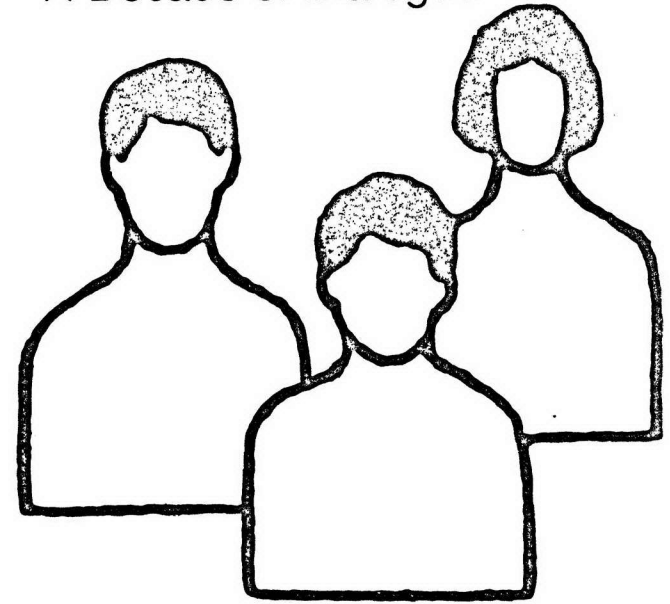


Consulting the American Catholic Laity

A Decade of Dialogue



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Introduction

Consulting the American Catholic Laity: A Decade of Dialogue marks a watershed for the Bishops' Committee on the Laity because it represents the highlights of numerous conferences and consultations with lay men and women on a variety of topics.

When the Laity Secretariat was established in 1977, Archbishop Edward McCarthy, then chairman of the Bishops' Committee on the Laity, identified communication between bishops and laity as a major priority for the committee and its secretariat. That priority has stood the test of time under successive chairmen: Bishop Albert Ottenweller, Bishop James Hoffman, and Bishop Stanley Ott.

In 1978, the Laity Committee met with leaders of national lay organizations and movements at Manresa Retreat House in Annapolis, Maryland, to explore the place of evangelization in lay life. During the consultation, Archbishop McCarthy asked the gathered lay leadership if they thought the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) should issue a pastoral statement about the laity; the response was decidedly affirmative. This first consultation, therefore, planted the seeds of the 1980 pastoral statement *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity*. At the same time, a committee was formed--the Manresa Task Force--which worked steadily and creatively with the secretariat director over a several-year period, planning the next gathering of lay leadership.

Archbishop McCarthy convened a second consultation in 1978 for representatives of six diocesan laity councils to discuss the topic of "councils in the life of the contemporary diocesan church."

In 1980, the Bishops' Committee on the Laity, under the chairmanship of Bishop Ottenweller, joined with the Young Adult Ministry section of the United States Catholic Conference's

(USCC) Department of Education to sponsor a conference on "learning to share ministry responsibly." Young adults studying for lay ministry joined with bishops, priests, deacons, religious, theologians, and social scientists to examine the many issues involved in shaping a collaborative style of ministry. During this same period, the American bishops issued a major statement on the laity, *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity*. It is this pastoral statement that forms the framework for *Consulting the American Catholic Laity: A Decade of Dialogue*.

In subsequent years, there followed conferences and consultations with various segments of the American Catholic laity that covered a wide range of topics: "American Catholic Spirituality"; "Work and Faith in Society"; and "Shared Responsibility in Diocesan Pastoral Councils." Each of these consultations yielded a publication (*The Tree of Hope, Work and Faith in Society: A Handbook for Dioceses and Parishes*, and *Journeying Together*, respectively), which gives a valuable overview of lay concerns, needs, and contributions during the past decade.

The Laity Committee has also been involved in several national research projects: one, a study of diocesan pastoral councils that looked into the quality of shared responsibility in these councils (published as *Building the Local Church*); another, a study that researched the training and formation lay people receive in ministry formation programs in dioceses across the country. The results of that research (*Preparing Laity for Ministry*) will soon be published in directory form by the USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services.

This present publication gives us an opportunity to pause and reflect on how much we have learned from consulting the laity. In a way, it states the question and clears the ground for extensive and intensive consultation with laity in 1987--the year of the world Synod of Bishops, which will focus on the mission and vocation of the laity in the Church and in the world.

During 1987, the Bishops' Committee on the Laity will meet with lay delegations from most of the dioceses in the country, as well as with lay leaders of national organizations and movements, in order to listen carefully to the stories of the people. It is hoped that the Synod delegates will also join in this listening process, prepared to go to Rome in the fall of 1987 as pastoral leaders in touch with the vitality and vision of lay people in the Church in the United States.

The Synod marks the beginning of the second decade of the Laity Secretariat. New reports are likely to be generated by the presynodal meetings, and the Synod itself is likely to be a source of rich insight and understanding. Meanwhile, *Consulting the*

American Catholic Laity: A Decade of Dialogue reminds us of how far we have come and of how much work remains to be done.

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Calling the Laity to Full Participation

In November 1980, the members of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the pastoral statement *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity*, in which they set out their vision of the role of the laity in the post-Vatican II Church. In the Introduction, they stated:

At the present time the light shed on the meaning of the People of God by the laity is especially noteworthy and exciting. In an exercise of our charism of "bringing forth from the treasury of Revelation new things and old" (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 25), we bishops praise the Lord for what is happening among the laity and proclaim as well as we can what we have been experiencing and learning from them.

. . . We affirm the vision of the Second Vatican Council and the importance it gives to the laity. We look forward to what is still to come under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, making the Church more and more the perfect image of Christ. We also acknowledge that these continuing developments may require new concepts, new terminology, new attitudes, and new practices. In prayerful dialogue with all our sisters and brothers we are prepared to make those changes which will aid in building the Kingdom.

The bishops reinforced the laity's importance within the Church when they said in their Conclusion:

We are convinced that the laity are making an indispensable contribution to the experience of the People of God and that the full import of their contribution is still in a beginning form in the post-Vatican II Church. We have spoken in order to listen. It is not our intention rigidly to define or control, to sketch misleading dreams or bestow false praise. We bishops wish simply to take our place and exercise our role among the People of God. We now await the next word.

In their pastoral statement, the bishops identified four calls to the laity: (1) the call to adulthood; (2) the call to holiness; (3) the call to ministry (both in the world and in the Church); and (4) the call to community. These four calls, together with the "voices" of the laity who have been answering them through nearly a decade of dialogue, form the relational structure of this book.

