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# MELITA THEOLOGICA

The Review of the Faculty of Theology and the Theology Students' Association  
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The Review of the  
Faculty of Theology  
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Malta

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## Father and Tempter?

### *The Lord's Prayer to the One and Only God\**

Thomas Kaut

It has become consensus among New Testament exegetes, at least among those who accept the *Zweiquellentheorie* as a viable instrument for interpreting the synoptic gospels, that the two versions of the Lord's Prayer (forthwith: LP) in the New Testament, Math 6,9–13 || Luke 11,2–4, are adaptations of an older version to be found in the hypothetically reconstructed *Logienquelle* (Q). One may present Matthew's version with marking Luke's deviations like this:

***Our Father, who [is] in the heavens,***<sup>1</sup>  
your name be sanctified,  
your kingdom come,  
***your will be done***  
***as in heaven so on earth, too.***

Our daily (?)<sup>2</sup> bread *do*<sup>3</sup> give us *today*<sup>4</sup>  
and forgive us our *debts*,<sup>5</sup>  
*as we also did* forgive *our debtors*,<sup>6</sup>  
and lead us not into temptation,  
***but deliver us from the evil one.***<sup>7</sup>

\*This paper was written to honour the memory of Helmut Merklein who passed away on 30.9.1999. The author of this essay is Translation Consultant with the United Bible Societies and is based in Bonn, Germany.

1. Luke renders only the vocative *páter*. All text presented in bold italics is found only in Matthew. Text presented in regular italics refers to differences between Luke and Matthew concerning the wording. Text presented in regular print is identical in Luke and Matthew.
2. The Greek word is the famous *hapax graphomenon epiousios*, which will be discussed later, cf. footnote 16.
3. Matthew renders imperative 2<sup>nd</sup> singular aorist active, whereas Luke offers imperative present tense.
4. Luke 11,3: «Our daily bread give us day by day», meaning «every day».
5. Luke 11,4: «Sins».
6. Luke 11,4: «For we ourselves forgive every one, who is indebted to us».
7. The majority of ancient and medieval manuscripts add here a doxology, which is missing in the oldest and most reliable ancient manuscripts, i.e. a ✠ BD among few others.

If one accepts the conclusion that Luke rather preserves the textual scope of Q, whereas Matthew has kept the wording,<sup>8</sup> one may reconstruct the LP in Q as follows:

Father, <sup>9</sup>	<i>Páter,</i>
your name be sanctified,	<i>hagiasthētō to ónomá sou</i>
your kingdom come!	<i>elthētō hē basileía sou</i>
Our daily bread do give us today	<i>tòn árton hemōn ton epioúision dos</i> <i>hēmīn sēmeron</i>
and do forgive us our debts,	<i>kai áphes hēmin ta opheilēmata</i> <i>hēmōn</i>
as we forgive our debtors,	<i>hōs kai hēmeis aphēkamen tois</i> <i>opheiletais hēmōn</i>
and do not lead us into temptation!	<i>kai mē eisenenkēs hēmas eis peirasμόn</i>

8. LP clearly shows a pattern of two strophes: The first five lines of Matthew's version and the first three lines of Luke's version respectively render the imperative 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular and the personal pronoun 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular. In the second part the imperatives are 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and the personal pronouns are 1<sup>st</sup> plural. The themes of the first part refer to God and his transcendental reality – he himself as father, his holy name, his kingdom – those of the second part express human needs – bread, guilt and temptation. Observing this pattern of two strophes it becomes obvious that Matthew's surpluses occur only at the end of each strophe and as extension of the addressee of the prayer. Luke's version concluding with the tough and hardly comprehensible request that God lead us not into temptation presents itself as the more difficult one. Taking into account the tendency of prayers to be extended for liturgical purposes, one may infer that Luke's shorter and more difficult version is closer to Q. But this judgement applies only in respect to the extent of the text. Concerning the wording Luke may well have changed *sēmeron* into *kath'hēmeran* with respect to the situation of his community, which is preparing herself for a longer period of time until the return of Christ and thus is in need of bread not only for today but also for each day to come. Provisions are in demand not anymore for the eschatological moment, for today and now only, but rather for a stretching period of salvation history. Therefore also the iterative present tense is an adaptation, since the verbs in LP otherwise prefer the complexive aorist. Concerning the request for forgiveness (RF) the Lukan object «sins» seems to be due to theological reflection. Matthew's version presents a metonymic metaphor: debts. But being God's debtor implies of course being a sinner. In addition, in the second part of RF Luke has kept the metaphor. This may serve as a reminiscence to the original wording of his source. Since the aorist in the second line of RF together with the conjunction *hōs* is more difficult to understand, we may assume that here again Matthew presents the wording of Q. According to Matthew those, who pray LP and ask God for remission, refer to the fact that they, too, did previously forgive and now wish to receive forgiveness to the same extent: Luke however asserts firm willingness to forgive.
9. If one takes into account the lexical preferences, it is confirmed that the longer address in Matthew is due to his redaction. The phrase «Father in the heavens» occurs in Matt 12x (5,16.45; 6,1.9; 7,11.21; 10,32.33; 12,50; 16,17; 18,14.19). In addition he offers 7x the expression «Heavenly Father» (5,48; 6,14.26.32; 15,13; 18,35; 23,9). Mark 11,25 offers the only occurrence of such an expression



But is this version the oldest accessible one?<sup>10</sup> In this paper I shall try to find the traces of an earlier version. I do not presuppose to reconstruct the original prayer as it was spoken by Jesus himself. My exegesis will be based on the Greek text of Matthew and Luke.

### *Synchronic Analysis*

The three ancient sources, i.e. Matthew 6,9–13; Luke 11,2–4; Didache 8,2–3, which have handed down the LP to us, offer it in the context of instructions for prayer. Matthew renders it within his composition of the Sermon on the Mount. After the Beatitudes Jesus commences a sermon to his disciples and the crowds. Six antitheses reveal the new eschatological torah, which reinforces and exceeds the law of Moses. Subsequently Jesus delivers a lengthy catechesis on the topics of alms, prayer, fasting, worries, judging, and trust in praying. The golden rule concludes this catechesis. Admonitions and the parable of the house built on a rock finish the Sermon on the Mount. Within his catechesis on prayer the Matthean Jesus admonishes his listeners to pray neither like the hypocrites, who show off while praying, nor like the pagans who pray with many words. Then Jesus gives the LP as a positive example, to which he adds some admonitions about readiness to forgive. According to Matthew, Jesus teaches the right attitude towards prayer. He thus speaks to people, who have experience with praying but need to be taught about the right attitude and spirit of praying. In this context the LP is a model of how a faithful Christian should pray: brief, to the point, and sincerely.

in his gospel, which is slightly changed in the parallel Matt 6,14. Even if one argues that Mark 11,25 may be a free quotation from LP (Schürmann 179s) and that Jewish prayers often used the address «Father in heaven», this does not prove that Q also contained the phrase. Since Luke offers 11,13 the expression «Father from heaven», I can see no reason why he should have omitted the similar phrase in 11,12. The distribution of the phrase throughout the whole gospel of Matt, may be due to a euphemistic manner of speaking in the community of Matt and can be shown as rather typical for Jewish communities and groups (cf. ApocEsd 7:9; Theodot [=Euseb., praep.ev. 9:22]; TestDan 5:13; TestAser 2:10; Joseph & Aseneth 11:9; Sibylle 3:1,19,174,286 passim). It serves the purpose of avoiding to speak to and about God too directly. In Matt this device seems to me as a fingerprint of his Jewish-Christian milieu. Thus one may rightly conclude that Matthew's version of LP is not his own adaptation, but rather the form of LP as it was prayed in his community. A type of LP similar to Matt 6,9–13 may be reflected in the Gethsemane-pericope Mark 14,36 | Matt 26,39 | Luke 22,42. Here Luke's wording is even closer to Matthew's version of LP. It seems that Luke 11,2–4 quotes LP from Q, but the form of LP prayer in his community may have been close to Matthew's.

10. I wish to emphasize that already the Q version is a hypothetical reconstruction. But in order to understand Biblical texts we are still dependent on reconstruction of the historical genesis of these texts. Otherwise it may happen that we only read our modern presuppositions and ideologies into these texts.

The Lukan Jesus is different. On his way to Jerusalem Jesus retreats and prays. After he has finished, the disciples approach him with the request to teach them how to pray, just as John the Baptist has taught his disciples. Jesus then utters the LP, giving the instruction: «When you pray, say: ...» Here the disciples are given the LP as a model for a prayer form. The listeners of the Lukan Jesus do not know how to pray. They need to be taught about the necessity and efficacy of prayer; therefore Jesus illustrates this with the parable of a friend, who asks at midnight for three loaves of bread. Even if he were not to receive the requested bread on account of friendship, he would receive it because of his perseverance in asking.

Behind the different tendencies of the catechesis around the LP we can see different circles of addressees: Jewish Christians addressed by Matthew, pagan Christians being taught by Luke.

