

Research Team Five

Order Council '68

The Ecumenical Institute Chicago

THE RELIGIOUS VOCATION

a working draft. for Order use only

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UNIVERSAL	People of God			Global Church			Temporal Ground		
	Signal Contributions	Religious Metaphor	Reconstruction	Ecumenical	Denominational	Movemental	Revolutionary Demand	Social Dynamic	Revolutionary Focus
	recognizes mystery	poetry	new religious mode	local parish-latent church	local congreg.-historic religious forms	local cadre-s;c church	discontinuity	scientific	bridge gap
	tells story	decision	new social vehicle	unitary	diverse	temporal	social mutation	urban	structure/mutation
	invents humanness	practic	vocation: metaphor context style	word gap	awe gap	journey gap	transparency	secular	revolutionize/transparency
CORPORATE	Religious Movements			League			Religious Response		
	Historic Orders	Social Movements	Perversions	Organization	Internal Dynamic	External Relation	Relation	Modality	Practice
	intellectual	Intellectual	intellectual sterilization	religious	relation to 'world'	to ecumenical chu.-educational order	pioneer	evangelize	meditation
	ministrational	economic-political	rigidified charity	order	possibility of interiorized NSV	to denominational ch.-contemplative order	represent	justice	prayer
	contemplative	symbolic	institutional withdrawal	college	basic tri-poles	to movement-service order	sign-humanness	presence	contemplation
PARTICULAR	Definitive Roles			Religious Vocation			The Secular Religious		
	Typology of Saints	Traditional Functions	Redefinition of Roles	Election	Ordination	Discipline	Contemporary Saint	Vicarious Deed	Eschatological Sign
	pastoral	restore community	scientific	meaning of call	church action	obedience	pedagogue	celebrate gospel	transform time
	servant	elevate cause	urban	awareness of decision	symbol	chastity	revolutionary	perform deed	converts space
	ascetic	allow devotion	secular	marks of election	objective reference	poverty	guru	love god	Indicate mystery

The question of religious vocation is raised by life and responded to by the people of God. Vocation is particularized in operational constructs. These constructs are always in the process of being defined in light of changing times and the qualities of humanness that the times demand.

I. PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT.

A. People of God	B. Religious Movements	C. Definitive Roles
1. Signal Contributions	1. Historic Orders	1. Typology of Saints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Recognizes mystery</li> <li>b. Tells story</li> <li>c. Invents humanness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Intellectual</li> <li>b. Ministrational</li> <li>c. Contemplative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pastoral</li> <li>b. Servant</li> <li>c. Ascetic</li> </ul>
2. Religious Metaphor	2. Social Movements	2. Traditional Functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Poetry</li> <li>b. Decision</li> <li>c. Practic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Intellectual</li> <li>b. Economic-political</li> <li>c. Symbolic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Restore Community</li> <li>b. Elevate cause</li> <li>c. Allow devotion</li> </ul>
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UNIVERSAL	CORPORATE	PARTICULAR

The Religious: People of God

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.

1. 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 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 gages 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 he lives before.

2. 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. Or, the religious metaphor tells a man what he must do with his life. Because the metaphor is a poetic statement it never grounds vocation in any particular, but addresses itself to the broad endeavor of whatever it means by being 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, thus giving it meaning. The metaphors, in turn, decide for all men what it means to be a human being in the midst of history (NSV). Then, the summary task of religious vocation is to create humanness out of chaos.

3. Under this rubric, vocation can be grounded in creating the vehicle or social order and the frame of religious expression. The fabric of society or the social vehicle is a practical embodiment of the philosophy of the religious expression of the times. The content of the social order of a time, however, provides the grist for the religious mode. In this way they create each other and the only vocation is to give birth to these.

