THE RESPONSE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES TO IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

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* This paper is a preliminary reflection: comments and suggestions are welcome.
I. IMMIGRATION: A PERSISTENT PRESENCE IN THE AMERICAN CHURCH

In 1784, John Carroll accepted his new position as Superior of the Mission in the thirteen United States of North America. The formal acceptance was supplemented with a "report on the state of religion in the united provinces of federated America". There were approximately 15,800 Catholics in Maryland, including 3,000 slaves of all ages; 7,000 Catholics in Pennsylvania; 200 in Virginia; 1,500 in New York; and many French-speaking former Canadians in the Mississippi Valley.

Carroll noted that among the immigrants "who pour in upon us in large numbers from various European countries", religious practice was poor. "...at Eastertime", he added, "hardly anyone is found among the immigrants who observes this duty of religion".

In 1789 he commented on the French arrivals in Baltimore, pointing out that they had lost every feeling for religion and that their disregard of religious practice and contempt for the Church were a scandal. On the other hand, in 1786, he had written about "our most excellent and incomparable German Brethren".

The first resident priest of New York wrote in 1785 to the Nuncio at Paris:

The Catholics in these parts are very poor, but very zealous. For the greater part they are Irish. As such, they would not be able to build a church nor even to rent a place for saying Mass. However, a Portuguese gentleman has given them a part of his house for that purpose... In this country it is necessary for a priest to know at least the Irish, English, French, and Dutch languages because our congregation is composed of these nationalities, as well as of Portuguese and Spaniards. (1)

A determining element in the character of American Catholicism has been the continued influx of immigrants. John Tracy Ellis has observed
that in the nineteenth century they came "in such numbers that they soon completely overshadowed the native Catholics and gave to the Church a foreign coloring that at once baffled its friends and exasperated its enemies". (2)

Between 1770 and 1850, a total of 1,071,000 Catholic immigrants landed in the United States, a figure which far outran the natural increase of native-born Catholics.

At the time of the Revolutionary War, there were perhaps 35,000 Catholics in the U.S., less than 1% of the population. By 1820 there were some 250,000 and a decade later 750,000. It is estimated that by 1850 there were close to 2,000,000 Catholics and in 1860 almost 4,000,000. Today's estimates place the Catholic population of 53,000,000, roughly 25% of the American population.

Immigration is an important factor in accounting for the numerical growth of American Catholicism as well as for any intelligent discussion of the challenges it faces at this revolutionary moment. In fact, to start with the second point, the immigration experience consciously or subconsciously influences most Catholics. In the middle 1970's, 85% of American Catholics were born in this country but 40% of them had at least one foreign-born parent and 80% had at least one foreign-born grandparent.

Andrew Greeley reported in his 1977 The American Catholic, A Social Portrait that "about a quarter of the Irish and Germans were foreign-born or had foreign-born parents, but 52% of the Polish, 63% of the Slavs, and 72% of the Italians were either first (foreign-born) or second (native of foreign-born parents) generation. The French were between the early and later immigrants, with about two-fifths being first or second generation." (3)

The closeness of the immigrant experience, however, does not exclude the interesting fact that in terms of educational and economic achievement Catholics are thoroughly acculturated into American society. In his recent study, American Catholics, James Hennessey observes, "...it is a reasonable historical judgment that the Catholic Church in the United States in 1980 was passing out of the immigrant stage which began with the 1830's". (4)
This historical distance from European origins and the overcoming of the "immigrant mentality" can be seen in some Catholic intellectual circles and in the emergence of an upwardly mobile, educated, politically savvy group free to act as a critical conscience for the country. This real achievement of the grandchildren of the immigrants indicates the maturing of the Church. On the other hand, it could unwittingly further marginalize through benign neglect millions of Catholics who have just crossed the border or tied their poor boots on American shores in search of asylum.

