

THE ORDER: ECUMENICAL

A Collection of Brief Essays on the Dynamics of Order Polity

Working Document  
Not for Publication



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## FOREWARD

The following pages are what they are titled: a series of brief essays on the polity of the Order: Ecumenical. They are not the "rule" of the Order, finally committed to writing. They are not formal Council pronouncements. They are simply a series of brief essays on some matters of crucial importance to all of us, because they are about the living formation of the Order, past, present, and future.

In the Spring, the 4th Quarter of 1977, five persons were set aside to write these essays. They spent each morning, during the week, and each weekend, working at this task, throughout the quarter. The work was further extended into the work of Summer '77. All five persons were assigned for this quarter, to Global Centrum: Chicago. For the period of the work, they were constituted as a kind of "acting" Panchayat, so that the work would be done from within the context of the Order's most critical symbolic role, and not as outsiders, and not as mere clerks or secretaries for the corporate body. It also prevented the work from being falsely abstract, or unrealistically theoretical.

In charging the group with its task, the Dean provided it with a number of images to draw upon: first, this writing was to draw together the framework of a "great vessel" which would be the operating structures of the Order. This was to be no mean problem solving task. This was work on the order of the framing of a constitution. In fact, it was to be a constitution--but an "unwritten constitution" such as has held together the British Empire. It was to be the writing not of a legal structure that binds and prohibits, but of a living constitution that motivates and invites creativity and encourages the human venture.

The procedures used for the research and writing were quite predictable. The Order archives were scoured for every file folder on Order polity or symbolic life that could be found. There were many, some as many as fifteen or even twenty years old. There were charts and diagrams, some of them helpful, some of them only interesting because they showed how much we have changed. Then, the group scoured its own memory of how things were done in the Order, and how the operating principles worked. Then a chart was constructed that placed missional configurations in relation to each other, in relation to operating principles, in relation to symbolic practices. Only then was it even possible to think of committing anything to writing. At first,

everyone wrote at the same time on the same subject. That allowed the members to get a feel for how little or much his or her thinking differed from that of the others. It was slow, but it was a necessary step in the process. When they began to find their level, then each began to write directly, personally, on separate subjects. Then it became a matter of checking, editing, crosschecking and sometimes, re-writing. This latter process is still going on, even as these words are being penned.

The final product of the work was not what any of the group members would have imagined at the beginning of the task. We had conceived of a single, formal, unified document, not a multiplicity of short pieces. We had conceived of something that would be quite formal. In fact, many sections are quite tentative and informal. But nothing is offered without profound and careful consideration.

The group also found, in a way, to its surprise, that the subject of the document was not just polity. Or rather, polity has a way of spilling over into every other arena of human consideration. The real, the inclusive subject of the following pages is the "glue", the unifying "stuff" that holds the Order together, and allows it to be one reality, and not many and diversified.

For after all, this kind of writing is in the tradition of law and government. Decisions are always heavily based on precedent. Yesterday's opinion shaped today's, and today's opinions will modify tomorrow's. The polity and other dynamics that hold the Order together, are living dynamics. They cannot be contained or tied off, even if we wished.

Therefore, read the pages that follow. Take them seriously, but not too seriously, and remember that that is always a delicate balance, at best. Then, enter into conversation about what you have read with your colleagues. Tomorrow, you may be called upon to write the next opinion.

A COLLECTION OF BRIEF ESSAYS ON THE DYNAMICS OF ORDER POLITY

PART ONE: THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE		PART TWO: THE ESSENTIAL FORMS			PART THREE: THE FUTURE IMPLICATIONS																	
A.	THE ORDERING DYNAMIC	I	THE COMPREHENSIVE MISSION	II	THE DELIBERATIVE FUNCTION	III	THE DRAMATIC FUNCTION	IV	THE IMPLEMENTIVE FUNCTION	V	THE PRACTICAL FORMS	VI	THE PROJECTED RESPONSE	VII								
	THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT	A.	THE PRIMAL COMMUNITY	A.	THE LOCAL COLLEGIUM	A.	THE PRIORSHIP SYSTEM	A.	THE LOCAL UNITS	A.	THE POLITY DYNAMIC	A.	THE TIMELESS CONCERNS	A.								
B.	THE ORDER ECUMENICAL	B.	THE INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES	C.	THE REPRESENTATIONAL COUNCILS	D.	THE SYMBOLIC ROLE	THE EXTERNAL FORMATIONS	E.	THE INTERNAL FORMATIONS	F.	THE FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS	THE ADVISORY COMMISSIONS	C.	THE GLOBAL CENTRUM	B.	THE INCLUSIVE METHODOLOGIES	B.	THE FUTURE CONVERSATIONS			
																				B.	THE RESEARCH ASSEMBLIES	
																						THE FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS



PART ONE

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

"In any revolutionary hour man is driven to review his journey, to reconstruct his social memory, to reformulate his story about himself. The more crucial the time of upheaval the more radical must be the historical reconstruction. Now, therefore, it must begin with the very dawn of consciousness. It is in redoing our past that we find the wisdom and courage to create the models which determine the future."

Document II,  
The Declaration of the  
Spirit Movement of the  
People of God, Century  
Twenty.



## I. THE ORDERING DYNAMIC

### A. Historical Process

#### CATALYTIC ROLE

Within the course of human events, many forces come into play, weaving kaleidoscopic patterns in infinite variety and complexity. At the heart of this process civilizations rise, play out their roles and decline, only to become parts of new configurations of human interaction. Among the interacting forces there is one, the ordering dynamic, which has a foundational role, that of catalyzing historical momentum by constantly giving form to new consciousness. This dynamic has claimed many expressions but can never be simply equated to its particular manifestation. Indeed, when it is most effective in generating historical change, its forms are experienced as mere reflections of a mighty movement, served to a greater or lesser degree of adequacy. These forms arise at the center of historical upheaval and, as history moves forward, either remain fluid and lively or fixate at certain stages as residues, reminiscent of the power that continues to drive history.

#### HISTORICAL MANIFESTATIONS

The ordering dynamic in any age is the creative response to the historical trends which make apparent the need for significant social change. Its function is always performed for the sake of catalyzing new directions within the broad spectrum of secular culture. This dynamic has been referred to variously by spokesmen of our own age as "The Invisible College", "The League of History", "The Crimson Line", "Those Who Care" and "The Transestablishment". It neither assigns itself with the established patterns and structures of a particular day nor pits itself against them in rebellious opposition, but addresses with focus and intentionality the major contradiction of the times by raising a sign of alternative possibility. The ordering dynamic, in this sense, is both a cause and an effect of societal upheaval and is that upon which historical development depends, beckoning new postures, making evident latent groundswells and pointing to new rationality and form when the foundations of society itself appear to be breaking apart. From age to age its manifestations have ranged from loosely structured societies and social movements to more formalized classical religious communities. In western culture the ordering dynamic has been made visible by the Desert Fathers, the Monastic Movement, the Mendicant and Apostolic Orders and the Teaching Congregations. The primary task of each - whether educational, serving or contemplative in emphasis - emerged out of the tactical requirements for addressing the discerned sociological contradiction of an age.

## B. The Order: Ecumenical

### HISTORICAL ROOTS

The Order: Ecumenical is a contemporary manifestation of the ordering dynamic. As with other forms in other ages and cultural settings, it is made up of those who, for whatever reason, have been grasped by the world issue of the times, and have dedicated themselves to the task of building a humane future for the people of the earth. The Order: Ecumenical sprang from deep roots in the Christian tradition. Its posture was forged by extensive probing into the Christian faith, understood as the contentless ground of the way life is for everyman. Its lifestyle emerged from the study of and experimentation with classical forms of Christian monasticism. Its formal symbolic life is firmly rooted in the liturgy of the historical Christian Church.

### INCLUSIVE MISSION

The Order: Ecumenical is the global servant force which self-consciously operates on behalf of the local church dynamic in history. Its particular tasks at any given time are inclusive of teaching, service and contemplation; they reflect its intention to lend form and direction to the radical metamorphosis of the Church as the church, operating locally, is the relevant, effective demonstration of profound care in the world. In doing so, the Order: Ecumenical generates images, forges sociological models and develops practical methods which give social substance to the movement of the spirit and ground anew the Church's traditional three-fold mission: to bear witness to the word that sets men free to live creatively; to be an insistent catalytic power within the social structures ensuring their delivery of justice to all men; and to stand as a sign of hope to the world through the style which claims future possibility.

### SECULAR- RELIGIOUS

Comprised of family units - both married couples and their children, and single individuals - it stands in relation to earlier historical experimentation with the formation of a "third order". Deeply religious with respect to its drive to continually probe beneath appearances to the transparent power from which profound motivity and historical creativity flows, it is at the same time radically secular in style and radically ecumenical in composition, embracing those who by election, decision or fate stand "in but not of the world".

### POLITY VEHICLE

The polity of the Order: Ecumenical, like every other facet of its life and work, represents an experiment on behalf of the world. The globe today is experiencing an upheaval in the arena of polity, the extent and intensity of which suggest that it can be accounted for neither as historical accident nor global conspiracy. Rather, it represents a wave of history generated at its deepest levels by the rise of local man, and manifest in the passionate demand of grassroots people for authentic participation

in shaping the globe's destiny. This resurgence cannot be questioned; however, there has not yet been invented an appropriate social vehicle which allows for the creative expression of both the unity required for broad participation, and the diversity necessary for depth authenticity. The task of the Order's polity experiment has been to address the contradiction blocking the formation of an inclusive polity structure applicable on any level of society.

PAST  
EXPERIMENTATION

During the past 20 years the Order has organized itself in many ways to come at various facets of the contradiction. There has been experimentation with a Permanent House Church and a Presbytery that included Senate, Session and Consistory; there have been ecclesiolas, congregations, teams, Presidiums, Councils, task forces, centrums and collegiums - each of which played a role in clarifying the issues of polity and allowing the necessary decisions to emerge as grassroots consensus, rather than hierarchically imposed directives. At times the forms have been cumbersome, at times the operations slow, but generally they have been effective in allowing the body to move creatively and in disclosing the fundamental dynamics of polity.

KEY  
FINDINGS

The key insight that has emerged from the years of experimentation is that the particular social forms through which the dynamics of polity operate cannot be solidified for a protracted period without seriously hampering the effective working of the dynamic itself. Because social forms tend to solidify and perpetuate themselves, periodic injections of innovation are required, but never for the sake of devotion to an abstract principle of balance. Polity itself is nothing. It is simply a servant of the task. When the task changes, or when the situation in which the task is to be performed changes, there is cause for a serious rethinking and regrouping of foundational polity forms.

PRESENT  
SITUATION

During the past year the Order has experienced a dramatic growth of complexity in its global operation and a radical diversification of missional forces, both in relation to their pluralistic composition and mobile configurations. Apparently overnight consideration of the Order's globality and ecumenicity has shifted from the level of the abstractly symbolic to that of the radically practical. It has, in its missional endeavors, encountered practical and profound collegiality with people of different historic traditions. Many have put on the blue, moved into houses and engaged wholeheartedly in the mission. This phenomenon has raised once more the practical and profound question of identity: Who are we as the Order: Ecumenical? How do we operate in global dispersion and pluralistic membership?

How do we order the Order, particularly as it becomes increasingly representative of the globe? Wherein lies our commonality? What symbolic forms sustain us? What operating principles guide us? And what task is demanded of us?

INDICATIVE  
CHALLENGE

At a time when such questions are coming closer to the surface and we anticipate quantum leaps on every campaign front, it is appropriate to restate the foundational ground on which we have stood, as an initial attempt to reappropriate the wisdom that has emerged from the experience of the past 20 years. Not for the sake of stabilization but for profundity in the changes that lie ahead, the work of this document has been undertaken.

## II. THE COMPREHENSIVE MISSION

### A. The Primal Community

#### PRIMAL COMMUNITY

Primal community is that set of local social structures and relationships within a delineated unit of geography that provide the activities that awaken and sustain the consciousness of its residents and create avenues through which local people can creatively engage in the civilizing process. In this sense, primal community is the context within which all human dynamics are intensified and profound humanness is released. To one degree or another the moral issue of every age has reflected a societal imbalance which has blocked the operation of primal community. The ordering dynamic, in its sensitive and responsive confrontation of the major contradictions of the times, addresses the particular manifestations of social imbalance for the sake of recreating primal community and releasing profound humanness. In our own century the moral issue has been described as the entrenched dichotomy between the privileged, affluent 15% of the world's population and the largely disenfranchised, poverty-ridden 85%. There is manifest within each pole of this dichotomy, though in widely divergent forms, the collapse of primal community and the debilitation of profound humanness. The Order: Ecumenical, in its master strategies, global campaigns and local implementation seeks to address the moral issue and, in the form and dynamics of its polity, demonstrate alternative models for re-empowering the inoperative aspects of the social process.

#### SOCIAL DYNAMICS

Social analysis has revealed three basic social dynamics, all of which must be operating simultaneously and in appropriate relationship to one another for the healthy operation of local community. These dynamics are economic, political and cultural commonality. The first and foundational dynamic is the economic which is the sine quo non of the others. If the basic material requirements of food, clothing and shelter are not met, their absence saps the vitality of a community's life and hampers full participation. The second crucial dynamic is the communal or the political dimension. It describes the way persons structure their own lives and the lives of their neighbors to allow for the operational well-being of the whole community and its component parts. The third dynamic is the rational or the cultural dimension which significates or gives meaning to human life as it engages in the total social process. This dimension is that toward which the other dimensions are aimed. When men have satisfied their basic needs, when they have ordered their lives, then they ask the

question "Why?" It is on the significating or cultural dimension of social existence that this question is answered.

SOCIAL  
IMBALANCE

These three dimensions of social existence do not operate in a fixed or static relationship to one another. Each age in the memory of human existence reveals one or the other as the ascendant. In our time, the economic dimension is clearly dominant. In the 19th century, during the emergence of the nation state, the political dimension defined what was meaningful in life. Prior to that time civilizations saw periods when letters, the arts, mathematics and the sciences, as well as religion dominated human values. In short, in every age of civilization the social processes develop various states of imbalance. The creation of human community has to do, at least partially, with identifying those imbalances and, to some degree, intentionally modifying them.

SIGNIFICANT  
SPACE

There are five foundational marks of primal human community. The first is significant space. The land and the people comprise the substance of primal community. The space a people occupies is not influential because of geographic features. The way a people cares for and respects its space reflects its self image and communicates its own story of self-respect or self-contempt. The land has a story of its own, apart from the particular people who happen to occupy it at a given time, and human participation in the land links the people with the primordial. The land also links all the people of the earth physically.

HISTORICAL  
TIME

The second foundational mark is related to historical time. A primal community reveres its origin. The rehearsal of the people's history recreates its relationship to its ontological roots and links the archaic with the present. Historical events then become the occasions for festivals, seasons and celebrations which mark the community life rhythm. Primordial identity is reclaimed by the people and given significance within the community's daily action.

CORPORATE  
CARE

The third foundational mark is corporate care. A primal community respects its members structurally. Structures insure adequate physical, intellectual and spiritual existence. Structures channel individual creativity and help to prevent the paralysis of individual competition.

FUTURIC  
CAUSE

The fourth foundational mark is related to futuric cause. A major unifying factor in primal community is the people's sense of sharing a common task which it grasps as a unique contribution to future history. This factor draws attention from the inevitable potentially destructive internal tensions present in community and focuses it on that which calls forth creative expression. In working corporately on a common task depth collegiality emerges. This is probably the least recognized factor in primal community and human motivity: a people who lack common destiny are not capable of being human community however close-knit they may appear to be.

DRAMATIZED  
PROFUNDITY

The fifth foundational mark is dramatized profundity. A primal community dramatizes and symbolizes its unique identity and task in history. This liturgical factor enables the regular rehearsal of the community's origin, identity and destiny. Through symbols, rituals and songs a community maintains the self consciousness which allows for the presence of the other foundational marks. It is in dramatized profundity that significant space, care, purpose and time are all remembered and affirmed.

CONTEXTUAL  
FRAME

The three social dynamics and the five foundational marks together provide a contextual frame for the Order as it seeks to structure its own internal operations to demonstrate primal community. These also guide the Order as it works in communities across the world to catalyze human development. The pages that follow will describe the strategies and internal dynamics it has employed to structure this demonstration.

B. The Inclusive Strategies

COMPREHENSIVE  
STRATEGIES

The vision of building primal human community calls for three master strategies: contextual re-education, structural reformulation and spiritual remotivation. Contextual re-education is the reprogramming of the consciousness of local man with new images which expand his grasp of human responsibility and call him to decide to give his life in radical care for the globe. Structural reformulation is the reshaping of local social forms which expand avenues for the practical action of Those Who Care. Spiritual

remotivation is the provision of depth spirit tools which sustain local forces as a catalytic presence in their task of relevant witness and creative engagement. These master strategies have been central to the work of the Order and have provided the context for discerning inclusive tactical systems and operating program outreach during the past 20 years.

MASS  
AWAKENMENT

The dynamics of awakening, engagement and fulfillment have been foundational to the missional outreach of the Order since its work began. At the heart of the Order's grasp of its role as servant has been the commitment to give shape to program vehicles which catalyze mass awakening. It has understood this task as impacting local man with the demands of the globe in this historical time, and disclosing the possibilities for his authentic response as the freely responsible participant in building the future. The creation and teaching of RS-1, the development of the core and comprehensive curricula in religious and cultural studies (now taught in the Academy); the experimental work with LENS, Black Heritage and University 13; and the Student House and ITI in their early phases of development are illustrations of the practical manifestation of this concern in the past. Recently the Global Women's Forum, the campaign of Global Community Forum and more specially focussed one-day programs based on a similar format, each has been a signal effort to awaken the masses to the indicative vision of the new human community and the new human being. In the impact programs, the use of intellectual methods based on imaginal education has been key to grounding appropriate and necessary human images in the life experience of everyman.

SOCIETAL  
ENGAGEMENT

The continued life of awakened forces necessitates the creation of practical channels for meaningful social engagement. Within this context, the Order began to develop methods for catalyzing effective corporate involvement on the local level. This early work in comprehensive community development produced the Fifth City social model, on the basis of which more refined local development programs were subsequently actuated in selected communities around the globe. The Local Church Experiment initiated in 1970, and more recently the comprehensive socio-economic Human Development Projects and planning Consultations illustrated the continued development of vehicles through which the energies and commitment of the awakened masses can be

engaged in acting out the love that is justice. Each of the engagement programs, in its training and demonstration aspects, has been undergirded by the social methods curriculum which makes the tools for common planning and corporate action broadly available.

HUMAN  
FULFILLMENT

Finally, concern for the dynamic of human fulfillment, or the sustained effective action of Those Who Care, has led to the development of a third cluster of programs. In these both the support of individual decision and the nurture of corporate motivity have been major values. The development of the metro cadre and guardian networks; the ITI as it later became a formulation tool; the GRA and Summer Program; and the regular Movement and Order Councils on many levels each illustrates the vehicles whereby the Global Servant Force has rehearsed its common symbols and story and dramatized its disciplined corporateness. In these programs, the spirit methods curriculum has been foundational in providing practical care for Those Who Care.



## PART TWO

### THE ESSENTIAL FORMS

"Like a child who leaves his feet to mount a bicycle, man is finding that his balance is based on a process of movement. One of the consequent features of this balance-in-motion is the need for ever greater communication. It is not a whim or a passing fad or an ideological thrust; if man is to have balance in a world-in-motion, then all men must be permanently present to each other. Man's very effort to survive on this planet is inexorably placing more and more decision-making factors in the hands of all . . . When we attempt to solve any problem within too limited bounds of reality, the problem causes even greater unbalance and is not solved at all. We must continually seek broader and more global solutions just to survive."

Juan Luis Segundo



### III. THE DELIBERATIVE FUNCTION

#### A. The Local Collegium

##### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The local collegium is the daily gathering of all in each place for deliberation of issues affecting the common life and mission. It occurs in formalized structures such as breakfast collegiums and meal conversations, as well as informal conversations with colleagues over missional issues. It represents the deliberative aspect of the democratic or community dynamic of corporate polity. It is the basic vehicle through which a common mind is forged and thus is the foundational aspect of consensus.

The paramount function of the local collegium is to shape and give expression to the consensed will of the people. Without the collegium dynamic, the refinement of strategy and maneuvers and the building of implementaries becomes an exercise in abstraction, divorced from the significant engagement of the people in decision making. The basic functions of the local collegium are:

##### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- 1) To insure a common operating context for the total group and, thus, prevent the emergence of a hierarchy based on special information. The collegium attempts to keep everyone informed about the current state of affairs and to keep the common memory alive. Reports on various aspects of the mission that allow for probing questions to be raised permit everyone to participate in the whole mission and, thus, to be a part of a team.
- 2) To provide the forum for initial corporate brooding on emerging issues. The collegium elicits local input which permits a broad range of perspectives to be focused on issues before they become critical.
- 3) To maintain and enliven the corporate vision and spirit which are essential aspects of the glue which holds the body together as a single operating thrust. The collegium is an occasion for reflecting on the profound and practical significance of particular happenings, for corporately dreaming the great dreams of the Order, and for discerning the trends present in the current situation which illuminate the futuric edges of the common mission.