Consulting the Laity

Since it was established in 1977, the Secretariat of the Bishops' Committee on the Laity has held five major conferences and has published the proceedings of three of these. What follows is a brief synopsis of each, including the conference's primary purpose and the names of its principal speakers and participants.

1. The *Manresa Conference*, held April 14-16, 1978, in Annapolis, Maryland, was a gathering of the leadership of forty national organizations and movements. The purpose of this consultation was to allow the participants to learn about each other's life and work; to examine how each was participating in the Church's call to evangelization; to facilitate dialogue between the bishops and the lay leaders; and to explore the future direction of collaborative efforts among lay organizations and movements and the bishops. No document was published from this gathering, although there is an in-house report.

The principal speakers and resource persons for the *Manresa Conference* were Archbishop Jean Jadot, then apostolic delegate to the United States; Dr. Beth McKeown, Georgetown University; Dr. Richard Westley, Loyola University, Chicago; Rev. Edward Farrell, Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit.

2. The *Diocesan Councils of Catholic Laity Consultation* was held in Washington, D.C., September 15-16, 1978. The purpose of this consultation was to explore ways in which diocesan councils of laity could effectively develop fuller participation of the laity in the life, apostolate, and lay ministries of the Church.

Archbishop Edward McCarthy described the conference's primary focus as being "to begin genuine dialogue between lay leaders and bishops, especially regarding the role of the laity." He went on to say: "We see this dialogue, however, as being not only between bishops and leaders, but between leaders and leaders as well. We suggest that to be rich and fruitful, it should include learning about one another's life and work; looking at

how each of us as individuals, as well as each of our councils, is participating in the mission of Christ, in the transformation of the Gospel, and in evangelization. We want to explore the future direction of collaborative efforts on the national level among councils, and between councils and the bishops."

Twenty-five people from the Dioceses of Davenport, El Paso, and Manchester and the Archdioceses of St. Louis and San Antonio met with the NCCB Committee on the Laity and representatives from the board of the National Council of Catholic Laity (NCCL). Principal speakers were Archbishop Jean Jadot, then apostolic delegate to the United States; Archbishop Edward McCarthy, then chairman of the Bishops' Committee on the Laity; Jean Eckstein, then president of the National Council of Catholic Laity; Dolores Leckey, director of the Laity Secretariat; Joan Thoma, St. Louis Council of Catholic Laity; Ferd Niehaus, Cincinnati Archdiocesan Council of Laity; Virginia Maragos, Diocese of El Paso; and Chief Adolphus Mbah, president of the Nigerian Council of Catholic Laity.

3. The *Learning to Share Ministry Responsibly Conference* was held in Washington, D.C., February 1-3, 1980. Its purpose was to identify the theological, pastoral, psychological, and sociological dimensions of ministry shared by the ordained, the laity, and the religiously vowed; to identify and reflect upon the practical issues involved in shared ministry, including the obstacles; to model, through the experience of the conference itself, shared learning; to provide material for the "Plan of Pastoral Action for Single Young Adult Ministry"; to contribute to the learning of others through the publication of the conference proceedings. (The resultant book, *Growing Together*, is available from the United States Catholic Conference's Office of Publishing and Promotion Services.)

The principal speakers for the *Learning to Share Ministry* conference were Rev. Henri J. M. Nouwen, then professor at Yale Divinity School; Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, OSB, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Bishop John S. Cummins, Oakland, California; Virginia Sullivan Finn, then Catholic chaplain at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston; Theresa Monroe, then dean of students, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago; James J. Greer, Jr., associate retreat director, Passionist Retreat House, West Springfield, Massachusetts.

4. A *Consultation on Lay Spirituality in America* was held in Adrian, Michigan, June 11-14, 1981. The purpose of this consultation was "to enable national lay leaders and others committed explicitly to spiritual development to come together and share what we anticipated would be diverse expressions of American spirituality . . . to identify more clearly the spiritual

resources that are present in the Christian community and . . . to shed some light on how these resources might be brought to bear on the critical issues facing the Church and the world." (The proceedings are contained in the book *The Tree of Hope*, also available from the USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services.)

The consultation's principal speakers were Gerald Hughes, executive director of Cursillo; Thomas Keating, OCSO, then Abbot of St. Joseph's Abbey, Spencer, Massachusetts, currently at St. Benedict's Monastery, Snowmass, Colorado; Virginia Sullivan Finn, coordinator of women's concerns, Weston School of Theology; Ray Kemmerer, lay minister at Lorton Reformatory in Virginia and founding director of the IMPAC Youth Retreat; Mary Sullivan, RC, and Dot Horstmann, cofounders of At-Home Retreats; Mary and Stanley Kramer, Teams of Our Lady; Barbara Ramsey, Church of the Saviour; Fr. Clarence Williams, CPPS, St. Anthony's Church; Dr. Lawrence S. Cunningham, professor of religion, Florida State University.

5. *Work and Faith in Society: Catholic Perspectives* was held October 23-25, 1983, at the University of Notre Dame. The purpose of this consultative conference was to provide a forum in which representatives of the NCCB could listen to the experiences of Catholic leaders from various occupations and could hear their reflections on the connection between work and faith. Some foundational questions were: What is my life as a professional like? What does it have to do with my faith? What kind of ministry challenges and supports me as a Christian? What are my expectations of the Church? How has the Church supported or failed me? (An entire issue of *New Catholic World* [May/June 1984] was devoted to this topic, with "Work and Faith" participants authoring all the articles. In addition, the conference spurred the writing of a handbook that enables dioceses and parishes to explore the topic for themselves. *Work and Faith in Society: A Handbook for Dioceses and Parishes* is available from the USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services.)

Principal speakers for the conference were Kenneth L. Woodward, senior writer, *Newsweek*; Dr. Sally Cunneen, educator and associate editor, *Cross Currents*; Ralph Graham Neas, executive director, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights; Dr. Doris Donnelly, theologian and author; Rev. John A. Coleman, SJ, sociologist and theologian; Rev. James Bacik, campus minister and theologian.

What follows is a synthesis of the recommendations resulting from these five consultations and conferences, together with those emerging from other publications. These recommendations have been related to the four calls to the laity as found in the bishops'

statement *Called and Gifted*. An additional resource used in the synthesis is the study undertaken in 1983, at the request of the National Advisory Council (comprised of bishops, laity, priests, deacons, and religious), on shared responsibility in diocesan pastoral councils. This study resulted in the 1984 publication *Building the Local Church: Shared Responsibility in Diocesan Pastoral Councils*. (This book is also available from the USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services.) The study reports the results of a survey of dioceses, as well as a number of in-depth interviews, and relates primarily to the call to administrative ministry in the Church.

