

THE FUTURE STAFFING OF OUR PARISHES
- some theological considerations -

A discussion paper

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Introduction

How we staff our parishes touches the way we experience our Catholic identity. "Parish" and "parish priest" have been correlative terms throughout the years of our growing up in the Church. The thought that lay people can be in charge of parishes can touch the very identity of priests, both theologically and emotionally. The thought of not having a priest in one's own parish, while other parishes do, can be troubling for parishioners. And yet there are hard practical questions that must be faced.

Our diocese is indebted to those whose foresight, leadership, skills and generosity have been directed towards preparing for the future. Priests and people have responded well to consultations conducted by the Task Force, and participation in programmes of formation for lay ministries (Waka Aroha and Hands On) has been strong. Nothing has been perfect, but we have pioneered our way well. Sister Cathy Egan's visits to rural dioceses in Canada and USA brought back some valuable insights which confirmed the general direction we had been taking.

There is much still to be done, including identifying the specific needs of those parishes which are less likely to have a resident priest, whether temporarily in order to allow for renewal opportunities, holiday or health needs of priests; or permanently.

Inevitably, some solutions begin to be put in place as we go along. But this is why there needs to be theological reflection to ensure that our solutions are consistent with our Catholic identity. We also need to be aware of those "solutions" which are not.

Some solutions are currently out of our reach; e.g. widening the range of who can be called to ordination.

There are other solutions which fall short of our Catholic tradition of celebrating Eucharist; e.g. by substituting Communion services and alternative liturgies.

There are other "solutions" which fall short of a Catholic understanding of ordained ministry, whether because they reduce it to "sacramental powers" in a narrow sense; or because claims are made about qualifications for preaching that require no distinction between ordained and lay ministries; or because the role of the priest is described primarily in terms of being a co-ordinator or director of operations, which ultimately does not require sacramental ordination in our Catholic sense; or because of speculation about part-time ministry.

Finally, there are solutions based on the "managerial" approach which derives from economic rationalism. This approach has resulted in the closure of small hospitals and small schools; (Bates¹). It would do the same to small parishes based on arbitrary claims

about liturgy or finance; only the financially self-sufficient shall be allowed to live; can anything good come out of Nazareth?

To avoid false "solutions" we need to reflect on the theology of parish, the theology of ordained ministry, the theology of mission and lay ministries. The following reflections are not complete; they only single out some key ideas pertinent to the staffing of parishes and to the morale of all concerned.

Part I - The Parish

The parish is many things, and staffing it means enabling it to be those things:

1. It is the community in which people first experience what it means to belong to the Church, and what "Church" means to them.

...for better or for worse, the large majority of Catholics at critical times of their lives will touch base with a local parish, not the universal Church. They will enter into the mysterious rhythms of birth, marriage, sickness, and death vis-a-vis the parish. The impression that the parish community makes at these archetypal times will be lasting and often will be a critical factor in the subconscious appreciation of the Church's mission (Bausch²).

2. The parish is the community in which people's lives are taken up into the seasons of the liturgy, where general salvation history and their own personal salvation histories intertwine. This is where we begin to perceive the meaning of our lives in the light of "the plan God had from the beginning, revealed in Christ and manifests in the Church" (cf Eph. 1:9-10; 3:3-11; Col. 1:25-27).
3. Parish life should be people's main chance to experience a "culture" different from their experience of a society which trivialises the real mystery of life and glories in the trivial, is deeply secular, cynical and exploitative. The parish is in a losing competition with social and political life, business and the entertainment industry unless what it offers is radically counter-cultural. For the same reason, its liturgies cannot afford to seem like just a variation, even a special variation, of the things we do; it needs to be an eye-opener on what God is doing.
4. At the heart of parish life is the celebration of the Eucharist in which
 - the events of Jesus' life, death and resurrection enter our consciousness, evoke our response and become part of our own lives;
 - which constantly forms us in the image of his body - "given up" for others and his life "poured out" for others.

- recalls our fundamental identity as people sharing Christ's life and therefore, in a sense, already "seated with him in the heavens" (cf Eph.2:6)
 - gives us a reason to "look forward to his coming again" (Eucharistic prayers)
 - unites us with the whole Church, which is present with us in our celebration (cf Second Vatican Council, L.G. 26; S.C. 42).
5. The parish is the community in which the Communion of Saints is made close to us and personal through parishioners we have known.
6. The pastoral care we experience in the parish is an expression of what it means to be a diocese:

A diocese is "that portion of God's people which is entrusted to a bishop to be guided by him with the assistance of his priests" (cf Second Vatican Council, C.D. n.11).