The introduction Luke 11,2a: «When you pray, say», does not quite fit with the Lukan context, which seems to presuppose that the disciples did not know how to pray. It was therefore already the introduction in Q. Also the admonition to trust in prayer is to be found in Q because of the parallel Matt 7,7–11. Consequently LP was also in Q embedded within a catechesis on prayer.

Didache 8,2s also surrounds LP with catechizing instructions: «Don't pray like the hypocrites but rather as the Lord has commanded in his gospel, like this you must pray!» (8,2) «Three times per day you must pray like this!» (8,3). By this latter admonition it becomes obvious that at the time of the Didache (early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), the LP was already being used also as a private prayer. Didache quotes LP as a catechizing model of prayer.

The *Sitz im Leben*, i.e. the socio-cultural purpose and function, of these catechisms is, to serve in the teaching of those who wanted to become Christians and to be baptized. The question is, whether LP was originally composed for this purpose. A closer look shows that LP itself does not contain instructions; its illocution, its speech-act, is not *teaching*, *instructing*, or *admonishing* but *praying*, or to be more precise *requesting in the mode of prayer*. And its address, its direction of speech is God, not disciples or crowds. Speech-act, direction of speech, and the plurality of speakers clearly show that LP is originally intended as a prayer of a community. Thus the catechizing frame is to be regarded as secondary adaptation.

If these observations are conclusive, we may be allowed to search for further

traces of adaptation. Fro Cyrill of Jerusalem, who delivered 24 catechizing sermons during Passion and Easter time in 350 AD, we learn in his 24<sup>th</sup> catechesis, which is his 5<sup>th</sup> mystagogic catechesis, that LP was regularly used in the Christian divine service – the Holy Liturgy – after the prayer of intercession and immediately before the holy communion (Cat. Myst. 5:11–18). Already the Didache seems to know LP in connection with a commemorative celebration of the Lord's Last Supper, for Didache offers instructions regarding the Eucharist directly following the catechism on LP (Did 9,1–10,8). From Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and from Luke's Acts of the Apostles we learn that already soon after the death and resurrection of Jesus, his friends and followers assembled regularly and celebrated community meals in remembrance of the Lord Christ Jesus.<sup>11</sup> Presupposing that LP was indeed originally received from the historical Jesus himself, and this means outside a social situation shaped by liturgy, and also presupposing that it was prayed on the occasion of these early Christian liturgical gatherings, we may assume in compliance with socio-linguistics and *Formgeschichte* that the application of LP to liturgical environment may have engendered textual adaptation. But before I jump to further conclusions I wish to present an analysis of the reconstructed version of LP in Q.

1. *Páter,*
2. *hagiasthētō to ónoma sou*
3. *elthetō he basileia sou*
4. *ton árton hēmōn ton epioúision dos hēmin sēmeron*
5. *kai áphes hēmin ta ophelēmata hēmōn*
6. *hōs kai hēmeis aphēkamen tois ophelētais hēmōn*
7. *kai me eisenentkes hēmas eis peirasmón*

The Q version of LP presents itself as a text of seven semantic units organized in the shape of a poem comprising seven lines. The first line is filled by one word only, the vocative «Father». This address of the prayer keeps the weight of a full line; the apparently missing part is to be understood as being filled by an emphatic pause.<sup>12</sup> Such a pause emphasizes the address of the prayer. It also represents the meaningful silence of pious recollection and preparation for prayer, still needed for listening to the eternal and transcendent God. The vocative «Father» followed by the pause thus serves as the heading of the whole prayer. Because God is confessed

11. Cf. Kollmann passim.

12. Cf. Kuhn 39, and Jeremias 1971:190.



as father, he can be approached with the following requests without violating his divine dignity.<sup>13</sup> The brevity of the first line therefore carries a particular pragmatic meaning.

The syntactic poetic pattern of the subsequent six lines shows some sort of uniformity. Each line, except lines 4 and 6, begins with an imperative, the last line with a prohibitive, a negative imperative. The imperatives in lines 2 and 3 are 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, the first passive, the second intransitive with passive function, followed by the noun subject as nominative and a personal pronoun (functioning as possessive pronoun) 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular genitive. Lines 5 and 7 start with the conjunction *kaí* followed by an imperative active 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, a personal pronoun (again functioning as possessive pronoun) 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, and an object. Both objects, debts and temptation, carry negative meaning. Line 7 expresses in relation to the affirmative and emotionally loaded address in line 1 a paradox: «Dear Father, do not lead us into temptation!» Line 4 has the position of verb and object reversed. In addition the verb as well as the object are extended by an adverb and an adjective respectively. The tense in all seven lines is the aorist. With the exception of the vocative «Father» in line 1 and the object «temptation» in line 7, the first and the last words of LP, all nouns have the definite article. Lines 4 and 6, the request for bread and the second line of the request for remission, the assertion of having already forgiven, stand syntactically out of the pattern of the other lines. They realize a different pattern of poetic organization, in the case of line 4 an extended

13. There has been a long and controversial discussion, whether the prayer address «Father» with an underlying familiar Aramaic «Abba» was Jesus' original contribution to Jewish piety and theology. This discussion admittedly clarified that «Abba» by no means is only children's language; adult sons and daughters also did in Jewish Aramaic sources refer to their fathers with the address «Abba», they even could speak to third persons about their father as «Abba». There are, too, innumerable places in the Talmud and in the Hebrew Bible, where God is addressed as Father. But no evidence so far has been produced that God was addressed by anyone before Jesus with a familiar term like «Abba». Until such evidence will be produced one is quite right to assume that the address «Abba» for God was a fingerprint of the historical Jesus. Furthermore, since Mark 14,36 (supported by Rom 8,15 and Gal 4,6) is a reflection on LP, the assumption that a hypothetical Aramaic original of LP contained «Abba» as the address of God is the most probable of all assumptions. In this respect we have to realize, how enormous and even outrageous and scandalous it could appear, to approach God Almighty, the eternal and by human standards unapproachable transcendent God, with a familiar term like «Abba», i.e. dear Father. For this, no analogy has been found outside Christianity. May we assume that this reflects the tremendous self-confidence of Jesus, which implicitly contains the understanding of him as the son of this dear Father, i.e. the Son of God? Cf. the summary in Merklein 1989:84–85, and Kuhn 1992.

and reversed pattern, in the case of line 6 a completely different pattern altogether. Lin 6 does not contain an imperative 2<sup>nd</sup> singular, but an indicative 1<sup>st</sup> plural. The object does not refer to impersonal things like «name» (line 2), «kingdom» (line 3), «bread» (line 4), «debts» (line 5), and «temptation» (line 7), but to a group of persons, «debtors». The Q version of LP like the versions of Matthew and Luke is made of two strophes. The first strophe is asyndetic, the lines of the second strophe are connected by the conjunction «and».

From the point of view of sigmatics<sup>14</sup> we can observe that lines 2 and 3 as well as line 5 and 6 realize the stylistic feature of an epipher, i.e. rhyme, because of the reoccurrence of the personal pronoun. The first and the last words of LP alliterate: «*pater*» versus «*peirasmós*». Sigmatically conspicuous are lines 5 and 6 in that they form a parallelism, more precisely a synthetic parallelism. This structure, well known to Semitic poetry is otherwise absent in LP.<sup>15</sup> Line 4 forms an antithetic pattern, if the semantics of *epioústos* is temporal.<sup>16</sup> All other lines in LP express

14. Usually linguists distinguish the three semiotic isotopies of syntax, semantics and pragmatics. In addition to this I follow Heinrichs, who distinguishes a fourth isotopy referring to the aesthetic relational dimension of language, such as graphemic or acoustic realization of spoken or written texts, e.g. rhyme, alliteration, parallelism. Cf. Merklein–Kaut 187–188. Sigmatics refers to the external form, the sensory appearance and perception of phonemes and graphemes and of written and spoken texts. Sigmatic analysis looks for sound and articulation, tone and expression, rhythm, metre, and all effects that give an utterance emphasis, thrust, beauty, and pleasure. This level of research is particularly important for rhetoric and poetry. Cf. also Kaut 1990:8–11, 29–31, 185–193, 204–213 passim.
15. Strictly speaking lines 5 and 6 utter only one request, the request for remission (RR). Yet this request is conditioned: «as we did forgive our debtors». None of the other requests in LP is shaped in this way. The targets of the other requests do not even allow for such a condition. Only the request for bread could have a gap to be filled with such a condition; but interestingly it does not say: «Give us bread as we have given bread to those in need.» It becomes obvious that the perspective of line 6 is different from the line of vision of all the other lines in LP.
16. Regarding the problem of identifying the semantics of *epioústos* cf. Foerster 587–595 and the summary in Luz 345–347. Cf. also Schürmann 1994:194–196. The hypothetical etymology of *epioústos* yields several possible roots: either *hē epioussa hēmera* or *epi-einai* or *epi-ienai*. Derivation from *hē epi-oussa hēmera* leads to the meaning «for the coming day», which can be interpreted as «for tomorrow» or, if one sees LP as a morning prayer, «for today». The latter interpretation renders a deep meaning: «Our bread for today give us today!», i.e. the bread we need to survive this day give us today. The first interpretation arrives at the meaning «Our bread for tomorrow gives us today», i.e. give us plenty so that we don't need to worry about food. Or if we supply as hermeneutic background the Manna-story in Exodus 16, we may understand that the food for today and the Sabbath-day is requested. One may also interpret as «Our bread of tomorrow give us today» and understand this as the bread of the eschatological meal in the kingdom of God, i.e. the bread you promised to share with us in the kingdom of heaven, give us already today. In this case

isolated single requests without any parallelistic pattern. Yet the uniform structure of imperative, personal pronoun, noun, personal pronoun shape a clearly repetitive pattern, which is by no means accidental. Concerning the second strophe one can observe an interesting rhetorical feature, the polyptoton,<sup>17</sup> the play with different cases of the same word, here with the personal pronoun *hēmēis*:

