps not explicitly related to prayer or faith-life. The element that makes such counseling compatible with spiritual direction is that it happens more by way of event rather than as the basic orientation of the relationship. The focus in an individual session may happen to be more of a counseling one, but the goals and the longer range dynamics in the relationship are those of spiritual direction. The basic orientation of the spiritual direction relationship is not problem-centered, but growth-centered. At some point in the relationship, perhaps at a later date, the person can be helped to see dimensions of the paschal mystery in a problem and not just helped to "cope" with it. It may be, too, that the activity of counseling may be more pronounced at certain stages of the

spiritual direction relationship, especially at the beginning or at a time of crisis. But if the counseling needs become so strong as to affect the very orientation of the relationship on a more or less permanent basis, then it would be more honest to call it "counseling" rather than "spiritual direction," even if no referral is made. If professional therapy *is* needed, of course, referral is in order. Then continuing direction becomes a delicate matter of not working at cross-purposes with the therapist.

(9) *Help Through the Desert.* I would like to make a distinction between dealing with a problem that calls for counseling and helping a person who is on spiritual pilgrimage through the desert. There are those special times for everyone seeking spiritual depth when he or she experiences the dryness of the desert, the apparent absence of God, perhaps the onslaught of the demonic. Nothing can get quite so boring and tiring and insipid or even frightening as spiritual growth. And there is nothing quite so painful as being broken open so the Lord can enter. A person's very efforts to become holy can lead to an "energy crisis." The recurring temptation for monks and other kindred spirits is *acedia*, that is, a distaste for spiritual things, an urge to "throw in the towel" when the going gets tough. This can very well be a part of the Lord's pedagogy in getting us to realize that sanctity is not a self-propelled enterprise by letting us experience such an energy crisis. Yet how many give up at this point either by "dropping out" or at least by "copping out" on spiritual depth and settling for a comfortable mediocrity for want of the right help at the right time to get through the desert?

(10) *Discernment.* Although much discernment in direction has been implied in what has been said thus far, the activities of the director should also be described under the explicit rubric of "discernment." That is to say, the spiritual director facilitates the process whereby the directee can examine the origin of movements within, often ambiguous and ambivalent, which are urging him toward or away from certain judgments and decisions. After living sometimes for years with clearly defined rules and with "black-and-white" clarity, many suddenly find difficulty in assessing particular situations and in clarifying motives involved in decision-making. It is not easy for anyone to choose between real and apparent goods. This aspect of the director's work is related very closely to keeping the directee honest and in touch with his genuine spiritual identity.

(11) *Prayer.* The final activity which goes on in spiritual direction, but by no means the least important, is prayer, both with and for the person coming for direction. The dynamics of grace are so much more at work than mere skills in direction. Often the mysterious workings of the Lord's presence are not susceptible to ordinary means of penetration. It is most appropriate to pray with the person for the Lord's own guidance and help, especially at such times. It is also appropriate to begin and/or end each session with some explicit prayer which invites the Lord to be involved in the process and to send his Spirit to enlighten and to inspire, and later to thank

him for his help-though this should not become a mere ritual. As I mentioned previously, often it will be appropriate for the session to culminate in sacramental absolution if the director is a priest. But it should be clear that the sacrament of penance and spiritual direction are not synonymous.

For Whom Is Spiritual Direction?

There is an old rule of thumb concerning the need for spiritual direction that says, "Always useful, sometimes necessary." I would think this holds true especially for those who give spiritual direction. To be truly effective in an on-going way, a credible spiritual director is one who values it highly enough to be receiving it.

Spiritual direction is appropriate for all who are taking the spiritual life seriously, who are genuinely reaching for more. An important consideration in readiness for direction is where the person stands in relationship to making the fundamental religious act. Has the person made, or does the person want to make a decision to surrender to the Lord? Not just to become a self-actualized person. Not just to serve others. Spiritual direction implies at least the desire to reach beyond merely human or ethical growth to genuine religious growth.

Perhaps a further distinction should be made between those who *seek* spiritual direction and those who are *ready* for it. We may have to look more closely at what people are asking for when they say they "want a spiritual director."