7. The parish is the community which we each have a responsibility to form as a community which
- mirrors the gospel; is the contemporary community of Jesus' disciples;
 - fosters a deep sense of wonder, gratitude for the gift of life, reverence for all that God has made, and prayer;
 - has a heightened awareness of being "*a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people consecrated to God*" (cf 1Pet.2:9);
 - "*makes known the wonderful things God has done*" and can "*give an account of the hope*" which it has and which the world needs (cf 1Pet.1:39; 2:9; 3:3-15);
 - Does the works of justice and peace, truth, love and mercy as evidence of Christ's reconciling power (Col. 1:17-20; 2Cor. 5:17-20) and the nearness of God's reign.
8. The parish is where we learn to practice inclusiveness by respecting differences - the different needs of different groups, and differences based on the "variety of gifts" (1Cor.12:4-7).
9. The parish is the community on which all Christian vocations converge:

The religious orders and congregations of the Church would lose their sense of direction if they did not see themselves as oriented towards the

life of the parish, in which a complete cell of the life of the Church is to be found.....

The same applies to specialists in scholarship or in teaching. The many other ministries to which people are called in the Church all relate in different ways to the building up of the parish community, as do the movements and societies of all kinds that meet different needs, material and spiritual..... (Richards³;

In a word: the parish is where our Christian life is focussed, and so staffing it is a priority of the highest order and an exciting challenge.

Part II - What kind of leadership?

How did we ever manage? Well, we did - partly. We had strong Catholic loyalties to support us, and a society that was generally sympathetic to what the Churches stood for. Now, society is predominantly unsympathetic, negative or just indifferent. This is the prevailing ethos and it affects the attitudes of Catholics too. In this very different context, we could hardly expect that the kind of leadership which relied heavily on loyalty could still be enough. Even with the wonderful loyalties that we have today, something more is required for effective leadership.

At this point we are reflecting on the qualities of leadership before we distinguish between the different roles of ordained and lay ministries. But it applies especially to us in ordained ministries.

The "something more" required of all leaders includes a gospel vision, a certain passion for it, a sense of "the big picture", bigness of mind, imagination, courage and perseverance. These, in turn, presuppose one's personal experience of "the Mystery". Speaking of priests, Barron puts it this way:

The priest of Jesus Christ is, first and foremost, a mystagogue, one who bears the Mystery and initiates others into it. At the heart of the Christian faith is a confrontation with the all-grounding and all-encompassing mystery of Being itself, which is God. The believer is grasped, shaken, overwhelmed by that powerful force, which in Jesus Christ is revealed as wild, passionate, unconditional love. Without a sense of that ever fascinating and uncontrollable power, the Church becomes, at best, a social welfare organisation or a self-help society...

The primary function of the bearer of Mystery is to hold up to the people of God the great images, stories, and pictures of salvation that lie at the heart of the

Christian tradition. The mystagogue is the one who has been entrusted with the sacred symbols and given the responsibility of making them speak. He is the artist whose task is to make the liturgy a great dance expressive of God's grace, a stunning saga at the heart of which is God's embrace of every aspect of our fallen humanity. (Barron⁴)

Effective leadership also requires "transparency". People need to see in their leaders what they themselves are being called to be. They need to know that what they are called to be is worthwhile and achievable (cf Greeley⁵).

This doesn't mean that leaders have to be finished products, who deal with others only out of their strengths. Just the opposite: a sense of being not above human frailty, self-doubt, suffering, fear and failure is itself a sign of one's calling in the tradition of Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Peter and Paul, and Jesus himself; (cf Buckley⁶)

For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning..... He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward since he himself is beset with weakness, (Heb.4:15; 5:2).

For priests, even the feeling of being not needed in all the ways that we were previously needed, referred to and deferred to, is part of that night in which He comes to those who row against the storm, and brings us closer to the condition of those we serve (cf Lyons⁷).

Even a correct understanding of personal growth can only fill us with the kind of hope that heals us and those who look to us.

The key element of growth is that of contacting and befriending the lost part of the personality. And that is the paradox: to change we need to do no more and no less than own who we are in all our reality. Psychiatrist Fritz Perls said that "change occurs when one becomes what one is, not when he tries to become what he is not".....