4. *tòn árton hēmōn ton epióúston dos hēmin sēmeron*
5. *kaì áphes hēmin ta ophelēmata hēmōn*
6. *hōs kai hēmēis aphekamen tois ophelētais hēmōn*
7. *kai mē eisenenkēs hēmas eis perasmón*

the bread refers to the Eucharistic bread, and it is very unlikely that Jesus himself spoke this request. But it is intriguing to observe the antithetical structure «bread of tomorrow – give today». – Derivation from *epieínai* / *epi-ousía* yields the meaning «needed in order to exist», i.e. necessary for sustaining life. An increasing number of exegetes currently assumes this as the originally intended meaning (e.g. Kuhn 35–37; Foerster 594; Grässer 102–103; Bonnard 85–86; Grundmann 232; Kümmel 37; Schulz 90–91, Vögtle 40–41; Schürmann 1980:65). Yet I regard this as a rather awkward solution, since it merely presents a tautology. For the expression, «Give us today our bread we need» produces no semantic surplus to the expression, «Give us today our bread», because in the latter phrase the meaning «necessary bread» is already implied by the possessive function of the personal pronoun and the fact that «bread» serves here as synecdoche for «life sustaining food». – Derivation from *epi-iénai* in compliance with *tò epión* renders the meaning «bread of the future», i.e. the bread which is promised to us, which we shall receive in the future (of the kingdom of God). It is of course a well known fact that etymology and semantics are two separate domains. The actual meaning of a word very often is completely isolated from its etymological history. In the particular case the use of etymology may be justified, because the only occurrence of *epiósios* outside LP was in a papyrus, found in Hawara in Egypt in 1888, which has been lost during the first world war (Cf. Sayce, in: Flinders Petrie, *Hawara, Biahmu, and Arsinoe*, London 1889, 34 No. 245; Friedrich Preisigke, *Sammelbuch Griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten*, I, Straßburg 1915, No. 5224; Idem, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden*, sub verbo; Albert Debrunner, *Epiósios*: ThLZ 1925:119). Jeremias (1976:34) assumes an Aramaic *makhar* meaning «for tomorrow» as the equivalent in the original. He quotes for this Jerome, who reports that he read in the Aramaic Gospel of the Nazareans this word *makhar*. This would explain, according to Jeremias, the use of the rare word *epiósios*, because there were no (other) Greek adjective meaning «tomorrow». Yet the retrojection of LP into Aramaic by Jeremias (1976:28–29) is stylistically inconsistent: lines 2 and 3 he regards as one line comprising a parallelism with rhymes (epipher on account of the personal pronoun), also lines 5 and 6, which he regards as one line too. Line 4 unfortunately does not contain an epipher, line 7 neither epipher nor parallelism. Furthermore, the suggested Aramaic equivalent *dlimkhar* is not an adjective. Also the Greek temporal adverb *sēmeron* does not have an Aramaic adverb as equivalent. Jeremias proposes *yoma dén* (literally: «on this day»). For this the Greek literal equivalent is *taútē tē hēmera*, which is quite common in ancient Greek literature and occurs also in the New Testament (e.g. Luke 19,42; 24,1; Acts 2,29; 23,1; 26,22).

17. Cf. Lausberg 91.



Particularly catchy and forceful is the chiasmic reduplication of *hēmōn – hēmūn/ hēmūn – hēmōn* in lines 4 and 5,

4. *ton arton hēmōn ... dos hēmūn*

5. *kai aphes hēmūn ta opheilamata hēmōn*

whereby the pattern of article – noun – pronoun – verb – pronoun / verb – pronoun – article – noun – pronoun is chiasmic altogether, thus giving these lines a formal unity. This chiasmic form is underlined by the semantic opposition of the imperatives *dos* and *aphes*: and the nouns *artos* and *opheilēmata*: «Give bread and take away debts.» Bread is something desirable the speakers of the prayer lack, and debts are by no means desirable, but unfortunately the speakers of the prayer do have them. This opposition would be less clear, if there were «sins» instead of «debts». This may account for the choice of the more concrete word «debts». <sup>18</sup> But this chiasmic formal unity is slightly obscured by the fact that line 5 is semantically more closely connected to line 6. The sigmatic relational isotopy of lines 4 and 5 clashes somehow with the semantic relational isotopy of lines 5 and 6. Line 7 contains a prohibitive instead of an imperative. This change of the pattern indicates that the prayer is about to arrive at the bottom of an anticlimax and to come to an end. <sup>19</sup>

All lines semantically offer tropic and figurative speech. To identify God as Father seems to be at first sight an anthropomorphic metaphor. The sanctification of his name quotes Ezekiel 20,41–44; 36,22–25 and refers to the restoration of God's chosen people and thus views the disciples, the circle of the twelve, as the eschatological people of God and as such prefiguring the church. <sup>21</sup> God's kingdom <sup>22</sup> is a metaphor for his almighty power over Israel and all the nations and all his

18. This observation offers further evidence for the assumption that «debts» is originally in Q.

19. Cf. Schürmann 1994:200.

20. The passive of *hagiasthētō* is to be interpreted as a divine passive: not man is requested to sanctify God's name but God himself. Man's way of sanctifying God's name is by acknowledging God and his plan of salvation.

21. Cf. Lohfink 25–28.

22. This request of LP also does not intend human action as though humans were capable of building the kingdom of God, unfortunately a thought to be found increasingly in ill-advised sermons, which reflect the state of modern mind rather than the teaching of Jesus. All that we know about human history is that man is capable at the best of reproduction and in the end of utter destruction. To believe that man could do anything that may bring about the kingdom of God, confuses him with God.

creation, frequently used in the Old Testament and in early Jewish literature, part of which is the New Testament. Bread serves as synecdoche for the life sustaining and thus necessary food. Debts before God are a metonymy, which comprises not only the debts of money or material debts, but also moral debts, ie. sins. Most difficult, it seems, is to identify the meaning of the lexical item «temptation».<sup>23</sup> Concerning the form of the whole line it is to be observed that the verb of this request is prohibitive, a negative imperative, which indicates that the meaning of the prepositional object «temptation» must be utterly negative too. LP asks to prevent

23. To request from God, who is approached as Father, that he must not lead us into temptation, seems to violate not only Jewish but also Christian doctrine. How on earth and in heaven could God ever be inclined to lead human beings into temptation in such a way that these are urged to request him not to do so? If one assesses the history of interpretation of this verse, one gets the impression that exegetes mostly attempted to comply with traditional doctrine. I have to admit that I myself find it hardly conceivable to perceive God as tempter. But isn't it this what this last line of LP expresses? God is one, who not only like a father loves human beings but who also is capable of tempting them? Herrmann believed that the Old Testament does not know a thought of this kind. Jeremias (1976:38) argues, on grounds of ancient Jewish prayer and piety, that this request can only mean that God may not permit that we are led into contravention, sin, guilt, temptation, or disgracefulness. But then, don't we find a thought close to this in the book of Job, in which God permits Satan to tempt Job in order to test his faith? Satan is here depicted as an agent of God. Doesn't God lead Abraham into temptation by demanding his son Isaac as a sacrifice (Gen 22)? And don't we read in Is 45,7, where God reveals himself through his prophet: «I create both light and darkness; I bring both blessing and disaster. I, the Lord, do all these things»? Some exegetes have suggested to interpret the Greek word *peirasmós* as meaning «test»: «and do not bring us to the test». The Greek word can indeed carry this meaning. But this interpretation does not really help the case. For the request in LP implies that one could fail the test. Otherwise we would not take the request very seriously. And then the semantics of «test» and «temptation» coincide. A test, which I fail, ends up as temptation, to which one falls victim. Another attempt to reconcile the last request of LP with a modern view of God as ever-loving, was presented by Jeremias. He suggested from an assumed Aramaic original, that the prohibitive *mē eisevenhēs* as eaning «test»: «and do not bring us to the test». The Greek word can indeed carry this meaning. But this interpretation does not really help the case. For the request in LP implies that one could fail the test. Otherwise we would not take the request very seriously. And then the semantics of «test» and «temptation» coincide. A test, which I fail, ends up as temptation, to which one falls victim. Another attempt to reconcile the last request of LP with a modern view of God as ever-loving was presented by Jeremias. He suggested from an assumed Aramaic original, that the prohibitive *mē eisenékēs* does not intend a causative modality («do not bring us into ...») but a permissive modality («do not allow that we are brought into ...»). Yet this is not said in the Greek text of LP, the only text we really have. To argue from a retrojection is a weaving and waving argument. One has to assume that the ancient translator of LP either did not know Greek sufficiently well or he did not know Aramaic sufficiently well and thus made a mistake. Wouldn't it be more likely that the modern exegete in producing a retrojection created a translation of his preconception? And furthermore, does this really soften the problem? If God could be one who allows that we are put to the test, which we can fail, does