- 4) To develop the particular implementing actions in selected arenas of the mission which call for the inclusive perspective not available to a small task force working on behalf of all. Whatever can be resolved by a single person effectively, probably should be; a collegium is no time to waste the common mind on trivia. Even so, certain implementing actions and those prone to take them need accountability to the corporate body to ensure that the will of all is being enacted.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The operating principles of the local collegium are: 1) that all the decisions belong to all the people and not to a small group acting, however benevolently, on behalf of all; 2) that the power to shape the common vision and destiny resides with those who choose to make themselves heard during these sessions - silence or absence means assent not dissent; 3) that critique of another's comments is done by offering an alternative recommendation which holds the value of the previous suggestions plus those of the critic; and 4) that informed corporate wisdom is the key to decisions which are effective in their implementation.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions held in the operation of the local collegium are multiple and important to protect. 1) There is a tension between the leaders' models and the corporate input: a leader must have a model before raising an issue, but the group is responsible for taking this initial suggestion and forming it into the group's best wisdom as to the issue at hand. 2) There is the tension between the priority of reporting and the value of corporate discussion, especially in the midst of a complex, global operation where uninformed input is a waste of everybody's time; discussion, however, guards against specialization and elitism and, therefore, is protected. 3) There is the tension in scheduling collegium topics between the comprehensive vision and the immediate issues: a genuine collegium is not the time to deal with the daily schedule, but neither can it be a time for ungrounded speculation on abstract wishdreams. 4) There is a tension between the individual wisdom and the corporate mind; occasionally it is necessary for someone, who sees what the group cannot see, to make himself heard, even when the corporate mind seems to be going in another direction; or, he may decide for other reasons to go along with this decision, keeping his opinions silent. 5) There is the tension between the single corporate thrust and the

diversity of the individual gifts which must be protected. The Order has no interest in either anarchic argument or in mindless acquiescence. New wisdom and bright ideas must always be held in tension with the established common memory - not for the sake of conformity, but for broadening the wisdom put into a situation to include the past as well as the present.

CLASSIC  
ASPECTS

Finally, a collegium has five aspects: the gimmick that allows freedom from pre-conceived opinions and a chance to approach the issue from a fresh perspective; the surprise which communicates to participants that something important is taking place; the context which gives the practical reason for discussing this topic in the first place; the issue which "lays the cards on the table"; and the discussion in which the common wisdom is gathered. These aspects may take many forms and some may occasionally be omitted; but they are the practical engaging dimensions of any deliberation that actually "gets somewhere".

## B. The Representational Councils

### 1. The Global Council

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Global Priors Council is the most comprehensive of the deliberative conciliar dynamics of the Order: Ecumenical. It is comprised of those persons known as the Global Priors, who are the Area and Centrum Priors from across the globe. In addition, representatives from the Demonstration Project Auxiliary priorship and the Panchayat are present. The location of the Global Council is purely a matter of convenience, except that custom and convenience have most frequently placed it at Chicago Nexus. The Council is open to all but attendance of the Global Priors is by assignment, and transportation and expenses are budgeted in the Global Mission Funds of the Order: Ecumenical. In every Global Council, representation of the pluralistic composition of the Order is a high value and leadership assignments are made with this consideration in mind.

The paramount function of the Global Priors Council is to create the Order's common mind for the forthcoming year through building a consensus on the missional priorities and designing strategies and tactics to actuate these priorities. The basic functions are:

#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- a. To receive and review reports for the past year from the missional configurations around the globe: Nexus locations, area houses, human development projects and Centrum bands.
- b. To memorialize the consenses of the Order relative to the crucial missional intents for the following year.
- c. To make geographical troop assignments for the Nexus, the Religious Houses, the Human Development Projects and any special configurations required by the present thrust of the mission.
- d. To recontext and re-envision the Order's spirit and celebrational life.

The operating principles of the Global Council are: 1) that each Area and each Centrum at each Nexus location is represented and, when possible, Religious Houses; 2) that the extended and movemental order are invited to consult

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

and advise; 3) that the Panchayat's symbolic presence be formally visible at every session along with the assigned leadership for each of the Council's sessions; and 4) that the Global Order see itself as being in attendance the whole period of time.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions held in the operation of the Global Council include: 1) honoring local concerns and models as well as global strategies and priorities; 2) enabling comprehensive planning for the missional thrust (currently the 3 campaigns) as well as placing the priority emphasis on any 1 campaign; 3) planning effective support systems for the Nexus as well as planning front line action; and 4) providing profound spirit nurture as well as accomplishing practical missional task force work.

## 2. The Continental Council

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Continental Council is the inclusive deliberative dynamic of the Order which presently manifests itself in the seven penetrated continents of the globe. This dynamic may appear at any gathering of the Order: Ecumenical within one of the continents: however, the term "continental council" is usually reserved for the thrice-yearly gatherings (September, December, March) of the three forms of the Order. These gatherings occur specifically in the several geo-social continents where the areas are at a stage of development which makes a continental gathering more helpful than an area council in providing a forum for inclusive deliberation of missional issues. The operational practice of the continental council is similar to that of the Area Council. It differs only in the geographical scope of the global mission for which it is responsible. This difference and the less reliable interim communication channels which often accompany it in certain instances, necessitate the Council's giving specific care in assuring reliable systems of consensus implementation.

The paramount function of the Continental Council is to commonize the missional thrust of the continent in building its strategies and tactics in the context of the broad arenas of consensus framed at the Global Priors Council. The basic functions of the Continental Council are:

### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- a. To assure that the channels for providing tools are required in local implementation are functional
- b. To plan the continental Global Research Assembly.
- c. To clarify and hold accountability for geographic responsibility.
- d. To work through the internal operations and procedures especially in relationship to self-support and missional care.

The operating principles of the Continental Council are:  
1) that every area and centrum on the continent and as many additional Order members as possible are present;  
2) that, at the September Council, the operating context of those gathered be expanded by a full report and review

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

of the memorials and missional priorities consensed upon at the Global Priors Council; 3) that the inclusive, indicative methods of the Order are self-consciously used in building the strategies, tactics, and maneuvers so that indirect training is a by-product of the Council; and 4) that the Council is chaired by both Area and Nexus priors to symbolize missional corporateness.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions which are held in the operation of the Continental Council include: 1) responding sensitively to the local urgencies as well as holding the global priorities; 2) representing the perspective of the Centrums as well as those of the Houses; 3) dealing with the spiritual as well as the practical; and 4) forging both the broad strategies and the practical maneuvers.

### 3. The Area Council

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Area Council dynamic is the deliberative forum which allows for the building of a common mind relative to the implementation of continental and global strategies and tactics by the local regions and metros within a particular area. The Council symbolizes the areal dynamic in operation. It is formally convened by the Area Prior once each quarter in the form of a one to three-day gathering open to all movement and order colleagues. The Area Council is not the middle level bureaucracy bridging the gap between the local council, on the one hand, and the continental or global councils on the other, but rather is the intersection of the comprehensive and particular deliberative dynamics which must always relate in creative tension. For this reason the presence of the Global Nexus in the form of a Centrum representative is crucial to the Council's operations.

The paramount function of the Council is to provide for the interchange, discussion and deliberation that allows areal consensus to emerge and become articulated. The basic functions of the Area Council are:

#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- a. To present reports that illuminate the breadth and depth of the missional context.
- b. To define strategies, map out maneuvers and build implementaries.
- c. To consider the specific area assignments, especially the naming of an area troila.
- d. To review self-support and missional care issues under the rubric of area responsibility.

#### OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The operating principles are: 1) that it is a working council infused with celebration; 2) that each Order member's wisdom and practical input is essential; 3) that motivity be released for sustained engagement; and 4) that area identity is established and recreated in relation to the present task.

#### TENSIONAL POLARITIES

The tensions which are held in the operation of the Area Council include: 1) standing before the needs of the area in relation to those of the globe; 2) honoring the situations of the regions and metros within the context of the area; 3) interfacing creatively the broad priorities and strategies with the particular maneuvers and implementaries; and 4) recreating the vision as well as forging concrete models.

### C. The Research Assemblies

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Global Research Assembly is the annual gathering of the movement on the various continents of the world for deliberation about and recommendation of the practical means for releasing anew the mission. It is comprised of numbers which range from as few as forty to as many as one thousand people. It is a vehicle for deepening the awakening of new troops and strengthening the engagement of old hands in an effort both to further the mission and to care for the movement. The GRA design involves work for two to four weeks in issue-oriented task forces punctuated as needed by plenary sessions in which the reports of each task force are presented for total assembly reflection. The GRA, on continents outside North America, bears similarity in focus and design to the GRA held in Chicago during July. Generally scheduled after quarter one of the annual calendar, the GRA benefits from and builds upon the work and consenses arrived at by the Chicago July GRA and the Global Priors Council. Usually its focus is working through continental implementation of global strategy and in so doing, clarifying major program issues for future brooding and deliberation.

The paramount function of the GRA is to channel continental wisdom into the building of a global program plan including strategies, maneuvers, and implementing designs geared to effective continental actuation. The basic functions are:

#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- 1) To inform annual missional priorities, thereby giving design to the continental calendar and the assignment of local forces;
- 2) To explore program edges which have become practical necessities in relation to pulling off the continental mission;
- 3) To train and nurture old movement forces many of whom gather across the distance of a continent only as frequently as once a year; and
- 4) To ensure the glue of commonality within the Global Servant Force and extend practical forms of care to Those Who Care.

#### OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The operational principles of the GRA are 1) that the GRA is functionally related to the other continental GRA's; 2) that the spirit life reflects the current focus of the Order's spirit life; 3) that the staff, save for one of two, be

assigned from within the geography represented; and 4) that physical work be included in the program design.

**TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES**

The tensions held in the operation of the GRA include:  
1) holding local continental implementation in relation to the global vision; 2) balancing efforts in pure research with the demand for practical designs; 3) honoring local concerns within the context of global priorities; and 4) enabling spirit motivation as well as the external mis- sional task.

#### IV. THE DRAMATIC FUNCTION

##### A. The Priorship System

###### CORPORATE LEADERSHIP

Priorship is corporate leadership. It is a role that is assumed by one competent individual among many, and so it is always a "first among equals" situation, not a matter of who's boss. Further, priorship is leadership by assignment, on the basis of the consensus of the whole body. Priorship is its own reward: it carries with it no benefits other than an increased weight of responsibility and accountability. Nor has priorship anything to do with time. There is no fixed period of priorship, long or short, and the same person may in fact find that he or she is a prior in one situation, and a troop in another. Once the usual status conferred upon leadership is disconnected from the role, then it becomes clear that there is no contradiction in this situation.

###### PRIORSHIP POSITIONS

Every situation and every task requires priorship. Furthermore, if priorship is properly understood, it is not possible to have 'too much' priorship under any circumstances. Priorship is above all, a matter of exemplary activity, not "calling the shots" although this, too, is sometimes required. However, within the life of the Order, there is a limited number of circumstances under which a prior is named: Area Prior, House Prior, Centrum Prior, Post Prior, Trek Prior and Project Director (Prior). The particulars of the role vary in every situation. The comprehensive priorship task does not.

###### AREA PRIOR

1. The Area Prior is responsible for the general oversight of the (Religious) Houses within his area, and for the inclusive missional strategy which those houses exist to implement. He is the first-among-equal-strategists. He is also the first-among-equal-spirit-giants. The role requires that he maintain the morale and welfare of all the persons who work in the Area. The Area Prior travels continuously, visiting each of the Houses and projects at least once a quarter. At Global Council, the Area Prior represents his Area and its concerns. He or she is responsible for assuring the financial equilibrium of the Area and the missional entities within.

###### HOUSE PRIOR

2. The House Prior, including the house prior responsible for maintenance of the Area House, is also strategist, finance director, program supervisor and the like, as first among equals. His specific geographical assignment, however, locates his primary concern in the geographical Metro or Region. However, it may be the case that he or she will spend most time accomplishing area strategy away from the house.

CENTRUM  
PRIOR

3. A Centrum Prior has functional, but not geographical responsibility. The duties of the Centrum Prior include maintenance of the Nexus facility, as well as the smooth functioning of the mission, within the Centrum Band to which he is assigned. Because of the supportive nature of the Priorship role at a Nexus, it may be that Centrum Priors are in more continuous touch with one another than are the Area Priors. It may also be that a Nexus Prior might be characterized by a stronger emphasis upon administration or management, as opposed to field strategy and generalship.

POST  
PRIOR

4. A Post Prior is responsible for the entire missional task, as is any other prior. However, he or she is responsible from within the specific context of the post work.

PROJECT  
PRIORS

5. Finally, Project Priors are, in a way, a cross between a House Prior and a Post Prior. A Project Prior has upon his shoulders all the practical requirements of a post prior-administrator, but with all the strategic demands upon an Area or House Prior.

COMPREHENSIVE  
VIEW

All priors are required to maintain the comprehensive view of their task, in the midst of radically particular, and local detailed demands. This is the principle of Xavierism. One who follows this principle is about the business of caring for the whole world by caring for his own local territory. His is not caring for his own territory as a matter of immediate practicality. He cares for his territory as a demonstration and a sign for the world.

SPIRIT  
WELFARE

All priors are responsible for the spirit well-being of the persons within the area of their assigned responsibility. They are concerned, however, for missional effectiveness, and the effective engagement of their troops. They are not concerned for the psychic well-being of any one. Nor do they maintain intimate friendships with one colleague as over against another, as difficult as that may be from time to time.

MISSIONAL  
MOMENTUM

All priors are concerned to provide continuing missional momentum and direction. They are concerned that all significant activity be addressed against the principle missional contradiction of the moment. They are not interested in doing a thing because it seems good to do, or because someone suggested or recommended it.

OBJECTIVE  
ACCOUNTABILITY

All priors are required to be the factor of objective presence for the persons within their arenas of concern. They hold accountability for missional performance, and they pronounce absolution. A prior knows that the only effective, long-range accountability, however, is addressed to the missional spirit decision of the colleague. He holds no coercive powers. He has only the power to hold a colleague against the decision that he himself has made to serve the needs of the world.

FOUNDATIONAL  
CONSENSUS

Finally, all priors are concerned to be attuned to the consensus emerging from the missional body. It is from this consensus, and his or her ability to read that consensus, that his leadership depends. He has no creativity, save he is able to give creative form to that consensus.

B. The Global Panchayat

HISTORICAL  
BACKGROUND

For seven years, the term "Panchayat" has been common currency in the Order: Ecumenical. The word comes to us from India, and refers to the five member corporate council operative on the village level. Since 1970, when an address was made to the Religious House Priors Council on this subject, the Order has been experimenting with the possibility of effectively realizing this concept. The dynamic of the corporate aristocracy, sovereignty or the corporate executive, whichever term seems best, has been part of Order polity since its inception. During that entire time, it has principally resided in the person and office of the Dean of the Ecumenical Institute, with occasional supplementary participation from other individuals and groups, for instance, the "Permanent House Church," and for five years, a selected Panchayat. Throughout that entire period of time, however, the importance of transferring the dynamic from the individual to the corporate form has never been lost. The writing that follows is one more step in clarifying the dynamic of the Panchayat toward its eventual full implementation as the key symbolic polity dynamic of the Order: Ecumenical.

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

Most simply, the Panchayat is a group of five persons, of which not more than three are of the same sex. Between them they may represent from thirty to as many as one hundred years of corporate Order experience. Their only visible corporate activity is that of conferring--sometimes only with one another, most of the time with many other representatives of the life of the Order present. Individually, they travel always with a prior assigned to that geography, they lead meetings, and they confer. No one will ever "catch" them in their official capacities as a body engaging in any practical activity. The Panchayat is the heart of the polity of the Order: Ecumenical. It is the seat of power. But it is principally the seat of symbolic power, and it is therein that its strength resides.

The three universal functions of the symbolic dimension of polity, and therefore, the three universal functions of the Panchayat, are as follows. First, to Guard the Comprehensive: the task of the Panchayat is to call attention to

UNIVERSAL  
FUNCTIONS

reductionisms and perversions of the original intent of a consensed model. Secondly, to Defend the Deeps: the task of the Panchayat is to protect and create morale, call forth profound participation, and hold that participation before the Mystery. Thirdly, Watching the Election: this function of the Panchayat has to do with the maintenance of those concerned for the wholeness of the mission, never captured by its complexity.

PRACTICAL  
FUNCTIONS

There are four practical functions of the Panchayat by which it enacts its role as a stabilizing force in the midst of many decision making processes. 1) First, the Panchayat is concerned to provide the context within which decisions are made. Conversely, the Panchayat is not a policy making body. It has a degree of practical power, but its purpose is not practical. 2) Secondly, it is a function of the Panchayat to symbolize, by word, deed and presence, the crucial decisions of the corporate body. Its task is to read accurately what is the consensus, and then, and only then, announce those decisions. The decisions which it dramatizes are related to the missional priorities of the Order. This function, this activity is a dramatization of the consensus. It is not a superimposition of the will of an individual, or even the will of any particular group, upon the body. In short, the Panchayat does not embody "kingship" in anything like the sense that the Western world has come to understand the concept. 3) The third practical function of the Panchayat is really two-in-one. It has to do with watching over the morale of the total body, on the one hand, and watching over the morale of each individual member of the Order, at the same time. This is a responsibility which is fraught with dangers, loaded with consuming pitfalls. It is the guardianship of each sacred soul in the Order without jeopardizing the spirit of the total Order. 4) Fourthly, the Panchayat is responsible for representing the corporate body when the corporate body is not in deliberative session. In this role, the Panchayat interprets and adapts policy, memorials and other forms of the consensus.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The Panchayat is, in principle, invisible. This is another way of saying that its power is symbolic. It is not the case that it is without practical power, but the Panchayat strives never to use this practical power. It is precisely in this that the Panchayat is invisible. The Panchayat is ever striving to avoid decision making. When it is functioning effectively, it is never running anything. Rather, it has two prime functions that relate to decision making: it catalyzes many of the decisional processes that are going on around it. In this regard, its principle task is to "sense out," to intuit, the "well-functioning" of each practical decision making dynamic. It is the "how" of

this perpetual sensing-out that is the key issue in the effective working of the Panchayat. It is the matter of communications flow. It is the matter of the screens of comprehensiveness. It is the matter of informal chatting, spot-visits, casual conversations. It has to do with maintaining a feel after the contents of the mail. All this is a matter of "just listening", with all the senses alert, of being at attention comprehensively in worship, collegium and at every form of convocation. In all of this the importance of the individual and corporate screens of attention is impossible to overstate. It is all a matter of "invisible availability". It has to do with always being present at the "un-meeting."

FUTURIC  
EXPERIMENT

The Panchayat experiment is an experiment in polity, in self-government, undertaken on behalf of the whole world. It rests on corporate, rather than individual, wisdom and style. It is an experiment to be thoughtfully and prayerfully enacted. Its objective is to provide one more means for local man to assume responsibility for his intentional engagement in the political process. Thereby, the Panchayat is an experiment on behalf of local communities, local organizations, state and national governments. The Order: Ecumenical is the sociological laboratory in which this sort of experimentation can go on for a sustained period of time.

C. The Symbolic Role

The symbolic role in the polity process is crucially important in the functioning of decision-making and the effective implementation of decisions. Yet it is one which has received relatively little reflection and which, in society as a whole is little understood. In society, this role is identified with that of power or leadership, and so is given a high status that tends to undercut the value of grassroots participation in decision-making. In fact, symbolic power is neither more nor less important than other types of power; the symbolic role is neither more nor less important than other roles in the functioning of a corporate body. It is an assigned role that is played either well or poorly; its power is conferred and used either wisely or unwisely. The essays in this section which deal with the Priorship system and the Panchayat are attempts to describe the dynamic functions of the symbolic role as it has thus far operated in the life of the Order. The following pointers are offered as aids in the exercise of the symbolic role. Everyone in the Order plays out that role in some context or another; sheer membership in the Symbolic Order conveys it relative to some relation.

1. Avoid direct confrontation--do not confer on the enemy the "honor" of contact with the symbolic figure of the home forces. Have contact with forces of the enemy only when you have assured victory in hand.
2. Avoid situations in which you will be the receiver of complaints; this protects the dignity of the allies in the eyes of the potential complainer and it also saves unnecessary wear and tear on your own psyche. If complaining seems unavoidable, provide a situation in which it can be done in a corporate setting or one in which the symbolic figure is absent.
3. Avoid close personal relationships and keep your own conscience. You are out to maintain the mystique that necessarily adheres to the symbol, and this is compromised when every neurosis or gripe of the symbol is made public. It is towards the latter stage of sanctification when one's neuroses are transformed into missional effectivity. Use your intuitions; keep them lively and functioning and keep yourself informed by them. But this does not mean letting them be public indiscriminately.
4. Give praise when it is warranted, but do it strategically; for some, the effective way to praise is to take them apart in public. This too can be a kind of honoring and a motivity boost. For others, this would be occasion for the severest kind of collapse. For these, high praise for little achievements is necessary to keep them going. Your intent is to keep morale and effectivity high. And a symbol giving praise and significance to what is going on is far more effective than giving only criticism.
5. Choose your engagements out of the comprehensive screen and priority list so that they are based on the major contradiction of the moment. Avoid trying to do everything somebody suggests that you need to do, even when you could do it better than it is being done, and it needs to be done. This has to do with both winning the battle and preserving energy for the crucial battles.
6. Do practical work symbolically; that is, actually dramatize the lack of status in the symbolic role by engaging in corporate care (enablement); but do it without falling into the 24-hour a day "on-call" trap which compromises the effective functioning of the symbol.

