

# COUNCIL III

## DOCUMENTS

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The crisis of our age is becoming blatantly manifest. The religious foundations and the social framework that have defined our global existence have failed. We live in a post-Christian and a postwestern world. The crisis of today is a crisis in humanness itself. Here is the clue to the contemporary concern with the question of vocation and with the category of style. Here is the key to the current drive for ordering of the corporate and solitary religious life. Here is the clue to the conundrum of radical discipline.

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#### THE RELIGIOUS VOCATION

The question of religious vocation is raised at every hour in history, but most sharply at the hour of the collapse of the current social vehicle and religious mode. For it is in the religious dimension of life that humanness is articulated for a given era. Humanness then, defines vocation, Vocation, when considered in its rich sense is always religious. This is the function of religion. The articulation is made always by the People of God.

The signal contribution of religion is in its inventions of what humanness is. In any period any authentic religion offers recognition of final mystery or it articulates what otherness a man is finally faced with. It offers man a self-conscious focus to deal with his life experience. Its second contribution is the story. Whatever the form of the story, it tells the secret of fully human existence. It becomes the life story by which one gauges selfhood or unselfhood. The third contribution is a system or mode of the ethical life. This deals with the practical decision-making process of a man in relation to his situation and to the reality before which he lives.

The form of the signal contribution of religion is in its metaphor or its poetic image of humanness. The metaphor is born from consciousness of one's own consciousness. Simply stated, a man's actual life situation is the problem of how to relate his philosophy about the way life is or his idea of life and his ethical activity to his practical day-to-day decision making. It is at the point of bridging the gap between one's philosophy and his practical activity that the metaphor functions. It is the life metaphor stated in poetic imagery that allows for the subjective response and the objective thereness to be synthesized. Vocation in this context has to do with how a man spends his entire life. This is the religious question. It is not concerned with what disguise he wears as the religious, but that he be the religious. The religious metaphor tells a man what he must do with his life. The metaphor never grounds vocation in any particular but addresses itself to the broad endeavor of whatever it means to be human. In the most radical and general sense the man of religious vocation is the one who perceives the chaos of his times and

knowing the way life is, sets out to construct the metaphors(NRM) that will create order out of the chaos. The metaphors, in turn, inform all men what it means to be a human being in the midst of history (NSV). The task then, of religious vocation, is to create humanness out of chaos.

## STYLE

### CONTEXT

Style is being. It is to be understood in the complex of knowing, doing, and being, which define humanness. Man raises the question of "Who am I?". This is his knowing dimension. He raises the question of "What do I?". This is his doing dimension. He raises the question of "How be I?", not "why?" or "what?", but "How?" From identity flows vocation and then style which is being. The dynamic between these is seen in the radical discontinuity between knowing and doing on one side and being or style on the other. The second dynamic in this relation is that style or being is the intensification of both knowing and doing which raises in a third dimension the issue of identity and vocation. This means that style is sheer symbol. It is the incarnation. It is nothing. It is all.

### DESCRIPTION

How then does one talk of style? First of all it is the ordering of our time and space. It is the form we give to our existence. Secondly it is an art form. It is our invention of humanness, our painting, our play, our building, our poem, our musical. This means in the third place that style is life itself. It is our living and dying, never finished until life itself is in, complete, finished, perfected. Finally style is concrete, it is practical. Being is particular and specific and individual. It is all there is finally to get your teeth in. Paradoxical as it seems it is the transparency itself which is the only concretion. Our knowing and doing pass away, our being goes on forever.

### FUNCTION

Style can also be conceived under the category of function. It is not simply the manifestation of the solitary spirit journey, it is the means, the chart, the compass, the power. Style is the stuff of civilization itself which is to say that it is the only strategy of radical revolution. It gives the very climate for thinking and the foundational construct of all revolts. It by itself keeps the mystery within the arena, brings men to the struggle, enables the incarnation of the divine.

### STRUCTURE

Style has a discernible structure. It is five fold. The first and second part of the construct is the selfunderstanding and the missional election. Style only proceeds out of a task and a word of basic orientation. The next or third ingredient is the religious mode which deals with the means whereby we are foundationally related to the mystery or God. The fourth dimension is the social presence or our manner of existing in the social vehicle, The relation between these two is the relation of "in" but "not of"; and this is realized in the fifth, quality of style which is discipline. It is therefore sheer symbol on the concretion of concretion. It is the result and sign and determination of both the social vehicle and the religious mode. It is the most practical and the most ethereal. It is the white hot manifestation of the Word of God and the role of the people of God.