I. The Call to Adulthood

The *call to adulthood* is the first of the bishops' calls to the laity and they state:

One of the chief characteristics of lay men and women today is their growing sense of being adult members of the Church. Adulthood implies knowledge, experience and awareness, freedom and responsibility, and mutuality in relationships.

The areas in which this "growing sense" was seen included evangelization, theological reflection, and laity serving in leadership positions on committees and boards. Adult Christian living was also identified in "the daily struggle to live out Christian values in family, neighborhood, school, government, and work," because "the laity are uniquely present in and to the world."

This theme is evident in the conferences and consultations. It was a call seen, not only as reflecting the need for laity to develop a mature understanding of their role in the Church, but for the clergy to accept and cooperate with the laity. As Archbishop Jadot said, at the *Learning to Share Ministry* conference, "We should not wait for a crisis situation to prepare for lay ministries, because these are essential to the Church."

1. Participants at the *Manresa Conference* made a number of comments relating to this call.

Archbishop Jadot spoke of the need for more collaboration between laity and bishops. "There is not enough reactive sharing and consultation . . . we have not realized the dynamism of Vatican II, which seeks to open up to all--men and women--full participation in the ministry of the Church and the mystery of Christ."

The Laity Round Table, composed of leaders of various organizations and movements, identified the need for academic, as well as experiential, preparation for full participation in the life

of the Church; training for the laity in coresponsibility; and lay-clergy cooperation and collaboration.

Participants also commented on the challenge of making laity aware of who they are in the Church and of the extensive ministries available to lay persons through organizations and movements. Their recommendations included (1) regular consultations of bishops and laity; (2) consultation with other than middle-of-the-road organizations; (3) an expanded role for consultants to the Bishops' Committee on the Laity; (4) similar meetings on the diocesan level; and (5) open organizational contact and communication.

In addition, the participants spoke of the need to look into definitions of the laity. Further suggestions included (1) an appeal for funding from the national Church for all lay organizations; (2) a call for pastoral councils at all levels; (3) the need to deal with both clergy and laity in any program of parish renewal or evangelization; (4) a desire to reach out to other groups, as well as to youth, blacks, and Hispanics.

2. By the very nature of its participants, the *Diocesan Councils of Catholic Laity Consultation* was concerned with how the laity could play a more active and responsible role in the life of the Church. Joan Thoma said that in St. Louis the continuing education of council members was considered important. She also stressed that listening to the people--meeting them where they are--is vital and pointed to lay leadership training programs as the most effective method of activating the laity.

Reinforcing these ideas, Ferd Niehaus spoke of the need to have an organized laity in order to accomplish anything of magnitude, while Virginia Maragos described the special communication problems in a geographically large diocese with a relatively small, scattered Catholic population.

In his introduction, Archbishop McCarthy described the consultation as an important and innovative step in recognizing and enabling greater lay involvement in the life and ministry of the Church in the United States. He said, "Especially do we, the Bishops' Committee on the Laity, representing the bishops of the United States, want this to be different--as it establishes a special warm relationship of affection, recognition, admiration, gratitude, encouragement, and communication with the lay leaders who have caught the authentic vision of the Church--a people, every one of whom has a calling to share in some way the transforming life that the Son of God brought to mankind to pulsate forever through human history."

Archbishop McCarthy continued: "We [the Committee on the Laity] received two mandates from the body of bishops: (1) to develop within the bishops' conference an instrumentality of the

bishops that would make the relations of the bishops' conference and the laity more effective by reaching out to communicate with, enable, and encourage the faithful to assume their roles as collaborators in the mission and work of the Church; (2) to explore with the laity what, if any, form of national organization of American Catholic laity is desirable today. . . . We are convinced that if there is to be any type of national council or organization of laity, it should be uniquely just that--of the laity--and not imposed, designed, or dominated by the bishops."

After discussing the development of new structures, such as parish councils, councils of the laity, and pastoral councils that resulted from Vatican II, Jean Eckstein explained how the NCCL hoped to help these new structures. Many dioceses, however, had not recognized the need for a national body of laity; the timing was wrong and the effort was misunderstood.

"There also needs to be an opportunity for lay leaders to emerge," Ms. Eckstein said. "We see the activity and the involvement of lay leaders and lay people on parish councils. Gradually, they come up to the DCCL, or to the regional council if there is one, and gradually up to the national level. This is training for them--becoming more and more aware of what the bishops are trying to do, of what the program of the Church is in the United States and in the world, and so forth. So, we get a lay leader who knows what he or she is talking about, who is dedicated to the Church, and who then can be a true voice of at least one lay person. It's very hard to speak for the laity of the Church in the United States."

Ms. Eckstein continued by saying: "There is no question in my mind (and in the minds of those people who have stuck with it all these years) that there is a need for laity to come together. I think the Church in the United States--the bishops in the United States--needs informed laity. And, they need informed laity who are *not* unattached; they need laity who are attached to other groups so there can be larger reflection when it is brought to bear on a case."

In the course of the small-group discussions, specific needs and recommendations surfaced, some of which directly related to the *call to adulthood*.

There was a pressing, felt need for continuing education and continuing communication. One of the responsibilities of spiritual leadership, it was stated, is to lead people--priests, religious, and laity--to a new understanding of the role of the laity in the Church.

There was agreement among the bishops that there are important advantages to the team approach, with laity, clergy, and religious working together, although Archbishop McCarthy felt

that some specific lay structure might be needed to parallel the special structures already existing for priests and sisters.

The problem of how the theory of shared responsibility should be implemented was discussed. Bishop Joseph McKinney, expressing the importance of building the structure from the bottom up, said that he saw the bishop's task as one of listening and being sensitive to what is happening at the grass-roots level. Similarly, Bishop Howard Hubbard warned that in order to be effective, diocesan structures must be responsive to the parish. Bishop Daniel Hart said that experience, not theory, should be the basis for developing a conciliar model of Church, with a broad-based, participatory planning process.

3. The lay voices heard in the *Learning to Share Ministry Responsibly Conference* were concerned primarily with ministry in the Church and the world. However, Virginia Finn touched on the question of adulthood when she said that the laity need to be affirmed and valued: "A professional lay minister . . . wrote to me that her most discouraging experience in ministry is 'watching and hearing clergy and religious talk and act as if lay folks don't exist as adult, determining members of the Church.' Can we at least agree that if lay people are to be part of the shared ministerial responsibility, they should be perceived and should perceive themselves as informed, adult, determining members of the Church?"