7. Use your schedule to build in discontinuity; that is, keep your perspective and avoid getting sucked into one viewpoint. You must remain an objective presence to every particular engagement. Move into the other world, this world, the work and the play in a way that guards against the human propensity to reduce the context.

8. Do surprising things strategically. The symbolic figure needs occasionally to do battle against deadening routine by injecting a happening into a "normal" situation. But do not let surprise become expected; a major function of the symbolic role is to enhance confidence and stability among the troops, and a clown inspires little of either. But occasional clowning is another matter.

9. Avoid immediate responses. You have to distrust your own intuitions as well as rely on them. Give yourself time to determine whether they are gifts from God or Satan. This is not quite right: they are also always gifts from God. That is, immediate responses are always clues to something necessary and right. But they are NOT always clues to the immediate issue at hand in the situation, and flagrant display before testing what they are clues to can be unfortunate. Always take note of your immediate intuitive responses and take them seriously as clues; as soon as you have determined there are clues, then move on them, even if you cannot thoroughly explain or rationalize why this move seems best.

#### D. The External Formations

The Order: Ecumenical has understood its formations in terms of three basic categories which reflect the major aspects of the ordering dynamic as it is manifest in our own time. The following paragraphs seek to provide a description of each aspect, a definition of its major functions, an identification of key principles upon which its operation is based, and a brief illumination of the tensional polarities it contains or generates.

## 1. The Symbolic Order

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Symbolic Order is the representational or symbolic role of the ordering dynamic. It is recognizable in social form as the global body called the Order: Ecumenical who wear the blue; live in common residence; live out of the common understanding of submission to vows which ground the external virtues of poverty, chastity and obedience; embrace a style which exemplifies the internal virtues of humility, gratitude and compassion before God and His creation; and grasp significant vocation as the common task of profound care for the world. Members of the Symbolic Order place themselves under full-time assignment and are available for service across the world in either a Religious House, a Global Centrum Nexus or a Human Development Project. To carry out its task the Symbolic Order lives under a rule that encompasses its worship life, study life, common goods and common mission, and has created various structures to ground that discipline.

The paramount function of the Symbolic Order is threefold: to illumine consciousness, to dramatize sociality and to mediate the Word of Possibility held in the poetry of the Christian church. The basic functions of the Symbolic Order are:

### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

1. To serve the larger movement through doing the practical research of putting form to its program edges;
2. To plan and implement movement gatherings such as the GRA, meetings of Guardian network, and the Councils;
3. To be finally responsible for carrying out the objectives of the movement's global priorities; and
4. To shape the new form of the Church by creating and experimenting with new methods for intellectual and vocational care.

### CATALYTIC EXEMPLAR

The symbolic order is sheer presence, being the profound consciousness of the gift that is human life and demonstrating the primal community whose radical expenditure of self in care is always performed on behalf of service to the world. Because of the symbolic nature of its function, as catalytic exemplar, its symbolic practices are critical to its effective operation. In the first

instance the Symbolic Order does nothing, save it reveals the presence of the sons of God at a given moment in history. It is nothing save it is the nobodies whose consciousness of election as forgiven sinners and whose witness to and demonstration of the hope of every man becomes a constant occasion for the world to decide about a new direction.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The Symbolic Order operates out of the understanding that all time is assigned time and that engagement in the external task is the body's priority. Internal life issues are honored as they become significant blocks to moving the mission ahead. Its polity forms are grounded in the consensus method of decision making (as defined in a later section of this document) and the operating principle that the power is always in the center of the table. The economic life of the Symbolic Order depends on the principle of self-support by which it meets the expenses of its own sustenance and care by the equitable sharing of income earned by those assigned to secular jobs. It sees itself as a radically mobile body, which symbolizes its readiness to be assigned anywhere in the globe by requiring that each person hold a valid passport and be prepared to move his goods to a new location in two suitcases.

The tensions crucial to the operation of the Symbolic Order are: holding the authentic expression of humanness forged out in the past in relation to the call to enact futuristic forms; being in but not of the world; honoring the diverse gifts of each individual in relation to the need for a unified corporate thrust; and creatively balancing solitary reflection and brooding with focused action in the world.

2. The Extended Order

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

The Extended Order is the second of three manifestations of the Order: Ecumenical. The Extended Order is finally definable only in relation to the Symbolic Order and the Movemental Order. Even the name, Extended Order, defines a relationship. Nevertheless, it is possible to offer some functional statements and some partial definitudes. Although its form has varied throughout history this aspect of the ordering dynamic has always functioned to some degree. It is best illustrated in the extended support of the first and second order of celibate monks and nuns by a network of individuals and families in the parish who grasped themselves as having been driven to intensify their relationship to the life of the Symbolic Order for the sake of maximal engagement in the

work of the Church. The Extended Order is comprised of persons who are fully assignable, but who are, for one reason or another, of more service to the mission while living outside of the common structures than they might conceivably be inside. A case in point might be a professional person, expected by his circle of associates and partners to maintain a public image in his life style that would be precluded by life in the corporate structures. It is by virtue of the necessity of performing the task rather than by individual choice or situational fatedness that the extended ordering dynamic operates in dispersion.

The principle purpose of Extended Order concept is to enable the largest possible number of persons to engage their lives profoundly in the missional task, excluding no one willing to make a decision to be so significantly engaged. There are certain functional gifts, given to Extended Order personnel which may, from time to time, be exceedingly helpful in the mission. Extended Order members can sometimes pave the way, or offer guide service, through the structures of the secular establishment, thus enabling authorization and support for the mission that might not otherwise be forthcoming. Extended Order members, because of their secular roles, can sometimes provide needed financial support that might not be obtainable readily in any other fashion. Extended Order personnel can and do provide needed consultant services and recommendations that might otherwise need to be submitted to unsympathetic professional agents. Above and beyond all of these benefits, the Extended Order members also participate in the missional tasks of the Order at any given moment in history, providing leadership for the guardian network, serving as consultants in the three campaigns, launching edge programs, providing and cultivating development contacts and serving on the Board of Directors.

#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

The Extended Order shapes its relationships, secular employment, family style, and economic life to assure winning in its assigned task. Those who represent the Extended Order dynamic hold to a discipline which reflects that of the Symbolic Order but is acted out in dispersion and therefore somewhat modified in the degree to which its dispersed location and the particularities of its task demand. In principle its representatives bear all the marks of order style, wear the blue, operate out of the consensus of the body, participate as regularly as possible in common symbolic and intellectual life and make all resources available to the mission - though these foundational marks are always seen as the enabling means for getting a practical job done, rather than as proof of commitment or membership and are therefore held in tension with the demands of conventional living.

#### OPERATING PRINCIPLES

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions embodied by the Extended Order include: supporting the direct renewal of the Church and employing strategy relative to the world; literally assuming corporate style as well as forging modifications of style suited to doing the task; standing before the comprehensive mission and corporate consensus in relation to engaging as the expert in a circumscribed arena.

### 3. The Movemental Order

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

In any age the ordering dynamic has depended upon its movemental aspect. The Movemental Order is that body of people throughout the world who live in informal covenant with the Order: Ecumenical but who are fated to live outside its structures. They are in covenant with God over the missional task required by history and so in profound collegiality with the Order. Members are in touch with the nearest House and often work out structures of accountability, periods of assignment and rhythms of participation in symbolic life of the Order. Whenever present they participate fully in missional and internal structures. The Movemental Order assures the awakening and engagement of the grassroots people of the globe. It is comprised of course grads, Town Meeting participants and GSD consultants who stand self-consciously as Those Who Care and work to extend the broad base of support for the common mission. It is always difficult to pinpoint the Movemental Order as a clearly defined body and comprehensively identify its catalogue of specific functions. It is the presence of the awakened laity in service to the world. It is the dynamic of the church in history on the most particular level.

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

The Movemental Order assures the global breadth and the local depth of missional outreach. It is the core leadership of the local movement of the spirit. Its members play critical roles in metro cadres, steering committees, guardians meetings, circuits, and other events in which local participation requires a familiar face to authorize and sanction the program. The Movemental Order enables and teaches consults, recruits, enlists, markets, and develops program funds. It expends itself for the sake of the creation of a more human society. It is the order's network of nerve endings which ensures the relevance of missional strategies to local man's present needs and future visions. The Movemental Order is crucial for maintaining immediate contact with operating structures of society and thus for being the active channel through which the wisdom of the Order impacts the world.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The Movemental Order's existence is based upon the foundational principle that grassroots participation is the key to social change. Its organization rests on the understanding that systematic geographic saturation is critical to winning. The type, qualities, and abilities of its constituents dramatically symbolize the pluriformity of Those Who Care, and reaffirm the Order's stance that whosoever decides to lay his life down for the sake of the common task is a colleague in mission. Each representative of the movemental order participates in the symbolic, intellectual, and economic disciplines of the Order according to his decision and ability in relation to his grasp of the mission's need. Each participates in the inclusive deliberation which shapes consensus thru the local and area councils. Each is under assignment through the regional and metro structures which locally care for allocating forces to particular arenas of maneuvers.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The Movemental Order stands in creative tension with the symbolic and extended order as Those Who Care profoundly for the local. It embraces the dichotomy of being in but not of the world radically and continuously. As the Movemental Order operates out of a fatedness to stand in dispersion, its role demands a moment by moment grounding of the humanly impossible tension between freedom and obedience. It embodies the tension between professional and missional demands, between local customs and order wisdom, and between common discipline and secular style.

E. The Internal Formations

1. The Sustaining Congregation

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

The dynamic of the Congregation occurs when any manifestation of the Order appears in its gathered, recreating state, in contrast to its scattered, missionally active state. It is not a deliberative, an advisory, a consenting or an implementing body and so not directly a part of the decision making process; yet, in carrying out its unique role, it is that without which, however cleverly polity structures are designed and maintained, corporate effectivity is impossible. For the congregation has the function of setting and sustaining the profound context out of which deliberations and decisions come. This is accomplished through attention to the style, wisdom and symbol of the body.

The Congregation has three subordinate manifestations: the College, when it is at prayer; the Seminary when it is at study; and the Sodality when it is engaged in planning; or in practical serving activity.

CONGREGATIONAL  
DYNAMICS

As a classical form, within both the historical church and the Order, the congregating of the people has involved rehearsing the common story (worship); maintaining and deepening the common memory (study); and ordering the time, goods and relationship of the body (discipline), for the sake of effectively deploying the people to proclaim the Word and perform the Deed in the world. The function of the congregation relative to the world is always that of enabling witnessing and justing love. In a very real sense, the Centrums, Posts, Stations, Task Forces, Divisions and other structural configurations which the Order has, over the past, designated as forces designed for performing this function, are implementing forms of the congregation's historical task. The function of the congregation relative to itself is that of delivering internal care and sustaining common discipline.

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

The paramount function of the Congregation is to provide healing, sustaining and enabling care for its membership, so that they are quickly and effectively equipped to be the catalytic, visionary, revolutionary presence in the world. Related to this function, it promotes various corporate and solitary spirit exercises that intensify self-consciousness from the stance that all experience is meaningful and good. It expands imaginal and intellectual clarity on both the profound dynamics of the spirit and the creative edges of social change for the sake of missional effectivity. Finally, it engages regularly in dramatic liturgical rehearsals of the ultimate Mystery of Being which awaken to consciousness the realities of mystery, grace and expenditure in which every man lives. These functions occur through Daily Office and weekly House Church, meal rites, ecclesiola studies, decor, solitary offices, rites or passage and prayers.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

Congregation care is intended to be structural, not personal; indirect, not direct. The Congregation never provides the opportunity for direct discussion of problems, spirit or otherwise. Rather, it sets the corporate, missional stage in which the individual wrestling of God can go on, and go on in the largest possible context. When persons acting within the congregational dynamic do decide to provide care, they do so by providing opportunity for the realization of gifts and possibilities through assignment and exposure.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The congregation dynamic stands in tension with the House or Centrum in calling for an emphasis on internal life in competition with the external mission. It holds the value of depth study in balance with broad knowledge access; missional images in balance with practical models; and spirit, in balance with task-oriented conversations.

2. The Enabling Team

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

The Team is that without which effective missional activity is impossible. It is a wiring together of minds and energies to generate a creative thrust towards a clarified target. It is an ontological dynamic, for without 'teamwork' nothing much would ever happen. In those most underdeveloped areas of the world where there has been a breakdown in social cohesion or corporateness (which is another name for the team), this dynamic may or may not appear within structures called "teams", but some basic, immediate local working group does exist to give the dynamic form. The team is the assurance of the possibility of winning. Its resources are the minds and energies of its members and their corporate resolve. Historically the term has been used in the Order in reference to a random group of people often subdivided into two or more units, and represents the basic operational unit of the congregation, ecclesiola or the house. As originally conceived teams were intended as care groups within larger entities. The team in its composition symbolizes the pluriform sociality of the Order and is made up of both men and women who represent a variety of phases, cultures, experiences and external assignment arenas. It is priored by a person so assigned who, along with unit priors when designated, bears responsibility for enabling the team as a missional entity to function in its assigned tasks as a single effective thrust.

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

The paramount function of the team is to deliver care both in relation to its individual members and in relation to the whole body's internal sustenance and maintenance. This function is always directed within the context of ensuring the engagement of the people in being about the mission of radical care for the Church and the world. The team's basic functions are to care for the total well-being - spiritual, physical and intellectual - of the people. This includes: 1) providing practical ongoing care (illustrated by tasks of preparing meals, maintaining space, and protecting life and property); 2) ensuring the

continuation of the symbolic, study and celebrational life of the body (illustrated by roles in Daily Office, and Ecclesiola); 3) sharing the common memory and common style of the Order; and 4) ritualizing practical accountability to assigned tasks on a daily basis.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

Certain operating principles are critical to the "team". First, friendship among members is highly irrelevant. Close corporate work quickly discloses the perversions of each member. Soon it is evident that the contribution of each member is inseparable from his perversion, and his contribution has already proven valuable. To protect its mission, is the business of the team. The team makes objective and structural efforts to ensure that nothing gets in the way of its effectiveness. In this sense the team is a third term, an objective other that relativizes the tensions that develop among people working together. Secondly, the team has no concern for the moods or the psyches of its members and even less for their personal relationships. Rather it constantly demands of its members to be concerned about its effective engagement in addressing the moral issue and its corporate relationship to final reality. The team may be referred to as a care structure, but it is care for the Mystery and love for the world that sustains it, not some friendship-by-assignment and not even some niceness by agreement. The team ensures its own victory and with it the victory of every member. "In this outfit, nobody loses, however hard they try." The care exercised by the team is always structural care by assignment. This is as true in situations which require the team to care in the particular ways for an individual member who is ill as it is in the case of the team's implementation of its ongoing weekly tasks.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

More broadly conceived, the team operates as an overlay on every type of engagement unit. Within each of the Global Centurms the team dynamic occur in day to day post work. It is the care network within the congregation and the Religious House. It is the dynamic of care and accountability within the structure of the Task Force. It is perhaps on the level of team operations that the creative power of corporate action and the vital release of human motivity become most dramatically revealed as the keys to effective engagement.

### 3. The Interior Classes

The interior classes of the Order evolved as a means of maintaining the awareness of the human journey within the individual's covenant with the Order. The three Novitiate classes emphasize the dimension of the journey which involves learning about the order and includes interns, fellows and associates. The three middle classes emphasize practical leadership in various order structures and include colleagues, confreres and friars. The third classes emphasize symbolic presence, or the sanctified life and include abbot, cannon and dean.

The symbolic function of the classes is to hold the Order before a regular reflection on and absolution of the individual's journey in the historical order. Although the classes have been related to the number of consecutive years a person has been a covenanted member of the Order, their use has in no way been intended to reflect any special status borne of longevity. The current practical function of the classes is to serve as a guide in the selection of the Panchayat, the Commissions and the Area and Centrum Priors.

#### F. The Foundational Pillars

##### 1. The Liturgical Offices

Throughout the ages wherever and whenever there has emerged the formation of a self-conscious community dedicated to determining the course of history, myths, rites and symbols were created to rehearse the individual and corporate drama of the community's understanding of profound humanness. Early in its history, the Order: Ecumenical experimented with many liturgical forms and practices, from highly liturgical to free form; from the traditional language of the early church to the secular expression of 20th century poets; from a subdued dignified choreography to a wild drama of dance and chant; and from the solitary-solitary to the corporate-solitary. For the past fifteen years the Corporate Office, or Daily Office has been a constant, read in every location of the Order six mornings each week. On the seventh morning the high office of House Church has been used as a form of Sunday celebration. A Solitary Office consisting of meditation, contemplation and prayer has been rehearsed in various forms at intermittent times.

HISTORICAL  
SKETCH

Intercessory Evening Prayers have also been held for the past three years at 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Although the globality and pluralistic form of the Order at the present moment raises questions about the appropriate alterations of its symbolic life, there will of necessity, remain some form of the Corporate and Solitary Offices. In some form the indicative of the Awe before the Final Mystery, the contentless word of possibility and the cruciform deed performed on behalf of all and consuming all will remain. In whatever form the Offices evolve, they will rehearse the response which is inclusive, archaic, futuristic and intentional.

a. The Daily Office

The Ground. Every life is an incarnate liturgy. Some liturgies rehearse reality; some, a reduction of reality. The liturgy of the Order rehearses the drama of celebration for all men. The first words of the Daily Office (The Ascription) summarizes the entire office in setting the context in which all of life is lived. It is in the name of the Father; the way life really is; in the name of the Son: the comprehensive possibility of any situation; and in the name of the Holy Ghost; the freedom of everyman to decide the stance which he will take to life. The closing words of the Office, "Grace and Peace", and the "Amen" that is said to them, express a vocational commitment to live life this day out of that which has been rehearsed. The ancient meaning of the term liturgy as "the work of the people", or "the public duty", is reflected in the Office as it functions to hold the community before its self understanding and its decision to be mission in the world.

CELEBRATIVE  
DRAMA

Moreover, the Daily Office is a final affirmation of faith that the given situation is one of sheer possibility at each moment, and that his decisional stance is foundational to the Order's commonality. The three acts of the office reflect the threefold nature of life: separation, gift and expenditure. What life is finally all about is the encounter with mystery, the awakening of consciousness, the enactment of care and the appropriation of tranquility. The Daily Office represents this life understanding. It grounds the fact that man's freedom lies in the appropriation of his interrelatedness with all of life and with that body through history which has lived out of the Word. Our commonality as the Order does not come out of a common idiom or language, but out of this rehearsed life stance.

COMMON  
STRUCTURE

THE  
CONFESSION

The Drama. The Corporate Office, an objective social act that portrays corporate, social realities, is a drama of three acts with a Prologue, an Epilogue, and versicles between each of the parts. Act I, the Act of Confession, is the acknowledgement that man is finite, contingent and finally has no control over death. Confession gives the possibility of standing before the contingency present in every life situation; it allows man to recognize a dead structure, a dead relationship, a dead idea when he encounters it. Objectively, it is not so much an appraisal of the self as of the life situation. Subjectively, confession is the acknowledgement of the sinfulness of man and his participation in that reality. Man can acknowledge the fact that, out of his pride, he has built an illusion around his life to protect himself from the pain of facing the separation that is present in every human relationship and in every local community of the world in which he lives. The acknowledgement of contingency is the stuff out of which new life is birthed. The life of confession as dramatized in Act I gives man the possibility of no longer patching up the old but creating the new. The three component parts of Act I are the act of confession, the absolution and the Great Prayer of the Church.

THE  
PRAISE

Act II, the Act of Praise, is the expression of gratitude for the wonderous gift life is, in spite of the circumstances in which it is lived, and of thanksgiving for the fact that the world is good. Psalms out of the tradition of the Old Covenant recounting and praising the mighty acts of Yahweh; a portion of the constitution of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ; a contemporary witness to the power of the word to transform the impossible into the possible; and the recital of one of the creeds from the historic church, all blend together to create a triumphant hymn of praise.

THE  
DEDICATION

Act III is the Act of Dedication. The offering of a penny symbolizes the total commitment of one's life to the age old commandment given to the church, "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." Prayers of petition for the church and prayers of intercession for the world are offered spontaneously by whosoever is moved to lift up his particular concern or plea. It is understood that when the community responds with an "Amen" **after each of**

the prayers, it is acknowledging its individual and corporate responsibility for realigning the particular promise claimed for a social structure or individual life. The passing of the peace from one member to his neighbor is a final reminder that the fulfilled life is a gift given in the midst of radical expenditure and care for the neighbor. Our lives are offered up only to be given back to us as whole and complete, and as the living incarnation of God's graciousness in the midst of this world. In this act the versicle, "Lord have mercy on us; Christ have mercy on us" are united in the prayer, "Lord have mercy through us."