### CONCLUSION

Style then is authenticity. Our life and our death is our mission. It is the word of the incarnation. It is the deed of the crucifixion. These are the intensification of knowing and doing. This is life. Indeed it is style. This is what is meant by "going to Heaven." Style is going to heaven or going to hell. The greatest failure is still the failure to go to heaven.

## THE ORDER

### INTRODUCTION

The Order in its relations to the church and world has a teaching, serving and contemplative function. The task of the teaching order is to evangelize and train leaders who can evangelize. The task of the service order is to establish signal projects revealing the mission of the church and to permeate the social structures bringing about their transformations. The task of the contemplative order is to provide structures of contemplation, meditation and prayer for colleagues and colleges.

Throughout history there have been three types of orders. The demand of our day is to experiment with what it would mean to be an order that embodies all three styles.

With the emergence of a new age there is needed a world wide forging of a contemplative people, who operate out of a common rule with varied disciplines. This new form of society is a broad system of presence which impacts the globe with its structured style. These nobodies are without task or accomplishment in the world; and it is through their struggle to the conscious before the mystery that others are enabled to order their lives and create the new structures of society. Their only function is to design and live a more human style which occasions the birth and fruition of a new style.

### WAYS

This new religious order would hold together a wide variation of human expressions in a simple vocational thrust. One may participate in three ways: the Cleric, the Monk, and the Colleague, all of whom would be based in a college. All three live under the common rule of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The Cleric is that one who has undergone intensive training, manifests the Style and is capable of nurturing the spirit depths of a college. He has decided to live as the iron pillar under corporate assignment to a college and cadre in various life situations.

The Monk is that one who has undergone intensive training, manifests the Style in terms of a life time commitment. He has decided to incorporate himself in a House which intensifies the style by its rigorous discipline.

The Colleague has sojourned and pilgrimed in the style of the contemplative life, is sent to embody that style in an extended form, and thus enables the Ecumenical Church to become self conscious of the religious mode, the Denominational Church to maintain the mystery, and the Movement to reincarnate the presence in every geographical unit.

### MODES

Each of these ways appear in three modal structures for care and discipline: College, House, and Cadre. The cleric and colleague are disciplined and cared for in the cadre and college, the Monk in the college and house.

The college is the primary mode of contemplative form. It is found at all levels from the local to the global, being both mobile and located. Its discipline includes depth study, accountability, obediences, and solitaries which are so designed that they enable college members to confront the mystery and to embody their struggle.

The House is the foundational sustaining mode of contemplative form. It embodies colleges and enables them to experiment broadly in the Universal Ur. The discipline life of the House is such that it presses depth, comprehensive encounter with the contentless Word.

The cadre is the local grass roots expression of the contemplative form. Through it the new context is provided therein the world is impacted, enabling the spirit struggle to break loose world wide. The life of the cadre is such that it allows the last fat lady to embark on the universal journey.

## METHODS

The contemplative uses three methods: teaching, contemplation, and serving in the world to develop new dimensions of human consciousness and to build the next step of the civilizing process.

The task of the contemplative teacher is to enable every human being to live in the very center of lucidity, to embrace the contradiction and to feast on the absurd. He lives out of the decision to gaze calmly into the abyss, to celebrate the chaos and to embody the paradox. His power comes in enabling the human community to embody that same decision.

Contemplation is the method whereby he gains distance on reality. He sees beyond the appearances and breaks loose a new imagination for the future. This new imagination gives the human community a vision of possibility.

Serving for the contemplative is not achievement itself. Serving is the method of bringing intentionality to the situation in the midst of the contradiction, which in fact creates BEING. This then becomes the symbol which frees the world to embrace and participate in the contradiction of doing while forging out the necessary deeds.

## DISCIPLINE

### INTRODUCTION

In every age, man has taken upon himself the task of ordering his existence. The 20th Century insight, that man must be a perpetual model builder, raises the question of rearticulating discipline in our time. This means that discipline is a sociological category. It is the practical relating of man to his world. It is the practical ordering of time and space. It is intentional maturing of human life style.