In the 1980's the Catholic community in the United States is still confronted with massive immigration. The Hispanic population was 2.7% of the U.S. population in 1950 and 6.4% in 1980, with a total of 14,608,675. Immigration has been a major reason for this increase. From 1950 to 1980, 1,291,000 Mexicans, 600,000 Cubans, 750,000 Puerto Ricans, and 1,012,000 other Hispanics came as legal immigrants and refugees. There are at least another 1.3 million undocumented Latinos. (5)

If the Hispanics are visibly changing the face of America, we can assume that their impact on the Catholic community will be even more dramatic. If Haitians, Filipinos, Indochinese, Chinese, Koreans, and newly-arrived Europeans from Portugal, Poland, and Italy are added, it becomes obvious that 1) the historical development of the Catholic Church through immigration persists and 2) in this decade a new chapter in U.S. Catholicism has started.

The colonial Catholic community was drastically changed by the influx of Irish and German immigrants. The "new immigrants" of the 1880's from southern and eastern Europe marked another shift in the demographic make-up of the Church. Latino, Caribbean, and Oriental Catholics are now, in different political styles, knocking at the door for full participation as new constituencies of the Church.

II. A CHURCH CHALLENGED

The overwhelming fact about American Catholicism is that, like all other Christian denominations in the U.S., it is a Church of immigrants. For more than two hundred years, the leadership of the Catholic Church had a double challenge constantly facing it. First, it had to respond to
succeeding waves of newcomers who had varied cultural expressions of the same faith, a process that generated its own dynamics. Second, since Catholicism was a minority religion within a society that, for historical reasons, was hostile to it, the Bishops had to play the role of ideological brokers, adapting Church structures to American democratic institutions and thinking while preserving the faith of the immigrants. In this perspective, a basic theme that runs through the American Catholic experience is a combination of real concern for the immigrants, constant conflict, and constant compromise. (6)

a) Continued Official Concern

The concern of the receiving Catholic community is documented in the actual unfolding of the immigrant presence in the U.S. The first bishop John Carroll had to meet the needs of German-speaking and other immigrants by providing priests who could speak German. In fact, German-language parishes were established between 1787 and 1802. (7)

In 1866 the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, in recommending that Catholics contribute to the extent of their means to the Diocesan fund for the support of ecclesiastical students, observed: "Situated as the Church is in this country, with a Catholic population so rapidly increasing from emigration, there is no work of charity that can take precedence over it...". It directed as well that "in any diocese or province where Catholics are found who speak only German, it is expedient that in the major or minor seminaries of those dioceses or provinces, the student learn that language, at least enough to give absolution in case of necessity". (8)

At the Rome preparatory meeting for the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1883, the care of immigrants took up an entire session. Assistance to immigrants was discussed in great detail and practical proposals were made. Archbishop Gibbons approved the establishment of committees in the countries of emigration and "the plan of placing Italian priests in charge of the direction and the care of their co-nationals living in the United States".

The then-Coadjutor of New York, Michael Corrigan, observed that it was difficult to provide special churches for the Italians because:
1) the Italian immigrants did not ordinarily frequent the Church, 2) they had their dwellings dispersed throughout the various parts of the cities, and 3) they made no offerings to the priests either for the latter's support or for the maintenance of the Church.

An alternative solution was proposed by Patrick Ryan, Coadjutor of St. Louis. "At the principal Churches of large cities, there should be provided priests to whom the care of the Italians should be committed, with the duty of seeking them out, inviting them to attend Church, and giving them religious instruction." The Cardinals and the American Archbishops present at the meeting had no objection to Ryan's plan provided Italian-speaking priests were available and as long as "it was not possible to provide them (the Italians) with their own Churches".

The German Society of St. Raphael was commended and encouraged to expand and become better organized. Letters were to be sent to the Archbishops of Genoa and Naples, along with the statutes of the St. Raphael Society. Another letter was to be sent to the Bishops of Ireland, "advising them that they notify Bishops in the United States of the emigration of the Irish...there should be appointed in the principal Irish ports a priest who would obtain information regarding the emigrants, exercising care of the latter and informing the Bishops of the United States of their departure". The Cardinals accepted this proposal as very valuable.

The concern shown in Rome was somewhat modified once the bishops met in Baltimore in 1884 for the Council. A special chapter of the Council's Acts and Decrees dealt with settlers and immigrants. It was introduced by a theological reflection: the immigrants' poverty; calls for solidarity; we are all on pilgrimage to a permanent city; Christ identified with the stranger and the poor.