...we have often made an inappropriate transfer of Jesus' call for perfection to the domain of our human integration, and as a result we have placed quite unrealistic demands and expectations on ourselves. Growing doesn't mean perfection - a well-rounded finished product. Growth, as psychologist James Zullo, F.S.C. has observed, "is not a question of having been victorious over previous conflicts, but rather of having synthesised those conflicts into human strengths for maturity. A generative man is one who recognises and includes within his higher affirmations the deeper, untrustworthy, humiliating, limiting, inferiority-producing and fragmenting dimensions of life." (Cantwell⁸).

Leadership, for any of us, is not about first being found "worthy". It about having glimpsed the meaning of mercy - for oneself and for others.

With these challenges and these assurances, we can now look at the specifics of ordained and lay ministries.

Part III - Ordained ministries

I have yet to meet a priest, who in responding to Christ's call, started out on his journey without a vision, a dream. The dream becomes clouded, if not lost, as they respond to the day-to-day demands of the ministry. Their vision is the very heart of their vocation, and when that vision is clouded or lost, the vocation becomes a job.....

When my priesthood becomes a job rather than the expression of my vision, I open myself to dissatisfaction, stress, and even burnout. The energy and power I once possessed give way to doubts, loneliness, and a feeling of emptiness and utter frustration. I begin to think: it's not what I thought it would be; there's no joy in my work, no fulfilment. I guess I never had a vocation to the priesthood. Such feelings may surface during our journey; more often than not, they are signs that we are losing our vision, not our vocation. The priesthood is a vocation, and it is all about dreams and vision. The priest without a vision is moving from a vocation to a job (Dwyer⁹).

There is little doubt that in future the community of the Church will be more involved in the selection, formation and assessment of candidates for ordination. But it will still be the case that the authority proper to ordained ministry comes from God in the sacrament of ordination. It is a distinctly Protestant view that sees ordination just as an official appointment and delegation of authority from the congregation.

It follows that according to our Catholic tradition, there is an essential difference between parish ministries which do not involve ordination and those that do.

The difference is not meant to be visualised in terms of above/below, or in terms of apartness. Those ways of visualising the difference are constructs and accretions that need to be corrected; (¹⁰). The distinction only acknowledges the God-given purpose of sacramental ordination, with its implication that non-ordained ministries do not substitute for ordained ministries.

This is also why some of the work shared with non-ordained ministers is said to be a "participation" in the work proper to ordained ministry. What is "ordinary" to ordained ministries is "extraordinary" to others. Of course, there are also ministries that properly belong to (are "ordinary" to) lay persons (cf below). When canon law makes such distinctions, it is because they are based on the theology of ordained ministry.

What, then, are the specific characteristics of ordained ministry?(¹¹)

1. Ordained ministries exist to make visible and make present the ministry of Christ the good shepherd. Of course, Christ is truly present in each member of his body. It is specifically his role as good shepherd and servant that is made present in those who are sacramentally ordained to re-"present" him in this way. In this sense, they become icons (note, not imitations) of Christ the good shepherd. Through them, Christ shepherds his flock. This is their particular way of acting "in the person of Christ" (L.G. n.10).

What they are sacramentally ordained to be they must constantly choose to be - good shepherds. One who makes Christ the good shepherd present to others goes out to his people wherever they are most at ease - in their own surroundings. He gets to know them and allows them to know him. The priests' presence is a symbol: it tells people they matter to Christ and supports their faith in him. This is Greeley's "transparency" applied to the theology of ordained ministry.

2. This shepherding role of presbyters and bishop is essentially a collegial responsibility. Together they provide collegial care of all the parishes. It is in function of this diocesan role that a priest takes up his place in a particular parish or chaplaincy.

When a priest is asked to leave one parish for another, or when he is asked to take on diocesan duties outside his parish, the sacrifice this can involve - both for priests and people - reminds us that we are all first of all members of a diocese.

3. The primary activity of those ordained to re-"present" the good shepherd is proclaiming God's word - the word which announces the presence of God's reign; (Second Vatican Council, P.O. n.4). The priest does this in several ways:

- (a) By the witness of his own life: Of course, this is true of all Christians, but here we are talking about the "*a fortiori implications of discipleship*"; "*one must recognise that in the gospels the vocation for special discipleship is portrayed precisely as a vocation to hardships too severe to be generally acceptable*" (Brown¹²). And one cannot re-"present" Christ to others (apostleship) if one is not formed in his image (discipleship). Neither ordination nor juridical status can make up for this.