### I. THE ESSENCE OF DISCIPLINE

The essence of discipline of the religious is the self- understanding in Jesus Christ which nurtures the presence that empowers the comprehensive human revolution and embodies the essence of humanness. This discipline concretizes itself in a covenant that holds in being a radically revolutionary body, and an emblematic community life.

MISSIONAL -- -The missional aspect of discipline is three-fold. First of all it is a recapturing of a sense of ultimacy in human existence through metaphors which point to the ultimate reality. The task is to create the contemporary face of God. This is the demand to which man must consent to discipline all of life. Secondly, the modes of sociality are inadequate to the demands of history. What we have known as humanness can no longer sustain the new self consciousness that has emerged across the face of the globe. New modes of sociality must be created. Nothing short of this task is worthy of the demand to be the discipline man. And finally, the task. is to bring consciousness to bear upon man's own self consciousness. This imperative demands of man a discipline for the sake of releasing global human creativity.

**COVENANT** -- Covenantal discipline, or the ordering of time and space for the sake of a task, is corporate. Every human being engages in corporate structures of a direct function of the necessity of man to bring order out of the Universe at every level of existence. First of all, every human being is bound in covenant with Being itself. This covenant is the inevitable expression of the fact of existence. It is the gift of Being itself about which every man must decide, or to which every man must take a relationship. Secondly, men are bound in covenant with each other. This covenant is also the act of Being itself. Every man is bound to life, and yet at the same time is free to affirm or negate this corporate covenantal relationship to his neighbor. Finally, within this corporate covenantal structure man is called upon to take a self-conscious relationship to Being, his neighbor, and himself. In addition he is called upon to be faithful to the concrete demands of his decision. The man who submits himself to this discipline is committing himself to the Divine struggle which is the only human mission.

**PRESENCE** -- Presence discipline is the embodiment of the mission toward which the discipline is directed. The new world being built finds itself manifest in the fabric of the disciplined life. This covenanted community shows forth the new society. This presence demonstrates an emblematic community style from which every body politic must guide its reconstruction.

## II. FORM OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is not only the practical manifestation of a covenant with all of history, a mission to be the church, and a self-understanding of life in Jesus Christ, it also points to a unique relation to social existence. The organization of a formal Rule, as a vehicle for discipline, allows for a concrete description and analysis of the actual ordering of the corporate life style of a missional body of people. The form of discipline is the intentional ordering of the economic, political and cultural life of the order, enabling the order to engage itself in mission.

**III. QUALITIES: MISSIONAL POVERTY** -- The qualities of discipline are missional poverty, paradoxical obedience, and religious chastity. Missional poverty is self-conscious ordering of the resources of each man to maintain and sustain the globe in the human enterprise. To serve this end, missional ordering establishes the pattern whereby we own nothing. All resources are held in common and all common energies belong to the common task. Nothing is fixed. There is no permanent structure and any man can do any task. Within the confines of the rule, care for every man is sustained by common funds which missionally direct the common resources across the globe.

**PARADOXICAL OBEDIENCE** -- Paradoxical obedience is the tension between the community and the individual. One always exists within obligatory structures with the possibility of decisional freedom. The relaxation of this tension results in abstraction from life rather than participation in actual decision making. Obedience is always rendered between the polarities of seriousness and nonchalance, between phariseism and libertinism, between moralism and unintentionality.

**RELIGIOUS CHASTITY** -- Religious chastity is the principle of willing one thing. Missional singleness must be grounded in dialogue with all historical tradition as well as oriented toward the future. Only the intention guided by the inclusive is chaste; only in the covenant with God comes the freedom to participate in the relative covenants of life. The demand is to embody in each situation the posture which signals the next mutation in humanness.

## CONCLUSION

This, then, is the essence, the form, and the qualities of the covenantal rule of a religious order, sent into history at the midpoint of Century 20, actively committed to the creation of the new social vehicle amid the secular-religious ethos of the new religious mode. The goal of this disciplinary structure is the mid-wifing of a new style of being. It is first the internal life discipline of the men of faith whose self-determined burden it is to lay down

their lives to hasten and assure the coming of the new order of reality. Nothing other than the rigorous corporate discipline can enable men to be the creative, life-affirming presence in history. Nothing other than covenant in mission can overcome the radical disparity of the individualistic willfulness which separates men one from another, and enables them to focus their wills in a common, life-giving mission.