Recommendations offered at the end of the conference included the following: the various categories of ministry should be defined, and the development of a new clericalism avoided; professionalism among lay ministers should not be allowed to exclude other laity from participation; new models for education and formation should be developed.

4. At the *Consultation on Lay Spirituality*, a participating bishop commented: "I have always had a dream that dioceses would set up think tanks. Many dioceses have an incredible ability to raise money that little justice and peace groups would have to struggle for years to match. Many of our major dioceses could put together very significant teams of people, not only to do the research, but also to do the programming. This would not just be an educational thing, but involvement on a practical level."

One of the conclusions drawn from this consultation was that "we need a deeper appreciation of the parish--its problems, its possibilities, and its potential. That is where the majority of people receive their spiritual nourishment; so, it should be given more attention."

5. The *Work and Faith in Society* conference was mainly concerned--as its title suggests--with ministry to the world. However, participants at the conference (both men and women)

urgently called for the Church to listen to women, affirming without reservation women's place in the work force. They urged recognition and support systems for working women and said that when and if ministries are restructured, they should reflect the equality of women to the extent possible.

Comments from the open forum stressed the importance of accepting the laity as adult members of the Church. One participant said, "Lay people need to be told that they are good; that as God has forgiven them, they should forgive themselves; that they need not be afraid, neither for now nor eternity."

Another of the conference attendees pointed out that "lay involvement depends, in large part, on the willingness of church leaders to allow it. Community grows only when it is nurtured and encouraged. We would hope that the clerical leaders would acknowledge that American Catholics are not uneducated, secularized immigrants who need constant instruction, direction, and admonition. Our church institutions of learning have taught us to question, to study our faith and tradition, and to have the freedom of exercising an informed conscience. . . . When we are faced with the difficult problems in life and our professions, we need more than rules, regulations, and guidelines. What would Jesus say? How would He act?"

A third participant offered the following recommendations: "Deeply involve lay people in processes for expanding a personal relationship with Jesus. . . . Ideas can be picked up and tried from other movements that have been very successful in involving people. Next, invite lay people to dialogue on issues . . . using their expertise and their prayerful discernment at the levels of the nation, the diocese, and the parish."

Kenneth Woodward expressed some of these same feelings when he exclaimed, "Just because I am writing about religion does not mean I am a frustrated priest."

II. The Call to Holiness

In their second call to the laity, the bishops stated:

Not only are lay people included in God's call to holiness, but theirs is a unique call requiring a unique response which itself is a gift of the Holy Spirit. . . . [L]ay men and women hear the call to holiness . . . in and through the events of the world, the pluralism of modern living, the complex decisions and conflicting values they must struggle with, the richness and fragility of sexual relationships, the delicate balance between activity and stillness, presence and privacy, love and loss.

. . . Increasingly, lay men and women are seeking spiritual formation and direction in deep ways of prayer. . . .

These developments present a challenge to the parish because, for the most part, the spiritual needs of lay people must be met in the parish. The parish must be a home where they can come together with their leaders for mutual spiritual enrichment, much as in the early Church. . . .

. . . [A]s lay persons assume their roles in liturgical celebration according to the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on them for that purpose, the ordained celebrant will be more clearly seen as the one who presides over the community, bringing together the diverse talents of the community as a gift to the Father.

1. The *Manresa Conference* did not focus on spirituality as a separate issue. However, as will be noted shortly, this topic received considerable attention at the *Learning to Share Ministry* conference and at the *Consultation on Lay Spirituality*.

2. At the *Diocesan Councils of Catholic Laity Consultation*, one of the small groups addressed the question of how laity can be effectively renewed, mentioning homilies, personal contact, spiritual formation weekends, and leadership workshops.

In his presentation, Chief Adolphus Mbah pointed out some areas of need: "There is indeed the need for new zeal and determination on the part of the Catholic laity all over the world to

show authentic Christian life and attitude of full commitment to God and the Church. There is the need to deepen the faith for more effective organization from the grass roots to the national level."

3. In his keynote address at the *Learning to Share Ministry* conference, Henri Nouwen stressed the importance of prayer in ministry: "The minister must be first and foremost a man or woman of prayer. Without prayer, ministry quickly degenerates into a busy life, in which our own needs for acceptance and affection start to dominate our actions and being busy becomes a way of convincing ourselves of our importance. In prayer, we discover that the seemingly heavy task of ministry is, in fact, an easy yoke and a light burden of our Lord."

Virginia Finn's comment pointed to the importance of developing a lay spirituality: "Without hesitation, I say that the greatest gift of my ministerial study was the development of a contemplative spirituality, experiencing God intimately in everyday life in specific ways related to my web, including my ministry. If the Church does not form its lay ministers with a strong lay spiritual dynamic, it may end up manufacturing a new class of civil servants."

4. By its very nature, the *Consultation on Lay Spirituality* focused on this call, with two speakers offering special insights. The first was Abbot Keating, who introduced his talk by saying that "monasticism is probably the original lay movement of spirituality in the Christian tradition." He continued: "The more that I live it, the more I realize that it is really everybody's life, because there is a little bit of the monk in each of us. . . . Our basic vocation is to be a human being: a member of the human family for whom Christ died and in whom he dwells as the deep self. A human being is someone with the potential to become divine."

Spirituality is manifested as "a desire to be alone with God from time to time, for a simpler life style, for interior silence and deeper prayer." The Abbot elaborated: "There are many paths . . . to the discovery of the mystery that is the source of everything. All genuine paths tend to converge at the goal. The main thing is to be touched by one of these paths and to accept it as the one destined for us; then to persevere in it regardless of the difficulties that may arise from the length of the journey, the politics of the time, or other people. . . . The spiritual dimension suggests that if we let some things go, we would have more energy for our spiritual journey. Perhaps the principle of monastic or any other detachment is just to cut down to things that are really essential and not to surrender to things that don't really matter."