this utterly negative temptation. If LP concludes with such a negative thought, then we must assume that the danger of temptation was particularly huge. And this can mean only the temptation to give up faith in the coming of God's kingdom. It is the temptation to despair of God and to give up all hope that he will bring about his kingdom, in order to end the crisis and to save his chosen people. If we understand the temptation in this way, we can see the unity of the thought of LP. The first two requests ask for the restoration of God's people and the realization of his universal power. But for the time being the believers still do face the dark reality of hunger and need and the terrible and terrifying jeopardy of debts, of being dependent on

this really take the thrust of the accusation away from God? I beg your pardon, this is only bad theology and weak exegesis. I for my part refuse to assume that Jesus was a bad theologian. He believed in God and he had come to know him as his Father. But this did not save him from being hated and persecuted, he who believed in God too. To the contrary. Because he preached the Good News of the Kingdom of his Father to be about to come, because he behaved as an obedient son to the Father, he met with enmity, which finally put him to arrest, trial and crucifixion. Do we assume that Jesus was so naive as not to anticipate all this? Or isn't it more likely that Jesus knowing the tradition of his Jewish religion drew upon the book of Job and on Isaiah and understood quite well that the one and only eternal almighty God is God beyond human reasoning and thus can be tempting as much as loving and merciful? Since God is ultimately unconceivable for man, there will be always a dark side, dangerous and frightening. To deny this dark side will inevitably lead to ontological dualism and consequently to the loss of monotheism, i.e. to the loss of God, to apostasy. However, the temptation, which Jesus asked God in LP to be saved from is, according to the Greek wording in LP, a real and serious temptation, the effect of which can separate ultimately from God, and therefore is so extremely terrifying. The topic of temptation is well and widely attested in the New Testament and in the Jesus tradition. The early Christian tradition knows that Jesus was led into temptation. Mark 1,12–13 renders a brief note of this. Q presents a long story of how Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness (Matt 4,1–11 || Luke 4,1–13). The point of this story is not to depict how Jesus was tried to commit a sin, but how he was tempted to renounce his ministry, to give up faith in God as his Father. The Passion story tells how Jesus was put to the extreme test in Gethsemane. Again this pericope illustrates how Jesus was put to the edge of desperation and apostasy. And the last cry of Jesus on the cross is interpreted in the early passion tradition as a paradox: «My God, why did you let me down?» Also the letter to the Hebrews knows: «We have a High Priest who was tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin.» (4,15; cf. Hebr 2,18; 5,7–8). The tradition overwhelmingly tells us that Jesus was tempted. What makes all the difference is that he passed the test, he stood the temptation, he did not fail. Yet in his prayer, which he shared with his friends, he asked his Father not to lead into temptation. The modern reluctance to accept God, the loving Father, as a tempter, has its ancient model. In the letter of St. James we read: «If people are tempted by such trials, they must not say, 'This temptation comes from God.' For God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one» (1,13). Even Joachim Jeremias admits that this verse reflects the final request of LP (1976:37s: «... wahrscheinlich mit direktem Bezug auf die Schlußbitte des Vater-Unsers»). Yet we have to acknowledge the fact that this admonition is addressed to Christians, who obviously understood the LP in this way, that God tempts man. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*



someone else but God.<sup>24</sup> Therefore the next two requests ask for bread, in order to sustain life, and for the remission of debts, in order to be free and to devote the full life to the service of the kingdom of God. The last request then asks not to loose faith in God's plan of salvation, not to fall victim to apostasy.<sup>25</sup>

Semantically there are five objects requested from the Father:

1. Sanctification of God's Name
2. Coming of God's Kingdom
3. Sustenance of Life
4. Remission of Debts, and
5. Sparing from Temptation

These five requests are arranged in the form of an anticlimax with a steady decline starting with the acknowledgement of God's holy name<sup>26</sup> and his universal power, followed by requests to sustain the physical life of his chosen people and to

24. In modern times we have become accustomed to call debts by the euphemistic term «credit». But in the time of Jesus debts often meant the loss of freedom to sustain life and even the loss of life. Very frequently debtors were put to prison and had to endure a lifelong sentence if the debts were not paid off or remitted. The fear of these sanctions not seldom diverted and distracted even pious people, Jews and Christian alike, from pursuing the one goal of life that matters: God and his kingdom.
25. Popkes has shown convincingly that this was the understanding of the request of being spared temptation throughout the time of the Ancient Church, dating back as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.
26. I.e. his plan of salvation through the wholeness of his chosen people assembled, restored, and renewed in the promised land. This salvation-historical background can be drawn from Ezekiel 36,23–24: «When I demonstrate to the nations the holiness of my great name – the name you disgraced among them – then they will know that I am the Lord. I, the Sovereign Lord, have spoken. I will use you to show the nations that I am holy. I will take you from every nation and country and bring you back to your own land.» Cf. also Ezek 20,41–44. Lohfink (27) comments: «God *himself* sanctifies his name. And he does so in that he in the last days collects Israel from everywhere, in that he renews Israel and restores it into a holy people. The formula that God sanctifies his name owns as regards content an exactly and clearly defined meaning. The content is by no means variable, for the reason in particular that the formula occurs in the Old Testament practically only in the book of Ezekiel.» (My translation from German; italics in original. T.K.) In spite of the closeness of this request in LP with the similar request in the *Qaddish*, which came about as a Jewish prayer in the time of Jesus, I wish to point out the difference in the wording: «Glorified and sanctified be his great name in the world he created according to his will... Blessed be his great name forever and ever.» Whether Jesus drew upon the earliest form of the *Qaddish* or whether he influenced the *Qaddish* remains an open question. Anyway, the differences are obvious.

free it from dependence on the powers of the world, and concluded by a request not to fall away from God and his enactment of salvation.<sup>27</sup>

The pragmatics of LP are defined by the imperatives. They qualify their nouns as objects of desires. Although it is humans, who act as petitioners, it is God, who is thought as the real acting person. Human action exists only in expressing the needs, desires, and requests – with the exception of line 6. Here the human speakers of LP occur as acting persons. Accordingly, the mode of the predicate in this semantic unit is not imperative, but indicative, the number is not singular, but plural, the person is not 2<sup>nd</sup>, but 1<sup>st</sup>. Consequently the speech-act of line 6 is not requesting, as in the other lines (except line 1), but asserting or promising. The prediction of the requests in lines 2–5 and 7 is propositional, yet the prediction in line 6 is performative. The speakers assert and promise remission by the fact that they express their action and willingness of forgiving. The object of the predicate does not refer to matter, but to persons. Line 4 differs from all other lines, in that it offers a time frame: «today». This limitation of time would fit as well as all other requests:

Sanctified be your name today!  
 Your kingdom come today!  
 And forgive us our debts today!  
 And do not lead us into temptation today!

In all cases the temporal «today» would stress the urgency. One cannot convincingly argue that LP intends the need for bread to be more urgent than the need for remission of debts or for the coming of the kingdom. To the contrary, the whole prayer is expressed against the background of extreme apocalyptic urgency: it is

27. This consistent anticlimactic pattern does not really allow for the interpretation that the first part or strophe refers to a transcendent reality, whereas the second intends world immanent needs. It is rather the transcendence of God's kingdom, which invades the immanent world and causes an eschatological crisis. It is to this eschatological crisis and the dramatic change of powers, that the requests of LP refer to. It is this world, in which God's name is to be sanctified and his government to be established. This means also: If God rules as one and only and if his government is acknowledged, then there will be no more deficiency, no famine and hunger, no debts and guilt, no temptation and evil. The salvation of this world and the eradication of its physical and spiritual needs are subjected to the prerogative of God's eschatological victory and the universal inhabitation of his holy name.

now that the kingdom must come. Because the prayer desires and expects the fulfilment and fullness of God's government over the world for now and not for a time to come,<sup>28</sup> the request of bread for the time being becomes urgent.<sup>29</sup>

### *Summary of Observations*

Line 6, the second part of the request for remission (RR) is not fully integrated in the stylistic pattern of LP:

1. With the exception of the address in line 1 all other lines are articulated by an imperative and a prohibitive respectively as requests.
2. Lines 1–3 are connected *asyndetically* (without conjunction), lines 4, 5 and 7 are connected *syndetically* by the conjunction *kai*. Only line 6 deviates from this co-ordinating sentence structure in providing the subordinating conjunction *hōs*, which has a correlative function.
3. The mode of all verbs is imperative/prohibitive; only the verb of line 6 is indicative.
4. The amount of lines for each strophe varies; the second strophe has one line in excess.
5. All requests have only one line, except RR, which runs over two lines.
6. Only RR uses the poetic feature of parallelism, more precisely the reciprocal synthetic parallelism. Although parallelism is a typical feature in Hebrew and Aramaic poetry, LP does not use it elsewhere.<sup>30</sup>
7. Only line 6 renders a personal object: «debtors».
8. Line 6 refers to human action; all other lines refer to divine action.
9. Line 6 does not contain a request but an assertion or a promise; all other

28. Against Grässer 102s.

29. In this context of apocalyptic urgency the «today» in the request for bread seems to indicate that the recipients of this version of LP have already reduced the urgency of their expectations concerning the coming of the kingdom. Could it be that they have already settled with the fact that the kingdom may come later, that there will be at least a short period of time, until God will have established his power and government completely? Cf. Grässer 102–103.