GODLY  
SORROW

The Moods. There are three accompanying moods related to the three acts of the Office: Godly Sorrow; Godly Joy; and Godly Compassion. In the Act of Confession, man embodies the "godly sorrow" which Paul describes as the path to repentance and health, in distinction from "worldly sorrow" which leads to depression and despair. Godly sorrow never ceases for it is based on the recognition that, as long as human consciousness is lively, it will turn from that which births it, thereby choosing death over life, enslavement over freedom. Godly sorrow, in this sense, has no object save the power universally present in man's denial of his profound consciousness which is the occasion for repentance, not despair.

GODLY  
JOY

In the Act of Praise, the mood is Godly Joy, in which "the men of faith make merry where there is no merriment". Where life is embraced in all of its suffering there is present a joy which is not conditioned by good feelings and noble intents, but by the fact that life is unconditionally good.

GODLY  
COMPASSION

In the Act of Dedication the mood is the Godly Compassion that foresees the need of the "last fat lady" and responds to it. Godly compassion places no limit on the availability of time and resources and is concerned only that man's compassion is poured out to meet the need of his neighbor at its deepest level.

The Function. The Daily Office is the religious exercise that illuminates the Order's self-consciousness about its task to love the church and the world and to be the elected People of God. To be a liturgist in the office or a member of the congregation is to

assume the priestly role which preserves the cultus, recovers form and space, intones the basic myth of the people and guards the mystery. There are no spectators in the rehearsal of the office, for the congregation and the liturgists together stand as the corporate priesthood. The rehearsal each day of the living power of the Word in our lives provides the nurture needed to keep that Word in history on behalf of the past ages and the future generations.

#### b. The House Church

### COMMON MEAL

The weekly House Church, or Sunday celebration is the high office focused in the Common Meal in which the Order celebrates its life together in service to the Church and the world. The ritual of the Common Meal is based on a structure which reflects the three Acts of worship discussed in a preceding essay in this section. Following the meal, the community celebrates significant events in the lives of the individual, the family and the corporate body, and receives and celebrates symbolic reports on the external and internal dimensions of the common mission. The ritual of symbolic Accountability and the pronouncement of Absolution dramatizes the significance of the past and the openness of the future into which the body is sent forth.

#### c. The Solitary Office

### THE INTRODUCTION

The task of creating consciousness in the 20th century always requires a comprehensive structuring of symbolic life. Every human being, in our time, has been thrown into a depth struggle with the primordial mystery at the center of life itself. That struggle is finally a solitary struggle in which the new face of God is carved by our solitary primal decisions. Yet once we have heard the call to struggle, we discover that we stand among a host of colleagues both ancient and contemporary. As those who have gone before us, we necessarily find ourselves forging a solitary office with its myths, rites, and symbols, that hold us before the final mystery. The construct of the solitary office corresponds to the solitary experience of life where man grasps after the deeps of existence through the human activities of meditation, contemplation, and prayer.

THE  
MEDITATION

One of the ways man deals with the assault of the future is to respond to the unknown through reflecting on the wisdom of his "ancestors". Every man has such ancestors whose lives, deeds and sayings inform his imagination and consciousness. The activity of self-consciously reflecting on one's actual and projected relation to those who inform the imagination is Meditation. Man in the 20th century is free to create his own conscience, to choose who will and will not be his imaginal ancestors. There are several kinds of friends who sit on any man's meditative council. There are supportive friends who give him unlimited permission to appropriate both the terror and possibility of his life as profoundly significant. There are demanding friends who recall him to his unlimited obligation to his neighbor. There are imitative friends, whose revolutionary style of forging the future have become models worthy of emulation. Finally, there are transpositional friends who call from the past for the completion of their work and whose continued historical existence is dependent on the present decision. The Order has experimented with different forms of the solitary office in an effort to enable man to self-consciously and continually create and recreate his meditative council. The task of comprehensively ordering and intentionally selecting spirit friends for the practice of meditation requires sensitivity to one's own spirit deeps as well as the needs of the historical times and the secular world.

THE  
CONTEMPLATION

Contemplation is the activity of being-in-relation to the Mystery of all that is. Contemplation is designed to bring to consciousness the struggle to be one's being while standing present to one's objective encounter with the Mystery. In probing the deeps of his own existence as it encounters the universal irrational, man creates culture. The solitary office of the Order employs inclusive categories for the act of contemplation: the Others; the Self; Time past and future; and Space in its breadth and particularity. The exercise moves beyond the rational in its use of images of geography, nature and time; through posture, gesture and use of the senses; and through rhythmic, plastic and literary tools. The Order has given great attention to and grounding of the classic description of the phenomenological happening of contemplation; the Preparation, the

Descent, the Dark Night of the Soul, and the Ecstasy. The moment of ecstasy, in which life comes together as one fabric, happens in the decision that all, just as it is, is good. Although the exercise, when described, sounds mystical, it is a mundane activity in which every man engages but for which he usually lacks for giving it a name. Contemplation, finally, is that exercise which gives the Order the possibility of making its day-by-day actions a manifestation of the inclusive love of Being itself for creation.

THE  
PRAYER

Prayer in the solitary office is that ongoing activity by which man symbolizes and orders the investiture of his life in the world. As man acts out his life, he constantly engages in activities of repentance and acceptance, of gratitude, and supplication. This is the prayer life of every man. In prayer, man decides his relationships and thus reveals his stance before the totality of life: past, present and future. The historic practices of prayer, including confession, thanksgiving, petition and intercession hold man open to the methods by which he has grasped after his creatureliness as he relates to himself, others and the final mystery. To pray authentically is to actualize oneself as one thrust in history; so prayer is action, the decision before the decision. The Order, in its prayer life assumes responsibility for the world.

CRITICAL  
FUNCTION

The solitary office of the Order is the method by which all human beings appropriate their own particular myth, rite, and symbols. It enables people to participate and formulate the time and space about them. Rather than living out of the many alternatives which he might adapt from his culture's articulation of what life is all about, the man of the spirit puts together a cosmic story out of which he can live life fully, be profoundly human.

d. The Evening Prayers

PRACTICAL  
IMPETUS

In 1972 the global spirit movement self-consciously turned its mission to direct service to the world as the necessary strategy for bringing new form to the Church. The comprehensive task became clear: revealing depth awareness, developing functional aptitude, provoking historical engagement, nurturing spirit prowess, and building primal community. Since then, the awesome clarity on what has to be done as grounded in the three great campaigns of Global Community Forum, Global Social Demonstration and Global Servant Movement has driven the Order to prayer as

an alternative to the danger of reducing our operating context. Prayer is the comprehensive, concrete, practical decision-making that precedes every action. The 6 p.m. prayers and fasting which began around the globe in 1975 dramatically rehearse this dynamic.

CONTEMPORARY  
ANGELUS

The experiment with the 6 p.m. prayers has been the attempt to recover intercessory prayer. The holding image of the experiment is the development of a contemporary form of the Angelus, a brief devotional exercise conducted at an appointed time of day marked by the sound of a bell. In the Order's experiment, the bell is sounded at 6 p.m. and those who decide gather in the Prayer Room, a designated space in every House or Nexus. A first and second liturgist read the short office, leading the gathered community in prayers for the Church, the world and the Order's common calling. An appointed Collect related to one aspect of the mission of the Order is read each day.

FASTING  
EXERCISES

The exercise of fasting symbolizes the Order's decision to care for the world. On each day of the year, with the exceptions of Sunday and designated feast days, a House or Nexus fasts on behalf of all. Fasting serves as an occasion of deep reflection when the assigned body steps back from the multiple involvements of life, and reappropriates its own uniqueness and significance for the purpose of total engagement in the mission.

COMMON  
RITUALS

Meal rituals; send outs; specific accountability for the care of members and the assigned task; meal conversations; readings and reflections; dramas which celebrate the sacraments of baptism, marriage, ordination and death, are all rehearsals that inform, remind and focus the Order's awareness that to be profoundly human is to constantly stand in fear and fascination before the Mystery that life is.

- 1) what phrases/sentences struck you?
- 2) what teachings/sayings of Jesus that concretize this?
- 3) images/structures that ground this in our Order?
- 4) How open; why would needs these vows today?

## 2. THE BASIC MARKS

### a. The Classic Vows

#### CLASSIC RULES

The classic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience have traditionally held before the Religious his basic life intention. Whenever man has dedicated himself to serving the world with the totality of his existence, the assumption of these vows has signalled the depth of his decision. As an integral part of the classic rules of historical orders, the vows have been formalized by rigorous requirements: poverty has been acted out in the giving away of all one's possessions to the poor; chastity has been symbolized by the celibate life of fasting and prayer; and obedience has been marked by the absolute honoring of the abbot's directives.

#### RESTATING WISDOM

The Order: Ecumenical has not required of itself the same practical grounding of the classic vows which the orders of monks and nuns followed in the early Church. However, each member lives out the intent of these vows as they have been reappropriated in form and exercises appropriate to a 20th century family order. The Order: Ecumenical has been concerned for both preserving the wisdom of the past and retooling and restating the vows in such a way that they may be recovered by the secular religious as he operates in any culture, regardless of race, class or creed. The rigor of the vows are nonetheless present; total renunciation of this world and singleminded obedience is still the demand if man is to know and act out in his life the meaning of profound humanness.

#### MISSIONAL POVERTY

The vow of poverty is the ordering and offering of all the resources and relationships for the sake of the missional task. It is detachment or disengagement from the claims of the world for the sake of missional engagement. Certain images and structures within the Order's corporate life support this vow: the stipend, the reminder that we are nobodies, and the principles of two suitcases and living among the dispossessed, poor and hungry.

SINGLEMINDED  
CHASTITY

The vow of chastity is best described as singlemindedness, or willing one thing: laying down one's life for the sake of the world. In the midst of multiple claims, chastity is enacted in the daily exercise of singlemindedly keeping to the task. The decision to live out of this vow is never a matter of following a clear-cut course of action, for each decision is made in the ambiguous context of the comprehensive and futuristic. Certain practices within the Order's corporate life symbolize this vow: wearing the blue; building checklists, brooding screens and setting priorities; and building models that respond to the major contradiction. Chastity holds the tension between the disengagement which is poverty and the engagement which is obedience. It is the surrender of one's total life in obedience to all creation.

JOYOUS  
OBEDIENCE

The vow of obedience is total engagement with open eyes and a joyous heart. The opposite of obedience is not freedom, but the disavowal of one's election by Being itself to serve profound humanness. Obedience is grounded in the principle of saying the Yes before the No to any disclosed need, and is marked in the Order by full-time assignment. Obedience is neither blind compliance to the rule of the Order, nor to any person. "The obedient man creates the new decalogue." Disobedience in any particular situation becomes necessary only when a more comprehensive context is disclosed which calls for a new articulation of the necessary deed. The ritual of accountability rehearsed at House Church grasps the deep ambiguity of being the obedient one whose response is either Yes and No, or No and Yes. Because no one is ever totally obedient or disobedient to the Mystery, it requires raw decision to discern the obedient response.

BENEDICTINE  
STABILITY

The Benedictine Rule adds a fourth vow, that of stability. Stability is the quality necessary to live consistently and constantly before the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. To be chaste, that is to live the intensification of poverty and obedience, requires that the man of the spirit always be steadfast in his decision to serve his neighbor with the totality of his life.

1) What is corporateness not?

2) What is corporateness?

3) Movies - corporateness

*Dirty Dozen*  
*The Cowboys*  
*The Sting*

*Bridge Too Far*  
*Sons of Navarone*  
*Star Wars*

4. Practical dynamics Chart →  
5. What is corporateness?

b. The Fundamental Sign

The ordering dynamic in history, as it expressed itself sociologically in the religious orders of the Western world, forged a sign of chastity that indeed created history. This sign was celibacy. It is not an overstatement to claim that celibacy, as singleminded engagement in the task of caring for society, was a source of power that shaped western civilization and, consequently, the whole world. In the 20th Century, the power of celibacy as a sign has collapsed, and the process of revitalizing its sustaining myth will require the recovery of that deep, dynamic impulse which first gave rise to celibacy as the sign needed for the creation of a humane world.

The Order: Ecumenical holds corporateness as its foundational sign. Corporateness is never advocated for its own sake, or for the benefits derived therefrom, but only for the sake of getting the missional task done. The mission of the Order is to serve the local church, as the operating base for converting new awareness into concrete love for the world; to serve society at the local level where dehumanizing problems are most particularly manifested; and to serve humanness by demonstrating how social sectors can be renewed from within by vocationally engaged human life. It is for the purpose of furthering this mission that the Order operates out of corporateness.

Four definitudes illuminate the Order's understanding of corporateness: focused power, covenantal collegiality, profound fellowship, and decisional obedience. Focused power is present when the practical vision of the corporate body is precise and clearly defined. In the movement, this is illustrated most dramatically when the Global priors gather annually in Council and delineate the strategic priorities of the next year within the context of the current four-year plan. These are rehearsed throughout the year in the daily collegiums to sustain the corporate focus globally.

*Global Priors Council*

SIGNAL  
CORPORATENESS

FOCUSED  
POWER

*power in str. of table*

Consensued Vision	Common Symbols	Funing	Praying
Time lining	<del>Publicly</del> Pow's story	Story Rehearing	Excelling
Declared Praisin	Blue-Wearing	Singing	Yes ing
maneuvers	Eschat. Endure	Celebrating	Seaming

*Power in str. of table -*

Covenantal collegiality is intrinsic to corporateness. Collegiality based on contractual agreement is short lived. The first reversal experienced in the effort to actuate a well-conceived model is, in most instances, all that is required for the body to lose nerve and opt for another venture that guarantees more security and requires less expenditure. Corporateness is collegiality based on the covenant to stand even when that requires walking barefoot across the coals of hell. It is a promise to stand even when that requires renouncing fidelity to any particular relationship for the sake of belonging to all mankind. It is a covenant to stand until nothing less than the Lord's economy terminates engagement. That is the foundation of which corporateness endures. *House Church*

*on-time*

COVENANTAL COLLEGIALLY

Profound fellowship is a gift of corporateness. It is the fun of doing the impossible. It is the fellowship with others that is grounded in carrying out the mission. It is not dependent upon personal affinity, similar background, shared interests or compatible neuroses. Rather, it is the fellowship that runs deep between those whose election in life is to care. It is deep appreciation of and delight in one's comrade-in-arms.

PROFOUND FELLOWSHOOD

*H.R.A. - John's Mtg.*

Finally, corporateness is the acting out of decisional obedience. It is obedience rooted in the free decision to do what is needed to honor the missional task. It is obedience to the consensus of the corporate body. The corporate man lives out of the common story, engages faithfully in the symbols and rites of the community, and stands accountable to history and his colleagues for his assigned task. Decisional obedience calls into question any move that is oriented toward internal well-being over external mission. It insists on effectivity over efficiency, objective intentionality over subjective propensity. Decisional obedience, finally, is based on a radical trust in the corporate mind and the common models of implementation that the community builds. Corporateness requires decisional obedience so that the full power of the community can be released to impact the consciousness of the world it serves and can stand as a demonstration of depth sociality.

DECISIONAL OBEDIENCE

*Work days  
Global assign.  
Security*

External structures of corporateness are necessary. Submission to the structures of corporateness, reflected in the rule of the Order, is the act of interiorized corporateness. The interiorly disciplined man is sustained but not defined by the enabling structure to which he submits. Interior discipline is a solitary decision which, to be sustained, requires a solitary office of some kind. The comprehensive brooding screen and the checklist prepared for the action of the next day are but two tools for sustaining the solitary decision. Corporateness as the foundational sign of the Order is, in itself, a religious exercise.

### c. The Life Qualities

The life qualities which the Order dramatizes in its individual and corporate style are humility, gratitude and compassion. These qualities have long endured through the centuries in the lives of those who have decided to create the structures needed to catalyze profound humanness and build primal community. They are profound qualities that flow from the three acts of the divine liturgy: the acts of confession, praise and dedication. They are not finally identified with any particular historical time or religious response, but emerge in man's living before that which is unsynonymous with any human relationship, situation, circumstances, temporal value, social custom or law. The qualities of humility, gratitude and compassion are ontologically grounded in Being itself, and consequently are universal to all humankind.

### INTERNAL QUALITIES

Humility is rooted in the indicative that life is radically open. As a life stance it is the openness to all which permits freedom from the reductionism evident in pride and arrogance. Humility is exposure before the unexpected intrusion which reveals the accepted action as potentially destructive, which discloses the operating model as restricted in scope and which exposes intended concern as a drive for self-acceptance. Because such intrusions are experienced as painful negation, the immediate human response is to receive them as threats from an alien agent which must be annihilated. The quality of profound humility allows one to appropriate occasions

### OPEN HUMILITY

- C: 1. Indication:  
 2. Style category?  
 3. His/fictional characters that ground them?  
 4. How do you check to see you are on the way daily? Clues?  
 Has to do w/ have you lived your life - - - -  
 interior accty.  
 5. What gimmicks, poetry, symbols use - divine liturgy embodiment?  
 6) How has our Order contributed to the Religious life of next century? + new shape of the Church?

of raw exposure as sheer gift, bearing the promise of new levels of consciousness capable of more effectively discerning and performing the necessary deed. Humility, in this sense, is the quality that gives one permission to be unreservedly exposed to the gracious activity of Being itself, giving man the possibility of affirming the totality of existence.

RECEPTIVE  
GRATITUDE

The quality of gratitude is rooted in the indicative that all that is, is good. All men, no matter what their economic or social condition, are grateful for something. This is as true for the villager who spends his life in search of food as it is for the suburbanite who is driven by the quest for meaningful engagement from one frenzied rat race to the next. Gratitude is the very condition of life itself; when gratitude ceases to be, self-denial and destruction are inevitable. Universal gratitude is the intensification of basic human thankfulness for all of life, across all time and space. It is the acknowledgment of the promise resident in every situation and relationship. It is the affirmation of failure as well as success; disillusionment as well as exhilaration; dashed hopes as well as fulfilled dreams. Gratitude receives creation as whole and good without exception, but does so as a response to the indicative of life's goodness not as a moral judgment. Universal gratitude is devoid of any preconceived criteria that separates good from evil. Rather, it is an unconditional affirmation of the gracious activity of Being itself, giving man the possibility of exercising total freedom.

UNIVERSAL  
COMPASSION

The quality of compassion is rooted in the indicative that everyman cares. Even in the meanest of characters whose selfish pettiness apparently signifies an absence of compassion, care - however reduced - is evident. Universal compassion is the intensification of indicative human concern which is care for the world and all its people, always enacted in the particular on behalf of the whole. The compassionate act is performed locally out of a plan that will benefit all of humanity. Universal compassion generates social repentance through which all past injustice and inequity is forgiven. It drives man to lay down his life in building the

the structures of care that will guarantee a more human world for the future. Its operating arena is unrestricted by geography, status, race or creed. It occasions the courage to risk action in the face of the unfathomable ambiguity which obscures knowledge of even the consequences of the deeds. Universal compassion is rooted in the trust that life is unconditionally cared for. As unrestricted responsibility it gives everyman the possibility of exercising his freedom with integrity before the gracious activity of Being itself.

Finally, it must be noted that the qualities of humility, gratitude and compassion are rooted in the contentless Word that all that is, is good; that life is unconditionally received; that the past is undeniably approved; and that the future is radically open. When this affirmation is internalized, the qualities of humility, gratitude and compassion become the basis of the human response to the historical situation. Such a style is a sign of possibility to all who encounter it: it is a demonstration that life is significant just as it is given, and that the exercise of authentic selfhood is the ground of fulfillment. Transcending time and space, this contentless Word is the hope of all mankind and, as it is made incarnate, becomes a transparent sign of radical humanness.

CONTENTLESS  
WORD

### 3. The Classic Principles

The classic principles of the Order: Ecumenical are foundational to the body's effective corporate engagement. They provide a common screen for decision making and action and have become over the years part of the fabric of the unique presence of the Order in history. The operating principles are stated unconditionally, somewhat like axiomatic truths. Their function, however, is understood as guiding, rather than prescribing responsible action. The application of an operating principle to a given situation always requires serious brooding over the relationship between the particular need and the global demand. Inherent in each operating principle is the acknowledgment of its perimeters. In a very real sense, therefore, although they are stated as absolute indicatives,

GUIDING  
FUNCTION

each operating principle embraces the tensions which are the key to the Order's polity and the basis for the flexibility that allows the necessary deed to be enacted.

ASSIGNED  
TIME

1. All time is assigned time. This principle grounds the Order's understanding that time is the context within which life is significantly expended or heedlessly wasted, and that everyone has but one brief life to expend. It relates the sign of the vow of obedience - which is to be under assignment - to the vow of chastity, which is the singleminded enactment of one mission which is life long and world wide. It enables the Order member to design the activities within each given block of time as intentional acts of expenditure, understood within the context of the assignment to be mission. It recognizes the investment of time in solitary, family and recreational activities as authentic missional expenditure.

AMONG  
POOR

2. The Order lives among the poor. This operating principle is grounded in the Order's decision to address the moral issue of our times as the means for caring for the world. It reflects the corporate strategy of moving in support of the trend of local man's resurgence to catalyze the grassroots development that will bridge the gap between the 15% and the 85%. It is a response to the claim to minister to obvious innocent suffering, recognizing that innocent suffering is experienced by both rich and poor. It is a reminder of the vow of poverty, which is detachment. It is based on the faith stance that what the task requires is present abundantly in every situation.