Then, there was the obligation of helping those afflicted by moral dangers. The Council Fathers endorsed the network of social programs that had been developing: the Irish Immigration Society, the German St. Raphael's Society, and similar associations established to help and advise the immigrants. They asked that priests knowing the immigrants' languages be assigned to their reception at the various ports, with particular care for young women, and praised the sisters who had opened houses of hospitality for these immigrant women. An anti-urban bias was
also evident. Priests were to direct immigrants away from city slums to rural life and wealthy Catholics were asked to form colonization societies to facilitate the task.

The bishops then sent their comments back to Rome through a letter written by Bishop Thomas A. Becker of Wilmington. Especially upset by Italian immigrants who, Becker wrote, "sell their faith at any price", they recommended that southern Italian bishops give religious instruction to the peasants. Such instructions could not be given in the United States because there are too few Italian priests. Disinterested priests should be sent to the U.S. who would "devote themselves fully and permanently to the spiritual care of Italians...that the padroni treat...like slaves". (9) As a result, some coordinated action got started, as the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith's 1887 "Report on Italian Immigration with a Summary of Related Correspondence" documents. (10)

Another major issue, the language parish, called for the concern of the American Bishops at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. In 1885, Bishop Kilian Flesch of La Crosse, Wisconsin, submitted to Propagande Fide two questions: 1) whether in the same territory there could be established several parishes for people of different languages, real parishes completely independent from each other; 2) whether a bishop would offend against the mind and the laws of the Church if he decided that children must belong to the same parish as their parents until they reach the age of majority.

On the first question, all the archbishops and bishops consulted gave a positive answer, adding that for the good of souls it was necessary to adopt the system of the language parish. The report on the establishment of quasi-parishes distinct according to nationality was prepared by Cardinal Mazzera, who had taught at Woodstock. It deserves extensive critical analysis since the position of the American Bishops on Americanizing the Church by accommodating to the needs of the immigrants is well-documented and because the nature and function of the language parish as accepted in the United States is carefully outlined.

On the national level, the increasing volume of immigration was bound to generate further internal developments in the life of the Church.
The next issue that forced a common response on the part of the bishops was the Cahensly debate that exploded in 1891. The bishops had to respond to claims of great losses to the Church among the immigrants and the necessity of ethnic representation in the episcopal body. The polemical evolution of Cahenslyism distorted facts and ideas, and the original issue became the occasion for personality conflicts and the advocacy of alternative strategies in the immigrants' integration.

The outcome of this violent and lengthy polemic has been support for the autonomy of the American Church, encouragement to immigrant voluntary associations to look for the material and spiritual welfare of immigrants, further approval to continue with the language parishes in the pastoral care of the newcomers, and the first practical steps, devised in the diplomatic notes exchanged between the Holy See and Bavaria, for a system of communication regarding immigrant priests and parishes between the bishops of the country of origin and those of the country of immigrant settlement. (11)

The welfare of immigrants on the part of Catholics, at first mostly local in concern, became more unified and organized in approach in the years after Leo XIII's Testem Benevolentiae. That letter indirectly curbed too rapid Americanization and the formation of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (1919).

The problems of Catholic immigration prompted in great part the founding in 1901 of the American Federation of Catholic Societies. The St. Vincent de Paul Society, started here in 1845, grew to give exclusive assistance to urban immigrants. Since 1905, the Catholic Church Extension Society has responded to rural immigrants. It would probably be revealing to study the immigration concerns of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, founded in 1910, and the National Catholic Education Association, founded in 1904. These supra-diocesan Catholic organizations aimed at giving efficient services on a professional level.

As World War I approached, the nation-wide concern of the Church became the coordination of Americanization and Immigrant Welfare Work. As Link has examined in American Catholicism and European Immigrants, this involved citizenship training, Catholic community houses for all immigrants, and the writing of textbooks and pamphlets in various languages...
on the rights and duties of American citizens. (12)

In 1920 the Central Office of the Bureau of Immigration was established in Washington, with branches in New York and El Paso, to coordinate the work of Catholic immigrant aid agencies and to cooperate with them. Through the NCWC Bureau of Immigration, Catholics began a concerted effort to influence immigration legislation, as in the opposition to the Johnson Reed Act of 1924 that discriminated against southern and eastern Europeans.