30. In spite of this, one may regard lines 2 and 3 as parallels, because these requests coincide in the result: God's holy name will be acknowledged and glorified when his kingdom has come; it is also true that the kingdom comes when his holy name is acknowledged. Also lines 4 and 5 can be seen as parallels. But the perception of these parallelisms is obscured by line 6.



lines (except line 1) contain a request. The illocution, the speech-act, changes from a requesting to asserting.

10. In line 6 the time perspective changes. The requests ask for God's future action in regards to the present. Line 6 deals with a human action in the past.
11. The performative pragmatics of the predication of line 6 contrast sharply with the propositional predication of the requests.
12. Line 6 obscures the stylistic and poetical relationship that exists between lines 4 and 5.

Line 4 also offers deviation from the above described synchronic pattern of LP:

1. The order of noun and verb is reversed.
2. The noun is extended by an adjective. This is the only adjective in LP.
3. The verb is extended by a temporal adverb. This is the only adverb in LP.
4. Line 4 is visibly much longer than all the other lines. If the extensions, adjective and adverb, were removed, the line would arrive at about the same length as line 5.
5. The adverbial extension in final position obscures the polyptoton in lines 4–7.
6. Adjective and adverb spoil the noticeable chiasmic structure of lines 4 and 5.
7. The temporal adverb changes the time perspective and eschatological urgency of LP.

### *Diachronic Conclusions*

The 12 observations regarding the synchrony of LP and the deviation from its pattern by RR concern all four semiotic relational isotopies: syntax (2, 3), sigmatics (4–6, 12), semantics (7, 8, 10), and pragmatics (1, 9, 11). This indicates incoherence of the synchrony of LP. Since the incoherence can be identified and isolated in line 6, one is urged to solve the problem by a diachronic operation, i.e. by literary criticism and its source theorems. I therefore suggest that line 6, the second line of RR is an interpolation into an earlier version of LP. If one accepts line 6 as an emendation,<sup>31</sup> the text of LP becomes more rounded and consistent.<sup>32</sup>

31. Cf. Vögtle 39, who regarded such a hypothesis as possible, even rather probable.

32. There is only one word in line 6, which fits the syntactical pattern of LP; this is the grammatical item *hēmon*. The correlative conjunction *hōs* subordinates the following clause. Syntactical subordination is alien to LP. The reinforcing explicit syntagma *kai hēmeis* emphasizes the subject

Also the request for bread, line 4, contains traces of incoherence. Yet different from line 6, this incoherence does not concern the whole thought and the way of its expression; it points merely to two words: *epiúsios* and *sēmeron*, which do not match the syntactic and semantic structure of LP and somehow interfere with the poetic organization of this prayer by disturbing the sigmatic pattern of lines 4 and 5. The temporal adverb *sēmeron* changes slightly the pragmatic perspective of line 4 in the context of LP. Thus the noticeable incoherence of line 4 regards also all four semiotic relational isotopies. I therefore propose to regard these two words as secondary additions to LP.<sup>33</sup>

Looking at LP without these admittedly hypothetical emendations we perceive a short prayer of request comprising 6 lines:

1. *Páter*
2. *hagíasthētō to ónoma sou*
3. *elthetō hē basileía sou*
4. *ton arton hemōn dos hēmin*
5. *kai áphes hēmin ta ophelīmata hēmōn*
6. *kai mē eisenenkēs hēmas eis peirasmón*

If this reconstruction is accepted we arrive at a stage of the LP tradition before Q. But this does not mean that this version is the Greek translation of the prayer, as it was composed by the historical Jesus, although I do think that this version comes close to the original LP. Lines 2 and 3 as well as lines 4 and 5 form stylistic parallelisms, a poetic feature very common in Hebrew and Aramaic, but alien in Greek. Thus the assumption that this prayer was originally composed in a Semitic

of the clause; but the subject in this clause is human persons, whereas in LP the only subject is God. The predicate *aphēkamen* is the only non-imperative predicate; it differs in number (plural), modus (indicative), and person (1<sup>st</sup>) from the other predicates in LP. The dative object *tois ophelétais* does not fit, because its referent are persons, whereas the referent of all other objects is matter. In lines 2 and 3, where the referent of the euphemistic noun-metaphors can be regarded as God, these nouns are not objects but nominative subjects. Sigmatically and pragmatically the clause does not share a single element with the rest of LP. Semantically it repeats the verb of line 5 and draws upon the root of the object in line 5, thus creating coherence only with line 5. – From this it is quite obvious that the incoherence of line 6 is not an originally intended incoherence. It rather expresses a new thought, which lies beyond the scope of lines 1–5 and 7. The intention of line 6 is a completely different one; therefore one ought to assume a different author for the whole clause.

33. Concerning all other elements the request for bread is quite in line with all other requests in LP. The reversed order may well be intended. With line 4 begins a new set of requests; this may account for the stylistic variation.

language is not at all far fetched. Yet methodically even a retrojection is nothing but a back-translation and that means a translation and it does not mean, by all means, the original. But a back translation can serve a heuristic purpose:

'Abb'á  
 yitqaddáš š'mák  
 teté malkuták  
 laḥmán hab lán  
 uš'boq lán ḥobain  
 w<sup>e</sup>la ta'elínnan l<sup>e</sup>nisyón.<sup>34</sup>

Comparing the Greek reconstruction with its Aramaic back-translation, it becomes obvious that the alliteration of *páter* and *peirasmon* is lost as well as the polyptoton in lines 4 and 5. Yet this is not amazing apart from the fact that polyptoton is a poetical feature common in Greek but not known at all in Semitic languages.<sup>35</sup> Texts do gain and loose in the process of translation. From a philological and historical-critical point of view, translations can be seen as adaptations to a new linguistic, cultural and social environment. Different languages do appreciate different aesthetic and poetical features. Therefore we are to accept that the Greek text of LP is the only text accessible to us, as long as an Aramaic source presenting a version of LP older than the Greek is not discovered.<sup>36</sup>

The rhetorical features incorporated in this Greek version of LP indicate that it was used in an oral and aural socio-cultural set-up. Parallelism as a feature indicating redundant style, short co-ordinated clauses and the overall brevity of the prayer as well as polyptoton, epipher, and uniformity of sentence construction support oral memorization; the non-analytic aggregative thought path, the agonistic thought pattern of «Father» and «temptation», the emphatic and participatory and clearly situational engagement of the text, its concrete and absolutely non-abstract

34. This back-translation draws upon Jeremais 1976:29.

35. This of course is quite evident from the different morphologies of these languages. Different from Greek, cases in Hebrew or Aramaic are not indicated by a suffix morpheme.

36. The Gospel of the Nazareans in Aramaic language, which is mentioned by Jerome, is not extant. But all that we can infer from the comments of Jerome is that it drew upon a translation from the Greek gospel of Matthew. Cf. Jeremais 1976:34.



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presentation, this all betrays the psychodynamics of orality.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the proportion of grammatical and lexical items results in a ratio of 15 grammatical to 11 lexical items, a further indicator of originally oral composition of LP, i.e. LP is definitely older than Q.

### *The Request for Remission*

The source critical solution to the observed incoherence of LP demands to be confirmed by a *redaktionsgeschichtliche* synthesis. For this an analysis of the semantic relationship between the first (RR<sup>1</sup>) and the second (RR<sup>2</sup>) clause of RR is needed.

RR<sup>1</sup> asks God for remission of debts. The plural *opheilēmata* in conjunction with the definite article indicates that a complete remission of all debts is intended. Since God is the addressee of this request not only remission of all debts concerning money and material things is requested but also moral and spiritual debts, i.e. guilt and sins. Only God is capable to forgive the entirety of debts, sins, and guilt. Because God is approached for such a remission of a pile of debts, we do understand that these debts concern an area, which is above human capability of forgiveness. The speakers of LP understand themselves as God's debtors, who urgently need his willingness to forgive.