It is by assimilating the word into his own life that one makes it present and contemporary to others (Ratzinger¹³). This is also what gives the word credibility (Paul VI¹⁴). "Transparency" again.

- (b) Through his preaching: St Paul uses the language of worship and sacred duty when describing this task (cf Rom. 15:16).

Even when the word he preaches indicts the preacher, he must still announce the whole of it. The shortfall between what he says and his own life witnesses to the fact that discipleship is a journey and struggle for him too. Allowing this to be seen is leadership - transparency! The word he preaches calls him too to where it calls his hearers. Using the first person plural comes easily to one who is conscious of this.

- (c) Through the sacraments: these are celebrations of God's word; they are the points at which there is no gap between what is said and what is done: "your sins are forgiven"; "this is my body", etc.

A perception of ordained ministry current before the Second Vatican Council reduced it to sacramental powers and to what others could not do. The Council rejected this narrowing down by describing priestly ministry primarily as a ministry of proclaiming God's word, and sacraments are particular celebrations of that word.

- (d) By his celibacy: even though celibacy is not doctrinally required for ordained ministry, it is doctrinally linked. Both ordained ministry and celibacy point to the reign of God. It is only the power of God that can achieve celibacy, and so celibacy "announces" the closeness of God's reign - already present. And it underlines the spoken message by saying "what God has in store for us all is so wonderful and so assured that we could afford to lose everything else if necessary". The word one preaches and the sacrifices one makes "speak" the same message. It is a highly focussed way of being in the service of the word.⁽¹⁵⁾

This link between celibacy and ordained ministry will be more easily recognised when ordained ministry comes to be seen primarily as a ministry of proclaiming the reign of God. ⁽¹⁶⁾

4. Finally, it is a characteristic of ordained leadership that it promotes and enables the involvement of others. By helping others to recognise their own gifts and where to use them, the ordained minister is carrying out an important part of his own ministry. Their involvement is not a diminishment of his ministry but an accomplishment of his leadership - his "author-ising". The meaning of "authority" is that it increases (from "augere") the ability of others to carry out their roles. (Power is the opposite of authority because it diminishes the freedom and scope of others).

An aspect of "authorising" others is providing for their formation. Diocesan-based programmes of formation correspond to the collegial role of priests.

Likewise, priests share responsibility for the ministerial performance, the ongoing formation, renewal and well-being of one another, because their ministry is

essentially collegial, and diocesan based.

Diaconate: when we have had more experience of ordained and non-ordained ministries working together it will be the right time to consider whether or not to set up the ordained ministry of full-time diaconate. The three ordained ministries of bishop, presbyter and deacon symbolise a communion model of ministry in the service of the Church which is essentially a communion.

The bishop's role is to ensure that in the midst of diversity the communion of the Church is maintained. The presbyter shares in this role through a ministry of word which calls people into communion and celebrates it in the Eucharist. The deacon also shares the bishop's role, through a ministry of word which calls the community to service - to be a community at the service of the world. To see diaconate as an offset to the shortage of priests is to misunderstand its own meaning.⁽¹⁷⁾

Part IV - Mission and Ministries

The Church does not exist for its own sake; it exists for the purpose of its mission - to be a sign to the world of its own destiny and of what God is doing: "reconciling all things to himself" (2Cor.5:17 ff), "making all things new" (Rev.21:5) - God's reign. The works of justice and peace, truth, love and mercy are the evidence the Church gives of the presence of God's reign.

Faithfulness to this mission, by means of these works, is also the Church's worship, i.e. lives that are an acceptable sacrifice (cf 1Pet.2:5).

This mission is the responsibility of the whole Church. Ministries exist to form the kind of Church that can carry out this mission. Though all are responsible for the Church's mission, not all are called to ministries (cf Pope Paul VI, Letter on Evangelisation, nn 70, 73; Pope John Paul II, Letter on Laity, nn. 15, 23).