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION -- I, B

### Religious Movements

Throughout the history of the church orders have risen, originating around a need and response to a new world coming into being. It was by them that the church laid its work through the ensuing age.

i,a The teaching orders formed to meet the needs of expanding consciousness, as in the Renaissance, when the redevelopment of learning coincided with the voyages of exploration. Such orders are best typified by the Jesuits, who acted through a militant discipline and a world organization. Teaching through an intense religious imagination, they shaped the intentionality and style at the strategic points of cultural development across the world.

i,b The mendicant or begging orders, such as the Dominicans and Franciscans, were organized primarily to meet the needs attendant on the eruption of new forms of social energy, as in the 12th century, when rising cities polarized social classes, established trade routes, and sustained the first universities. By service, learning, and poverty they carried to the new parts of emerging society a Christian witness to which previous structures of the church could not minister.

i,c The contemplative orders were formed in periods when the ground of humanness had moved dramatically away from the cultural constructs of an age. They may be best illustrated by the Benedictines, who rose in an age when the life pattern of shrinking cities echoed the empty forms of a past age, and the bulk of the population either was held in a tightening spiral of soil servitude, or was running amuck in a chaos of deprivation. The Benedictines, standing over against their time by holding to a corporate mode and discipline, a fixed geographic commitment, and a systematization of time, developed a religious style radically focused on the final mystery and grounded in the reclamation of culture.

2 Social movements arise from the same social needs and human concerns as the orders. Correlative to each of the orders mentioned above is its prototype in the form of a secular response. The Enlightenment was a movement, primarily intellectual, concerned with expanding world consciousness. An economic-political movement concerned with new forms of social energy can be characterized by the labor movement in the United States. Symbolic social movements are concerned at least in a reclamation of culture. Exemplary of this type movement is the Doxiadis Institute. While one might not call this a social movement, he sees it is one manifestation of many participating actively in creating a sign of a new social order.

3 Social movements are susceptible to perversion as are religious orders. Revolutionary viability of spirit orders is directly related to their possible perversions. When the metaphors of universal mystery tend to obscure the mystery, contemplative life becomes locked in sociological sterilization; when the imagination fails of new possibility it becomes a dogmatic hold; and when the sense of abandonment is lost reformulation becomes institutionalized charity.

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION - I,C

### Definitive Roles

1 Three decisional types have emerged throughout history in which the movemental dynamic has incorporated its thrust. Each type is historically viewed according to its religious or secular emphasis. Where all three roles intersect are found the archtypes of the secular-religious.

1,a Ascetic role: From the religious extreme of the ancient hermit to the secular-oriented nuclear physicist, the contemplative-oriented ascetic role has traditionally centered on the Hindu guru and the Buddhist monk; encounters the ecclesiastic dimension in the philosopher-theologian; finds its tertiary concern for the world in the Christian mystic; and merges with both in the image of the Brother of the Common Life.

1,b Servant role: From the religious pole to the primordial incantor to the secular radio commentator, the community-oriented ecclesiastic role centers classically on the Roman Catholic priest and Islamic Muezzin, shares ascetic concern with the Jesuit officer, and merges with both in the worker-priest.

1,c Pastoral role: From the radical Pentecostal to the labor-union organizer, the service-oriented tertiary role centers historically on the Protestant social reformer, meets the ecclesiastic type in the Wesleyan Class leader, expresses the ascetic type in the Franciscan friar, and resolves itself in relation to both in the image of the Old Testament prophet.

2,a These roles have functioned historically in three major vocational delineations: Functioning as vicarious contemplators for the world in times of arid self-consciousness and barren reflection these ascetics have massed concentrative powers to awaken men to unexplored depths of self-understanding, have created the poetry that articulates the restless yearning and struggle of human life, and through experiments in devotional living have triggered spirit breakthroughs in society.

2,b Functioning to unify people in times of chaotic social upheaval and radical individual isolationism, These ecclesiastics have drawn men into disciplined, ordered community to celebrate the contingency of the human condition, to liberate self-hood to operate in creative transmission of the word of life, and to create styles of responsible participation in the social order.

2,c Functioning as revolutionary forgers of the social deed in times of apathy and parochial communalism, these tertiaries read the signs of the times, build social models, and prick the conscience of men to commit them to a passion for building the earth through identification with the suffering masses of the world.

3 The saint is always in the process of defining his times and redefining his own role. In our hour the new saint retools his mindset from the absolutism of the previous century to the reality of relativism, from region-nation orientation to global concern, and from certitude based in authority to authenticity through self-conscious destinal decision.