Obviously many are looking for spiritual direction in the specific sense in which we have defined and described it thus far. Others may mean "direction" in the wider sense of any and all helps that will enhance their relationship with God and others—reading, friendship, classes, and so forth.

There are those who may be looking only for shared prayer and not for direction as such. There is a difference between getting together to pray and getting together to reflect on the experience of prayer. The two should not be confused. Direction has to do with reflecting on the process of prayer to see what is happening and what is not happening.

Some people are simply looking for a good confessor rather than a spiritual director. Again, that is a need that should be kept distinct, even if not separate from direction.

Others are more in search of a counselor. Again, even though this kind of help can aim at readiness for direction, the notions should be kept distinct.

There are also some who are just looking for a friend, a good, supportive relationship. Invaluable as it is, this is not the equivalent of direction. As a matter of fact, it can become problematic when the roles of friend and director are combined, though not necessarily so. For some aspects of direction, like affirmation, a good friend is eminently suited. But for others, like confrontation, objectivity can be somewhat hampered by friendship. In

short, friendship can be a hazard as well as a help in spiritual direction.

Then there are those who don't express a desire for spiritual direction, but who have the *need* for it. Perhaps one of the challenges of this ministry is to find ways to help the objective need for spiritual direction become a felt need!

Who Is Suited for the Ministry of Spiritual Direction?

If we view spiritual direction as a ministry, then I would submit that the stress should be on identifying those who have the charisms necessary for it. This may be a practical alternative to constructing an overly-idealistic job description which may scare off many gifted people. Within the Christian community the Spirit brings gifts according to its need for ministry at a given time. So perhaps one approach in identifying spiritual directors should be one of testing and affirming those who "feel called" to be directors. Another of the obvious signs of such a call, I would think, is that of actually being sought out by others for such spiritual help. Whom are people asking for spiritual direction? They are not necessarily those who are hanging out shingles in a self-appointed ministry!

And the director obviously need not be a priest. There is no special character of the priesthood that marks him automatically or exclusively for this ministry. More and more men and women from non-clerical quarters are being sought out as directors. And a number of these manifest a hesitancy to assume such a ministry before their own lack of help in developing the skills and acquiring the understanding that can make their gifts more operative.

Everyone called to be spiritual director need not be a living saint, but I would think there should be in himself or herself a deep desire to grow in the Lord. And there should be a basic equilibrium, together with an awareness of those areas of his life where he does not "have it quite together," so that he will be careful in guiding people in matters relating to such areas.

Group Spiritual Direction?

Some consideration should be given to the relative advantages and disadvantages of group, as opposed to individual spiritual direction. Some of the benefits of individual spiritual direction are: (1) a greater ease in communicating more deeply with a director; (2) less chance of evasion; (3) a more rapid getting to where the directee "is" in prayer and in their relationship; (4) a greater freedom and ability to talk when the right moment arrives. Some of the disadvantages of one-to-one spiritual direction are: (1) the danger of dependency; (2) undue influence by one person on another; (3) diminishing returns, perhaps, from one person.

Some of the benefits of group direction are: (1) a greater richness through diversity and the possibility of being affected by other people's prayer; (2) easier communication for some who have difficulty in relating one-to-one; (3) the benefits of communal experience; (4) less danger of

dependency developing; (5) the impetus of group accountability. Some of the disadvantages of group spiritual direction might be: (1) a possible lessening of individual accountability through hiding within the group; (2) a greater threat to confidentiality; (3) the difficulty of self-disclosure in a group for some; (4) the practical difficulty of finding a time when all can get together regularly.

I am inclined to think it is not a question of the superiority of either individual or group spiritual direction. The style should be suited to individual need. But there will come moments, especially as people in a group progress in prayer at different rates, when each will need to meet with a spiritual director on an individual basis, even though that person be involved in group direction.

Negotiating Expectations

I think it is important that, as people enter into a spiritual direction relationship, mutual expectations be negotiated. Whether expectations are negotiated or not, they will be there to affect the relationship. Expressing and negotiating them tends to keep the more primitive ones from jeopardizing the relationship. Both potential and limitation should be faced realistically early in the process. Some of the factors that should be considered in this negotiation include:

(1) *Frequency and regularity of meeting.* There should be some kind of mutual commitment in terms of definite periods wherein direction will find the space and time to happen. There is good reason for setting regular times. When the reason to get together is not the result of a problem situation that has arisen, creating its own urgency, it is more likely that growth process can be helped. Then, too, when fixed, the time (though flexible and adjustable to meet unforeseen contingencies) gets more priority in busy schedules on the side of both parties.