In his presentation, Dr. Lawrence Cunningham continued with the theme of spirituality and holiness by identifying "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Saint":

1. They teach others how to see value in their religious vision and show others new possibilities.
2. They testify to the perennial values of the Gospel and simply act directly.
3. They illustrate a new way of being Christian, appropriate to the time in which they live, and they become relevant to later periods by what they add to the tradition.
4. They model a new way of being and are, by their very lives, signs of contradiction to their own era.
5. They are always bearers of prophetic judgment and say to the believing community, "You are not doing well enough," to the unbelieving community, "Here is a contradiction for you to notice."
6. They often record a second conversion in their lives, but it is not this that makes them saints but rather the persistence with which they follow their life after that conversion.
7. They do not burn out.
8. They will often define an age.
9. They will continue the tradition of the desert fathers from the new deserts of the prisons and concentration camps of the world.
10. They will continue the life of the imagination.
11. They will seek spiritual enrichment by passing over to other traditions, such as Buddhism, learning from them, and coming back home.
12. There is room for everyone in the tradition of the saints; the ones we learn about are only the tip of the millions who have sought to put on Christ.
13. We need to look for the saints and have them nurture us because they enrich our tradition.

Virginia Finn was concerned by the example of the student whose most intimate relationship was with a machine: "He came back week after week, concerned about where he stood spiritually in relation to this machine." She said that people are beginning to identify themselves as machines and asked, "How does one evoke contemplation in such a setting [as MIT]?" She had discovered that the Ignatian retreat "gave the students the first opportunity to express their negative feelings--feelings of being terribly pressured by the Institute, of being lonely, of being afraid

of intimacy, of being afraid of the very machines they are creating. They were sorrowful because they realized that they were putting God on hold in their lives." She also commented that doctoral students of theoretical science "are drawn to a reflection and contemplation of the universe. They feel like misfits in a Church that is so focused on the biblical.

Ray Kemmerer spoke of the IMPAC Youth Retreat, which has some of the dynamics of Cursillo but has been designed primarily for black youth "who found that the effects [of Cursillo] ended abruptly when they went back to their own environment." IMPAC attempts to show the dignity and the spirituality of the black culture. "The program says that there is a lot to learn from different cultures, but it is often overlooked because we don't have the time or interest or openness."

Dot Horstmann and Mary Sullivan, whose At-Home Retreats are based on the exercises of St. Ignatius, made the following comments:

"When we see Spanish, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Dutch, and Flemish people, married women, married men, couples, singles, and those who are divorced and separated, all making the retreats, we realize all the possibilities that there are out there," said Ms. Sullivan.

"Because the retreat [takes] place in the home environment it [has] rather special results. It is a prayer experience, and it is not intended for people who want to study Scripture or understand the changes that have been taking place in the Church. We meet as groups, people with similar life styles, led by a lay-religious team. For example, a retreat for married women would have a married woman on their team, who could relate to their experience," explained Ms. Horstmann.

"The essential part of the retreat is the commitment to fifteen minutes of prayer each day. . . . Because people stay in their daily environment, instead of finding daily life a distraction from God, they find that this life is a tool for becoming closer to God," she continued. "People realize that prayer does not occur only in church or when they are away from home, it is right there in the everyday things of life. Christ is alive and well in their children, in their husbands, in the family rooms."

Mary and Stanley Kramer represented the Teams of Our Lady, an international organization. Each team is comprised of three to six couples and a chaplain and meets monthly. Couples are expected to pray together daily, say the team prayer daily, and participate in the team meeting each month, as well as attend a retreat once a year. "When you sit down with the same group of people each month for a number of years, you are able to share

some really deep thoughts. You can ask for support from your team that your priest may not be able to give you."

Barbara Ramsey of the Church of the Saviour, a Protestant ecumenical church, said that each member of the church is expected to make a retreat at least once (preferably twice) a year for a minimum of a weekend of silence. "When we are in the world and busy with many things, we often experience ourselves as very fragmented and scattered. This can be a devastating, deadly experience, or it can provide a breakthrough to new levels of the reality of union with God. So, I think of a retreat as a recollecting time to gather those pieces together so that I am conscious that there is wholeness and can let God deal with the true self that exists, apart from the various roles that I play. I cannot do this without some focus," she explained.

"I think of the experience of being with small children, who are very busy, running everywhere. Sometimes they will simply sit in your lap and be still, letting you be with them--not to tell them what they ought to do when they grow up or what they have done wrong that day--just simply to be with them. It is a very precious time, and it occurred to me that perhaps God longs for that kind of precious time with us. The mystery and miracle . . . is that . . . our children discover from this experience who they are, and then they can sprout the wings to be about what they need to be about. It is only if we can come into this place of silence, to be held by the living God who loves us, that we can develop the roots and wings to be about the business of being Church in the world," Ms. Ramsey concluded.

The round-table discussion was intended to apply the dynamism of spirituality to the burning social issues of our time. It brought to the surface a number of the difficulties and struggles experienced by participants, particularly in reference to the apparent struggle between concern for social justice and spirituality. "I don't believe that the dichotomy is between the spiritual and the outward journeys because [as it says] in the Old Testament, to know God is to know justice. Jesus told us that to know him we must know the Father, and to know Jesus is really to know justice, and to know justice is to know peace," commented Ellen Burns.

"I sought out some Christian-based resistance communities that provided me with a solid foundation on which to try to live some form of spirituality in the twentieth century. . . . I think there needs to be a time for quiet, and I have moved into a Christian community to try to find that kind of base. Even though we talk about nonviolent action, many people see it as aggressive and have a real problem identifying that as part of the Christian message. Often, I think that they reject it because of this . . . so,

we need a time for quiet, for renewal and reflection, to make sure that the work is what Christ would have us do and not simply a reflection of our wish to be do-gooders," said Pat Spring.

"We find that many people who are working in social justice ministries are close to burnout and do not have the time to be renewed because they are constantly 'doing.' We try to help them develop a discipline so that they can incorporate prayer and meditation into their lives. . . . People who are working on the inner journey are constantly struggling with the problem of how they move into the outward journey. I think we have to develop compassion, not just for ourselves or the people close to us, but for family, friends, and people wherever they are. The whole process is a transformation," explained Cecilia Braveboy.

Three members of the group, who were not identified, added their comments to the discussion:

"I believe that until small communities learn to come together, to celebrate together, and to be with one another in a very peaceful and simple way, justice and world peace will elude us," said one participant.

"If someone attacks me, I have the right to defend myself, even if it means killing someone to do so . . . but, when you look at the Christian's life in Jesus, the word *survival* is not even included in the list of values. That is the radical insecurity we are talking about, and for me the only way to confront that is through contemplation from time to time," added another.