II. OPERATIONAL CONSTRUCT

A. Global Church	B. League	C. Religious Vocation
1. Ecumenical	1. Organization	1. Election
a. Local parish -- latent church  b. Unitary  c. Word gap	a. Religious  b. Order  c. College	a. Meaning of call  b. Awareness of decision  c. Marks of Election
2. Denominational	2. Internal Dynamic	3. Ordination
a. Local congregation --historic religious forms  b. Diverse  c. Awe gap	a. Relation to "world"  b. Possibility of interiorized NSV  c. Basic tri-poles	a. Church action  b. Symbol  c. Objective reference
3. Movemental	3. External Relation	3. Discipline
a. Local cadre -- s/c church  b. Temporal  c. Journey gap	a. To ecumenical church --Educational Order  b. To denominational church--Contemplative Order  c. To movement-- Service Order	a. Obedience  b. Chastity  c. Poverty
UNIVERSAL	CORPORATE	PARTICULAR

RELIGIOUS VOCATION - II, A

Global Church

The church construct provides the initial context for re-examination of the Global Church. Of the three dimensions of this construct, universal, historical, and local, the historic church triangle can best be used to ground the relations within the global church. The following chart illustrates the dynamics within the historical church, in its aspects of ecumenical, denominational, and movemental.

Historic Church Dynamic	Basic Polarity	Typological Parameter	Relational Phase	Signal Relation
Ecumenical	local parish ●—————● latent church	Geo-social	Missional	Unitary
Denominational	local congregation ●—————● historic religious forms	Socio-religious	Instrumental Missional	Diverse
Movemental	local cadre ●—————● self-conscious church	Religio-spiritual	Managerial Instrumental Missional	Temporal

*LEAGUE OF WOMEN*  
*LOCAL college*      *Religious*

Examination of the basic polarities reveals how each form of the historical church is a dynamic relationship, composed of its own set of polar realities, which in turn, provide the aspects of the local church, at the point of the particular, and the universal church at the point of the universal.

As shown in the chart, the typological parameters define the societal manifestation of each form of the historical church, while the relational phases point to the particular quality of relationship that each aspect takes to history in general. As can be seen in the chart, these relations are cumulative, and the relation of any one form cannot be considered except in relation of the other two.

The signal relations shown in the chart indicate the unique dimension of each aspect of the historical church, and provide a handle whereby the tension between each of the church's forms can be readily grasped. For example, the tension between the ecumenical and the denominational aspects of the historical church can easily be seen as a manifestation of the tensional polarity of their respective signal relations (i.e.: diversity-unity.)

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION -- II, B

### The League

The dynamic of the League must be understood as an additional dimension to the Church Construct. Expanding the concentric triangles of Universal, Historic, and Local Church, into a three-dimensional figure illustrates the integral "in but not of" relationship of the League to the entire Church construct. In the League dynamic the basic polarity is between the COLLEGE at the point of the particular and the RELIGIOUS at the point of the Universal. As shown above these poles are only found in tension, never in isolation from one another. As in all true polarities the League dynamic reveals a basic paradox that is, that each pole, when pushed to the depth contains the other. Between these poles of the League is the Concrete Historical Manifestation which maintains the tension of the poles and contains them in a demonstrable reality. This manifestation is the ORDER and corresponds directly with the three dynamics (ecumenical, movemental, and denominational) present in the Historical triangle of the Church construct.

The relational phases of the League are three fold. Its relationship to itself is illustrated above. Its interior tensional dynamic provides its relationship with the world. That is in its interior construct it provides the prototype for changes in the world social vehicle. The world cannot respond consciously to this prototype but its societal changes reflect the prefiguration actualized in the League. The structure of the League's social experimentation is always centered in the Order, which embodies the continually developing models of the spheres of social responsibility (Individual - Family - Community - Polis - Nation - World). For example, toward the point of the particular the order experimented with the Individual/Family construct and the relationship of the League as Order/Colleges to it. Toward the point of the Universal the League as Order/Religious explored the tensional dynamic of Nation/World. Finally, the League as Order in tension between College and Religious relates itself to the Community/Polis dynamic.

These relationships only manifest themselves to the world as they are revealed in the League's external relationship with the Church wherein they provide the Church's revolutionary deed in history. It is in this external relationship to the Church that the League manifests itself as the catalyst for the historic church, whose activities can be held under the rubrics of Knowing, Doing, and Being. When these categories are dimensionally increased to the Four-Fold Awe Soul Journey, Word, Deed construct, a significant gap appeared. Briefly stated, the League functions as a catalyzer upon the Historic Church so that these gaps, or "invisible functions," in the dynamics of the Historic Church are made manifest.