The centralization process provided a more efficient response for the development of a national social and legal policy by the Church, given especially the exclusive federal right to legislate in this field and the increasing federal involvement in social programs. Pastoral policies, however, remained under diocesan control and, therefore, more diversified. Immigration decreased in the 1920's and 1930's and the cultural climate favored assimilation.

When World War II broke out, the Catholic community no longer had immigration as a priority issue. Then, the refugee waves began. Catholic Relief Services, Migration and Refugee Services, the International Catholic Migration Commission, and various nationality associations under Catholic auspices became involved in a variety of resettlement and assistance programs that found support in the political climate of the 1950's.

The Church's mission was identified to a degree with the American objectives of freedom and containment of communism on the international scene. The care of displaced persons and refugees from eastern Europe was consistent with those objectives and an indication that the Catholic Church was a thoroughly American institution. Through its diocesan and parochial network, the Church became perhaps the largest voluntary agency in immigration work. It stood for the rights of freedom of movement and family reunion and it functioned effectively through its NCWC Immigration Bureau by watching over legislative developments and by giving social assistance to newly-arrived immigrants. The history of the NCWC immigration work is waiting to be written.

From 1919 to the 1960's, the three dominant preoccupations seem to have been: Americanization programs, legislative education, resettlement and counselling activities. In particular, the official Catholic position on
the 1952 Walter McCarren Act and on the 1965 Immigration Act would probably show the rearrangement of immigration as an issue to be balanced with employment, foreign policy, ethnicity, and similar other concerns of the Catholic community and to be dealt with primarily by those Catholic constituencies directly affected, since immigration is no longer perceived as influencing the entire Church as in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

While the assistential aspect continued in its course of service along the lines set with the centralization of immigration work in the NCWC, the pastoral concern with evangelization re-emerged with the arrival of Caribbean and Latin American immigrants. In 1955, the first conference on the spiritual care of Puerto Rican migrants was held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Cardinal Spellman observed, "...for the Archdiocese of New York, the sidewalks of New York have become a mission field 'white with harvest'." The participants, like Ivan Illich and Joseph Fitzpatrick reviewed the cultural dimension of religious practice, the role of community, the types of parishes and structures best-suited to the new arrivals in their urban dispersal, and the exchange of priests between the mainland and the Island. (13)

In the re-organization of the NCWC into the NCCB, committees on Migration and Tourism and Hispanic Affairs were formed. The Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs was established in 1974, but it grew from an Hispanic office established in San Antonio in 1945 and taken to Washington, D.C. in 1968. The service of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees was formed in 1983. (14)

The entire body of Bishops adopted a resolution in 1976 on "The Pastoral Concern of the Church for the People on the Move" as a response to the increasing immigration of workers and refugees and as a promotion and defense of the human rights and dignity of voiceless people. In 1977, the U.S. Hispanic-speaking Bishops issued a pastoral letter of their own. They said that Hispanics are afflicted by "institutional and personal racism both from within and from without the Church" and, at the same time, that they possess great qualities. A major pastoral statement on Hispanics was released by the NCCB in November 1983. (15)
We have come full circle from inter-ethnic conflict in the hierarchy to explicit positive action on its part for a specific immigrant group where immigration is only a facet of a larger concern for pluralism and diversity in the Catholic community.

b) Emergence of Some Basic Themes

In two hundred years the Catholic Community has returned to be native, an integral part of society as it was at its beginning, but with some awareness of the persistent reality of immigration. The Germans of John Carroll have become the Hispanics of the 360 Bishops of the NCCB. In the alternate events that marked the official concern of the Church for newcomers, some constant variables or themes emerge:

First, through their symbolic and authoritative position in the Catholic community, the American Bishops have legitimized the incorporation of new cultural groups into the Church, and the means as well through which incorporation was brought about. The immigrants, however, paid their way in. David O'Brien summed up his reflections on the Catholic Experience in the United States in this way: "The Church needs to provide a support system for its ethnic, Chicano, and Black members, but they in turn must realize the lesson of the past. Until they get their own people together and generate common goals and collective institutions, they are not going to make it. In America, nobody else does it for you. The name of the game in the market is power. Nobody ever really shares it willingly; they share it when those on the other side are capable of forcing them to do so." (16) Besides the issue of power, the family, the neighborhood and the parish have been the real community for most Catholics.