TWO  
SUITCASES

3. The Order member lives out of two suitcases. This operating principle guards the mobility of the global Order. It dramatizes the fact that "home" is where one is assigned (even though it be a tent) to perform the missional task. It illustrates the style of detachment from goods which block effective missional engagement.

MONTHLY  
STIPEND

4. The Order member lives on an equitably based monthly stipend. The stipend is a sign of the vow of poverty, and in one sense is sheer symbol. This operating principle, however, is grounded in the

Order's decision to care for the practical necessities of life requisite to full engagement in the missional task. It reflects the Order's understanding that equity (relative to providing care) rather than equality (relative to providing equal amount) is the basis of economic commonality. It recognizes the cruciality of internal care which is always held in tension with enabling the external mission.

SELF-  
SUPPORT

5. Every operation is self-supporting. This operating principle grounds Xavierism. It allows for the creation of self-dependence and self-reliance relative to external support. It emerged out of the practical and spirit necessities revealed in going global and supports the pole of local autonomy in tension with global commonality. It gives practical grounding to the understanding that the Order is servant, and costs no one anything. It supports the call that everyone be a developer.

ONE  
MISSION

6. The Order has one mission, not many. This principle is the context for the vow of chastity. Internally it enables common focus within the widely divergent task assignments of the Order, and gives expenditure in menial tasks and sophisticated work equal significance. It is the basis for the Order's insistence that internal life is structured for the sake of enabling one mission, and therefore is dealt with only as it relates to issues of missional effectivity. Externally it functions as a guardrail against the propensity to chase after the interesting and novel at the expense of the necessary.

LOCAL  
AUTONOMY

7. The Order lives out of total local autonomy and total global responsibility. This principle holds the tension between the comprehensive and the particular which is foundational to Order polity. It provides the context for honoring unique authenticity within inclusive commonality. It encourages grassroots decisions at the same time it relates them to responsible action on behalf of all mankind. It fosters practical inventiveness yet guards against parochialism.

STRUCTURAL  
CARE

8. Care is provided structurally. This operating principle is grounded in the Order's understanding that structural care is the form of justing love required in the urban, post-modern world. It provides an objective, sociological context for acting out the love of neighbor and is a check on the perversions of a subjective, psychological approach. It offers a viable basis for massive care on every level of society because it relies on the power of a replicable model as opposed to the unique charisma generated in a one-to-one encounter.

NO  
INVITATIONS

9. The Order never asks anyone to join, leave or stay. This principle rests on the understanding that the working out of one's election is a solitary matter between the individual and God, and that the form of one's participation in the League is an issue of personal decision. It recognizes the Order's authentic role of revealing the possibility and establishing the responsible limits, either of which could catalyze an individual's decision to join or to leave. It embraces the tension between the fact that membership in the Order bears no status, reflects no preference of one life over another, and the fact that the only reason for deciding to be the Order is to further the missional task.

OPEN  
MEETINGS

10. All meeting are open. This principle is foundational to the grassroots polity and consensus method of the Order. It is based on the value of maximal corporate input in the deliberation which leads to decision. It is the structural means by which everyone's input can be honored, and all the decisions can belong to all the people. It provides the context for each member to decide freely the extent of his or her participation. It guards against secrecy and elitism relative to the information flow which is the life blood of the Order's global commonality. It is always held in tension with the sensitive discretion required when colleagues meet to deal with personal matters concerning the life of an individual or family.

AVAILABLE  
POWER

11. The power is in the center of the table. This principle grounds the fact that no one person or group is in charge of the Order. It is foundational to the Order's understanding that whomever will, through participation in the various structures and occasions for consensus building, may pick up the power which is available to all and get his wisdom into the decision making process. Its context is the Order's conviction that the power to effect history is corporate power, employed in building models for doing one mission. This context alone ensures the creative use of the power of the people and checks irrelevant axe grinding and petty complaints. This operating principle calls for the raw decision of each individual to risk offering his unique insight for the sake of building a more human world for all people.

GRASSROOTS  
CONSENSUS

12. Decisions are made by consensus. This operating principle is foundational to the grassroots polity of the Order. It reveals the Order's grasp of participatory democracy as a method which forges the common will of the people to act together, not a process of discerning the individual wills which comprise a majority vote. It depends upon broad grassroots input and inclusive deliberation. It guards against the dilution of compromise by holding the value of effective historical action over that of keeping all sides balanced or happy.

TOTAL  
RESPONSIBILITY

13. Everyone is responsible for the whole mission. This principle grounds the concept of action on behalf of. It calls for concern for the particular in the context of the comprehensive. It guards against both the compartmentalization of decisions according to specialized focus and the consequent victimism or blame which can arise when decisions made in one arena unhelpfully effect those in another. It keeps the focus of one mission before the whole Order and ensures the broad input and interchange flow which builds consensus and allows action to be corporate. It transforms an understanding of "my work" into a grasp of "our task".

EQUITY  
BASIS

14. Equity, not equality, is the basis of all operation. This principle is grounded in the recognition that imbalance is inherent in life. It is based on the understanding that the responsible deed in history maximizes the creative power of every human life and every authentic structure as each operates in tensional relationship with others. It guards against the drive to balance the dynamic realities of human life and the social process according to a fixed common denominator which defines universal well-being. This principle is at the heart of the Order's missional strategies for dealing with the moral issue of our times; its grasp of consensus; its self-support operations; and its assignment configurations. In the Order's internal life this principle is well illustrated in the naming of a "first among equals", the use of an equitable stipend base, and the practice of rotating specific assignments within the understanding that "we all do everything". Underlying this principle is the Order's conviction that each life and each situation is a unique gift, best honored within the context of moving the global mission ahead.

HUMAN  
EFFECTIVENESS

15. Effectiveness, not efficiency is the mark of our work. This principle is grounded in the understanding that the global impact of the Order's mission depends on more than the well-oiled running of each operational level. It reflects a grasp of the Order as a profound historical dynamic, as opposed to an organization or an institution. It does not dismiss the minimal cost/maximal quality output which is the recognized gift of efficiency; however, it holds that value in tension with the need of moment by moment flexibility, courageous intuition and raw decision—the marks of those who stand in "the humanly impossible situation" of total obedience and total freedom not readily claimed efficiency geared systems or action.

FIRST  
YES

16. The first response is always "Yes". This is the actional expression of the quality of humility understood as openness to the possibility of every life situation, and the quality of gratitude, understood as profound affirmation of life as sheer gift. It is the context within which the quality of compassion, or the giving of life on

behalf of the world, takes practical form. This principle represents the tension which always exists between the universal "yes" of God's mercy in every situation and the particular yes or no which is the responsible, necessary deed.

INDIRECT  
ACTION

17. Indirect action is preferred to direct attack. This principle is grounded in the catalytic function that has marked the ordering dynamic throughout history. On the sociological level indirect action reflects the fact that the Order never does anything. It is the guideline for the group of nobodies whose role is to catalyze the social avalanche which represents the radical decision on the part of the existing social structures to pick up the task of care for the world. This principle is illustrated in the turn to the world as "the end run" made to enable the Church's reappropriation of its authentic task. Indirect action is catalysis by demonstration of methods, not by imposition of content. On the more individual level, indirection provides the objectivity through which the address of the Word can be appropriated as possibility, rather than negation. When the life of an individual is dealt with in a corporate setting through indirection, the happening becomes an occasion for sociological as well as personal address.

KNOWLEDGE  
ACCESS

18. Knowledge access is each person's individual responsibility (or not knowing is no excuse). This principle is grounded in the indicative that all the wisdom belongs to all the people. It stands in creative tension with the Order's operating practice of broad, regular interchange. It recognizes that participation is a matter of decision, not a 'fait accompli' guaranteed by ideal structural design and operation. It confirms the fact that social structures care, but are no messiah. It affirms the significant exercise of individual freedom in gaining access to the inclusive deliberation from which consensus emerges.

OBJECTIVE  
MODEL

19. We move only on the basis of a model. This principle is grounded in the Order's presupposition that responsible action is based on an objective model which is inclusive (sensitive to the need of the particular situation in relation to the

comprehensive context of the globe); futuric (responsive to the immediate demand as it relates to anticipated historical trends and missional strategies); and intentional (oriented toward practical action as opposed to abstract ideas). It is the key to creative revolutionary method. It is the sine qua non of the style of those who are continually prepared to meet ambiguity victoriously. It is a guardrail against subjective criticism and is the basis of the Order's practice of only critiquing an initial model on the basis of a more adequate alternative model. It is at the heart of living out the style of compassion: as the implementation of one's model becomes the means by which one gives his life at a particular moment, he embodies the cruciform style.

20. The Daily Office is the most important thing we do. This operating principle is grounded in the indicative that symbol is the key to social transformation. It reflects the fact that a people cannot long sustain themselves in mission without common myth, rite and symbol. The Daily Office is the glue of the Order. It is the objective rehearsal of the Order's origin, identity and purpose. Its constancy symbolizes the constancy of the call to serve the world.

21. We never make a decision until it is absolutely necessary. This principle is grounded in the understanding that every decision is crucial to moving the mission ahead. It guards against the impatience which leads one to seek immediate answers to complex issues. It stands before the fact that moment by moment change is inevitable and allows for radical openness to new information. This principle is held in creative tension with the value of carefully timing decisive action, and recognizes the dangers of paralysis and confusion inherent in waiting too long to move.

22. Every decision is checked with another colleague. This principle is foundational to corporateness. It guards against needless submission to the reduced context that any individual perspective necessarily represents. It is an affirmation of the power of corporate wisdom in shaping effective action. This principle is foundational to the Order's practice of assignment by teams, and is

LITURGICAL  
PRIMACY

DELAYED  
DECISIONS

CHECK  
DECISIONS

the practical grounding of the style of openness to the intrusion of the comprehensive other.

AVOID  
PUBLICITY

23. We never seek publicity. This principle reflects the understanding that the Order is a group of nobodies who do nothing save catalyze the decision of others to build the new earth. It grounds the decisional style of being in but not of the world. It guards against losing focus on the task, or equating victory with renown.

GIVEN  
ADEQUACY

24. The external situation is never the problem. This principle lies at the heart of the method of contradiction battleplanning and, as such, guides decision making on every level of the Order's work. It is grounded in the radical affirmation of the adequacy of the given. It allows for moving beyond irritants and deterrents to grasp the major contradiction. It guards against the illusion that a lack of anything - money, time, troops - is the block, and demands that the Order discern the possibility of the Other World amidst the apparent impossibility of this world.

## V. THE IMPLEMENTIVE FUNCTION

### A. The Local Units

#### 1. The Religious House

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Religious House is the basic local missional unit of the Order: Ecumenical. It currently exists in 103 cities in 24 nations of the globe. The House is composed of at least five adults - couples and/or single families - who live in common residence in a building which also serves as office space for the Ecumenical Institute and the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Its size varies and depends upon missional need. A troika priorship is assigned and the House members are divided into teams to facilitate rotation of corporate care tasks.

#### HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Religious House experiment began in 1968 as there emerged in North America a substantial movement of colleagues engaged in the renewal effort. At first its task was to be a corporate catalytic presence among these colleagues providing the local movement access to the resources of the Order. In 1970 with the advent of the Local Church Experiment, the increased number of Houses became centers of training and planning for local galaxies. Two years later with the "turn to the world", the Houses began to demonstrate for the Church how to care for the local community. Thus began the Primal Community Experiment with direct catalytic action in the neighborhood surrounding the House. With the advent of Global Community Forum and Global Social Demonstration, the work of the Houses took another shift. In North America they became mobile on an areal basis in doing a series of "maneuvers" designed to awaken local communities systematically across the assigned geography. As missional emphasis shifted from spirit nurture to church renewal to local development to geographic awakenment, the practical tasks of the House have undergone alteration. Yet its general role of being the Order's local missional unit has remained unchanged.

#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

The paramount function of the House is to be the manifestation of radical presence. The House is a living demonstration of full, profound humanness in its contemporary form and so bears witness in its style to the realities of faith, hope and love. The basic functions of the Religious House are:

- a. To enable global reconstruction as a sign and catalyst of effective comprehensive social engagement on the local level. Whether the House is engaged in Global Community Forum or Global Social Demonstration, it is the catalyst of local man's participation in shaping his destiny.

- b. To provide a wayside inn for travelers on the journey of profound humanness. It provides structures for reflection, decision and celebration within the context of effective practical engagement and so allows the Order at large to wrestle through life issues in a setting of missional corporateness.
- c. To serve the established religious institutions. It grasps and manifests the intimate connection between human community and the profound consciousness held in formal religions, and it constantly works to enliven, reinforce and put form on that relationship.
- d. To rehearse religious practices through experimentation and regular rituals. It dramatically enacts the profound dramas of life's ultimate nature and destiny. In this sense, it is a post-modern monastery, a spot of the Other World in the midst of this World whose sole task is to bring the fullness of life to all.

**OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

The operating principles of the Religious House are: 1) that it employ the polity of consensus; 2) that it be fully responsible for the globe from within its location; 3) that each House is webbed to every other through both its missional priorities and its corporate practices including Daily Office, weekly House Church, 6 P.M. prayers, and weekly Ecclesiola; and 4) that it maintains its global perspective through weekly Global Order Reports, common study format and a common time design.

**TENSIONAL POLARITIES**

The tensions held in the operation of the House include: 1) honoring the needs of the mission from the perspective of the House in relation to the tasks defined from the perspective of the area; 2) developing local opportunity within the context of global priorities; 3) relating self-support efforts to comprehensive missional demands; and 4) holding in creative relation the establishment posture and the disestablishment life style.

**FUNDAMENTAL ROLE**

The House is an integral part of the polity dynamic. Although its primary task is implementation, for that very reason its input to corporate deliberation is invaluable. Periodic reports in councils, collegium insights forwarded to the appropriate centrum and occasional assignment shifts ensure that the wisdom of each local unit builds the context for corporate decisions.

**2. The Metro Cadre**

The Metro Cadre is the basic local missional unit of the Extended

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

and Movemental Order. It is composed of a group of colleagues who meet weekly and assume responsibility for carrying out the missional priorities within the geography of a given metro. Its tactics and time design are coordinated with the House, where one is present, and often the two meet together. Membership is by decision to carry out the task, and many levels of decision may be present at any one time within the group. A single House may be related to metro cadres in many of the towns and communities within its assigned geography. Like other local missional units, the metro cadre is responsible for the total globe and is locally autonomous.

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

The paramount function of the Metro Cadre is to be the catalytic thrust of its assigned mission within its local geography. The basic functions of the Metro Cadre are:

- a. To provide a reservoir of trained personnel for global needs;
- b. To afford access to local resources for missional use;
- c. To secure entree and authorization for program funding; and
- d. To supply the "wayside inn" dynamic for House personnel and other circuiting colleagues.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The operating principles of the Metro Cadre are 1) that it uses the consensus method for making its decisions; 2) that its meetings are focused on the external mission working through the current contradictions; 3) that it exposes its members to global movement participation; and 4) that it operates out of a common discipline of engagement.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions held by the Metro Cadre include: 1) maintaining the relationship between local needs and the movement's global priorities; 2) forging a style of conformity to certain crucial conventions by being a constant, discontinuous presence; and 3) demonstrating direct involvement while effecting change through indirect catalysis.

### 3. The Task Force

The task force operates whenever the implementation demands cannot be effectively handled by the ongoing operational configuration of Centrum posts and Houses, and yet do not warrant either the redesigning of the Order's current operating forms or the

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

bringing into being of a new permanent structure. The task force, in this respect, is a temporary actuation unit which remains in being only until its assigned task is completed. Its size depends upon the magnitude of the task. Members are selected variously from those normally assigned within one Centrum or House, to those assigned across the globe. Because its role is geared to effective actuation of a task in as little time as possible, it is comprised of those who can get the job done. It operates under the leadership of a gun, and yet the quality and extent of its accomplishment is dependent upon corporate effectivity.

The paramount function of the task force is to apply particular force and ability to a specific task for the sake of unblocking current contradictions. The work of the task force ranges from pure research to cleaning a building. The basic functions are:

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

- a. To build a model for allocating troops to various aspects of the task and for gathering necessary supplies and equipment;
- b. To determine common methods and procedures for getting the job done on the basis of a realistic timeline;
- c. To provide training as a function of the demand to finish the task; and
- d. To sustain corporateness and motivity until the work is completed through corporate expenditure in the thinking and action demanded by the particular task.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The task force is grounded in the principles that: 1) structures are created only when necessary to move the mission ahead; 2) that the task force remain in being only as long as it is pertinent; 3) that corporate thought and action are key to effecting social change on any level; and 4) that motivity is critical to sustained engagement.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The task force stands in tension with the team, which primarily functions as a dynamic of care, and the guild, which is a long term configuration of which the task force is often a component. Other tensions it embodies are those between individual creativity and corporate power; and between careful planning and rapid actuation.

#### 4. The Problem-Solving Unit

The Problem-Solving Unit (PSU) is a short term configuration of people called together as a deliberative dynamic to work a definite issue through to a set of recommendations for implementation. It may function over a Week II or a period of several weeks, to resolve a particular problem. Assignments to a PSU are largely determined by the nature of expertise required to solve the problem. The work of the PSU is usually fed into some already ongoing deliberative structure. Its product may be used immediately, or may be stored for reference at a later time. The PSU is a unique structure for "wiring together" a number of minds to work through a problem that would be beyond the capacity of any one individual. It is also an important dynamic in the process of consensus formation, as it becomes a vehicle for the participation of grassroots people in the resolution of issues that effect them.

The paramount function of the PSU is to work corporately on the problem to be solved, using appropriate common methods, in order to create a sizeable base of material, including practical implementaries, for later refinement and application. The basic functions are:

- a. To create a product that addresses the problem;
- b. To examine all previous research and models as the basis for building a new solution;
- c. To reveal alternatives, without determining which will be used; and
- d. To serve as a think-tank dynamic producing viable solutions as quickly as possible.

The operating principles of the PSU are 1) that everyone's input is valuable; 2) that workshopping and corporate writing methods be employed to produce an inclusive product; 3) that a cross-section of both expertise and general knowledge interact to assure relevant, inclusive input; and 4) that work be focused within the stated parameters, bracketing related but extraneous issues.

The tensions held in the operation of the PSU include: 1) reflecting the gifts of both expertise and general wisdom in group membership; 2) seeking the local solution for the sake of global applicability; 3) discerning short range answers which may have long-term relevance; and 4) gaining theoretical clarity as the context for shaping practical implementation.

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

CONDITIONAL  
CHARACTERISTICS

## B. The Advisory Commissions

### BASIC ROLE

Four Commissions function as advisory bodies within the Order: Ecumenical: The Legal Commission, the Finance Commission, the Internal Life Commission and the Assignments Commission. The Commissions were brought into being at Chicago Nexus to enable effective action in four critical areas of corporate life and mission where profound commitment and sensitive insight are required. Finally, however, the affairs with which the commissions deal are of such a nature that they cannot be entrusted to any single group of persons. Therefore, the Commissions are understood as advisory bodies, assigned the power to make certain kinds of routine decisions, but finally subject in all matters to the deliberations and scrutiny of the Global Priory and the approval of the Panchayat.

### MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION

Each Commission shall be comprised of five persons, no more than three of which shall be male, and no more than three of which shall be female. These members shall be selected from lists of eligible persons prepared by the Assignments Commission in consultation with the Panchayat. Membership shall be selected from the classes of colleagues and confreres. The five shall be selected from across the Centurms, with one representative from each, and one representative from another dimension of the Global Priory.

### OPERATIONAL LOCUS

The residence and the tables of the Commissions shall be at the Chicago Nexus. However, wherever recommended by the Priory, Commission members may be assigned to trouble shooting functions around the globe with an appropriate budget set aside for this purpose. At the Centrum Nexus locations beyond Chicago shadow commissions have been informally constituted to carry out certain aspects of the Commissions dynamic within their assigned continents.

### 1. The Internal Life Commission

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Internal Life Commission, which operates at the six Nexus locations, is composed of five persons from across the Centurms selected by the Assignments Commission in consultation with the Panchayat. It is comprehensively concerned with the well-being of both the resident and the deployed Order. The commission cares for the spirit dimension of the individual and corporate body and is, therefore, concerned with building the structures of care that are missionally releasing. As the receiver of special concerns of individual Order members, it never engages in counseling but is concerned only with the objective situation. It keeps its counsel, acts only after considered reflection, and recommends a response that will engage creatively the

### 3. The Legal Commission

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Legal Commission is one of the four key advisory commissions of the Order. It operates at each location of Global Centrum in principle, though is more formally operative at Global Centrum: Chicago Nexus. Its members are selected by the Assignments Commission, in consultation with the Panchayat. Particular effort is made to name at least one practicing attorney to the Commission's membership. It meets by arrangement as necessary to complete its business, and as necessary, draws upon the wisdom of persons who possess specialized knowledge in certain arenas not available to its membership. The Legal Commission is the sociological manifestation of the Order's decision to work within the established structures of society. It is the guardian of the Order's structural forms against either the sterility of alliance with dying trends, or the irrelevance of reliance on unfounded wishes. This Commission keeps in touch with current social reality.