RELIGIOUS VOCATION -- II, B

The League (continued)

		ECUMENICAL	DENOMINATIONAL	Movement
KNOWING	WORD	GAP CONTEMPORARY ARTICULATION	TEACH/TRANSMIT	RENEW WORLD
DOING	DEED	COORDINATE MISSION	ENABLE ACTION	SHOW FORTH DEED
BEING	AWE	SIGN OF THE ESCHATOLOGICAL	GAP MAINTAIN MYSTERY	REBIRTH ESCHATOLOGICAL
	SOUL JOURNEY	UNITY IN POLITY (UNITE THE ARMY)	CONSERVE TRADITION (CONTINUE MARCH)	GAP REINCARNATE PRESENCE

As seen above, in relation to the Ecumenical Church, the League/Order acts as the catalyzer that allows the Ecumenical Church to pronounce the Contemporary Articulation of the religious mode, and is seen here acting as a Teaching Order. When the League/Order acts in catalytic relation to the Denominational Church it permits the Denominational Church to Maintain the Mystery, which would otherwise be lost without this relationship. Here the League/Order acts as a Contemplative Order. In the Movemental Church, the Soul Journey dimension is lacking. The League/Order acts to catalyze the Movement into Reincarnating the Presence. Here the League/Order stands as the silent servant and fills the role of the Service Order.

No gaps appear in the Deed category since the Historical Church is defined by its missional relationship to history itself. Thus the Deed of the League/Order with relation to the historical church is finally the Contentless Deed which makes possible the eschatological deed of the Church that is its revolutionary role in history.

Religious Designation

Election is the self-conscious acknowledgement of the demand of history which is that each man shall live his life that every other life - past, present, and future shall have been lived, shall live, and shall be lived in the fullest expression of its possibility in any given situation. Thus it is seen that the call of history which is election can be heard by all men. Only those who acknowledge this call and move toward a corporate vehicle to respond to the call are marked as the elect. When man articulates his decision to be present to his election he is seen to be on the self-conscious journey toward the salvation of God.

Ordination, then is the Church's symbolic articulation of the individual decision to live before the election of all men and is available to each man as a viable symbol to freight his vocation. It is the symbolic incorporation of the solitary religious into the body of the Church. Only in ordination is the individual decision to live on behalf of all given the necessary dimension of corporateness required to fulfill the task demanded by the mission.

Discipline is the crucial manifestation of the style out of which a body must operate in order to be constantly present to its common decision to live before the election of all men as the Saviours of God. Whatever the contemporary articulation of the discipline, it is manifested in the ancient vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty. Thus, the style of the body, which is manifested in its discipline, reflects the Church's receiving of the individual decision, and thrusts that decision into a corporate frame, wherein the individual as well as the group, is held inexorably against the demand of history.

III. CONTEMPORARY QUALITIES

A. Temporal Ground	B. Religious Response	C. The Secular Religious
1. Revolutionary Demand a. Discontinuity b. Social Mutation c. Transparency	1. Relation a. Pioneer b. Represent . . c. Sign -- Humanness	1. Contemporary Saint a. Pedagogue b. Revolutionary c. Guru
2. Social Dynamic a. Scientific b. Urban c. Secular	2. Modality a. Evangelize b. Justice c. Presence	2. Vicarious Deed a. Celebrate Gospel b. Perform deed c. Love God
3. Revolutionary Focus a. Bridge gap b. Structure/mutation c. Revolutionize/ transparency	3. Practice a. Meditation b. Prayer c. Contemplation	3. Eschatological Sign a. Transform time b. Convert space c. Indicate mystery
UNIVERSAL	CORPORATE	PARTICULAR

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION - III, A

### Contemporary Qualities

#### Temporal Ground

The question of vocation has always risen from the temporal ground of man's concrete situation. In our time as never before man is faced with a radical gap in his historical understanding, which stems from the collapse of a rigidly structured universe and the awareness of himself at the center of a relatively oriented metability - faces an unbridgable discontinuity between itself and the relational networks of which it is a part. The means by which man can bridge this gap must come from the situation itself. That is, only in the understanding of himself as a relationship within a set of relationships, scientific creative dynamic or a perspective from which one aspect of his universe is viewed, can now meet the demand to leap the gulf of discontinuity.

With this objective understanding, man sees the demand to meet the discontinuity of his time articulated most clearly in the face of social mutation, a phenomenon that best illustrates the discontinuity of our time. In order to deal with what would otherwise seem to be a spontaneous phenomenon, man's self-understanding is clearly seen in its urban context that of the predictive capacity to structure the inevitable social mutation.