(2) *Clarification of specific areas that will be dealt with in future sessions.* As has been said already, a person will discover and deepen his values through the visibility that is given them. This visibility or specification of behavior in certain key areas like prayer, relationships in community, service to others, and so forth should be mutually agreed upon. It then becomes the basis of accountability in the whole process of spiritual direction. The accountability of course, is not so much to the director as it is to God and to the individual himself.

(3) *Assessment provisions.* There should be some agreement to build in periodic evaluations of what is happening or not happening in the spiritual direction relationship. These evaluations offer the opportunity to consider new decisions about the direction, its continuance or the severance of the relationship. This provision may save spiritual direction from becoming pleasantly (or unpleasantly) insipid.

Even though provisions like these should be negotiated, I am hardly recommending that the relationship be overprogrammed or overstructured. Each successive session will provide its own agenda centering on what is happening in the life of the person and his or her response to the Lord. But it *is* helpful to try to focus the session somewhat each time so there can be some reflection in depth. Certain issues that recur can be tagged for future reference and explicit discussion. Ordinarily I would expect the here-and-now action of God in the person's life to constitute the heart of the agenda. Helpful in this regard is the practice of some kind of examen, that is, a habitual reflection on how the Lord has been speaking to me and calling me to conversion in the events of life and how I have or have not been responding.

(4) *Journal keeping.* For many, the discipline of articulating their spiritual autobiography has proven to be a valuable tool. It enables them to perceive the trajectory of the relationship they have had with the Lord and to discern the patterns of their dealings with him. They are enabled to construct, as it were, a profile of their spirituality. It also enables a spiritual director to "tune in" more quickly on where a particular person has arrived in his spiritual growth as the relationship of direction begins. It is vital that each person know his own story so that he may live out its implications more authentically. There are several effective techniques in making and in keeping such a journal, none I know of more thorough than the *Intensive Journal* technique developed by Dr. Ira Progoff.

Some directors also find it helpful to keep a journal of their own by making notes after each interview. It is certainly an aid to memory and enables the director in retrospect to discern the rhythm and flow of the relationship over a period of time.

Conclusion

These, then, are some of the questions and issues to be dealt with in entering spiritual direction. There are certainly other questions and issues as well as other points of view. These observations are meant to be quite tentative and open to modification in the light of further experience. One cannot afford to be too absolutist or definitive in a helping ministry like spiritual direction. It calls for much awareness of human limitation as well as great dependence upon the Lord. As I indicated, the experience of being privy to people's dealings with the Lord is a humbling one.

In closing, I'd like to echo the thoughts of a kindred spirit whose experience has been that of psychotherapy. What he has to say might well be voiced by those of us involved in spiritual direction:

> I want to conclude by saying very briefly what it means to me to be a psychotherapist. I feel like one of the more fortunate people. The men and women who come to see me entrust me with that which is most deeply meaningful in all their experi-

ence. They offer me the awesome privilege of participating in the very essence of their lives. When I am most authentic, I am most humble in my appreciation of this opportunity.[3]

What spiritual director can say less?

NOTES

[1] J. A. Cuttat, "The Religious Encounter of the East and West," *Thought*, Vol. 33, No. 131 (Winter, 1958), p. 489.
[2] Jean Laplace, *The Direction of Conscience*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1967.
[3] James F. T. Bugental, *Search for Authenticity*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965, p. 374.

Letter to a Beginning Spiritual Director

Matthias Neuman, O.S.B.

Volume 37, 1978, pp. 882-888.