The paramount function of the Legal Commission is to guide the Order: Ecumenical and the Ecumenical Institute and the Institute of Cultural Affairs in their formal relationships with the established structures of society for the sake of protecting missional effectivity. In doing so it is concerned with guarding the transestablishment posture of the Order, and the Institutes, against succumbing to either societal values or legal violations, either of which could jeopardize the mission. The basic functions of the Legal Commission are:

#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- 1) To supervise all significant contractual agreements and assure that all necessary forms of registration, incorporation, property, insurance, taxation, and citizenship are attended to and in order.
- 2) To provide adequate legal council when and where it is needed in relation to business pertaining to Order life and work, with special advisory responsibility in relation to the operations of the Board of Trustees.
- 3) To advise the Order and the Institutes in matters of form and protocol to ensure that a dignified and ordered face is presented to the Church and world.
- 4) To equip Order members with basic operational knowledge when relevant in the interest of preventing legal infractions on the part of the Order and its individual

members as they assume responsibility for doing the Mission.

**OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES**

The operating principles of the Legal Commission are: 1) that the established structures of society can be honored at the same time the mission is advanced; 2) that by anticipating and dealing with potential difficulties in advance, issues can be solved before they become problems; 3) that the cultivation of a network of external support is key to building clout for effective maneuvers; and 4) that the value of global commonality be reflected wherever possible in the Order's local relationships to civil structures.

**TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES**

The tensions held in the operation of the Legal Commission include: 1) guarding establishment credibility while being the revolutionary advisor; 2) balancing legal compliance with missional effectivity; 3) honouring local statutes in relation to the parameters of global policy; and 4) authentically relating the public story to the private face.

**4. The Finance Commission**

**GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION**

The Finance Commission, like the other three advisory commissions, operates at each Nexus around the globe. It is composed of five persons selected according to the commission selection guidelines by the Assignments Commission in consultation with the Panchayat. The Finance Commission exercises important responsibility in assuring that all monies are global monies and that fiscal viability is maintained in the program entities held in the Ecumenical Institute and the Institute of Cultural Affairs. It is obligated to hold to a mode of revolutionary financing and the principles that flow therefrom. It recognizes and works within the understanding that the development efforts of the Institute of Cultural Affairs and the Ecumenical Institute to raise program funds from the public and private sectors is a contemporary version of the mendicant style of the monks of the past.

**CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS**

The paramount function of the Finance Commission is to assure responsible management of global monies and to monitor the global cash flow so that every front of the mission is equitably released to carry out effectively its assigned task. Four basic functions are:

- 1) To approve expenditure of the E.I. and ICA, especially in relation to the 90-day principles;
- 2) To receive and advise on recommended requests from the

### 3. The Legal Commission

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#### CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

- 1) To supervise all significant contractual agreements and assure that all necessary forms of registration, incorporation, property, insurance, taxation, and citizenship are attended to and in order.
- 2) To provide adequate legal council when and where it is needed in relation to business pertaining to Order life and work, with special advisory responsibility in relation to the operations of the Board of Trustees.
- 3) To advise the Order and the Institutes in matters of form and protocol to ensure that a dignified and ordered face is presented to the Church and world.
- 4) To equip Order members with basic operational knowledge when relevant in the interest of preventing legal infractions on the part of the Order and its individual

members as they assume responsibility for doing the Mission.

**OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES**

The operating principles of the Legal Commission are: 1) that the established structures of society can be honored at the same time the mission is advanced; 2) that by anticipating and dealing with potential difficulties in advance, issues can be solved before they become problems; 3) that the cultivation of a network of external support is key to building clout for effective maneuvers; and 4) that the value of global commonality be reflected wherever possible in the Order's local relationships to civil structures.

**TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES**

The tensions held in the operation of the Legal Commission include: 1) guarding establishment credibility while being the revolutionary advisor; 2) balancing legal compliance with missional effectivity; 3) honouring local statutes in relation to the parameters of global policy; and 4) authentically relating the public story to the private face.

**4. The Finance Commission**

**GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION**

The Finance Commission, like the other three advisory commissions, operates at each Nexus around the globe. It is composed of five persons selected according to the commission selection guidelines by the Assignments Commission in consultation with the Panchayat. The Finance Commission exercises important responsibility in assuring that all monies are global monies and that fiscal viability is maintained in the program entities held in the Ecumenical Institute and the Institute of Cultural Affairs. It is obligated to hold to a mode of revolutionary financing and the principles that flow therefrom. It recognizes and works within the understanding that the development efforts of the Institute of Cultural Affairs and the Ecumenical Institute to raise program funds from the public and private sectors is a contemporary version of the mendicant style of the monks of the past.

**CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS**

The paramount function of the Finance Commission is to assure responsible management of global monies and to monitor the global cash flow so that every front of the mission is equitably released to carry out effectively its assigned task. Four basic functions are:

- 1) To approve expenditure of the E.I. and ICA, especially in relation to the 90-day principles;
- 2) To receive and advise on recommended requests from the

Centrums that represent major budgetary expenditures;

- 3) To maintain surveillance over the principle that all programs are self-supporting; and, finally,
- 4) To inform the Panchayat on a regular basis of the global fiscal condition.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The operating principles of the Finance Commission include: 1) reviewing weekly the financial condition reports prepared by the Global Finance Post and recommending the crucial expenditures for the ensuing week; 2) approving daily purchase orders by the signatures of two members of the Commission after the written approval of the Centrum prior; 3) assuring the honoring of vendors and their operating contexts by a style of gracious revolutionary steel; and 4) imaginably educating the Order in fiscal responsibility and accountability.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions held in the operation of the Finance Commission are: 1) maintaining missional flexibility while, at the same time, exercising bureaucratic efficiency; 2) making certain that disbursement schemes support the program needs of the area while systematically paying the operating costs of the Nexus support system; 3) discerning what is an immediate cash demand while reserving enough of the cash flow to honor the 90-day principle of the vendors; and 4) assuring that the operating costs of Nexus support systems are held in relation to missional monies.

C. The Global Centrum

GLOBAL  
CENTRUM

Centrum is the global dynamic of the polity of the Order: Ecumenical. Although Centrum occupies space, it is never fixed in relation to geography. The locations, or spatial manifestations of the Centrum dynamic are always determined by the degree of service that is required by the local, or areal, dynamic which it serves; and this, understandably, includes consideration of distance and other factors which influence the adequate delivery of such services. It is conceivable, then, that there could be one spatial manifestation of Centrum in one sphere, and three or six in another sphere. There are currently six such Centrum manifestations across the globe: Chicago, Singapore, Bombay, Brussels, Hong Kong and Nairobi. These, however, are not fixed eternally. Despite the multiplicity of Centrum's spatial manifestations, or locations, there is but one Centrum. There is but one global dynamic of service to the local. If there were a multiplicity of Centruns in this sense, the tension between the global and the local could not be maintained.

CENTRUM  
BANDS

The term Centurms, when used in the plural refers to the four dynamics within the Centrum dynamic itself: Research, Development, Operations and Management. These four dynamics are not fixed to geography, but are the interior aspects of the one Global Centrum which, themselves, band the globe. There is one Research Centrum Band around the world; there is one Development Centrum Band around the world; there is one Operations Centrum Band around the world; there is one Management Centrum Band around the world. When these four interior dynamics of Global Centrum intersect in one of the six currently manifest locations, we refer to that place as Global Centrum Nexus.

GENERAL  
DESCRIPTION

The number of persons comprising a Centrum is not predetermined but is effected by priorities established through ascertaining the missional contradiction of the moment. Each of the four Centurms is comprised of three posts. The priorship of the Centrum is composed of the three priors of the posts, acting in concert as a troika. The Centrum structure is like unto four powerlines with several booster stations to keep the power strong and steady. The corporate body wherever it is, can at any time plug into the circuit and obtain power. This is not governance power but rather and only missional power. It is methods power; instrument power; data power. It is tactical power; corporateness power; motivity power. It is common wisdom power; training power; "know-how" or experience power.

CRITICAL  
FUNCTIONS

The paramount function of Global Centrum is to support and enable the front-line missional field operation. It stands in tensional polarity to the areas, constantly testing the comprehensive applicability of the implementing systems it provides to the globe. In a real sense, the global centrum dynamic is the glue of the Order's structural dynamics, rendering global significance to the local mission it serves. Within this broad functional understanding of service, there are included the more external aspects of support as indicated in the paragraphs on each Centrum Band which follow. The inclusive image under which Global Centrum operates at all times is that of "servant to the servants."

DEVELOPMENT  
CENTRUM

Development Centrum secures program monies through cultivating broad-based grassroots support and major contributions from both the public and private sectors. This includes working with individuals, government agencies, corporations, religious bodies, and foundations. Program support is systematically developed through circuits of two or more persons sent from the Nexus working corporately with house members, the Guardian network and metro colleagues to gain authorization and make development calls.

RESEARCH  
CENTRUM

Research Centrum is responsible for caring for the long-range future of the missional operation by providing materials to objectify missional brooding and by isolating and distributing significant information and writings from extra-mission. The Centrum also engages in practical research relative to the movement's edge concerns and is responsible for training programs, such as the Global Training Academy.

OPERATIONS  
CENTRUM

The Operations Centrum provides the back-up systems and coordination required to further the programmatic thrust. It is responsible for scheduling of programs, providing support troops and special task forces as necessary, coordinating strategic and tactical operations covering more than one geographical area, and refining operational plans, constructs, and implementing tools.

MANAGEMENT  
CENTRUM

Management Centrum is responsible for the financial management of developed and program monies for the Ecumenical Institute and the Institute of Cultural Affairs; for legal compliance and accountability; for printing and distributing program materials; for personnel data processing; and for the maintenance of facilities of the entire missional operation, including the support systems at each Centrum Nexus.

CRITICAL  
ROLES

Each of the Centrum bands acts as a checkpoint for the deployed forces; a trouble shooting force; a sounding board for insights and issues which emerge out of the work of the areas; a war room for developing master strategies; and a supply depot dispatching ideas, people, data, materials and supplies. The Centurms comprise the repository of most of the Order's common memory and the files to contain it.

OPERATING  
PRINCIPLES

The operating principles of the Global Centrum are: 1) that all missional activity is open and shared with all the members of the Centrum Nexus; 2) that Global Centrum troops are assigned to a particular Nexus and within a particular Centrum Band, yet are available across the geography of the globe; 3) that the Nexus exists to serve the Area and its Religious Houses; and 4) that Global Centrum: Chicago Nexus is the first among equals and symbolizes the unity in diversity of the Global Centrum dynamic.

TENSIONAL  
POLARITIES

The tensions held in the operation of Global Centrur include: 1) serving the areas' needs within the context of global priorities; 2) sustaining ongoing program momentum as well as developing new program edges; and 3) tracking current accomplishments as well as designing futuric strategies. The Global Centrum also maintains the unity in diversity of the four Bands which represent both the comprehensiveness and the particularity of the global dynamic of Order polity.

A. ENGAGING THE MOVEMENTAL RESOURCES			
B. SUPPORTING THE MISSIONAL THRUST			
C. BUILDING THE OPERATIONAL PLAN			
D. SYMBOLIZING THE INTENTIONAL PRESENCE IV			
1	KNOWLEDGE ACCESS I	INTERNAL SUPPORT II	DECISION FORMATION III
2	ACTUATES INFORMATION INTERCHANGE	RECOMMENDS ASSIGNMENT MODELS	DISCERNES INDICATIVE CONTEXT
3	MAINTAINS HISTORICAL ARCHIVES	HOLDS COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY	CREATES STRATEGIC BATTLEPLAN
4	PROVIDES CONSULTANT EXPERTISE	ANCHORS COMMON MEMORY	MONITORS SENSITIVE ISSUES
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### PART THREE

#### THE FUTURIC IMPLICATIONS

"The creative act is by its very nature ecstatic; it involves movement out beyond the boundaries; there is an act of transcendence in it. Creativeness is not an immanent process, nor susceptible of explanation in terms of immanence. There is always more in it than in any of the causes by which it is sought to explain creative power . . . . Creative activity will not come to terms with the given state of the world, it desires another. The creative act always calls up the image of something different; it imagines something higher, better and more beautiful than this than the "given". This evoking of the image of something different, something better and more beautiful, is a mysterious power in man and it cannot be explained by the action of the world environment."

Nicolas Berdyaev



1) How do polity issues get raised?  
2) Another dimension of polity?

VI. THE PRACTICAL FORMS

A. The Polity Dynamic

1. The Historical Moment

DERIVATIVE  
DYNAMIC

① In the whole social process, the polity dynamic is derivative. It has no content of its own as does the economic and the cultural. Rather it is that dynamic which orders, evaluates and distributes the other two. Its task is to insure order, justice and welfare among the members of the body politic and therefore is primarily a decision-making dynamic.

CATALYZING  
RENEWAL

② The Order: Ecumenical, in its experimentation with and development of a functioning polity, is concerned primarily with one value: the accomplishment of its mission of catalyzing and signaling the profound renewal of the world. Its polity, therefore is designed to be a sign of a renewed political dynamic. Its experimentation has therefore emerged from and responded to the major contradiction in polity of our time.

BASIC  
ASSUMPTIONS

③ In our time, many forms of polity exist, but they all embody two basic assumptions: 1) a hierarchical process of decision making and 2) an adversary mode of operation. Evidence of radical political upheaval in virtually every type of political system suggests that these assumptions are no longer adequate, however valuable they have been in the past. But today they are collapsing under the weight of global relationships and local resurgence. Global consciousness has brought into play a radically increased number and complexity of factors involved in any decision. Local resurgence has aroused the passion of local man to participate fully in the decisions that effect him.

ADVERSARY  
MODES

④ Hierarchical processes inevitably limit both the participation in the final decisions and the complexity of factors actively considered. That is both their gift and, currently, their perversion. Adversary modes of operation inevitably ensure that some values are lost in the final decision. The times are searching for a form of polity - of decision-making - in which both pluralistic global complexity and unique local participation can be realized. For in the political dynamic a particular consciousness has emerged as axiomatic: all the decisions and all the responsibility belong to all the people.

To actualize its responsibility of being a sign of renewed society in the political dimension, the Order: Ecumenical

BASIC  
RE-EXAMINATION

⑤ has been forced to re-examine the fundamental dynamics of polity that operate in any system, and to develop the method and forms through which they may best function to hold the values of global complexity and local participation.



## 2. The Dynamic Forms

UNIVERSAL  
DYNAMICS

⑥ ?

There are three universal dynamics operative in any polity system: The community or democratic, the Oligarchic or Bureaucratic, and the Symbolic or Aristocratic. The function of the Democratic is to form the consensus among the grassroots; the function of the bureaucratic is to implement the consensus of the body politic; the function of the symbolic is to announce, ritualize and confirm the consensus that has formed. No group ever makes a decision without in some fashion involving all three dynamics. In our time, the bureaucratic has been the dominant force, and neither symbolic figures nor grassroots people are immune from snares of "red tape" of administrative machinery. Neither the symbolic nor the local exercises the questioning necessary to keep the bureaucratic effective in service to society as a whole by carrying out its will. At best the three dynamics operate in tension, each having a unique function which complements the other two. Power does not reside in any one of the three dynamics but rather in their interaction.

CREATIVE  
TENSION

⑦

The Order: Ecumenical has organized itself in a way that attempts to keep all the dynamics active and in creative tension: Decisions are made by consensus of the entire body as they are arrived at through deliberations in collegiums, Problem Solving Units and councils; they are announced and ritualized through the symbolic structures of House priors, Global Priors and the Panchayat; they are enacted through the Houses, the Commissions and the Centurms. This would be a neat scheme except for two complicating factors that further increase the tensions among the various dynamics. First, the Order: Ecumenical includes an extended and a movemental dimension, both of which live outside the formal structures of the Symbolic Order. Both participate actively in the polity dynamic; they share in the decision-making process actively though in less structural ways than those named. Secondly, the Order: Ecumenical has become a genuinely Global body operating in 23 countries with a single thrust. Operating

out of a hierarchic polity would be relatively simple; but maintaining local autonomy and global commonality is immensely complicated.

CONCILLIAR  
DELIBERATION

⑧ In dealing with these complications, the Order holds collegiums daily in each location in which issues facing the body are deliberated upon and a common context is maintained. Occasionally, a group will be set aside as a problem-solving unit to think through a particularly complicated issue and build a model for its resolution. Periodically the Order comes together in council, on an area, continental or annually on a global basis, for pulling together its operating consensus from a variety of viewpoints. Guardians Councils meet semi-annually at which occasions professional colleagues bring their expertise to bear on the missional priorities. These are forms through which the democratic dynamic is acted out and the wisdom of everyone brought to bear on the decisions at hand.

GLOBAL  
CENTRUM

⑨ One hundred and three houses exist as missional units in defined geographic territory. Each coordinates its activities with nearby houses, by operating as an area within the polity of the Order: Ecumenical. The areas are the most significant geographical division. Then four centrums operate as bands around the globe: Development provides funding for the projects; Research maintains the common context and explores edge arenas; Operations schedules and staffs programmatic thrusts as coordinated strategic thrusts; Management insures commonality is fiscal, legal, personnel and materials. Each of the centrums exists in each of the six Nexus locations: Singapore at Canberra, Brussels, Hong Kong, Bombay, Nairobi and Chicago. These locations are not geographic divisions but rather strategic locations around the world from which the Centrums service the mission. By circumstances of origin, Chicago Nexus functions as "first among equals" among the centrums, and, as "mother house" of the Order. It has the largest number of people assigned to it, and is the seat of the Panchayat. It is, however, but one of six Nexus locations and no more Order headquarters than any of the others. Four commissions function in each Nexus and deal with legal concerns, financial policy, assignments and internal life matters within its zone of service. Whereas the centrums and houses attend more to the external missional tasks, the commissions care for the internal operations of the Order. These are the current forms through which the Oligarchic dynamic is activated. To guard against tendencies toward bureaucratic rigidity, the Order regularly shifts assignments of people within the structures and, throughout its history, has often modified the structures themselves, as missional needs and directions have shifted. Furthermore, lively tensions are maintained among houses, centrums and commissions

- Xavierism, transparentizing, model bldg., globality unity -  
- releasing depth human potential of all those in his cell -

to insure no single viewpoint dominates to the exclusion of other values.

10

Each House has a priorship which is finally answerable for the total mission and operation of that house. Again to maximize creative tensions a troika, which, however, has a "first among equals", bears symbolic responsibility for the whole. Area Priors and Centrum Priors together form a global priorship which, in its annual councils produces "Memorials" that state the operating consensus of the total body for the coming year. These are not policy decisions, those are formed at the grassroots; rather they are indicative descriptions of the state of consensus at the given moment. Finally, the Order's symbolic "head" is a "Panchayat" of five people representing the inclusive composition of the Order. Its function is to maintain the comprehensive, defend the deeps and guard the election of the whole body. It is not in any way "in charge"; its power is symbolic in representing and embodying the wisdom of the entire order. And yet its presence is felt in councils and collegiums, in centrum and commissions and among priors. At virtually every point at which a dynamic of polity is acted out, that presence insures the depth, the scope and the vision required for profound effectivity.

PRIORSHIP  
IMPLEMENTATION

### 3. The Consensus Method

The foundational premise upon which consensus as a basic polity mode rests is the understanding that effective actuation of decisions to move the mission ahead requires the active support of the will of all the people. Consensus is the expression of the discerned will of the people who participate in both formulating and symbolizing the decision, and then who understand themselves to be the ones called upon to fully support the decision's implementation.

FOUNDATIONAL  
PREMISE

The process of formulating consensus is perhaps most critical for it is in the inclusive deliberation which shapes consensus that the principle "all decisions and all responsibility belong to all the people" becomes dramatized. It is in the formulation of consensus, therefore, that a viable alternative to the classical hierarchical and adversary modes of operation is posed.

INCLUSIVE  
DELIBERATION

Consensus building occurs virtually every time colleagues gather to report, discuss or exchange information and think about a particular issue related to the future implementation of the mission. These occasions range from formal structured situations - such as collegiums, PSU's, research assemblies, corporate study sessions or witnesses - to more informal, casual

CORPORATE  
INTERCHANGE

exchange - such as hallway meetings, telephone conversations and collegial correspondence. In whatever form the dynamic occurs, consensus building is the wiring together of the people's decisional consciousness through which values and disvalues, priorities and admonitions, hopes and fears, convictions and reservations merge, interact and are forged into the corporate will capable of resolving to act in a particular direction to shape history.

INCLUSIVE  
PARTICIPATION

Those who grasp the dynamic of consensus building as such can claim their daily participation in any number of ways. Those who decide to give voice to their opinions during a group discussion shape the direction of the emerging consensus. Those who meet with a colleague for brief or extended conversation on an unresolved issue activate the interchange which is consensus building. Those whose individual broodings prompt them to float a balloon in order to posit an issue before others catalyze the building of consensus.

OPERATING  
GUIDELINES

Consensus building depends upon commonly held operating guidelines which are intended to disallow reducing the complexity or circumscribing the context of any issue. The particular situation is held in tension with the comprehensive mission; the immediate model is set in relation to the long range timeline; the individual need is seen in the light of corporate priorities; hard questions are raised by the loyal opposition.