From the teaching of Jesus we can infer to which extent exceeding all human expectations God is ready to forgive. The parable of the Merciful Father, traditionally called the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15,11–32), illustrates this loving mercy of God, who is prepared to forgive without demanding advance concession from man. The father in this parable hurries to meet his son while he is still on his way back home; the father rushes to embrace his son before he can even finish his confession of repentance. The father of this parable was awaiting his son, was longing and yearning for him, in order to forgive him unreservedly. Not the confession of repentance matters; what matters is that the father sees his chance to forgive and to love. Such is God! This is the point Jesus wants to drive home.

The parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matt 18,23–35) illustrates a further aspect of God's willingness to forgive. A king demands an account from his servants.

37. Cf. Ong 31–77.



While checking the accounts a servant is brought before his throne, who owes him ten thousand talents. The figure intends a sum beyond imagination.<sup>38</sup> The sum of the debts intends to explain that the king is a very mighty and rich king, richer than the Roman emperor, and that this servant, who is responsible for this huge amount of debts, will never be able to pay off. He would have forfeited his life; a lifetime in prison would be his fate, if the king insisted on repayment. But this king does not insist at all. He remits the huge pile of debts and renounces all repayment, when requested by the servant. After this the servant meets a fellow servant, who owes him one hundred denars, a dwindling sum by comparison with the ten thousand talents, a *quantité négligeable*. This servant asks for deferment of payment. But the other servant doesn't want and has him arrested and thrown into prison. When the king learns about this he becomes very angry and says to the unforgiving servant: «You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you», and sends him to prison, until he shall pay back the full amount of his debt of ten thousand talents." And Jesus concluded this parable: «That is how my Father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.»

A parable from the Q tradition highlights God's willingness to forgive without prerequisite, the parable of the Lost Sheep (Matt 18,12–13 || Luke 15,4–7). Jesus being criticised for associating himself with sinners answers with this parable:<sup>39</sup> «Who of you, if he had hundred sheep and one of them went astray, would not leave behind the ninety-nine on the mountains (wilderness?) and go and look for the lost one? And if he finds it, (Amen) I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that were not lost.» And the silent point of this parable is a *Qal-wakho-mer-conclusion*: If already you would act like this, what do you think, God will not act in this way? The phrase «lost sheep» is already coined in the Old Testament and signifies the Israelite who deserted the torah. In this context, which the parable presupposes, it signifies the sinner in general and the publican in particular. What is new in Jesus teaching this parable is, that no repentance, no willingness to return, no advance concession, no prerequisite is demanded. God will rejoice over the sinner, whom he is constantly looking for, when he finds him. God is by his divine nature determined to forgive. Nothing and no one can stop him doing so.

38. «Talent» is a measurement of weight and signifies some 30 kilogrammes. If we calculate 30 kilogrammes of gold to the talent and take the current gold price of about 4000 US\$ per kilogramme we arrive at more than a billion US\$.

39. My translation of the reconstruction of the Greek text of Q by Merklein 1981:188.

These parables illustrate Jesus' view as to how God as creditor treats his human debtors. Unreservedly he is keen to forgive. He demands no advance concession. But man, who receives God's forgiveness, is freed and obliged to forgive. Because God has mercy on him, he must have mercy on his fellow humans and because he receives God's mercy, he is capable of being merciful himself. This is the point of Jesus' teaching about the ethics of mercy: Because God always advances mercy, man is granted this freedom, which enables and obliges him to forgive.<sup>40</sup> God's merciful forgiveness stimulates and motivates man to forgive also. But human forgiveness or even his asserted willingness is by no means a precondition, a prerequisite for receiving himself remission.

Yet to the contrary argues RR<sup>2</sup>: «And forgive us our debts, *inasmuch as also we did forgive* out debtors.» the correlative conjunction *hōs* introduces here a causal clause and serves a reasoning purpose.<sup>41</sup> There is no need to assume instead of the descriptive aorist *aphēkamen* (we did forgive) an Aramaic permissive *perfectum coincidentiae*, in order to get rid of the theological precipitousness. Greek language knows the ingressive aorist, which indicates the beginning of an action. One may then translate RR<sup>2</sup>: as also we are about to forgive. Yet still, the precipitousness remains: human willingness to forgive serves as a precondition, in order to receive forgiveness from God, even worse, the correlative function of the causal conjunction indicates an evenness of the amount of forgiveness: «Forgive us (*only*), *inasmuch as we have forgiven.*»

Such preconditioning of God's forgiveness stands not only in contradiction to the thinking of Jesus, but also to Christian and Early Jewish thinking. Also the

40. Schürmann 1994:199 argues that according to Jesus' teaching human forgiveness is not only fruit of God's forgiveness but also condition to receive this forgiveness. As evidence he offers Matt 5,7.23–24; 6,14–15; 7,2; Mark 11,25; Luke 6,37; 16,1–8. None of these passages proves his case. The principle «He, who is not ready to reconcile himself with his neighbour and to compensate for the damage beforehand, he must not hope for forgiveness» (Thyen 73; cf. Merklein 1981:185) applies to rabbinic and early Jewish theology but not to the teaching of Jesus. Mark 11,25; Matt 6,14–15 do not so much articulate a condition, but rather a motivation. Jesus «instructs his disciples to forgive, because they, too, are in need of God's forgiveness» (Merklein 1981:186).
41. According to Liddell–Scott–Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 2039, the conjunction *hōs* in causal clauses even means «inasmuch as», «since» or «on the ground that».

fifth, sixth, fifteenth, and seventeenth benediction of the Shmone-Esre, the famous Jewish prayer form of old, exclude such an understanding of God's preconditioned forgiveness:<sup>42</sup>

5<sup>th</sup> «Turn us back to you, LORD, so that we repent ...»

6<sup>th</sup> «Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned against you ... Blessed are you, LORD, who forgives plentifully»

15<sup>th</sup> «... for you are a gracious and merciful God.»

17<sup>th</sup> Blessed are you, all-gracious LORD, you must be thanked!»

God himself grants turning back and repentance, is kind, merciful, and all-gracious; he is one who forgives plentifully.

But if neither Jewish nor Christian thought can account for RR<sup>2</sup>, our problems of interpretation and comprehension are intensified and increased. If not Jesus the Jew can account for the assertion of forgiveness in LP nor any other Jew or Christian, who then can be responsible for such an interpolation? Do we misunderstand this line altogether?<sup>43</sup>

### *Reflections on the Formgeschichte of the Assertion of Forgiveness*

Earlier I mentioned that Didache and Cyrill of Jerusalem know LP as a prayer used also for community services.<sup>44</sup> I wish to show that the assertion of forgiveness added to the request for remission is due to the use of LP within a divine service including an Eucharistic meal.

42. Cf. Billerbeck 211–214.

43. One could argue that the topic of judgement is a dominant theme in Q. Therefore it could be that sayings like Matt 5,48 || Luke 6,36; Matt 7,1–2 || Luke 6,37–38; Matt 7,12 || Luke 6,31 influenced the LP tradition in Q. But this is not really convincing and even more difficult to prove. In the light of Matt 18,12–13 || Luke 15,4–7 (=Q) even rather improbable. The topic of remission of debts and sins does not occur a further time in the text of Q, as quoted by Matt and Luke. Yet having shown that the text of LP in Q is not the original version but an adapted one, it is not necessary to assume that Q is liable for the emendations. These emendations may well have been inserted at an earlier stage of tradition.

44. See above pages 6–7.



Repeating that the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural of the personal pronouns clearly demonstrate that LP was a prayer of a group of people, a community, I also want to mention again that the speech-act of RR<sup>2</sup> and thus its intention is not *asking* or *requesting*, but *asserting* and *consenting*. According to the second request of LP, «your kingdom come», this community sees itself as God's chosen eschatological people. They are called to follow the Christ Jesus, his teaching and his actions. They respond to God's eschatological mercy and forgiveness with their own willingness to have mercy and to forgive. This community interprets itself as the community which is about to face the eschatological salvation and therefore defines its relationship with God and Christ as a relationship based on reconciliation and remission graciously granted by God through Christ. By requesting from God, the Father, remission of all debts and sins, this community of Christians enters this graciously granted relationship of reconciliation and responds to God's forgiving love with a firm will and with fierce determination, to forgive all its debtors and those who have sinned against it and its members. If one looks in this light and against this theological background at the line of LP, which expresses the assertion of forgiveness, one realizes, that it is exactly this, what the assertion of forgiveness means and intends: consenting with reconciliation and asserting forgiveness and willingness to forgive in word and deed. In respect to this soteriological and ecclesiological context we are obliged to ask for the *Sitz im Leben* of such forgiveness requested, asserted, and practiced.