Dear Sister Susan:

Last week brought a real joy when I received your letter and read the exciting account of your first months as a spiritual director. Even though you have entered upon the task by pressure of personal requests, I sense that the role fits you very well. I can also appreciate your hesitations and fears upon entering this new ministry; but be assured that no Christian service is without its anxieties. In this particular ministry the challenge seems staggering; it is an immense responsibility to take on the guidance of human lives, especially the sifting, discerning and supporting of the innermost secrets of hearts. You would do well to reflect on St. Benedict's advice to the abbot of a monastery: "He should recognize the difficulty of his position—to care for and guide the spiritual development of many difficult characters. One must be led by friendliness, another by sharp rebuke, another by persuasion. The abbot must always remember his task is the guidance of souls (for which he will be held accountable)." There can be no doubt that this practice of spiritual direction produces an awe, humility, and a proper fear in the heart of anyone who assumes its yoke of service.

Those feelings of inadequacy you worry about arise quite naturally, then. This initial period of eight months has accurately indicated that special abilities are required to do the work well. This is so true and your intuitions are right on target. The talent of being a spiritual guide goes far beyond a sim-

ple facility at helping people to "clarify their prayer life" or "to discern with them God's will in the Scriptures." Spiritual direction has unfortunately assumed a somewhat faddish image in our day and too many people approach the title without a clear awareness of these demands. At the same time, I don't wish to make this ministry seem overly professional; the gift of assisting a life to God demands a personal living of faith that no learned technique will ever provide. But we do well to remember that while this work of service moves beyond professionalism it still includes professional capabilities in its wake. Let me briefly list some of these for you.

The constant study and assimilation of the modern psychological sciences remain paramount. The in-depth exploration of the human psyche stands as one of the great achievements of the twentieth century. In particular you should attend to the study of growth processes, normal maturational patterns, and the functioning of human needs and motivations. All these elements recur again and again in spiritual direction for individuals of all ages. As your first encounters have made clear, human motivation is incredibly complex. How often self-love mingles with love of God, and vice versa! How often people cannot separate the parts! One of your major tasks as a spiritual director and the place where you will begin many probings with individuals will be the purification of motives. Hours upon hours will be spent in this task, for people—even in their lives of faith—are desperately searching for *why* they do what they do. As you assist them to find answers, the path of freedom open to God's Mystery will slowly show through the mist. To accomplish that purifying effort in the critical moments of a direction session requires that the advance homework has been done; the books have been read and pondered; the possibilities of growth, need, and motivation internalized in your own understanding. That all means study on a serious level. I have found the works of Erik Erikson, Abraham Maslow and other developmental psychologists to be helpful. Even a semipopular work like Gail Sheehy's *Passages* will provide many insights into the common human maturational steps. Applications to the spiritual context will emerge easily. Don't neglect this fundamental area in your ongoing preparation.

Besides the study of psychology you should know well our contemporary American culture, that encompassing environment in which both small and momentous decisions are shaped. We live in an age when cultural pressures influence behavior as never before. I believe it was a Carnegie Foundation Report of last year which concluded that, by the senior year of high school, peer pressure has become the single dominant factor in the behavior of young adults. Similar thrusts toward social conformity extend up and down the age scale in the United States. These cultural factors deeply affect the awareness and living of Christian faith, even when people vocally denounce such influences. Know well the values spread through our mass media system; unless a man's or a woman's decision for faith includes a direct confronting of these pressures, the house is being built on sand. A primary task

of the spiritual director looks to this examining of the decision for faith in a person's life. You must help them sort out the demands of a Christian lifestyle in a twentieth century, pluralistic, consumer society; that's where faith is struggling to live in our United States. Your study of this culture should not be confined to religious analyses of pop culture, though that's a good place to begin. Modern fiction traces many typical personal struggles analogous to real ones. The novels and short stories of Joyce Carol Oates forcefully penetrate the mystery of human emotions in our modem society; *The Wheel of Love* has as much material for meditation as many religious books. A recent novel by Mary Gordon, *Final Payments*, surveys cultural confrontations that you should be familiar with. And of course there are television and films. Too frequently we ignore these by reason of "poor content" in favor of spiritual reading. But those visual media are far more of a factor in shaping people's contemporary perception of reality than all the armloads of books that can be shoved at them. Regularly schedule some movies and some television into your agenda. The time won't be wasted, but will contribute a necessary learning of the ethos which underlies the common struggle for faith today. A spiritual director must be sharply in touch with that cultural base.