## THE SOLITARY OFFICE

### INTRODUCTION

All men have engaged themselves in the solitary dimension of humanness. Wherever there is humanness, there is the solitary. The degree to which a man participates in the solitary dimension is the degree to which he conducts a solitary office. The solitary office is therefore grounded in man's decision and in his life stance.

### CONTEXT

History is created only by men who unite in a common deed, and who have made the decision to be responsible for the whole world. The solitary office is the form by which man individually actualizes that responsibility. It is the arena for the spiritual discipline of the people of God which is manifest in a covenantal rule. The solitary office holds the dynamic tension of the New Religious Mode and the New Social Vehicle.

### DESCRIPTION

The solitary office is concerned with the relationship which man has to being itself. Humanness begins when man is faced concretely with the dread of nonbeing and consciously faces the dread of being. In the midst of these dreads arises a depth fascination. In dread and fascination, profound human awe before the mystery of being is found. The solitary is that act of the will where man selfconsciously faces the abyss and the facticity of nonbeing and being, the continual decision of suicide or crucifixion, and totally responds to dread, fascination and awe by affirming the world of perpetual change.

### STRUCTURE

Man has always experienced the solitary within a threefold structure of meditation, contemplation and prayer. Meditation is the act of selfconsciously reflecting upon one's actual and projected relation to the lives, deeds and wisdom of those "ancestors" who inform and lend shape to his imagination, consciousness and solitary struggle. Contemplation is the act of probing the depths of man's being in relation to the final mystery through the disciplined focus of the mind, body, and spirit through particular a myth, rite, and symbol. Prayer is the act of symbolizing and ordering the investment of man's life as decisional relationships to and responsibility for the totality of the past, present, and future.

### FUNCTION

In the richness of the solitary, man grasps a new relationship to his knowing. Standing present to the transparency of any system of knowing, he is aware of the fact that knowing always reduces that which is un-reducible, orders that which can never finally be ordered, and gives meaning to that which is finally mysterious. The new relation is a shift in man's theological stance which is not related to any degree of intellectual endeavor, but to the Word in Jesus Christ. To reduce the solitary to some level of intellectual astuteness is to engage in intellectualism. The solitary office is not an intellectual exercise but a depth reflection of man's total grasp of his function as a knowing creature.

In the power of the solitary, man grasps a new relationship to his doing. Grounded in the comprehensiveness of

life, rendered by the totality of the self, all action is surrendered in openness to new demands. The solitary is not a ritual to justify actions, a form of moralism which manipulates social action, or a psychological comfort in personal problem solving. The solitary does not enable man to live his life but is the depth context out of which man directs all of his doing.

In the depth of the solitary, man embodies a new life stance as the one who has appropriated his own death, and is perpetually open to the dynamic mystery of life. The solitary is deeply grounded in the concretion of an individual's life. The temptation is to abstract experience to a plane of unreality or to engage only in aesthetics. If this occurs the experience is isolated and void of objectivity. The purpose of the solitary is not to allow man to be scintillated by his own depth self-reflection but to enable man to continually decide his actual relation to his total situation.

## CONCLUSION

The secular, revolutionary and universal world of the 20th Century demands that man bring into existence today a new solitary office. The imperative of the transmutation of consciousness, whereby man consciously forms his own consciousness, is to create a new symbolic life. The solitary office, is essential to that creation for it is the center of that new consciousness of consciousness of consciousness. The secular world demands that man intentionally forge out those symbols and patterns of relationships which allow him to freely decide his own life. The revolutionary world demand that man constantly forge new structures of civilization and that he do this within a corporate eschatological group. The universe demands that man participate in life as the comprehensive one who stands before the mystery in the Word that all of life is received and good as it is. The solitary is that which finally sustains the secular, revolutionary and universal man in that corporateness which creates humanness.

## THE RELIGIOUS MODE

### FORM

In the depths of life, man experiences the awefull fear and fascination of the struggle to be human. Religious modes throughout history have derived their form from the three fundamental dimensions of this basic life experience of awe. Contemplation is man's encounter with the abyss, in which is stands utterly present to the final mystery at the center of life. Meditation is man's encounter with the primordial, in which he dialogues with the wisdom of his ancestors in order to continually inform his struggle. Prayer is man's encounter with the demands of history and his focus on the future of the civilizing process by assuming responsibility for all that will be. The religious mode defined humanness by enabling man to stand before the mystery, by articulating the secret of human existence, and by providing an ethos out of which he lives.