Immediately following its catechism about praying (Did 8,1–3) the Didache presents 9,1–10,8 instructions about the Eucharistic thanksgiving prayer over cup and bread. From this I conclude that already the Didache community (early 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD) practised to recite LP during the gathering during which the Eucharist also was celebrated. In context with further instructions concerning the Eucharistic celebration, Didache demands to break the bread and to say thanks, «after you confessed your sins» (Did 14,1–3).<sup>45</sup> Didache then knows

45. So Wegst 53–54 with footnote 179, and p. 87. Different Niederwimmer 236. The question as to whether the variant *pros-eksomologēsámenoi* or the emendation *pro-eksomologēsámenoi* is to be preferred, is not decisive for our problem. Either the Eucharist was received *after* (so Niederwimmer) or *during* (so Wengst) the confession of sins. In both cases the confession of sins is described as during the same service. Even Wengst (loc. cit.) thinks: «Of course we must imagine the procedure in this way that the confession of sins took place before the meal prayers. But even then the variant in H doesn't need to be wrong; it expresses the confession of sins as an essential element of the assembly.» Niederwimmer (loc. cit.): «signifies a confession of sins before the beginning of the Eucharist.»

already the practice of confessing sins during the Eucharistic liturgy before communion and it also knows the recitation of LP during this liturgy. The confession of sins to my mind must have been already a ritual, because according to Didache it was a regular, reoccurring practice. It is this context, the ritual of confessing sins and, while receiving the remission of sins, also extending forgiveness to the sisters and brothers present, that the assertion of forgiveness in LP refers to.

### ***Reflections of the Formgeschichte of the Request for Bread***

Didache 10,1–3 gives instructions concerning the prayer after the satisfying meal. This prayer contains the following passage:

*«You, Almighty Ruler, created everything for the sake of your name; you gave food and drink to human beings as to refresh them; yet us you gave spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Jesus, your servant.»*

By interpretation of the Eucharistic bread as *spiritual food* the prayer quoted by Didache hints at the heavenly eschatological dimension of the Eucharistic celebration. At the same time this prayer envisages the eternal life, which already now, while consuming the Eucharistic bread and wine is anticipated. In the light of this prayer in Didache, which again is to be understood as a regular, each time reoccurring prayer, it becomes very likely that already the request for bread in its Q version interpreted the bread requested as the Eucharistic bread, the bread, which Jesus promised to grant at the eschatological meal in the kingdom of his Father. The community praying LP requests this bread, which is promised for the future, for today. Thus the request for bread expresses with other words the same wish as the request for the kingdom to come. Give us this bread of the eschaton today means: let the eschaton, let your kingdom come today, so that we today can celebrate the meal in the kingdom. It also means, that the Eucharistic celebration was understood as the anticipation of the eschatological Eucharist in the kingdom of God. In this context the *epioúsios* is to be understood as meaning «future»: «Our future bread give us today!»

After these reflections, which reinforce the observations concerning the synchronic incoherence and which add plausibility to the source-critical reconstruction of a pre-Q LP as presented in this paper, I wish to return to the text of this assumed and hypothetically reconstructed earlier version.

### *The Lord's Prayer to the One and Only God*

The address of LP, «Father», or even «Dad», demonstrates a close relationship between the reciting person and the addressed God. Such a prayer address is without parallel and analogy in Judaism of the time before Jesus. The following first two requests result to the theological meaning that God reveals himself as saviour.<sup>46</sup> This presupposes that God is understood as the only one, who can save. The revelation and manifestation of God as the only saviour and thus as the only God is the soteriological and theological content of the dynamic expression of the coming of God's kingdom. Sanctification of God's name in this context means that God, who restores, chooses and creates anew a people for himself, i.e. the eschatological Israel, will be acknowledged and worshipped as the only God. The coming of his kingdom thus results in the eschatological revelation of his oneness and unity. The oneness and unity of God implies his faithfulness to his promises. This faithfulness finds further expression in the requests for bread and remission. Since God is faithful to his promises he will sustain the life he created. But because man sins and in this always behaves as God's enemy, God can keep his promises only, if he has mercy on his enemy and resolves to an everloving forgiveness. But if the relationship of God and sinful man is realized on the side of man always as disobedient enmity, this relationship is always jeopardized to fall apart. Since God is the one and only God, and since he is the almighty, no one can destroy the relationship between man and God but man and God. Sin is the utter destruction of the relationship. On the side of God temptation is the corresponding action. Like Isaiah 45,7 the theological conception of the oneness and only-ness of God leads to the consequence that to accept that only God can lead to temptation, i.e. to forfeiting salvation. Thus the request to be spared temptation shows a piety which is deeply rooted in the faith that there is only one God, the God of Israel, who is the Father of Jesus and in Jesus the Father of all those who are friends of Jesus and thus overcome the enmity towards God.

This line of thought reveals an ingenious and very original thinking. Neither ancient Judaism nor the Christian Church were prepared to accept this brilliant

46. For this paragraph cf. Merklein 1998, and Kaut 1998.



theology. This is to me evidence that Jesus himself composed this prayer.<sup>47</sup> Independently of such a judgement this prayer contains a precise précis of the teaching of Jesus.<sup>48</sup>

- ◆ By seeing himself as God's eschatological messenger and by viewing his words, parables, miracles, and also his fate as signs of the dawning of God's kingdom (Luke 11,20), Jesus testifies to his close relationship to God, which is adequately to be expressed as the relationship of Father and Son.
- ◆ By selecting a circle of twelve disciples to be an eschatological symbol of God's chosen people, Jesus anticipates the universal acknowledgement of the holiness of God's name.
- ◆ By casting out the demons Jesus anticipates the coming of God's kingdom, the announcement of which is the core of his teaching and faith.
- ◆ By associating himself with poor and needy people Jesus demonstrates God's option in favour of people who lack what is needed to survive.
- ◆ By associating himself with sinners Jesus demonstrates God's willingness to forgive even his enemies.
- ◆ By submitting to passion and crucifixion Jesus endures and victoriously passes temptation.

### *Conclusion*

The Lord's Prayer as presented in Matthew, Luke, Q, and Didache in the context of catechisms serves as a model prayer. Didache knows LP as prayer of community as well as a private personal prayer.

The *Sitz im Leben* of these catechisms was the instruction of new believers to prepare them for baptism and the Eucharistic celebration, which was reserved for baptised persons.

47. The only parallel I know of, except for Isaiah 45,7, is the Jewish prayer during the Warsaw Ghetto, 1943: «LORD, you have done to us everything as to achieve that we cannot believe in you anymore. But whatever you will do, this you will not achieve.»
48. As a communicative translation I wish to suggest the following text «Dear Father! Reveal your holy name and restore your chosen people! Establish your government and save all nations! Give us the food we need and forgive us our debts and sins and do not make us your enemies!»

Yet one can observe that this purpose was not the original purpose of LP. The catechizing frame in Matthew, Luke, Q, and Didache is a secondary adaptation. The internal form of LP clearly indicates that it is intended as a prayer for a group of persons, a community.

Cyrril of Jerusalem and Didache show that LP was recited during the Eucharistic service.

The synchronic analysis leads to the result that the requests for bread and forgiveness are adapted. *Formgeschichtliche* reflections make it highly plausible that these adaptations were due to application of LP to the liturgical environment of the celebration of the holy Eucharist, referring to a ritual of confession and remission of sins and to the communion of the Eucharistic bread which is regarded as spiritual food, i.e. participation in the eschatological meal in the kingdom of God.

This Eucharistic application of LP is paralleled by an application of LP as the first prayer of a neophyte, a new member of the Christian community, after baptism.

These liturgical applications do not establish the original purpose of LP. The thought pattern of LP represents the teaching of the historical Jesus. The paradox of God as a tempting Father, i.e. of the one and only God, marks this prayer as a deeply monotheistic prayer, which in its kind finds no analogy in ancient Judaism or early Christianity. Therefore the supposition that LP is truly Jesus' own prayer is the most probable of all.

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## THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND FORMATION OF VOCATIONS

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In his Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores dabo vobis* (25 March 1992), John Paul II speaks of “The challenges facing priestly formation at the conclusion of the second millennium”<sup>2</sup> and considering the different aspects of human life today, John Paul II gives the positive and the negative sides of these aspects of the life of children, adolescents, young people and adults; he considers the negative aspects as the main hindrances for priestly vocations today.

Vocations to the priesthood in the diocese of Malta are not forthcoming as in the past. After the publication of *Pastores dabo vobis*, it was deemed necessary and important by the Centre for Diocesan Vocations of the diocese of Malta to find out what was hindering the number of vocations to the priesthood to grow in the Maltese Christian community.

The Centre for Diocesan Vocations asked the help of Canon Benjamin Tonna to compile a survey in order to see and analyse the socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts of the members who attended the meetings of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations during the years from 1972 to 1993. In the meantime the Centre also asked and received the help of Rev Professor Pietro Gianola of the Pontifical Salesian University to have access to the section of the library of the same University which specialises in the Theology and the Pastoral work for vocations.

1. The author was appointed *Auditor* to the Eight Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on *The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of Today*. He was also invited to deliver a speech on *The pastoral work for priestly vocations today*. Since then, the author read an M. Phil. Degree at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Malta with a dissertation entitled *Priestly Vocations in Post-Conciliar Malta*.
2. See *Pastores dabo vobis*, 5.