A third participant pointed out, "The reality is that, for most of us in this room, our life style is largely dependent on oil companies and other big industries. The system in which we live and from which we draw our well-being is one of clinical madness, because, in our insecurity, we build bigger weapons and therefore grow more insecure."

Finally, Bill Beatty made the potent comment: "A cry for justice that comes from anger is not a work of the Spirit of God. It is self-defeating."

5. At the *Work and Faith in Society* conference, Dr. Doris Donnelly, speaking of the Catholic spiritual tradition, said: "The outreach from prayer is direct, immediate, painful, and real. The fact that a rigorous, committed prayer life leads to solidarity with our brothers and sisters, especially the poor ones, the ones in need, is axiomatic."

Jesuit Father John Coleman stressed the need for dialogue, pointing out that "if our Catholic press does not publish accounts of people talking about lay spirituality, if our parishes do not help people to talk about prayer in everyday life, then little will be accomplished. This is a new kind of dialogue; no one really knows how to enter into it. This type of dialogue could transform

our whole society, because, if we did talk about this, a truly secular and a truly Christian spirituality ultimately promises closer harmony with the world of everyday life and our faith."

Participants asked for a fuller development of a theology of work, as well as a spirituality of work, rooted in the concrete experience of the laity. Someone observed that if faith is connected with work, it can become a vocation and a joy; without faith, it can become a drudgery.

"One clear part of this process involves lay persons learning to trust their own experiences," said one participant. "This means less dependence on clergy and more effort to join together with other members of the laity who are serious about spiritual growth. My sense is that the resulting spirituality will be less programmed and more situational."

Another stressed the need to have love as your foundation: "True love has three principles associated with it. First, since it is from God, it is always transforming and brings life to those who receive it and those who give it. Second, it is always freely given and must be freely received; it is never coercive. Third, it always renders the lover vulnerable since to give this love means to open yourself to the beloved. That's quite a task for a group of lay people to commit themselves to, but His love is really transforming and our team has become more and more united and supportive."

A third participant suggested, "The Church should develop systems to spread the techniques for enabling [people] to expand their personal relationship with the Lord and to discern what they should do and how they should live in that context."

III. The Call to Ministry

In the third of their four calls to the laity, the bishops stated:

Baptism and confirmation empower all believers to share in some form of ministry. . . .

This unity in the ministry should be especially evident in the relationships between laity and clergy as lay men and women respond to the call of the Spirit in their lives. The clergy help to call forth, identify, coordinate, and affirm the diverse gifts bestowed by the Spirit.

Ministry in the World

The bishops felt a need to make a distinction within their call to ministry, with one part of the call addressing the secular aspect and a second part of the call dealing with the religious:

Because of lay persons, Christian service or ministry broadly understood includes civic and public activity, response to the imperatives of peace and justice, and resolution of social, political, and economic conflicts, especially as they influence the poor, oppressed and minorities.

The whole Church faces unprecedented situations in the contemporary world, and lay people are at the cutting edge of these new challenges. It is they who engage directly in the task of relating Christian values and practices to complex questions such as those of business ethics, political choice, economic security, quality of life, cultural development and family planning.

. . . In those areas of life in which they are uniquely present and within which they have special competency because of their particular talents, education and experience, they are an extension of the Church's redeeming presence in the world. Recognition of lay rights and responsibilities should not create a divisiveness between clergy and laity but should express the full range of the influence of the People of God.

1. Participants at the *Manresa Conference* felt that there is a need to go beyond the present view and talk about the prospects for the Church at all levels, in all areas of society, in public policy and public service.

2. The concerns of the *Diocesan Councils of Catholic Laity Consultation* were primarily with the role of the laity within the structures of the Church. However, Jean Eckstein told of being asked to be a special adviser to the United States delegation to the United Nations for a special session on disarmament, through which she learned how her religious and moral values related to the wider world. "The real purpose of my being there was . . . to see and to hear and to observe and to think, and I was to take home to Catholic groups the need for them to be informed, the need for them to get acquainted with the gospel message of peace and justice," she said.

3. Although the *Learning to Share Ministry* conference was concerned primarily with ministry in the Church, the question of ministry in the world was also addressed. Virginia Finn, in her plea that those trained in lay ministries should avoid falling into the trap of developing a disdain for the world, cautioned, "Experience related to the web of secular work and pluralistic socialization should be a prior requirement for lay ministry, whether volunteer or professional." She also commented that "what looks in the literature like an avalanche of lay ministries could be no more than a snowball in relation to the needs of the whole laity."

4. At the *Consultation on Lay Spirituality*, a participant reflected: "I believe we have really done a good job in liturgy and education. The most neglected area is social service and particularly social justice. For the rest of my days, I really have to be committed to try to create, at least in my part of the world, a more just and equitable society, so that there will be peace. . . . That is why I promote peace groups and coalitions, particularly *Pax Christi*, because if we are to have peace, we have to create justice."

Abbot Keating made the point: "As I see it, every level of Christian witness is going to have an impact on what happens in the twenty-first century. . . . [B]y whatever means these spiritual values are communicated to every level of society, we must do everything that we can as Christians to try to change society. The witness of people who are leading our communities is perhaps one of the great secrets of success in active ministry. Timing is important, because there is a time to act and a time to wait."

Another participant commented: "We are building alternative structures that empower people and enable them to take control of

their own lives. That is very much a part of how we see living out the Gospel and the liberation that Christ taught. Even though we talk about nonviolent action, many people see it as aggressive and have a real problem identifying that as part of the Christian message." Still another voiced the opinion: "It occurs to me that social change takes place in three ways. First, small changes are made by determined people who see problems and attack them. . . . The second way that change occurs is through the charismatic persons. . . . The third way that society is changed is on a large scale at institutional, government levels. . . . These changes come from the possession of two things: knowledge and power. If you want to change society, you have to have people who know what they are talking about, who understand what is going on. That is why we need people who have made the interior journey to be the intellectuals of change. I see a lack in our willingness to engage in issues at the intellectual level."

5. The conference on *Work and Faith in Society* gave serious consideration to this ministry, although it was pointed out that there was a built-in limitation--this was a privileged group of people, who could talk about *enjoying* their work. For most people, work is seen as a necessity rather than as a source of fulfillment.

Dr. Sally Cunneen, speaking on professional life and vocation, made the point that "Church exists to serve the world; Church is a way of relating to the world, a pointer to God's presence." She continued: "My formal Catholic education, though it nourished my belief in God, the practice of worship both public and private, and established certain ideals permanently, did not at all help me to see the connection between them and the world. Nor did it suggest anything I could do. The icon of St. Sebastian pierced with arrows did not help me in my search for a vocation."