Lastly, and the most important among the learned abilities of a director, you must develop in your own mind and heart a firm grasp of the theology of God *within* human life and experience. What I mean by this is that you must be able to see consistently how a fundamental human issue or action possesses definite links to one's openness or closedness to true faith. Achieving a good self-image, holding correct attitudes on sexuality, power, work, valuing the honesty of good personal relationships—all these will powerfully affect a person's view of faith and the ways in which he or she will accept the Christian mystery. It is frequently said in today's anthropological theology that every statement about God is a statement about human life. As a spiritual director you should accept that completely, and *also* affirm that every statement about human life is a statement about God. In this realm you assume a mediator's role I n the truest sense, because you bridge the gap between people's seemingly enclosed, secular experiences and their emerging life of faith. While going through emotional traumas it is usually hard, and sometimes practically impossible, for people to relate to God in any other way than as "immediate helper." Sometimes God is forgotten or the object of intense anger. In a real sense the mediating link between that person's painful experience and a learning of faith will be maintained *in your heart;* your prayer and memory will keep the lines open, until the individual can begin to pick up the pieces again. That's an awesome responsibility for a spiritual director, but it's your ministry because you have been given the talents to do it. A continual study of God in human experience will aid your ability to hold and continue those lines of connection. There are many good works in theology that explore this mystery of God within human life;

Rosemary Haughton's works, *The Theology of Experience* and *The Transformation of Man*, provide good starting points.

Let me now turn to some consideration of the specific and difficult case you had to confront last semester. The young woman approached you with a problem in her prayer life (a quite common beginning), but soon it became apparent that other troubling issues were stirring deep within her. In your judgment, her affectivity was blocked and unable to be released ("she couldn't emotionally relate to anyone"). Then suddenly it came gushing out towards you. That's a common occurrence in direction relationships; it was precisely your care and concern for her that unlocked the welled-up torrents of emotion. Don't be afraid of such changes in people's lives; you will see them often. The vastly more important concern centers around how you follow up and respond to this affective burst. This first time you found yourself full of relief when the semester ended and she went home. You sensed in yourself a backing-off, an inability to relate directly to her dependency. Well, don't feel too bad about that. A great deal was learned—as your later reflections indicated—and next time you will have a bit more courage and straightforward resolve to keep going. In a dependency situation, a very delicate middle ground must be attained between allowing her to feel your support and acceptance, while slowly correcting and setting boundaries for the sharing of affections. The ability to make that practical judgment will come only with the wisdom learned through trial and error. So, take courage! The experience will prove beneficial in the long run. A director, too, must be tried by fire. That means both you and your directees will be singed occasionally.

We might do well at this point to reflect a bit more about the religious life-style of a spiritual director. I'm sharing reflections here that have come from a brief nine years of experience, although with a fairly wide variety of individuals. Lord knows, there's still so much to learn. We never attain full mastery of the skill of directing lives.

First of all, through the instances of direction you will acquire a sense of the immense pain within human lives. Through the inner sharing of thoughts and feelings you will meet people who have harbored incredible suffering in their hearts for years, suffering you haven't believed possible. After a while you may even find yourself nodding to Thoreau's observation that most people "lead lives of quiet desperation." You will cry often! I have. Especially when a gentle soul is encountered who has never really had a chance to be kind or to be loved. Believe me, this human agony will constitute a real temptation for you-the desire to simply close off sensitivity and forbid any more stories of human despair. Please keep your tenderness and gentleness finely honed; they are the gifts which brought you to the ministry of direction in the first place. Sensitivity will be the necessary means for your ongoing growth and deepening as a wise director. Take care to check yourself regularly on this.

A second aspect of a spiritual director's life-style focuses on the courage to recognize and live with personal failure. This is already happening in your hesitating response to the young student. It won't be the last failure. Each year will find your efforts with some people ending up with unsatisfactory resolutions; the failures will be both partial and total. Sometimes people will move away from your area just as progress is beginning. A feeling of unfinished business will frequently be your lot. As human beings we hate a lack of closure. As Christians living with a religious ideal we easily tend to internalize that lack into our own guilt. This is a common temptation in all kinds of pastoral ministry. To live life happily you must learn to accept an incompleteness about your efforts. This resembles the unfinished quality of Christ's ministry. Even with the great efforts of his teaching and mission the full richness of the Spirit came only after his death and in his physical absence. Remember that, like St. Paul, you are planting seeds. God alone gives the growth and that may flourish long after the person has left your immediate presence.