Second, conflict has been a normal feature of the Church's growth. John Carroll was perceived as opposed to the German-Americans' desire to have catechism instructions and sermons in their own language and so they asked to form a separate body or diocese. The Germans built in fact a church for themselves in Philadelphia and Baltimore in open schism (1787-1802), that subsided on Carroll's provision of German-speaking priests and the Germans' acknowledgement of his authority. (17) Between Bishops and immigrants tensions were not rare, even though only one extreme case continued to the point of becoming institutionalized, the
Polish National Catholic Church.

Within the episcopal body and the clergy, the immigration factor played a significant part. Of the ten bishops in the United States in 1830, six were French or French sympathisers, two were Irish-born, and two were of American birth but Irish ancestry. The fourth archbishop of Baltimore, James Whitfield, had this to say writing probably to his friend Bishop Rosati of St. Louis in 1833: "...Dr. England, Dr. Henrich, etc. These two Bishops are both warm-headed Irishmen, and have, it seems, strong Irish predilections in favor of Irish Bishopsry and Irish discipline for the United States. They have both recommended for the vacant See of Cincinnati, Irishmen... They both have united in using every effort even by publications in their newspapers, to make me hold another Provincial Council, which notwithstanding all they have exposed before the public, I have not consented to convoke, because such is the agitating disposition of Dr. England, that he would be restless in proposing changes in our discipline until it were reduced to the standard of Ireland or reformed according to his republican notions... I am sorry that any more Irish Bishops are added to our Hierarchy, as I fear their increase in number will have power to have others of their countrymen nominated hereafter and bring over to this country a great number of Irish priests, whilst Irish, with a few exceptions, they would all stay at home! In my diocese including Virginia, there are but five Irish secular Priests, four of whom have studied and been ordained in the U.S. The other has been here 30 years. There were some in my predecessor's time dismissed and several in my time have been refused. This in great part has much contributed to the peace of this diocese, which has been constantly preserved, whilst New York and Philadelphia, where the clergy are almost entirely Irish, there have been and may still be trouble and disunion... You may say that as an Englishman I have our national prejudices against the Irish, it may be somewhat true, but the greater number of the Americans entertain similar prejudices". He refused to call students from Maynooth... "I should wish the contents might not reach the Irish...I am upon good terms with the Irish, all I fear is from agitators or adventurers among their native clergy..." (18)

Intergroup conflict is extensively documented, only the actors change according to circumstances of time and place. The French and Irish
bickered in Kentucky, Irish and Germans in the Midwest, Germans and Poles also in the Midwest, etc. John Moore, Bishop of St. Augustine, sent a clipping to the Pope's Secretary of State in 1891 from the Times-Union of Jacksonville, Florida, to show the real thinking of most Americans and in support of his position. The newspaper said: "There should be no welcome for foreigners who are not willing to mingle and assimilate with the native element. The Italian especially are non-assimilative, and some measure should be taken to check the flood of immigration from that country. The appointment of an immigration commission to visit Europe is a good idea... This country should no longer be the receptacle for the most degraded and vicious of the population of Europe. The American labor market is overstocked to a serious extent, mainly through the importation of cheap laborers from Europe. It is our duty as a nation to take some measures for self-protection and for the protection of our superior civilization from too serious contamination."