The ordinary circumstances of life in the world - no matter how worldly or how human - are precisely the circumstances in which the Church carries out its mission. And those who make the Church present in the world are all the baptised, but especially the laity (because the ordained are called to minister to the Church's own needs). This different relationship to the world is a matter of focus only because both laity and ordained contribute to forming the kind of Church that carries out this mission. Consequently, the distinction between lay and ordained is not a distinction between secular and sacred: laity and ordained are both Church, and both are "in the world".

Nor is the term "lay" used according to its common meaning as "non-professional/amateur": the laity are the Church's professionals - i.e. they are the Church's presence in the world (cf Richards⁽¹⁸⁾).

Having noted the difference between mission and ministries, and the priority of mission

over ministries, we can now look at the characteristics of lay ministries.

First, it helps to understand that

- "charisms are enduring gifts of the Spirit given to Church members to be put to use in services and ministries" (19)
- a **service** is a way of using our charisms/gifts/talents for the good of the Church, as opportunities arise
- a **ministry** is an ongoing way of serving that involves a call by the Church, formation and a mandate (in some cases ordination)
- an **apostolate** is a way of putting the Church at the service of the world; (in this sense, the whole Church is "ministerial", but ministries proper are ways of serving the Church's own needs)
- a **vocation** is the call to a ministry or specific way of Christian living. Because a vocation is carried out in the name of the Church, it needs to be recognised by the Church. God's call is made known through the Church's call and mandate. A calling is personal, but not private. This is why the Church is involved in Christian marriages, the profession of religious vows, ordination and ministries carried out in the name of the Church.

Some ministries are proper to lay people, and are based on baptism/confirmation. There are others that properly belong to that pastoral care which is the purpose of ordained ministry, but which can be shared with lay persons when ordained ministers are not easily available. Examples of ministries that are proper to ordained ministry, and therefore "extraordinary" to lay ministers, include the pastoral care of parishes (cf cc.516, 517), presiding over liturgical prayers, exercising the ministry of the word, baptising, distributing Holy Communion, taking Holy Communion to the sick in the form of viaticum, exposing the Blessed Sacrament for adoration, etc.

Lay persons may also be authorised by the bishop to assist at marriages and to conduct funerals.

Ministries that are "ordinary" to lay people include catechising, the ministries of the RCIA, readers at the liturgy, altar servers, administration (cf cc.230/1 and 2, and 1282).

All Christians are responsible for sharing the gospel message. Even within the liturgy there is scope for lay persons to preach, but without obscuring the fact that ordained ministry is specifically a ministry of word and sacrament. This unity between word and sacrament is signalled by the fact that the ordained minister presides over the whole Eucharistic liturgy - word and sacrament (cf cc.766, 767).

Those whom the Church ordains to preach must be capable of pointing to the mystery of

what God is doing in our lives and giving an account of the hope that is in us (homily). In special circumstances, others who are not ordained may be called upon to catechise, explain, instruct and encourage, depending on their areas of competence and experience. But the ministry of word proper to the celebration of Eucharist is not based on those criteria. It belongs to the ministry of word and sacrament given in sacramental ordination.

No vocation is at the expense of other vocations, and each contributes to God's work:

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose (1Cor. 12:4-7).

Obviously, ministries are not the measure of "greatness" in the sight of God. The only "greatness" in the kingdom is holiness of life.

The appropriate formation, selection and support (including financial support) of lay ministers is the responsibility of the whole Church, and is demonstrated by what parishes and diocese do in practice.

This broader sharing of pastoral care is to be welcomed for the reasons given by Pope Paul VI

A glance at the origins of the Church is very illuminating, and gives the benefit of an early experience in the matter of ministries. It was an experience which was all the more valuable in that it enabled the Church to consolidate herself and to grow and spread.

Attention to these sources, however, has to be complemented by attention to the present needs of people and of the Church.

.... (from both these sources) it will be possible to seek wisely and to discover the ministries which the Church needs and which many of her members will gladly embrace for the sake of ensuring greater vitality in the Church community. (Letter on Evangelisation, n. 73).