One of the director's essential functions is to serve as a reality principle for people, and that causes change in one's life-style. The result shows up in the virtue of radical honesty, a virtue which constitutes a signal characteristic of the spiritual-direction ministry. You will need to be bluntly honest, first of all, about your own feelings and attitudes, honest to yourself and to your own spiritual director. We know how easy it is to play games. Only if you acknowledge emotions, both destructive and tender, within yourself will there be courage enough to give straight and honest answers to advisees. A spiritual director at least ought to be able to "tell it like it is" without beating around the bush. No double-talk here; people get more than enough, even from their friends. This personal honesty may involve "telling it like it is" all the way from uncouth personal habits to a life that is totally messed up. If you won't tell them, probably no one will. Pray often for that gift of radical honesty.

The daily work of spiritual direction will revamp your prayer life. Expect this to happen and the conflict that arises will not be so great when the transition begins. The emotions raised in your heart from struggling with other people in their grasping for faith, love, truth, self-acceptance, the courage to risk, will not be easily contained. They will tend to overflow into your times of personal prayer; the hopes and needs of others will surge in and overturn the private agenda you had fixed. Don't fight this intrusion; adjust your mood and integrate these feelings into the style and content of your prayer. One of the finest spiritual gains of this ministry will occur through the deep prayer you offer *for* those and *in the name of* those you are serving as director. At times when they cannot pray in the Body of Christ you will be their *alter ego*. Appreciate this change in the style of your prayer as a great treasure.

Another element of your spirituality will be an increased sense of the pressure of conversion in daily life. Conversion becomes more and more that

slight, step-by-step, painstaking work of attaining a redirection or a better direction in one's life lived towards God. So many of the people who will come to you are seeking some kind of clarity in faith and the means to effectively internalize it. When this day-by-day striving to slowly purify intentions, lessen weaknesses and form new ways of acting has become a constant part of your personal awareness and action, you will discover ever greater treasures to place at the disposal of your directees. Most conversions in people's lives are not dramatic, instantaneous flashes; instead there is a patient living with and working out of the faith possibilities inherent in their life-situations and in the very talents they have been given. Most evidently you will soon learn this truth.

There are other significant changes which will be forced on your lifestyle because you have taken on this ministry, but these few points will suffice to indicate some of the adjustments a director is called on to make. This brings to mind another dimension which bears examination: the self-image of a spiritual director. How should or does this ministry change your view of yourself as a Christian?

A spiritual director must have the conviction of being a shaper of God's mystery in people's lives. Through you, their image of God as good or punishing, gentle or demanding will be affected. In many ways they will see God dealing with them as you deal with them. Therefore you must carry that honor conscientiously, for it counts as an awesome burden. You will need a gentleness of spirit to live with such a responsibility. So in your heart see yourself as a tender person no matter how hard and demanding your external conduct must be. Be happy, and nourish this kindly interior. Along with this sensitivity you need also the surety that your own personal spiritual life possesses unique and worthwhile qualities. It is important to have a positive appreciation of one's own spirituality. Know deeply and honestly that you have something eminently good to share: the gift of faith given by God to you. Always have a high estimation of that gift.

Your self-image ought to possess the sense of being a humble person. Humility is always necessary when confronting the mysteries of God, the human person, and God entering into human life. Recognize the style you practice in leading people into a deeper awareness of God's reality. That recognition should lead to the judgment you have to make about who will profit from your assistance and who won't. It takes humility to say, "I can't really help yow someone else is needed." Perhaps that admission will be a catalyst for much growth in the advisee's life. And be sure to help the individual find another director who has the abilities or style necessary.

In some way you will have to incorporate the aspect of being a challenger or confronter. This will be hard because it's the exact opposite to being an interiorly gentle person. One of the toughest tasks a director faces is having to confront individuals and tell them directly where they are deceiving themselves, failing in promises, or just plain afraid to get started.