Third, compromise on the practical level led to effective solutions in order to preserve the faith of the immigrants by allowing room for the diversity of their needs while maintaining the unity of the Church. The language parish and school was acceptable, but not the imposition of a Vicar General for every language group; bishops were appointed from the immigrant communities, but separate jurisdictions were not created; church property was given by the immigrants to the diocesan bishop, who in turn allowed their cultural expressions of the faith to continue. (19)

Fourth, in the ideological battlefield, the refinement of the understanding of Church-State relations in the American context touched directly on the integration of immigrants and on the speed requested for their Americanization. The Americanizers or liberal party of bishops Ireland, Keane, Gibbons, saw the newcomers as a reminder of the Church as a foreign institution and therefore advocated for them immediate assimilation. The conservative party of Archbishop M.A. Corrigan, more suspicious of American institutions, stressed a progressive adaptation for the immigrants so that their faith might not be endangered. The point of departure of the two parties were different. The conservatives started from the immediate goal of preserving the immigrants' faith by allowing
language, culture and ethnic community building as transitional means in the process of adaptation. The liberals wanted to show the thorough Americanization of the Church so that every American could find in it a comfortable spiritual home. Historians have perhaps oversimplified the two positions. Archbishop Ireland might have been too optimistic when in 1913 he told the National Convention of the Federation of American Catholic Societies: "By the terms of the Federal Constitution as by the teaching of the Catholic Church, no room is given in America for discord between Catholicism and Americanism, between my Catholic faith and any civic and political allegiance." Shortly after, however, in counteracting the criticism of the Yale Review that the Catholic Church links the immigrants with their past rather than with that of the United States, Ireland added: "Shall we call the Almighty God a foreigner?... Shall we call the Saviour of Calvary a foreigner? Yet he was neither a native nor a naturalized American...The days of tribal religions are past; they must not be revived in America." (20) At the end of the liberal-conservative clashes over Americanization, a fundamental agreement sustained the participants in the debate: The acknowledged relative importance of the immigrant groups' differences in the house of the neither native nor naturalized God. Ultimately, the ideological determinant of policy was a commonly accepted religious conviction of one people of God, as evidenced in the choice of administrative unity under the bishop's authority.

Fifth, the mediating role of Rome in the disputes that erupted with each new wave of arrivals between newcomers and bishops is a chapter of American ecclesiastical history still in its infancy. Recent studies seem to indicate its importance and effectiveness, for example, Gerald Fogarty's The Vatican and the Americanist Crises: Louis O'Connell, American Agent in Rome, 1885-1903 (1974) and Robert J. Wister's The Establishment of the Apostolic Delegation in the United States of America: The Satolli Mission, 1892-1896 (1981). (21)

III. OPERATIONAL PASTORAL RESPONSES

As a component of the American Catholic population, the immigrants have been a constant variable and have elicited an equally constant official concern articulated by the bishops as a body and individually. The
basic themes intervening in the articulation of this concern became the platform of operational pastoral responses and two key factors in this pastoral care have been the priests and sisters who had natural or acquired affinity with the immigrants and the immigrant neighborhood or community as expressed by the language parish and school. Evangelization and inculturation of the faith succeeded because of these two responses or agents, and without a dichotomy between the religious and the social dimensions -

a) Immigrant Clergy

Thus a way of looking at the succession of immigrant groups in the Church is through the presence or absence of their clergy. At the end of the XVIIIth century, as a result of the French Revolution, many French priests emigrated to the United States without a following of their people. During the XIXth century, German, Irish, Italian and Polish Catholics came accompanied by their priests and sisters, even though in different proportions. Post World War II Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and other Latino Catholics have arrived without priests. In the latter part of this XXth century the Catholic Church is called to confront yet another immigrant wave, of mostly non-Christians from Asia. In parishes, schools and associations priests and religious men and women have historically served the immigrants as catalysts of community, symbols of a religious system, transmitters and mediators of a world view rooted in religious values, and as the carriers of evangelization. The degree of internal cohesiveness and range of impact have varied, but German, Polish, Italian, Bohemian, Hispanic, Vietnamese priests' associations - as well as seminaries to train such priests - have appeared with regularity and served their purpose well as a bridge for millions of immigrants on their way from a rural to an urban religiosity.