It is in the intentional structuring of social mutation that man meets the final demand of his time. It is here that his efforts meet with the transparency that is inherent in a relative understanding of the universe. That is, the social mutation reveals the reality that stands behind any modification of humanness, and is finally expressed in the Christ word. Only in his secular dimension, can man finally reveal this transparency without reduction, for only as a secular being is man a total Participant in his universe. And thus, the secular man reveals the depth of the religious vocation.

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION - III, B

### Religious Response

Those who have chosen to be the religious vocation relate to the world as human pioneers with a representative responsibility for all that is, a corporate sign of authentic humanness. The qualities of those of the religious vocation are that of sensitive, sacrificial being, living on behalf of all. These people intentionally pioneer by being the first to act in a particular situation in which a universal demand for response is present. In doing this they bear the representative responsibility for all by changing history, drawing forth a response, and projecting the corporate possibility of mankind. In every action those of the religious vocation reveal the role of the decisional human being, the power of decisional human being, and the presence of the Mystery in life.

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION - III, B

(Religious Response, cont.)

The Modes of the Religious Response to the question of vocation are: Evangelism, which communicates in the symbol of a particular culture the historically grounded contentless Word witnessing to individual significance and enabling transformed humanness; Justice, which creates political - Economic - Cultural structures demonstrating the possibility for total life participation and enabling a transformed destiny; and Presence, which embodies the Absurd Word and the Cruciform Deed in the depths of primordial humanness, making visible the mystery and enabling the transformed civilizing role.

The practices in and thru which the Religious becomes the Pioneer, the Representative, and the Symbol of humanness is the spiritual exercise of Meditation, - Prayer, - Contemplation. Meditation is the knowing of one's being thru the eyes of those in the past, present, and future. Prayer is doing one's being thru a self-conscious articulation of decision which alters the consciousness of the future itself. Contemplation is being one's being by engaging one's mind, body, and spirit thru myths, rites, and symbols, which bring to self-consciousness Being itself.

## RELIGIOUS VOCATION - III, C

### The Secular Religious

The third quality of vocation is that of the secular religious. One who lives under this category is a contemporary saint. He is in every situation a pedagogue; one who perpetually turns his subjective impressions into artistic expression, who uses every appropriate opportunity to enable his brother's struggle for life-clarity, and who creates those spirit images which bring consciousness to consciousness-of-consciousness. This new saint is also a revolutionary: one who constantly creates an economic-cultural-political gestalt of all the data he encounters, who is ever erecting those structures which make it possible for every man to reach the full extent of his humanness, and whose style is the unmistakable embodiment of community reformulation. Through the intensification of his pedagogical and revolutionary roles, the twentieth-century saint is a guru, one whose every nerve, thought and feeling are sensitized so that the totality of what he experiences immediately reaches his depths who transposes his temporality into the mode of eternity, and whose being is the effulgence of the unsynonymous.

The secular religious, knowing himself to be the new saint, perpetually performs the vicarious deed. His life is a celebration of the gospel: he hears the Word with unspeakable clarity, he sees the judgement deep in the formless abyss, and is the incarnation of the age-to-come. As the benediction of this gospel celebration, the contemporary saint moves to actualize the deed, building an all-inclusive plan for inter-galactic

The Secular Religious (cont.)

renewal, unstopping the streams of social justice, and flooding everything he touches with the transforming righteousness of his being. In the unity of Word and Deed this saint is preeminently one who loves God he understands that he is always up against the limits of life which shall never be removed, he appropriates the possibilities which arise out of his decision to be open toward God, and becomes in his own time and place for all mankind the new religious mode.

The contemporary saint engaged in the vicarious deed is the eschatological sign. He transforms time; discerning the signs of his own historical moment with prophetic insight he orders chronos by giving names to times and seasons and embraces the kairotic revelation, plumbing secular events to the depth of their religious significance. The one who is an eschatological sign also converts space he builds design on the face of chaos, he dots the wide oceans of the abyss with moved mountains, and is the embodiment of being-in-itself. Finally he indicates the mystery which is beyond time and space yet working in it he humbly takes what is given and in gratitude gives what is taken away, forever rejoicing in that enigmatic power which is the ultimate ground of all knowing, doing, and being. This sign is both the beginning and the end of the new religious vocation.