CONSENSUS  
STATEMENT

In a real sense consensus is formed before it is symbolized. Discussion at the time of stating the consensus rarely introduces new information, but often is a helpful way for the gathered body to rehearse the perspectives which have interacted to reveal the necessary direction. The consensus is symbolized in a corporate setting by a member of the body who decides to pick up the power from the center of the table and articulate the discerned will of the body on behalf of both the gathered and the absent. The statement of consensus is the expression of the will of the people; it is not a reflection of the majority vote. It is the announcement of the necessary direction for the whole body, informed beforehand by a wide discussion and deliberation in which the participation and perspectives of all have been invited and heard. It is neither a compromise stand which seeks to equitably resolve differences of opinion, nor an optional course of action for those who agree, or have become persuaded, that the decision is right and, therefore, good. It depends upon the active role of the loyal opposition until the announcement of decision is made at which point - if there is consensus - debate and deliberation is irrelevant. It is not a conditional

assent to support as best I can but the missional resolve to do the deed which has become necessary.

RADICAL  
RISK

Consensus is forged in the midst of the ambiguity which the historical situation casts over right and wrong, good and evil, wisdom and folly. It is informed by critical intelligence and is birthed into history by the resolve on the part of a people to risk responsible participation in the historical process. It is built by the people, announced on their behalf, and offered up to history through their act of implementation.

#### 4. The Decision-Making Path

DECISION  
PROCESS

This brief essay seeks to begin the process of understanding how it is that decisions are actually made in the Order: Ecumenical. This is one of a type of puzzle, to which the solution is always self-evident--until someone from outside asks for it. For instance, everyone knows that in the structures of this community, the power is in the center of the table and anyone can grasp it. Anyone can have his say in the group, and thus influence the direction of history. All of this is true. Now, exactly how is it that some 2000-odd Order: Ecumenical members actually participate in shaping the decisions that determine the direction of the Mission?

CONDITIONAL  
DISAGREEMENT

Well, the, decisions are made by 'consensus'. This also is true. When we make decisions, we keep working at them until everyone is in agreement--correct? No, patently not correct. In fact, we occasionally make decisions with which some are, by ordinary criteria, in considerable disagreement. But then it is necessary to ask, how could that be? Even speaking strictly from the standpoint of semantics, it is just not possible for a group of persons to make a decision with which it disagrees. It is a simple contradiction in terms. And yet, there is no doubt that consensus, in the way in which we use the term, is something other than simple, straight-forward plunging about until there is unanimity of opinion.

REVERSE  
APPROACH

Let us experiment with approaching the subject backwards. That is, consider that the only proof that a decision has been made is, that it has been implemented. You then ask, which decision? and it immediately becomes apparent that there are many, many different kinds of decisions, and the process may differ markedly for many or all of them. It is probably worth saying there are only six kinds of decisions: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. Decisions about what relate to definition of the mission, and the strategic and tactical priorities. Decisions about

"who" have to do with assignments. Decisions about where, of course, represent geographical priorities. The hows have to do with structural implementation.

ORIGIN  
POINTS

Within the structure of the Order: Ecumenical, an idea that is eventually made the substance of a decision and then implemented, can originate at any point within the organizational milieu. Management is not restricted to discussion and action upon ideas relating to managing, nor is operations Centrum restricted from making a decision about management. The overall structure of operation is sufficiently fluid that this kind of interaction can, and does occur frequently. In fact, the decisional aspect of all Order organizational entities reminds one of circles of spotlights moving across a wall--sometimes they lie far apart, sometimes they overlap to one degree or another.

STRATEGIC  
CONSIDERATIONS

No individual is restricted in any way from introducing any idea into any part of the organization, on any subject. However, it is important to add, the likelihood of that individual's success in having his idea accepted and implemented depends heavily on a large number of strategic considerations: timing, the context in which the idea is introduced, and, most significantly, whether his idea or ideas are aimed at the heart of the current missional contradiction.

GROUP  
INTERCHANGE

Likewise, any group of individuals, whether operating as part of a regularly constituted missional structure or less formally, has full permission to introduce its ideas into the life of the corporate body. In fact, this is exactly what must happen if they are to be effective, for the missional consensus is dependent upon groups passing their missional plans before the gaze of the whole body before implementation, so that the whole becomes an integrated movement, rather than a series of disrelated activities.

ENTRY  
POINTS

However, some points of entry into the inclusive overall structure are more used, and more effective, than others. For instance, if you set up an ideal operational model, it might look something like this: All decisions might first be introduced into the deliberative bodies: the collegiums, whether at Centruns or Houses; and the Councils, whether global, continental, areal or local. These are the officially stated times when any individual can speak his piece, and insist on his right to be heard, so long as it is done within the operating context of the body. It is the deliberative bodies of the Order that belong most properly to the "people" or to the democratic pole of the polity triangle.

STRATEGIC  
REFINEMENT

Still following the ideal model, once an idea has been discussed in the deliberative body, it would then be submitted to the oligarchic dynamics of the Order, meaning the Commissions, the Panchayat and the Priories, for refinement and incorporation into a missional strategic plan. When approved by these oligarchic dynamics, the idea would then be returned to the Centrum and/or to the Houses for direct implementation.

VARIANT  
PATHS

The fact of the matter is that no decision ever made by the Order or any of its members ever had such a clean, straightforward path. The process actually is often foreshortened: an idea may be conceived of and then directly implemented in the same place and the same missional structure. This might occur for any of a number of reasons, the most frequent being simply the missional necessity to act with maximum speed and effect in an arena where it is anticipated that there will be very little opposition, resistance, or few suggestions of alternatives. This is possible because the context is clear: the year's priorities, the major contradiction, and the strategic objectives of the areas or the centrum. As a case in point, the Assignments Commission might make an interim or short-term assignment to fill a crucial gap checking only with the concerned Area or Centrum prior. This might be because the alternatives are already clear, the cost of not acting quickly high, and the serious possibility of resistance to the person or persons assigned to a job, almost nil.

### 5. The Decision-Making Principles

EFFECTIVE  
DECISIONS

The decision-making process depends for motivity on the participation of all members of the group effected by the decision. But for effectiveness, it depends also on other less tangible factors. Even the cleverest social forms and the sincerest personal resolves cannot guarantee that a group of 1400 people scattered throughout the globe can achieve any real consensus. And even if that were ensured, the mere fact of that consensus would not guarantee its "rightness". The Order is not only or even primarily concerned about the purity of its polity process; its main concern is that effective decisions be made, decisions that incorporate all available wisdom and guide missional action in creative directions that address the moral issue of our time.

TRANSRATIONAL  
THINKING

Two principles have guided us: first is the assumption that everything required for a victorious action already exists in the situation, whether the issue be one of self-support or of programmatic implementation. The issue is how to determine what those elements are, especially when they have been overlaid with decades or generations of clap-trap. How does one see into and

through the particularities of his situation with eyes that black out eons of primordial and parental prejudice while letting through the stark objectivity of reality itself? For victory comes from using reality, not from striving for ideals. Practical results occur when the given, actual reality is found to have latent within it all that is required for a resolution to the issue at hand. A method of discernment is required whose major characteristic is TRANSRATIONALITY, seeing through the apparent to the creative.

HISTORICAL  
WAVES

The second principle, closely related to the first, is the assumption that effective decisions occur when they are in accord with the underlying currents of history. Historical change comes when forces deep beneath the surface of events gather momentum, become trends and push to the fore. Historians' search for causes is in fact an investigation of those currents that existed long before their visible manifestations. Decisions and actions which profoundly effect the course of history are those which tap into these existing currents and give them a social form which thereby releases them into history. But determining these currents or "waves of history" is not easy. It, too, depends on having the eyes to see. Methods of analysis are required which move beyond the individual or corporate prejudices of a group and which allows perception of what is present.

THEOLOGICAL  
CONTEXT

Both these assumptions point out the necessity of paying careful attention to the context in which analysis and deliberation takes place. Both one's own standpoint and the objective situation must be clarified critically. The following essays represent some of the dimensions of the corporate context maintained by the Order: Ecumenical. The first and broadest context is the theological. It is broad, not in the sense of providing a cosmology, but in clarifying the basic stance to all of reality taken by the corporate body. Its key element in this discussion is the insistence that all is good. Obviously any deliberation or decision that operates out of some other stance to life than this will be severely restricted in seeing options and will have a built-in paranoia.

CONTEMPORARY  
WORLD-VIEW

The second most inclusive dimension of the context is a contemporary world-picture. Determining effective actions depends on being open to the latest information on how the universe operates, and this means, not scientific expertise, but sufficient openness to the assumptions out of which science operates to be able to make use of whatever breakthroughs occur.

The third dimension of the context is a sense of the waves of history as they are currently operating. Continual probing of

CURRENT  
RESURGENCE

the news and analysis of trends yields invaluable information on actions that will release these waves to move creatively. The Town Meeting, for example, is not simply some clever program; it is built on the perception that throughout the world, local man in local community is experiencing a resurgence in his passion to care. Programs which assume that apathy is the dominant factor blocking community life approach the issue of community development from a totally different perspective, and, incidentally, with noticeably lesser results.

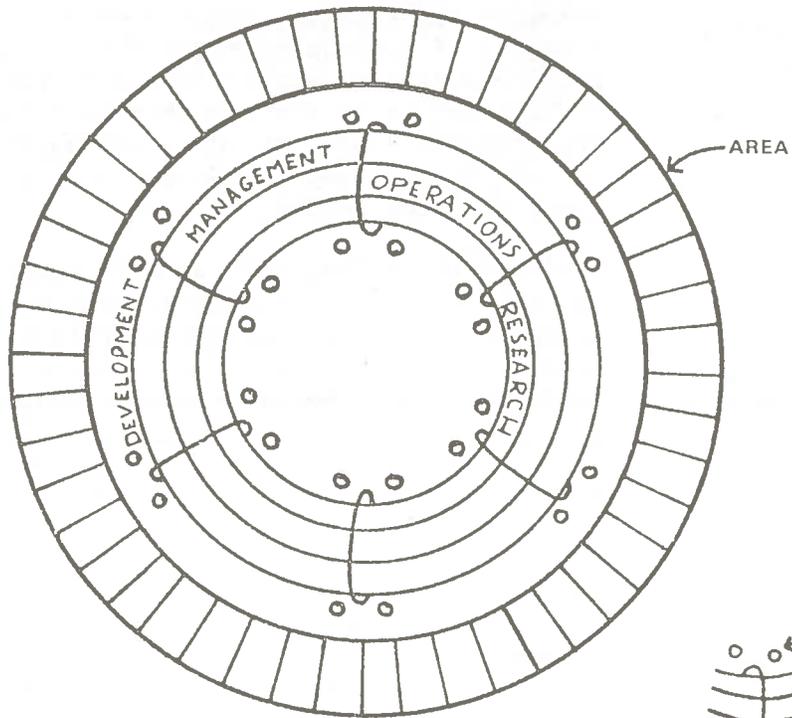
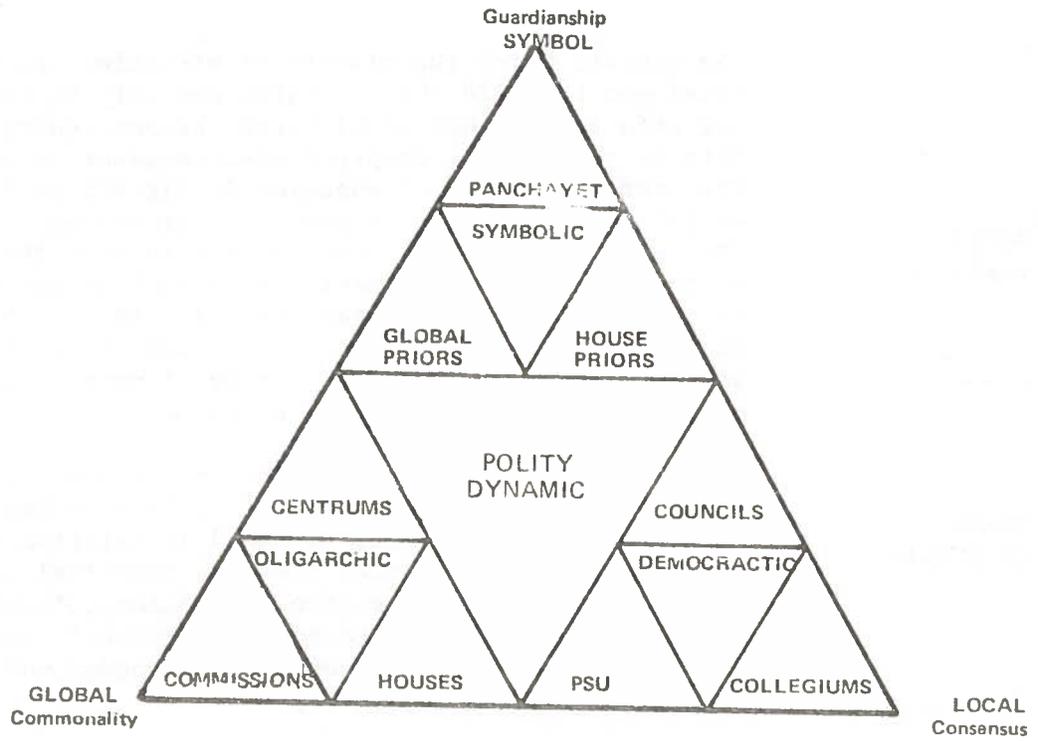
GRAND  
STRATEGY

The fourth dimension is the four-year plan, or the grand strategy. This factor provides a broad, directional thrust out of which to design particular programs. It is deliberately broad to allow for multiple diversity as the historical situation changes. Furthermore, when it has been well done using the above elements, it is often completely accomplished in half the projected time. But, the four-year plan serves as an operating screen out of which to build priorities and a direction towards which to move with programs.

YEARLY  
PRIORITIES

The fifth and final dimension is the yearly priorities determined at the Global Priors Council in July. These missional priorities arise out of the present condition of the mission, reflect confrontation with the present contradiction, and afford more of a definite context out of which decisions of troop deployment can be made. Not only does the situation in its total scope and depth provide the context for decisions; so also does the intent of the Order relative to that situation. The yearly priorities list expresses the consensus of the body on its intent.

REFLECTIONS ON POLITY



July 8, 1975

Chart from Lecture T-369

## B. The Inclusive Methodologies

### 1. The Basic Frame

#### DEPTH TRAINING

The mandate which the historical situation has placed upon local man to build the new earth can only be received and acted out effectively when local forces become equipped with the methods that assure comprehensive relevant corporate action. The appropriateness of engaging in significantly directing social change is never a question for awakened local communities. The issue, however, is posed by the inaccessibility to methods which guarantee the effectivity of such engagement. One way to describe the role of the Order is, therefore, that of the guarantor of depth training in the use of the inclusive methods and procedural tools called for by history to perform the necessary deeds of awakenment and engagement.

#### THREE CATEGORIES

The inclusive methodologies which the Order has developed over that past 20 years can be organized in a number of ways, but perhaps are most helpfully grouped in relation to three major categories. Each grouping contains practical methods which are directed toward comprehensive, intentiona, futuric service. Each, in some fashion, provides fundamental, replicable means for demonstrating the authenticity, freedom and care that define the serving forces in history.

#### INTELLECTUAL METHODS

Intellectual methods forge the common images and modes of thinking and pedagogy which expand human understanding. This category of methods rests on the presupposition that mental competence serves effective action in the world. Intellectual methods relate to the operaton of grassroots polity in the degree to which such methods give shape to an adequate context for individuals and groups engaged in the various aspects of local decision making.

#### SOCIAL METHODS

Social Methods deal with ways to corporately work, plan and maintain effective common engagement. This category of methods rests on the presupposition that life is expenditure and that responsible living is effective corporate engagement in the necessary deed. Social methods relate to the operation of grassroots polity in the degree to which they equip local forces to think tactically, to forge the commonality required for consensus building and to sustain the group motivity which allows decisions on every level to become implemented.

Piety Methods sustain the individual as a solitary presence, capable of objectifying and acting out profound vocation. This category of methods is grounded in the presupposition that the strength of Spirit which is reflected in the style of steadfast

service is dependent upon the designs that enable local man to confront the mystery, depth and greatness of his own life. Piety methods relate to the operation of grassroots polity in the degree to which they allow for the focusing and refocusing of relevant broodings, the rehearsal of foundational resolves and the renewal of decisions for passionate involvement.

## 2. The Procedural Tools

The procedural tools employed in support of the inclusive methods are numerous, and could constitute a document on their own. The following paragraphs represent a selection of the procedures which are foundational to and directly employed in the process of consensus building. Other procedures can well be added to this initial compendium in the future as each bears at least an indirect relationship to the polity dynamic as it influences the Order's operation and mission.

### a. The Individual Brooding

The process of decision making begins with the activity of brooding. Brooding is the individual preparation for responsible participation in the corporate stew, or discussion. Brooding is practical, concrete action and, as such, is a form of prayer. It is a solitary exercise during which an unresolved dimension of the common mission is met and wrestled to the point of revealing new clarity about a recommended direction. Brooding occurs both in the midst of, but more frequently around the edges of direct missional engagement. It is most effectively done with a pencil in hand, and begins with lists of concerns, worries, contradictions, blocks, deterrents to the mission. Such lists in their many forms provide the comprehensive context for claiming the particular promise which constitutes brooding as a prayerful act. The specific issues which become the focus for brooding at any one time are characterized by their futuristic implications. They are always related to the contradictions which lurk around the corner of tomorrow and which are not consistently apparent in daily task engagement. Yet they are those issues upon whose solution the sustained effect of today's engagement depends. Brooding is doing one's homework in pivotal arenas prior to injecting creative stuff into the stew of corporate deliberation. It is the aspect of intellectual discipline which catalyzes the transformation of intuitions into insights representing wisdom, rather than simply opinions or good ideas. It both issues from and is the sine qua non for the Order's deliberative

interchange. Brooding symbolizes the decision to embrace divine judgment and see within it the divine mercy which allows the body to creatively move forward.

#### b. The Context Building

Context building is a critical procedure at various points in the decision making process and is used in a number of direct and indirect ways. Usually the context is formally set at the beginning of a corporate sessions by the assigned leader. In less structured situations the context for discussing an issue can be set indirectly by one or several parties at various points as they deal with various issues. Broader contexts are built over periods of time which extend beyond a single session.

When effectively established, the context significantly shapes the work of the group. Effective context setting dramatizes that the power in the center of the table is available to all. The function of the context is to delineate the focus of the group's attention in such a way that its notivity and engagement in deliberation is sustained and the relevance and quality of its treatment of the issue is assured. The basic components of any context are as follows: 1) an affirmation of the present situation as the required launching point; 2) an identification of the current contradiction and historical trend which necessitate a response; 3) an indication of the future indicative before the corporate body, and 4) radical permission for the group to make the indicative called for creative response to its imperative.

These components are not intended as procedural steps, but rather as a screen for use in creating and checking a particular context. A context can be as short as one sentence or as long as a brief spin. It never attempts to do the work for which it is intended to set the stage. Its power depends on the degree to which it compellingly presents an image which communicates "we are the ones, now is the time, this is the task."

#### c. The Foundational Brainstorming

Brainstorming is foundational to consensus building. It taps the objective data and reflective intuitions of the corporate body relative to a particular issue under consideration. It

elicits the grassroots wisdom which is prerequisite to locally based decision making.

Brainstorming is the procedure by which the individual responses of each participant are called forth to create a bank of data, or raw grist, for inclusive deliberation. The brainstorm is always corporate and rests on the understanding that each person's insight is worthy of tabulation. In this respect brainstorming methodologically grounds the decisional stance of humility before the radical possibility and unconditional openness every situation poses.

The individual items brainstormed by a group in response to a given issue are questioned during the brainstorm only in terms of their clarity (understandability) or pertinence (obvious relationship to the issue posed). In general, brainstorming operates out of the basic understanding that every insight is important and acceptable. This guideline encourages broad based participation in consensus building from the outset. A brainstorm often begins by each person in the body offering at least one response, and then additional responses being offered at random. The result of the brainstorming procedure is a relatively comprehensive but unorganized catalogue or listing of clear, relevant responses to a given issue.

#### d. The Rational Gestalting

Gestalting allows for the rational organization of the raw brainstorm. Related items in the brainstormed list are grouped together into master arenas which are reflected in the raw data. These groupings are given holding titles which serve as imaginal handles on the variety of items subsumed into each. Gestalting organizes the chaos of possibility so that the group can grasp one picture of the whole entity the brainstorm represents and can then focus attention on paramount and basic components contained within the whole dialoguing about their relationship and relevance to the main issue in question, prioritizing them according to selected values and deciding to employ or bracket the wisdom they represent.

The gestalt arranges data into a holding screen, which offers a fresh perspective on the topic under consideration. It reflects the rational order which explicitly reveals previously implicit, intuited relationships. The gestalt is never imposed or prescribed by a formula; it emerges as a unique creation from the

raw data catalogue which has been transformed by the corporate mind. Gestalting releases the body from paralysis in the face of the impact of sheer possibility and enables decisions for action to be made. It is the ordering dynamic in the deliberative process which seizes the plethora of grassroots wisdom available in any moment and drives it with focus into the future.