b) Language Parish and School

The fundamental practical ecclesiatical response to immigration, and the most controversial in recent years, has been the language parish. A dispassionate and exhaustive analysis of the role of the language parish in the formation and development of American Catholicism would require docu-
mentioning the sociological reasons for its success and the historical evidence that in fact it has been a successful pastoral strategy for both the immigrants and the Church at large. Emmet Rothan, studying the German Catholic immigrant in the United States from 1830 to 1860, found that toward the end of the 1860's there were 1,160 German priests working in 705 German and 51 mixed parishes. German Catholics remained true to the faith thanks "to the German missionaries and the German missionary sisters and to the German parishes and schools founded and guided by them". The explanation was that German Catholics, while seeking to adapt themselves to new surroundings in a new life, clung to the religious customs and institutions of their homeland, and in them found a source of unity and fraternal charity. (22) The vitality of religion was directly connected with the availability of German-speaking parishes. In a study of Philadelphia and the German Catholic community, Jay Dolan comments: "For Catholic Germans the institution that outranked all others in importance was the parish. It was not only the center of both their religious and social lives, but it also was an ethnic fortress which enabled the immigrants to resist the onslaught of the surrounding Protestant culture on their faith and tradition." (23) Germans, Poles, Italians, three diverse cultural groups, notwithstanding minor schisms, remained in the Catholic community and integrated well because of the practical compromise of the language parish. This type of parish has not been an original American idea. Writing to John Carroll in 1798 the Secretary of Propaganda Fide had pointed out that Catholic Churches for national minorities had existed in Holland and Belgium and even in Rome. In London and Vienna there were several language parishes at the time. And back in the 5th century St. John Chrysostom had ordained a bishop and some priests for non-Greek speaking people in Constantinople. The new aspect of the language parish in the United States was going to be its systematic use in building up the American Catholic community and in serving as much as a social as a religious function in the voluntaristic context of the United States. This policy is well documented for several dioceses by recent historians. Dolores Liptak has done it for the diocese of Hartford, CT in: "European Immigrants and the Catholic Church in Connecticut, 1870-1920". (24) A most compelling case was made by Charles Shanabruch in the recent
From 1833 to 1915, 202 language or national parishes were established: 89 Irish, 30 German, 9 Bohemian, 33 Polish; 10 Italian, 4 Croatian, 5 Slovak, 2 Slovene, 10 Lithuanian, 4 French and one each Dutch, Negro, Syrian, Belgian, Chaldean, Hungarian. More national parishes were added as Mexicans and Yugoslavs arrived in later years. The national parish fostered diversity and separateness and, therefore, impeded centralization; however, national parishes were the foundation of the Chicago Church's amazing growth and the essential factor in the fidelity of its immigrant membership. Among Shanabruch's conclusions are these points:

1. The Church withstood the centripetal force generated by more than twenty distinct nationalities: maintained its oneness and in fact it prospered.
2. Success was achieved because the bishops' leadership was flexible and they relied on the ethnic parishes, schools, organizations and immigrant clergy to meet the socio-psychological needs of the immigrants.
3. The language parishes were not designed to create a world apart, but to conserve the faith until the immigrant could feel comfortable in the new environment: they were a corridor into the future.
4. The children of the immigrants, no longer satisfied with the old ways of the language church, could graduate into English-speaking, inter-ethnic, more American territorial parishes.

c) National Coordination

To prevent "leakage", loss of faith among newcomers, the Church became involved in the battle for economic and social justice. Catholic Charities in the cities, Extension Society in the rural areas, National Catholic Associations for Educations, The Press, for coordination of other societies, became and are effective instruments. For the first impact of newcomers with the host society, the language parish and school, modified by evolving circumstances, have been the mainstay of evangelization in their transition from the old to the new environment. Today the names can change, but the substance of providing a sense of community and internal leadership persists for the latest immigrants. It is interesting that parishes whose population has become predominantly
Hispanic function in the same way as the older model of the language parish and are equally needed. The Vietnamese have developed several parishes and large Vietnamese Apostolate Centers. The newly arrived Poles have established five new parish missions. A Portuguese parish has been established in the Stockton diocese. The canonical status has relative importance, however. If the ethnic parish today can be replaced by the "Base Christian Community" (Comunidades ecclesiales de base), even in the context of the American Church, the course of history should not be blocked. Immigrants and Refugees and other marginal groups need to express their faith as community, since this is what faith requires. If the social conditions of being community are not present, the appropriate pastoral response will be providing such conditions. As all human groupings, the people that made up the language parishes were engaged in a ceaseless effort of absorption, assimilation and transmutation of symbols, images, modes of existence. From one type of faith community they moved into other types like the suburban ethnically mixed parish. To try to arrest this movement at any given point whether from nostalgia over the past or the dream of Utopia is to condemn it to sclerosis and death. On the other hand, from a faith perspective we can ask if the gospel has something to offer at the crossroads between the death and life of a cultural group.