Grit your teeth because these moments will hurt. You can accomplish these urgings well only after reflectively meditating on this notion of "confronter," praying over it and incorporating it as part of your religious self-image.

Lastly, a spiritual director ought to possess the image of being an artist of ongoing faith. You are indeed one who delicately handles the most precious material possible—the actual elements of human lives. This material must always be respected; the abilities and experiences of each individual count as God's gifts to them. The finishing task of each is to discern his or her vocation, to learn love, truth, beauty and God's Mystery in concrete living. You are an artist of that discernment; your products are living "earthen vessels" of incredible beauty. I have often thought that one of the greatest mission fields of our age is to journey with someone through the jungles of modern culture and temptations, through the labyrinth of human motivations to the simple faith and love that confidently says "Yes" to God's Mystery. So be assured that you possess a truly artistic ministry of great worth.

These thoughts are sufficient for now. The ministry of spiritual direction holds a place of growing respect in the Church today, and you will be a part of that movement. I have shared so many of my thoughts and feelings with you on this subject because I want you to become the best possible director you can be. Your gifts will stimulate the growth of faith in many. Be courageous and hopeful.

Affectionately yours,

Letter to a Person Beginning Spiritual Direction

Gerald E. Keefe

Volume 33, 1974, pp. 542-545.

Dear Friend in Christ,

Please accept this letter as an attempt on my part to offer an explanation of some ideals that I hold about spiritual direction. I would like to make it as personal as possible, personal insofar as I sense your presence while I write, personal insofar as I want to make transparent my thoughts about this sacred privilege.

Trinitarian Spiritual Direction

I try to be Trinitarian in offering spiritual direction. What do I mean by that? I mean that from the Church's contemplation of the Triune God certain realities emerge that are worthy of our adoration and imitation. We learn that Father, Son, Spirit are personal in their relationships; they hold each other as equals; they are distinct from one another; they are in deep, perfect union with each other; they are One.

Spiritual direction strives to reproduce these divine relationships in the human, but Spirit-filled, dialogue that occurs.

It is important that the communications be personal. We try to avoid generalities, abstractions, intellectualizing that render the communication impersonal and sterile. Both of us must strive to speak from our interior convictions or lack of them. We are not two computers exchanging information but two persons trying to grow in faith and love together. Like

Jesus in His post-resurrection appearance to the Apostles we want to exclaim, "It's really I" (Lk 24:39).

For the relationship to be personal we must adore and imitate the equality that Father, Son, Spirit celebrate with each other. Both of us must strive to overcome any feelings of superiority or inferiority that would damage the Trinitarian ideal we cherish. We must strive to accept our fundamental equality with each other.

Equality without Sameness

When both of us do this we can enjoy a certain relaxation. We do not have to put on pretences or airs but simply be ourselves. We can have exchanges that are honest, humble, accepted. We are not threatened at all, because we see each other as equals. Our conversation at once has the encouragement that comes from an equal. We begin to fulfill the command of Christ, "Love your neighbor *as* yourself" (Mt 23:39). When we avoid being above or below one another we can enjoy what it is to cherish another person as you do yourself. Equality makes this possible.

This equality is not sameness or blindness. This equality discovers, appreciates, and celebrates the distinctions that are present between us, just as Father, Son, Spirit thrill at their distinctions. The distinctions do not loom up as threats but rather as cause for rejoicing as we recognize our otherness. Our differences of age, authority, position, talents, grace are not cause for fear or separation but rather become stimulation and excitement to share in a complementary way our personal gifts. God's gifts are always meant to be shared, to become mutual, to build up the Body of Christ. Gifts that are isolated quickly diminish and vanish. Gifts that are shared increase and endure.

When we prayerfully strive to make our relationship reflect the personalness, the equality, the distinctions of Father, Son, Holy Spirit we will begin to experience some of the joy that St. Paul felt in the counseling that he offered to others. It will unite us in Christ. It will enable us to realize between ourselves what St. Paul expressed unabashedly to his people in statement of fact. "You have a permanent place in my heart" (Phil 1:7), as well as in his request, "Keep a place for us in your hearts" (1 Co 7:2).