Part V - Eucharistic Communities and Parishes

The parish is the eucharistic community. But, especially where parishes are merged, there will be eucharistic communities within parishes. In order to respect the needs and rights of all, on the basis of the theology presented above, I propose that we move in the

following directions:

- Every Catholic community which is used to celebrating Eucharist (whether it is a parish or part of a parish) should be built up into a "eucharistic community" in the fuller sense of taking more responsibility for its own liturgical, evangelising, catechising and apostolic activities.
- Eucharistic communities which do not have a parish priest should eventually be located within a parish with access as of right to the ministry of a parish priest. In some cases, this will require the eventual re-drawing of parish boundaries.
- In the meantime, their "parish priest" is the bishop, but he acts through those referred to in c 517/2.
- The re-drawing of parish boundaries should not take place before the eucharistic community without a resident priest has had time to strengthen itself and get used to taking responsibility. This is to ensure that when boundaries are re-drawn, these communities do not just lapse into being a "back paddock" of the parish they have become part of. They continue as eucharistic communities even after amalgamation.
- "Eucharistic communities" are described here in terms of taking responsibility for their liturgical, evangelising, catechising and apostolic activities - not in terms of autonomy or independence. There can be several distinct eucharistic communities within the unity of one parish, with one parish pastoral council and one parish finance committee. Subsidiarity applies, but without prejudice to a parish priest's responsibilities for the liturgy and pastoral care (cc 528-530), the administration of parish property (cf c 532) or parish records (cf c 535).
- Marae communities are comparable to eucharistic communities. Their priest chaplains (Maori missionaries) have the same faculties as parish priests, but pastorally their work is to be seen as a specialised ministry within the parish; cf c 516/2. Their need for their own space does not mean they are any less members of the "parish" or that they are not the responsibility of all priests. Minita-a-iwi are available to assist.
- A stipend is payable to those who are formally appointed as pastoral co-ordinators of parishes or as official chaplains, (e.g. to prisons or hospitals). All other lay ministers, including minita-a-iwi, and associate chaplains who volunteer their services, are entitled to reimbursement for significant costs, e.g. travel, loss of wages, etc.

Footnotes

1. See Ball, Snook, Codd, and others in *Educational Reform: Its Role in the Economic Destruction of Society*, Richard Bates, Keynote address at Geelong, November 1992.
2. Bausch, William, *The Parish of the Next Millenium*, (23rd Publications, 1997), p.143.
3. Richards, Michael, *A People of Priests* (DLT, 1995), p.137.
4. Barron, Robert, *The Priest as Bearer of the Mystery* (in *The Furrow*-----?)p.204.
5. Greeley, Andrew, *Come Blow your Mind with Me*, (Doubleday, 1971), Ch. 7.
6. Buckley, Michael, *Because Beset with Weakness* (in -----?) Ch. 14.
7. This theme is well articulated in *Transforming Ministry, a Reflection on Priesthood*, by Rev J Lyons, Petone, 1997.
8. Cantwell, Peter, *Ongoing Growth through Intimacy*, (in *Human Development*, Vol. 2), pp. 94-100.
9. Dwyer, Vincent OCSO, *Formation of Priests*, (in *Human Development*, Vol.10), pp.10-15.
10. Cf International Theological Commission, *The Priestly Ministry*, (St Paul's, Bangilore, 1971), p.112.
11. The main points in this section are substantiated in Chs. 2 & 3 of Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1992. (The Pope speaks of the priest being "configured to Jesus Christ as Head and Shepherd of the Church", but he carefully explains that Christ is head "in the new and unique sense of being a servant". (cf n.21)
12. Brown, Raymond SS, *Priest and Bishop* (Chapman, 1971), p.24.
13. Ratzinger, Joseph, *Priestly Ministry: A Search for its Meaning*, (Sentinel Press, 1971), pp.19, 20).
14. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975, nn. 21, 41, 76.
15. Concerning how a requirement of the Church can also be a charism and vocation, see my paper previously distributed, *Clerical Celibacy*, March 1997.
16. Similarly, an ordained priesthood perceived mainly in terms of "sacramental powers" would not of itself require full-time ministry. But a priesthood whose

- primary purpose is to proclaim that word which lays claim to a person's whole existence needs to be seen to have claimed the irrevocable commitment of the one who proclaims it. (cf Rahner, K. *Priestly Existence, in Theological Investigations*, vol. 3, pp.253 ff; Ratzinger, op. cit. pp.27, 28.)
17. cf Kelly, G. & Lennan, R., *The Diaconate: Possibilities and Challenges*, in *The Australasian Catholic Record*, April 1997.
 18. Cf Richards, op. cit., pp.56-59.
 19. For a more extensive treatment, with some variations, see Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, *Ministries: Heralding a New Era*, (in *Origins*, August 1978) pp. 130 ff.