Further illustrating her point, Dr. Cunneen said: "Young people, those born after Catholicism achieved the goal of entering mainstream American culture, have little sense that their faith demands intellectual and moral distinctions from them, particularly in questioning the dominant values of success in our country. They have not had the great blessing that I had--seeing it as a task for their lives. Yet, my education suggests that we can only be Church . . . if we can learn to demand much of all our members, then encourage their freedom of response and support them in their effort. If the Spirit rises where it will, it is going to come up in some very surprising ways and people."

Several other conference participants commented on the theme:

"I think being Christians in a secular world is far more difficult and far more of a challenge than we are really prepared to admit," said one.

"The American Catholic laity has a special mission to serve the world because of the role leadership history has placed upon our nation. As we think in global terms, it is not just material things we must share with people of other nations but our friendships, our lives, our sufferings," another participant commented.

"It is our inherent responsibility to be Christian leaven and presence between Sundays--to play our own personal role in the challenging process of Christianizing the business world. We perform our business function in the context of our community. We have the opportunity, if not the obligation, to share our wealth and talents beyond our business in the community which is our home, that of our employees, and perhaps [that of] the customers of our organization. Although there are many valid and important ways to serve the Lord, I believe that proper corporate responsibility fulfillment must go beyond the donation of money," one participant pointed out.

"The institutional Church has given leadership, rationale, and example to its members to aid their development as caring persons in the world. But, it is a largely secular world, especially when social and public institutions ascribe supremacy to property rights over human rights, the reverse of the Christian concept. Lay people operating in such a climate of opinion need support of a tangible nature. In this respect, the institutional Church is lacking," added another participant.

Ministry in the Church

In *Called and Gifted*, the bishops stated the following with regard to the laity's call to ministry within the Church:

Ecclesial ministers, i.e., lay persons who have prepared for professional ministry in the Church, represent a new development. We welcome this as a gift to the Church. There are also persons who serve the Church by the witness of their lives and their self-sacrificing service and empowerment of the poor in works such as administration, housing, job development, and education. All these lay ministers are undertaking roles which are not yet clearly spelled out and which are already demanding sacrifices and risks of them and their families. . . .

Special mention must be made of women who in the past have not always been allowed to take their proper role in the Church's ministry. We see the need for an increased role for women in the ministries of the Church to the extent possible.

1. At the *Manresa Conference*, Bishop Raymond Lucker pointed to the laity's significant role in evangelization and catechesis. All of us must not only preach but teach the Catholic faith, and the most pressing need in the Church today is the evangelization and catechesis of adult Catholics.

Small groups considering the bishop's talk asked, How do we reach young people who are struggling and who are not in parishes? How can we facilitate conversion experiences for adults?

The Saturday afternoon groups on evangelization commented on the following: the importance of one-to-one relationships in evangelization; the need for continuing education; the importance of making room for the "unsaved" among us and the need to beware of creating a "saved" elite.

Another emphasis was on parish councils: they need training, renewal, and spiritual development.

There is much talk about alienated Catholics, but it seems that people do not care enough to take the next step. The reasons for this alienation need to be understood before an evangelization program is launched.

Dr. Richard Westley, a member of the theology faculty of Loyola University (Chicago), described a conciliar model of Church, in which laity, priests, and bishops carry out their distinct but equally vital roles, continually affirming each other's importance to the whole.

Bishop Albert Ottenweller pointed to the phenomenon of people seeking meaning and finding commitments outside the parish structure. He wondered why.

2. The agenda of the *Diocesan Councils of Catholic Laity Consultation* was almost exclusively concerned with the call to ministry. The lay participants had been working with the clergy as part of the diocesan structure, and this was the focus of their comments as they discussed their own experiences and recommendations. The specific questions addressed by the small groups were the following: Is the DCCL a viable way to get lay concerns on the diocesan agenda? What makes it an effective instrument? How can it relate to the diocesan pastoral council? How can it effectively renew itself, bringing in fresh ideas, new people, new concerns?

Some participants felt that laity councils were unduly concerned about structures and representation, while others believed that the councils offer a means of getting concerns from the grass roots to the bishops. One question raised in the discussion was how the councils could work with priests to help make shared responsibility "good news" rather than a threat. It

was stressed that laity and ordained together are the Church, and the ideal is for all to work together, each recognizing the responsibilities of the others.

The following conclusions concerning diocesan councils of Catholic laity emerged from the consultation: (1) The bishop's approval is necessary. (2) Funding is vital. (3) The councils must work with pastors in a responsible fashion. (4) The needs of the diocese should be balanced against the needs of the people. (5) Leadership training is needed, with sound ecclesiology and a sense of mission. (6) The people should be personally involved. (7) Good communications should be developed and should also include the alienated. (8) Leadership should be changed frequently, while respecting the various generations. (9) The role of priests and bishops is to share the faith mutually with the laity and also to be teachers and interpreters.

In a round-table discussion, the bishops agreed that there are important advantages to the team approach within the Church, where laity, clergy, and religious work together, and all are acknowledged as "priestly" people. To develop this new model, both clergy and laity need to change their role expectations.

3. The *Learning to Share Ministry* conference devoted a good deal of time to this topic. Bishop John Cummins addressed the role of laity on parish and diocesan councils, on school boards, and in diocesan offices. Such lay involvement, he said, can often produce unexpected fruits. By way of example, the Bishop offered the following: "Eucharistic ministry was originally intended to facilitate the distribution of Communion at the Sunday Mass, but it has become an integral part of the care of the sick and elderly, while at the same time deepening the spiritual lives of the ministers themselves."

He continued by saying that there are other ministries that are especially suited to lay involvement. "Those best equipped to serve the divorced and separated are those who are themselves divorced or separated. Married couples run most of the marriage preparation courses in [my] diocese. The youth ministry is organized and served by young adults. The elderly have found a place to serve in ministry to the aging."

Bishop Cummins stressed the importance of ongoing formation for ministers, with theological and scriptural formation being given first place. He added that the virtue of patience is also needed: "Laity who leave the world of business for service in the Church sometimes seem stunned to find that their colleagues have human weaknesses or to discover some of the characteristics of Captain Bligh among the officers of the Barque of Peter."