IV. LOOKING AT THE FUTURE

The pastoral vision and strategies the newest immigrant groups demand for the future will probably transcend institutional adaptations. There is an explicit agenda in the Hispanic community that goes beyond the immigrant period to the formation and preservation of a sense of peoplehood where religion and culture are inseparable. Previous immigrant groups have basically kept constant religion and experienced de facto an evolution of their culture in the direction of the American majority. Will Hispanic, notwithstanding stated goals to the contrary, follow the same pattern? Greater emphasis is placed on coordination through national and regional offices, pastoral institutes, diocesan committees, and Schools of Ministry. How is this approach bearing on the life of the local community? What will be the result of the new factor of the immigrants' language used in the liturgy and the presence of permanent deacons in building
community? How sustainable is the effort of providing ministers of acquired cultural affinity for a plan of indefinite group separateness? For the new groups, where ordained ministers are few, perhaps an itinerant ministry can be developed at the service of basic christian communities where lay leadership is the norm. A basic question remains if the large scale organizational approach advocated by some Hispanic leaders will in fact develop a local community or compensate for it in the pastoral task of evangelization.

V. SOME CONCLUSIONS

As immigrants continue to arrive in a fast changing Church and society, the future of their pastoral care will be in the context of a new sensibility for justice and equality, an awareness of international co-responsibility in the "global village". In conclusion, it would seem that:

1. The sensitivity and ability to alter 'historic' structures to permit the inclusion and participation of language-culture groups in the life of the Church was done in the past and can be repeated now as new needs are identified. The primary demand of all immigrants is the possibility of forming communities. Ethnic enclaves have and are still serving as a transmission belt for social mobility. In these transitional communities, the newcomer is at home in a cultural milieu that preserves a natural continuity between past and future. In terms of religious ministry, personal and de facto or de jure language parishes afford the immigrant the proper context he controls for his cultural expression of the faith and a bond of solidarity and self-assurance that guarantee successful integration.

The innovation will be in adapting these language parishes structures to the faster pace of population dispersal to avoid the trap of perpetual legal provisions in neighborhoods that change face in five or ten years.

2. The creation of multi-lingual parish communities is a greater challenge in responding to scattered immigrant groupings within the same neighborhood. Here the newcomers are the red light of alarm that tests the catholicity of the parish. They are not a problem, but a
grace, difficult as it may, toward the acceptance of universality as
a condition for being Church. Theological insight, lay leadership,
the strategy of base communities, participatory involvement and
partnership in parish councils and programs can map out the road
of successful ministry. But the effective communion of the ministeri-

cial team will be a prerequisite.

3. The development of leadership within the immigrant groups: priests,
sisters, married deacons, women and men catechists and liturgy lead-
ers, offers a double advantage. The immigrants' identification with
the Church is made visible and functional. Evangelization can reach
into the community in the style and immediacy of communication and
make the message effectively understood. Then, immigrant leaders
in the ecclesial community link the newcomers to the larger society.
Their role, with proper preparation, mediates the newcomers' needs
with the diocesan and national Church. After all, this openness is a
requirement needed by the immigrant group to be Church. Resources
and time given to support the growth and organization of immigrant
leaders and leaders working with immigrants are an investment for the
Church of the next generation.

4. The fear of divisiveness and the fear of neglect that occasionally sur-
face respectively in the Church at large and in the immigrant groups
are overcome in the convergence of building communion. The danger
would be in allowing the established and affluent part of the Church
to ignore the voiceless and poor immigrants and relegate them to a
marginal sub-church that must struggle for decades to graduate into
the ecclesiastical mainstream. Such a gap becomes the space where
proselytizing flourishes. The Lord, who identified himself with the
immigrant (Mt. 25, 35), chose the style not of lifting us up to Himself,
but of coming down to befriend us at our level.


18. Archives, Catholic University of America. Denis O'Connell Papers, Box 18, Reel 7 (copy).


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