### CONSTRUCT

As the basic instruments enabling humanness, all religious modes have operated out of the same fourfold structure, which includes an intellectual schemata, a symbol system, a social methodology, and an image of unction. A belief system in which man orders his basic life stance, his world-view, and his philosophical presupposition is necessary to self-consciousness. Rationality, however, is but one mode of selfconsciousness. Humanness always manifests itself in myth, rite, and symbol which hold any religious mode in being and are manifestations of that mode. The mode must be given expression in concrete social practices, or it becomes an esoteric system or abstraction. Functionally, the mode becomes the articulation and expression of the relation of a people to themselves, to the other, and to the final otherness to which all men relate in some form.

### PRESENCE

Every man in every age, regardless of his social and religious context stands present to the totality of existence in four fundamental ways. He is driven always to order the chaos that surrounds him, to drive his consciousness to the edge of the knowable, and to remain on the journey of increasing the sphere of his consciousness. He is also driven to accomplish, to give meaning to his life through participating in the noble deeds of society, and to grasp his significance as related to everbroadening the scope of his action. Yet knowing and doing finally are not adequate. Man discovers in knowing that he knows nothing, and that all of his knowing throws him over the abyss. He grasps all his doing as impotent and so all his doing throws him over the abyss, He is that which stands discontinuously from his knowing and doing: he be's through the intensification of both which then becomes transformed. All of this is the style whereby he stands present to all of his life and therein creates history this style is transparency.

## CONTEXT

A new religious mode is required out of the turning back in upon itself of the globe which is producing a consciousness of the consciousness of consciousness itself. In the midst of this man finds himself seized by the offensive word of the Gospel, which requires a decision about his very life: he then discovers that that decision embarks him upon a journey of spiritexpansion until he is one with the entire creation and is even then being superseded in the next step of the primordial march. Paradoxically, he discovers that only with the inbreaking of the recurring event, is he able to move along that journey. With his heightened consciousness, and the progress of his journey, man sees that he has grasped after humanness out of a particular primordial invention, which is only one of several, each emphasizing a different, though equally significant aspect of what it means to be human. This very awareness is the creation of a new, universal invention of humanness (Ur), out of both a new relationship to the pluralism of Urs and the intensification of the uniqueness of each with the consequent convergence of consciousness itself. It is out of this context that a new religious mode has emerged.

## INTERNAL EXISTENCE

Man's internal existence is that ground out of which the style of the new religious mode flows. It is never to be confused with subjectivism or psychologism for it reflects objective decisional relationships of belief, disposition, vow and posture. Beliefs in the New Religious Mode is the stance before the Mystery (Awe), the stance of the Absurd Word, the stance of the Cruciform Deed, and the embodiment of the stance in the Christ style. Dispositions is the network of beliefs which rearticulate the decisional qualities of humility, gratitude, compassion, and the courage to persevere in these qualities. The vows are man's relationship to the defined corporateness in the form of chastity, poverty, obedience, and the steadfastness to these vows (stability). Posture is the internal response to be the free man who dares to risk his lucidity, sensitivity, and exposed being in his discipline.

## EXTERNAL PRESENCE

The external presences in a religious mode are the fundamental relationships that are held in being by a pattern of practices. The objective symbols include myths, rites, symbols, and the sacraments which express the totality of the final relationship. The necessary roles are those of the guru, the pedagogue, the revolutionary, and the prior who embodies and expresses all roles and each of them as the situation demands. The corporates are the religious bodies through which the Christ men dramatize their life stance: the cadre, the parish, the congregation, and the college, which is the training ground for the spirit journey. The pieties are the activities by which the Christ man rehearses the dynamics of his interior existence: contemplation, meditation, prayer, corporates (e.g. obediences, tasks).

## CONCLUSION

A religious mode is that ethos of a times and a people by which a man is related to the final mystery of existence itself. It is that style out of which his every relationship is defined, whether to his own journey or the social vehicle of his age. It is that ground out of which he is enabled to forge his own particular selfunderstanding. The religious mode of our age, for the first time in history, is the mode, not of a people, but of all peoples. Nothing less than a global mode is demanded of this time.