Speaking from his own experience as a lay minister employed in a religious setting, James Greer commented that every

nonordained minister must also be a "role initiator," because there are few precedents to provide guidance. He continued: "Lay ministers find themselves, often unwittingly, in the anomalous situation of being [agents of change] in the very institution and structure on which they depend for support. . . . It is my perception that volunteers are the most shabbily treated of all ministers. The full-time minister is an investment on the part of the parish in terms of *money*, and a great source of resentment can come on the part of the volunteer ministers who have donated their time and talents freely throughout the years, with perhaps no visible sign of gratitude for their efforts."

4. Although neither the *Consultation on Lay Spirituality* nor the *Work and Faith in Society* conference dealt with the call to ministry, the "Study on Shared Responsibility in Diocesan Pastoral Councils" was concerned with this question of the role of the laity in a specific activity of the Church. Growing out of a request from the National Advisory Council, the research was carried out in conjunction with the NCCB/USCC Office of Research and resulted in the book *Building the Local Church: Shared Responsibility in Diocesan Pastoral Councils*.

Subsequently, three regional convocations were held to explore the successes, frustrations, and hopes of shared responsibility. The authors of the study, Rev. Eugene F. Hemrick and Dr. Mary P. Burke, discussed their findings, while Rev. James H. Provost, executive coordinator of the Canon Law Society of America, dealt with the theological/canonical dimensions, and George Wilson, SJ, discussed the organizational dynamics of different models of diocesan pastoral councils.

The first convocation was held September 28-30, 1984, in Belleville, Illinois; the second in San Francisco, October 12-14, 1984; the third and final convocation was held November 2-4, 1984, in Washington, D.C. Eighty-one dioceses were represented, with over 200 bishops, priests, religious, deacons, and lay persons participating.

In spite of the great diversity found in the dioceses, a pattern did emerge. The support and commitment of the diocesan bishops were major factors in the health and effectiveness of the councils. It was also agreed that the councils needed a well-defined role, with clearly delineated functions, whether advisory, policy making, or administrative. Relations with priests' councils appeared to be a widespread concern; several groups commented on a lack of support from clergy. Another problem was the need for stronger links with deanery councils and vicariates in order to connect the pastoral councils and the parishes. Better communication might also contribute to greater visibility for the councils.

VI. The Call to Community

In their fourth and final call to the laity, the bishops stated:

Because lay women and men do experience intimacy, support, acceptance, and availability in family life, they seek the same in their Christian communities. This is leading to a review of parish size, organization, priorities, and identity. It has already led to intentional communities, basic Christian communities, and some revitalized parish communities.

It is likely that this family characteristic of the laity will continue to influence and shape the community life of Christians. If it does, this should enable the clergy to give the kind of overall leadership which their office requires.

1. At the *Manresa Conference*, many participants commented on the need to start sharing their lives with others, particularly emphasizing the need for laity to give emotional support to one another.

2. As its name implies, the *Diocesan Councils of Catholic Laity Consultation* did not concern itself with the community aspect of laity, as such, but rather dealt with the council and its structure.

3. In his keynote address at the *Learning to Share Ministry* conference, Rev. Henri Nouwen considered the characteristic common to all who are called to ministry: "[They] are men and women without power who live in the Name of their Lord. . . . Real ministers, real servants, are powerless. They cannot even decide how to be servants. If training and formation are valuable, it is not because they offer us some power, but because they lead us to a powerless availability." According to Nouwen, it is in living out this powerlessness that we discover what ministry really is. He warned against the twin ministerial temptations: recapturing power through Word and Sacrament, when these are treated as professional tools; or recapturing power through

individualism, through a "spiritual pioneerism." Ministry, in short, must be a shared vocation: "Bishops have seldom had the experience, while they were priests, of working closely with men and women in the ministry."

Archbishop Rembert Weakland, OSB, defined the Church's mission as "to grow in holiness, to spread the Good News, and to bring salvation to the world." All the baptized are responsible for fulfilling that mission, according to their individual gifts and talents, and "one should not feel that the baptismal ministry of itself is incomplete unless found in ordained ministers." The Archbishop identified three characteristics that seem necessary for the official recognition of ecclesial ministries: (1) The need and the service rendered to that need should be permanent. 2) The service should be rendered in the name of the whole faith community and not as a private enterprise. (3) The ministry should fulfill a service recognized as important for the whole local Church.

4. At the *Consultation on Lay Spirituality*, one of the participants summed up the general feelings of the group, with regard to the call to community. "I don't think that people are able to grow on their own. The group brought out the strength of our different traditions, as well as our own skills and talents, and people were able to develop more deeply in whatever particular area they focused on. They had not been able to do that by themselves, and I think the same is true of people working with social issues."

5. After the conference on *Work and Faith in Society*, Bishop James Hoffman noted that the participants--all professionals--"expressed a loneliness in their efforts to connect work and faith. The starting point is their daily experience . . . and that gives rise to the questions. We heard a plea for networking mechanisms, for mediating structures."

Another participant illustrated this concern: "We neglect dialogue at our peril. It seems [a] mistake to suppose that the philosopher or the theologian can dictate the terms of discourse, the criteria, or the laws of meaning and speculation in a particular discipline. It is embarrassing to see a well-meant pastoral pronouncement vitiated by some fatal misunderstanding, a flaw that could have been anticipated by consulting a trustworthy and well-disposed Catholic scholar. It is just as much an error for the specialist to suppose that with his knowledge in his own field, he can overtrump the poised analysis of the theologian and pastor."

Additional comments made during the course of the conference spoke of this call to community:

One participant asked: "To whom do the caregivers turn for support and inspiration? What does sustain them? Most rely on

prayer, the Eucharist, and the reservoir of faith developed in their youth. They long for replenishment. When faced with a spiritual problem that needs discussion, the caregiver turns to a spouse, [to] a colleague whom he trusts and respects, or to a priest who is a friend. Many feel apart from organized parish activities and isolated from the church community. Secular leadership carries with it a certain degree of aloneness, even a loneliness."

Another felt that "[we should] recognize that 'small is beautiful.' There is a sense of involvement, community, [and] relationship in relatively small groups, but that is not present to a sufficient degree in many parishes of the institutional Church today."

Conclusion

In their pastoral statement *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity*, the bishops eloquently summarized the mandate and challenge of the Church, today and tomorrow:

The Church is to be a sign of God's Kingdom in the world. The authenticity of that sign depends on all the people: laity, religious, deacons, priests, and bishops. Unless we truly live as the People of God, we will not be much of a sign to ourselves or the world.

The laity have been called to adulthood, holiness, ministry, and community. Their continuing answer is crucial to the Church.