#### e. The Corporate Writing

In an age of mass media, consensus building is heavily influenced by the written word. Discussion, spinning, debating and speech-making can significantly happen and authentically shape emerging consensus. However, at points, from time to time, it becomes necessary to anchor the corporate insight of a particular moment in a more objective and replicable form than either individual or corporate memory. It is at such points - and these are never prescribed in advance - that corporate writing becomes an important tool in decision making.

The product of corporate writing is the body's common articulation of its present insight, including its reading of the current situation and blocks, and its insights about the necessary future directions. It allows for an objective fix on an aspect of the model being forged by the deliberative processes. It marks the journey of the Order toward arriving at consensus. It guarantees that history will benefit from the revelation of a particular moment, and in this way is rooted in the foundational principle of action on behalf of the world.

The procedures of corporate writing are based on the understanding that the corporate mind is as important as individual creativity. The task begins with a group brainstorm which forms the basis of the statement in consideration. The outline is commonly forged and the relevant issues of style identified by the whole group. Individual writing is assigned by paragraph or section which, when completed, is corporately critiqued on the basis of a common screen. Revising or rewriting is undertaken on the basis of this, and successive critiquing as called for. Final polishing and editing is done by a small group or one individual on behalf of the group, and then is checked by several from the group at large before publication.

Corporate writing enables the building of the common mind which is symbolized by consensus. It becomes increasingly important as the Order is more widely dispersed across the world. It ensures the accessibility to and interchange of common thinking.

to the whole body at any point in the decision making process. In this respect it is crucial to maintaining the network of consciousness that safeguards the Order's globality.

### 3. The Ontological Screen

#### FOUNDATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

An important dimension of the symbolic dynamic of the Order polity is the fundamental philosophical categories through which reality is perceived and evaluated. Without commonness at this level, consensus that produces effective action is impossible. Conformity to mass will may be imposed, but genuine consensus must arise from within. Doctrinalism - required subscription to a set of detailed religious or political or economic beliefs - is by definition exclusive and limiting of viewpoints. The optimum level of ideological commonality would be the most general, universally acceptable categories for designating reality comprehensively. This is not to claim unqualified universality as a result: any attempt to designate a screen is bound to exclude somebody. It is only to say that the Order has consciously decided to eschew narrow dogmatism, and has found adequate basis for that approach within the tradition of the Christian faith out of which it arose.

#### TRANSPARENT KNOWING

The basic ontological categories which function in the Order as a screen for comprehensively designating reality are Knowing, Doing, and Being. All three have an obvious and transparent dimension. "Knowing" refers to the activity of the intellect and the senses. Transparently, it refers to consciousness itself and is in no way limited to sense perception and rational thought. Transparent Knowing includes intuition, the non-rational, the imaginal and other ways in which human beings have experienced consciousness of the tangible and the ineffable dimensions of reality.

#### TRANSPARENT DOING

"Doing" on the obvious level refers to activity. But transparently it includes all dimensions of engagement with reality - deciding, preparing, planning and dramatizing are all pertinent factors in man's comprehensive engagement with the otherness, which confronts him, both as that which is apparent and that which is constitutionally mysterious.

TRANSPARENT  
BEING

"Being" represents intensified knowing and intensified doing. It is not a third element but rather a dimension of experience that emerges when the tensions within and between the other two are heightened. Its obvious referent is style - the way someone does what he does or knows what he knows. Transparently it refers to presence, the quality of a life that relates to the final Mystery of life itself which is finally presence itself. Transparent being refers to the quality of disclosing the ultimate Other which is neither the same as, nor separable from, the self.

PHENOMENO-  
LOGICAL  
RECOGNITION

All three categories are phenomenological. They are intended to be. They do not suggest that nothing is real save man encounters it. Rather, they are intended as a screen identifiable in the experience of everyone, whether or not he has recognized it. Knowing, Doing, and Being meet that criterion. They are the starting points for the Order's analysis, deliberation and decisions and the comprehensive check-points of effectiveness and inclusiveness for models.

## VII THE PROJECTED RESPONSE

### A. The Timeless Concerns

The number of issues facing the Order: Ecumenical, and its program arms, at this time is staggering. When drawn together in a single list, they are certainly in the hundreds. This surprises no one. This is just as it should be for an organization, a structural entity, as alive and vital as the Order is. Most of these issues belong in a Global Priors Council, or on a corporate brooding screen, for future Priors Councils.

But there are some kinds of issues, like the Division of Yin and Yang in Oriental philosophy, that are, for us, life issues. As long as there is an Order: Ecumenical, there will be these few issues somewhere on the corporate agenda:

1) Appropriate Symbology: After more than ten years of continual practice of it, the members of the Order: Ecumenical insisted upon referring to the Daily Office as an "experimental liturgy." The experimental nature of it has been demonstrated from time to time through small modifications in dramaturgical practice. Most recently we have experimented with it through the "not practice" of it. We have been greatly concerned with the effect of the use of Daily Office upon non-Christian, particularly non-Western, colleagues and associates. We search for ever more universal, ever more transparent liturgical practices. This is one of the eternal issues of the Order: Ecumenical.

2) Global Unity: The nature of the external mission of the Order has continually demanded extension, expansion, and increased complexity. Since its inception, it has been no other way, and there is no reason to suspect that it will be otherwise in the near future. But these tendencies also have a centrifugal effect. The tendency is not only towards autonomy. It is also toward radical disparity. One of the eternal issues facing the Order will be that of how to maintain unity across the globe, despite the movement toward larger and larger configurations. Many factors are involved: symbolism is one. Effective communication nets, reporting formats and procedures, meeting and planning schedules are others. But there will never be a final solution to this issue. Proof of the continued life and vitality of the Order: Ecumenical will rest in the ever more creative variety of ways we find to deal with the issue.

3) Awakening Consciousness: It has been said, rightly, that the Order has never been about anything other than Global

Awakenment. Since the days of the Faith-and-Life Community, through the time of RS-1 training, and the HRM, it is clear that what we were concerned with was the matter of increasing the self-conscious power of decision making among all men. This was apart from whether we were dealing with the members of the Middle Class, the elite, or the lives of local man. Town Meeting, the Global Women's Forum, and the Youth Course and Corporation LENS and Consults are only the latest steps in this extended journey. But the life of the Order will be the never ending search for diverse, imaginative ways to carry on that awakenment. The task cannot end, or at least, not in our generation. For the accomplishment of some kind of "total" awakenment would be simply to pose the need for a new definition of awakenment.

4) Style Demonstration: Privacy is one of the first and foremost values of the contemporary, middle class society and life style of the "15%". Yet this is precisely the point at which the intrusion of the masses of the world are offensive to the controlling minority. Maintenance of possessions is not easy, or cheap. Values of quietude and seclusion are simply not recognized or honored. In short, the majority of the world's population is in search of a life style that combines many different values. The Order: Ecumenical has always denied itself the benefits of privacy, precisely in order to allow missional identification with the world-wide majority. Corporateness, however, is a stylistic demonstration, as well as a pragmatic instrument of effectivity. The challenge to achieve a unique, truly human, yet universally adaptable life style will be unending.

5) Inclusive Participation: There is probably no other organization, or community of persons, in the Western world, that refuses to conceive of its organizational structure in terms of an hierarchy imaged as a pyramid. As Westerners and 20th Century persons, we have been trained simply to think in terms of pyramidal hierarchies. Our struggle with creating the new polity will not disappear in a year or a lifetime. It is part of our nature. If there is ever a victory, it will be a pure, unqualified gift of the Lord.

## B. The Future Conversations

Sometimes human conversation belongs to the realm of the fine arts. Such conversations take place over years, and even lifetimes, and exchanges take on the concretions of battlefield maneuvering. Their content was nothing less than history, and because these conversations were done with care, they shaped history.

Life in the Order: Ecumenical is a kind of conversation with history. It is a very good thing that the Order does not do programs or projects or strategies, like the Ecumenical Institute and the Institute of Cultural Affairs, because it is of crucial importance that the conversation should be protected, and for the moment, be kept apart from the realms of mundane doing. But if you can hear the conversation of the Order rightly, then you have the best imaginable clue to the real future of the whole functioning corporate body.

Let us submit that there are seven conversations now in progress: There is the conversation the Order is having with itself, which means also the E.I. and the ICA. There is the conversation it is having with local man; local man of the East, and of the West, local man of the 15% and of the 85%. There is a pair of conversations that are related, yet distinct, between the secular establishment, and the ecclesiastical establishment. Then there are three "spirit" conversations: one with the ancient wise ones, one with the "Enemy", and one with the "Mystery."

What comes next for the Order: Ecumenical very largely depends on the direction those seven conversations take. But there is no straight line projection that can help very much in attempting to grasp the realities of the future. You might, for some purposes, draw a line from 5th City in 1967, and say, "see the roots of our 24 Human Development Projects plus the Maharashtra replication. But if you lived in 5th City in 1967, you have to be aware of the kind of game that is. Nobody would ever have predicted Ijeda or Kreuzberg Ost from 5th City. No one would have predicted the New Jersey: 100 out of RS-1, or the Local Congregation Course, or Cultural Studies I, even though the seeds were all there.

What will determine our future, if it is to go on being the sort of creative adventure that it has been until now, is the periodic intrusion of the sort of "quantum leap" that has marked our past. That term is not a good one, but a better is hard to come by. The idea is that we need continually to be sure that the possibility of radical intrusion into our going

routine is always possible. Much as it is necessary for some purposes, what moves the human race is not plodding, routine attention to duty, but gestalt shifts into wholly inconceivable realms. Creativity is not rational; it is not logical. It is wild, fierce, unpredictable, though it uses rationality and routine and predictability as its servants. Creativity is "unnatural", and the object of huge kinds of resistance from the "normal," and "natural" ones. You could make a case, although it would be questionable to take it too far, for saying that the spirit of real creativity and the Holy Spirit were one. So, the underlying critical question of the Order: Ecumenical is: "How do we remain exposed, and open to the wild winds of the future?"

There is no way to legislate in that wild uncertainty. In fact, there are many ways of making a good case for increased emphasis upon bureaucratization and routinization. Looking back on the history of the Order, it seems that every year, at least 20 times a year, we require ourselves to re-invent some set of procedures, or some way of doing things that we did last year. We re-invent the wheel, and sometimes it feels like we re-invent the horse. Perhaps this is one way of maintaining the openness. But re-inventing the Summer program from scratch can become just as boring as looking up the manual on doing Summers, and doing it by rote.

Perhaps this says that in the future, it will be necessary to allow some kinds of routine and bureaucratization in the door; maybe even the little tiniest bit of efficiency. If we do, what may yet protect us is the incredible gymnastic feat we have cultivated among ourselves of being able to sit for record-breaking numbers of hours, while problems and solutions whirl through our corporate mind until it is impossible to perceive which is which. And at this point, sometimes, there emerges the genuinely new, the genuinely creative. There is something to the promise that "where two or three are gathered Together..." in the name of spirit, or the name of creativity, or the name of the new humanness, or the moral issue, or whatever. The whirling, endless hours do produce revelations (spelled, please note, with a lower case "r"). For that is finally what consensus is all about.

If we can maintain that openness to creative incursion, to the intrusion, then we may eventually find that that also becomes the kind of service role that the Order plays for society at large. If we cannot afford to be without the intrusion,

society at large simply cannot afford to do without efficiency, and it cannot afford to open the door to very much creative chaos. If you do, you don't make money, you don't get streets repaired, you don't collect taxes.

In other words, if we remain faithful to our own insights, and faithful in our work, it just may be that one day, the world will require of us that we be the discontinuity and the intrusion to which we are loyal, for the sake of society at large. And after all what better role for the religious of the world--the controlled friendly intrusion from the other world, the intrusion that heals, the intrusion that opens new roads when stony paths are no longer visible.

One more rambling bit of grist for the conversations. Once, some years ago, one of the members of the Order used the idea of a "new Medievalism" to illustrate a lecture. The idea is that there is a parallel between our times and the age of the collapse of ancient Rome. The further implication is that the church alone was sufficiently strong to withstand the flood of chaos and disruption, and begin the rebuilding process.

The "Chicken Little" quality of the illustration may have been more appropriate to the occasion in a way that it is not now. But Order Living, with its mobile style, moderate austerity and objective external focus is, in several ways, an attractive alternative to much of what passes for contemporary culture. The corporate task emphasis lends a legitimacy to conservative values that is hard to justify elsewhere in a relativistic world.

But far beyond that, if it is possible, yet, in the 20th Century, to talk about the "new morality," then surely the Order: Ecumenical is one of the very few living laboratories for giving form to it, with any real capacity for intentionality. And surely the quality of global inclusiveness has to be one corner of a new moral structure, along with passion for the awakened consciousness of every man, and an obsession for the total engagement of every man.

One might anticipate more tears than victories in that arena for a time. Being global is appallingly difficult at close range when matters of protocol and cultural form loom larger than the rise and fall of church and empire. But morality in the 20th Century requires that the effort be made.

And so, we continue the conversations: the Mystery provides the general context and the specific situations in which those conversations take place. The "Wise Ones" of the past provide the insights into what has been said and thought and done before, in the history-long conversations. The "Enemy" provides all the fun, interesting and exciting answers to the life questions that last one hour and are gone.

## EPILOGUE

In the midst of the deliberation which produced the preceding essays, there emerged certain exploratory recommendations which relate to the future direction of the Order: Ecumenical's continuing experimentation in polity. The following entries represent those which the task force chose to submit for the consideration of the Order as it commences its task of memorializing the global consensus which has emerged during the year 1976-77.



The intent of this recommendation is to bring into being a Global Panchayat, by consensus of the Global Priors' Council.

1. Operating Principles. There are five cardinal principles of Panchayat operation. These are related to matters of 1) membership composition; 2) term of service; 3) selection of members; 4) deputy responsibilities; and 5) meeting schedules and details.

2. Formal Composition. The Panchayat shall be comprised of five members, of whom no more than three shall be of the same sex. To ensure depth of memory and breadth of mission experience and symbolic power, three members are to be of the Class of Confreres. Deputies shall be of the same composition. Membership is a full time task assignment of the Order: Ecumenical.

3. Term of Service. The term of service for a Panchayat member shall be five quarters. Three of these quarters shall be spent in residence at Global Centrum: Chicago Nexus. Two shall be spent either on Trek, or at a Global Research Assembly and Priors' Council. Once having completed a term, no Panchayat member shall be returned to office until eight quarters have passed.

4. Selection of members. The quarterly selection of each new Panchayat member shall be made by the total Order. Once each quarter, a ballot and an eligibility list shall be sent to each Order: Ecumenical member. Each member shall select a Panchayat Member and a Deputy Panchayat Member. Ballots shall be returned to Global Centrum: Chicago Nexus in a pre-addressed envelope provided for this purpose, to a designated Confrere, not a member of the Panchayat. The ballots and all recording notes shall then be destroyed. The Panchayat shall then select its own new member by consensus, giving the fullest and most careful consideration to the results of the balloting, but not necessarily being bound by them.

5. Deputy Responsibilities. While serving in the absence of a Panchayat Member, a Deputy Member shall bear all the weighty responsibility of that office. Each Deputy shall be designated by the Panchayat, at the beginning of his term of office, to replace a specific Panchayat Member, in his or her absence. The term of service for a Deputy shall be under the same conditions as for a Member. But no Deputy shall bear any other particular responsibility toward any one Member. Deputies shall be called upon to

take on the responsibilities of Membership only when the corresponding member is to be absent for a period of one week or longer, or is expected to be absent with undue frequency during that period of time. For the term of office, Deputies shall be resident either at Global Nexus: Chicago, or some proximate location. A Deputy's designated task assignment during the term of his office shall be such that he or she can be easily released at any time to take up the full time responsibilities of the Panchayat. Deputies are encouraged and permitted to be present at any and all Panchayat meetings of their choosing, and to participate fully in those meetings, even though they are not, at that time, taking the place of a Member.

6. Panchayat Meetings. The Panchayat shall understand itself to be in permanent and continuous session. The Chair of the Panchayat shall be rotated monthly. The chair shall stipulate the times at which the meetings are to be actually convened. With the exception of meetings convened in a "state of emergency", to be so designated by a consensus of the Members, and with the exception of meetings called to give consideration to matters relating to the eternal soul of an individual Order: Ecumenical member, all meetings of the Panchayat are always open at all times to all members of the Order. It is expected that with the exception of designated days of discontinuity, and during the sessions of Global Prior's Councils and Global Research Assemblies, the Panchayat will meet daily, and for a length of time deemed by its Members to be sufficient to conduct its business. During its formal and informal meetings, the Panchayat is to have a designated gathering place, to be changed during a quarter only with advance public notice. The Panchayat is to create its own budget, adequate to meet all travel, communication and office needs. All travel during the term of office is to be understood as assigned travel, and therefore fully reimbursable.

7. Panchayat Implementation. Over the next few years, the Panchayat will continue to be in a formative state. Accordingly, it is expected that it will work closely and continuously with the Dean in the carrying out of his tasks and functions. In order to move the Panchayat on its way, a new balloting of all ten Members and Deputies shall be held in Quarter II of 1977. The final selection shall be made by the consensed agreement of the Assignments Commission, the Global Priors and the Dean. The Panchayat shall be

considered as a full time task beginning July 1, 1978. Each Panchayat Member, and the corresponding Deputy, shall be accorded an arena of "watching" over the decision making, including Centrums, Commissions, Areas and Houses and Projects, and shall be accountable to the Dean and to his fellow Members for his or her oversight. The Panchayat shall cultivate the custom of writing the results of its deliberations, although it must itself decide what form these should take. It is recommended that for the interim year of 1977-78, five persons be named to function as the Panchayat dynamic as did the Global Panchayat Task Force in Quarter IV of this year. This would allow experimentation with flexibility to continue.

8. Implications. The implications of what has been set forth above are myriad, and will be, of course, years in working themselves out. But there are certain kinds of operating "spirit principles" for the Panchayat which are worth stating.

a) A Panchayat Member treats each meeting he attends as though it were his last.

b) The Panchayat never engages in the futile task of attempting to solve individual problems, taken in isolation from the total missional focus.

c) Rationality and Objectivity are the key to effectiveness.

d) The emphasis on comprehensiveness must continue to be stressed in the corporate common memory.

e) Beware of the individual or private thing in all of its millions of forms.

f) The only effective criteria for selecting leadership is that of accrued or acquired symbolic power.

## AREA PRIOR SELECTION RECOMMENDATION

The intent is to select the Global Priors each year in a way which meets the missional demand using experienced leadership and developing new leadership.

1. Assignments are made annually, and for one year.

2. In the case of priors of houses and projects, a two year period of assignment would be expected.

3. In the case of Area Priors, the expected period of assignment would be four years, although unusual circumstances might extend it.

4. The operating screen for the selection of Area Priors should include these factors:

a) At least three years of membership in the Order: Ecumenical, with at least part of those three years spent in a Religious House.

b) Significant exposure, while in the Order, in assignments beyond their home continent.

c) Selection shall be made from a list of recommended names compiled by the Assignments Commission at each Global Centrum Nexus, from which the Global Priors, with Colleagues and Confreres, would make recommendations and the Panchayat make assignments.

5. When a new assignment to the Global Priory is being considered, the tension between using available experience in a role and offering the challenge to potential new leadership, shall be held.

## ASSIGNMENTS COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The intent is to make assignments as needed around the globe enabling the Assignments Commission to prepare recommendations.

1. Assignments are made annually for one year, by the Global Priors meeting in Council.
2. Mid-year assignment shifts shall be made from recommendations of the Nexus Assignment Commission in consultation with the Global Priors and the Panchayat.
3. Particular assignments are understood as having been given to a particular individual. In general, families are assigned to the same geographical area.
4. One important screen in making assignments is the length of time a person has been assigned to one geographical area or to one task assignment. After a certain length of time, a change in assignment shall be considered. The definition of such a length of time as it relates to the practice of assignment rotation shall be made by the Assignments Commission in consultation with the Global Priors and the Panchayat.
5. Children under the sixth grade accompany parents on assignments, except where situations of schooling, health, housing, and general well-being or the "state of the mission" would make it inadvisable. This shall be determined in consultation with the receiving Area Prior. Negotiations shall be carried on through the Internal Life Commission.

NEXUS/PROJECT RELATIONSHIP RECOMMENDATION

The intent is to allow maximal effectiveness of all missional entities and configurations by enabling the creative tension between the global and the local dynamics of Order polity.

1. When located in proximity to an Area House, a Human Development Project staff will be attached to that House.
2. The Global Centrum Nexus shall operate apart from the Human Development Project and represent the global presence to that, and all other, local units.

## GLOBAL FINANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent is to create global formulae, designs, and priorities which will facilitate the operating reality of the Order's global finance structure.

1. A special task force will be created to:

a) Deal with particular kinds of internal operating issues including questions of child support; extended family care; past personal debts; private and corporate car maintenance; income from high school working youth; alimony; and resettlement costs.

b) Design an effective, workable financial reporting system with appropriate enforcement procedures.

c) Examine how priorities are determined for the disbursement of developed income.

d) Consider the means of broadening the global stipend base through seeking public support from agencies such as ACTION and VISTA.

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Portents from the Turn to the World (T-239)	April 1974
Corporate Organization and Global Polity (T-240)	April 1974
Global Order Polity (T-369)	August 1975