Trinitarian Dialogue: I Am Son

If we have accepted the Trinity as the basis for our relationship, then we should strive to give expression to this in our dialogue. Paradoxically I will often act as Son to you. What do I mean by this? I mean that just as the Son is the reflection, the exact likeness, the glory, the splendor, the word, the obeyer of the Father, so will I strive to be like that toward you. I will encourage you to be Father by initiating whatever thoughts, convictions you have about your life and then I will strive to respond toward you with the same fidelity that the Son responds to the heavenly Father. I want to do this so well that you might

exclaim in some silent, equivalent way, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 17:5). I want to become word for you, not word for myself.

You can see yourself in me. I have become the reflection of you by words. You have the privilege of seeing yourself mirrored in the faithful, attentive words of another person. This mirroring enables you to see yourself more objectively and clearly. The understanding, the acceptance that you receive by my response to you should bring delight even though in the process your flaws might become more apparent. The hope that I carry is that my responses will help you to "become perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). My being Son to you enables you to grow in the likeness of the Father, to strive, to become what Jesus was, "the exact likeness" (Heb 1:3), of the Father.

Trinitarian Dialogue: I Am Father

There are other times when I will act as Father to you. I will initiate thoughts and suggestions that seem to fit your life. In these moments I then seek your response, your sonship, your word. I want you to recapture what I have said so that I know you understand. I will draw from experiences of my life, from my prayers, my reading, my studies to be a good father to you. I crave to see you accept what you behold in me and adapt it to yourself. I pray that the experiences of my life bear fruit in your life.

When we become conscious of a Father-Son dialogue between us it is something deeper than role playing. It is our effort to respond to the Father and Son who abide within each of us. It is an effort to be caught up into the very life of God: "No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son wants to *reveal* him" (Mt 11:27). The Father in me reveals the Son in you: "This is my beloved Son" (Mt 3:17). The Son in me reveals the Father in you: "No one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son wants to reveal him." What happens to me also happens to you as we are caught up in the mutuality of Father and Son.

The Brooding of the Spirit

So long as we are attentive to each other with the fire and breath and love and anointing of the Holy Spirit we will be drawn together in deep dialogue. The Spirit broods over us like the bright cloud of the Transfiguration and we witness and participate in the dialogue of Father and Son as intimately as the Apostles, though not as dramatically as they in this splendid moment of adoration. Yet we can say to one another in an accommodated way "In your light we see light" (Ps 36:10) and "Deep calls unto deep" (Ps 42:8).

I know that both of us must grow in holiness together. Just as St. Paul was edified by the faith of his people and his people were edified by his faith so also do I feel that our faith should be mutually revealed and shared so that both of us mature in Christ, put on the mind of Christ, grow in the stature of Christ.

In spiritual direction we stand together or fall together. There is no lukewarm middle ground.

Ways of Preparing Yourself

There are different ways in which you might review your life in preparation for our visits together. John Wright, S.J., suggests the way of faith, hope, charity. Faith would cause you to discuss the prayer that you experience daily. Hope would suggest that you share your difficulties, sufferings, disappointments, and failures with your spiritual director. Love would prompt you to focus your life on community. These are just organizational suggestions as obviously the three are intimately related and overlap.

Another way of organizing a review is to consider word, sacrament, community and try to perceive your living of these ideals.

Still another way could be your contemplation of Father, Son, Spirit to see how you responded to their distinct influence in your life. Did I reveal the Father by initiating, generating, creating, planning, providing? Did I reveal the Son by responding, obeying, articulating, reflecting, mirroring? Did I reveal the Spirit by animating, uniting, exciting, anointing, enlightening, comforting?

You may well develop some organizational procedures of your own. The main thing is that you can obtain as rounded a view as you can about yourself. This review you can make in moments of prayer or extract from your journal if you keep one.

Prayer Together

Finally I would like to suggest that at every spiritual-level conversation we have that we pray together. We are trying to discern the mind of God. It seems proper that we approach God in prayer, seeking His blessing on our humble efforts. This should give an unction and direction to our dialogue that will make the total conversation prayerful and sanctifying.

I would also like to give you assurance that I will pray for you frequently, and by name, to our heavenly Father. I earnestly solicit your frequent prayers for me.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be ours together.

Sincerely,

Father Keefe