This investigation into the problem about the diminution of priestly vocations in the diocese of Malta was made by the Centre for Diocesan Vocations when it organized a survey among 720 persons who attended the Vocation Guidance Courses between 1976 and 1993. The survey was made in 1993 and it put questions to the ex-members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations about the socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts in which they lived and their impact on the possibility of their being called to the priesthood.

There were 446 respondents or 61.5% of all those who received the survey who were ready to give important information about the experiences which they made in the years they attended the Vocation Guidance Courses. They also provided the positive and negative causes which were influencing the number of vocations in the Diocese of Malta at that time. It must be said that 62 of the respondents or 14% opted to become priests!

The age group of all the respondents was between 15 and 55 years of age because while some of the respondents were school leavers, others had already taken up a career. But the young respondents were in the majority and therefore their answers give an up-to-date picture of the life of some of the young people of today. However, it was not easy to analyse the different situations of two different categories of people: people who were still in a state of discernment and these were in the majority, and people who had already found their place in life.

## ***1.1 The first invitation to attend vocation meetings***

### ***1.1.1 Early in Life***

When the questionnaire asked the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations to say at what age they received the first invitation to attend vocation meetings, 35% said that they were invited in the last year of their primary school and 59% said that they were invited during the secondary school years. This means that they were invited in the year when they received the sacrament of Confirmation or immediately after.

There were 6% of the respondents who said that they were invited for the Vocation meetings neither in the primary nor in the secondary school. Probably these were the people who received the call to the priesthood when they had already taken up a career. There has always been a small but continuous flow of adult vocations in the Major Seminary of Malta.



### 1.1.2 *Who encouraged them to attend?*

The questionnaire also asked the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations to say who encouraged them to attend the vocation meetings. Forty one percent of the respondents said that they were invited to attend the Vocation Guidance Courses by priests, while 28% were invited by friends; 18% said that they were invited by no one in particular. But only 11% said that they were invited by parents and only 2% said that they were invited by teachers.

The questionnaire asked the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations to say if there were more than one person who invited them to attend the Vocation Guidance Courses. If we add all together the times the individual persons who encouraged young people to attend the vocation meetings were mentioned, it can be said that the priests still head the list because 37% of the respondents said that they were invited by priests, 27% mentioned their friends, 15% mentioned their parents, while 03% mentioned their teachers.

The respondents referred to priests, friends, parents and teachers as the persons who encouraged them to attend the meetings of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations. It is very important to note that the persons mentioned by the respondents form the principal components of the Christian community in which they lived and therefore they mentioned the main environments in which they received their human and Christian formation.

It must also be noted that these persons who encouraged the respondents to attend the vocation meetings are the media through which God makes His call heard in the heart of the Christian adolescents. The Second Vatican Council and other Church documents about the pastoral work for Vocations make it clear that God wants His call to be heard through the Christian community.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.1.3 *The special role of the spiritual director*

It is very important to note that 57% of the respondents of the questionnaire said that they had a spiritual director.

3. See *Optatam totius*, 2.

The presence of priests in the life of the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations is a determining factor, and the programme of the Centre insists that members should have a spiritual director especially from Form 5 of the secondary school upwards.

## ***1.2 The motives for attending the vocation meetings***

### *1.2.1 The Vocation to the priesthood*

There were 24% of all the respondents and 49% of those respondents who opted to become priests who said that they attended the vocation meetings organized by the Centre for Diocesan Vocation for the express purpose of knowing about their vocation to the priesthood.

There were other motives for which the respondents attended vocation meetings: 22% of the respondents said that they wanted “to get to know friends”, 21% said that they wanted to know themselves, 15% mentioned prayer, and 10% mentioned “to play.” There were 5% of the respondents who did not specify any motive but 3% said that they were forced by their parents to attend vocation meetings.

Although most of those who opted to become priests said that they attended the vocation meetings to “know about the vocation to the priesthood”, they also mentioned the same motives for attending the vocation meetings as the respondents in general: to get to know friends, to know themselves, to pray and to play.

### *1.2.2 First preference given to the vocation meeting*

The test case for the first preference and the high percentage given to the motive of attending the Vocation Centre, i.e. “To know about the Vocation to the Priesthood” can be seen in the question which the questionnaire asked the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations what they did when, besides going for the vocation meeting, they had a pleasure occasion or some other appointment at the same time.

Of all the respondents, 64% said that they preferred the vocation meeting and 18% said that they preferred the pleasure occasion. There were 15% who said that they would attend none of the occasions and 03% said that they would have tried to attend both!

Sixty three percent of those who opted to become priests said that when they had other things to do besides going to the vocation meetings, they preferred to go to the latter. Thirty seven percent said that they preferred to go to the pleasure occasion.

The positive response to an invitation to attend a vocation meeting does not necessarily mean that those who attend the vocation meetings are in fact called to the priesthood. But it may happen that the attendance of vocation meetings coincides with a vocation to the priesthood.

### ***1.3 The call and response***

#### ***1.3.1 The call to the priesthood***

In preparing this question for the questionnaire it was made sure that the vocation that was referred to was the vocation to the priesthood. Fifty eight percent of all the respondents of the questionnaire said that they felt the call to the priesthood sometime in their lives.

#### ***1.3.2 Motives for leaving the vocation meetings***

It is a fact that many boys who begin to attend the vocation meetings in the parish or/and at the Seminary drop out along the years. Twenty four percent of the respondents said that they never ceased to feel the call to the priesthood. While 76% said that they ceased to feel the call to the priesthood at a certain moment of their life.

When asked to say when they ceased to feel the call to the priesthood, 51% said that they no longer attended the Vocation Guidance Courses within the age bracket 10 to 14 years or the secondary school years; 35% within the 15 to 19 years period or the post secondary years and 14% said that they ceased to attend the vocation meetings from 20 years upward or when they took up a career or followed a University course.

There were many reasons why the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations discontinued to attend the vocation meetings. Thirty two percent transferred themselves to other vocation meetings that were organized by the Religious Vocation Centres. Eleven percent chose a career.



But 57% of the respondents mentioned other reasons. These reasons ranged from “not called” (27%), got fed up with vocation meetings (25%), needed more time for study (17%), found a job (10%), lost their vocation (10%), went to other places of formation (7%), they were expelled from the Centre (4%).

### *1.3.3 The decision*

A determining question was put to the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations whereby they were asked to say what they decided to do in life.

Forty four percent of the respondents said that they wanted to get married and 14% said that they wanted to become priests. While 4% of the respondents said that they neither wanted to marry nor to become priests.

But 38% said that they were undecided about their vocation. This large percentage of young people who are undecided about their future vocation requires a plan of action on the part of the Centre so that it can provide help to these young people to know what God wants them to do in their life. It can make new contacts with them, organize a reunion and offer them counselling sessions.

### *1.4 The family environment*

In the past, the Christian family was considered to be a fertile ground for the growth of priestly vocations in Malta. Considering the exalted image of the priest that was presented to the Maltese Catholics up to the sixties, it is not surprising to know that many Maltese families desired to have one of their boys “becoming” a priest. On the part of the young man who became a priest it can be said that he could count on the support which the family was sure to give him to live a “comfortable” life.

This favourable environment which many Maltese priests found in their families was traditionally described by the general term “good family” and it consisted of certain structures such as getting married in Church, the baptizing and the Christian upbringing of the children, and fidelity to the marriage vows.

If the environment of the traditional family succeeded to support many vocations to the priesthood in the diocese of Malta, it may also be supposed that the decrease

of vocations to the priesthood in the diocese of Malta coincided with the changes in the life of the family.<sup>4</sup>

Less children in the average Maltese family, an inadequate sex education, lack of Christian formation especially for adolescents and reticence about the promotion of a priestly vocation in the family may be some of the factors that contributed to the decline of vocations in the diocese of Malta.<sup>5</sup>

#### 1.4.1 *Begetting a lesser number of children*

The survey which was held among the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations has shown that 82% of all the respondents have between 2 and 4 children in the family. This means that a very large majority of these Maltese families still bear a good number of children. It was also found that there were 13% of the respondents who said that in their families there were between 5 and 11 children while 5% said that there was only one child in their family.

When one considers the number of children in the families of those who opted for the priestly vocation, one finds that 72% of these respondents said that in their family there was an average of 3.48 children and 26% of the same said that there were more than 4 children in their families. Only 2% of these respondents said that there was only one child in their families.

4. See Il-Kulleġġ tal-Kappillani, *Seminar Pastorali*, Malta 1968, 44.

A description of the Maltese family which was given during a seminar about the pastoral life of the diocese of Malta showed that the "Maltese society was made up of good families." However, Monsignor Aloysius Deguara, who was a parish priest at the time, speaking in this seminar said that from his experience in the pastoral field, it could be said that there were going to be important changes in the life of the Maltese family in the coming future. He mentioned the threat of infidelity and separations, the shifting of responsibility to transmit the Christian catechesis to third persons, the drop in the birth rate and the changes in the social life of the family; these were going to contribute to a lesser Christian environment in the Maltese family.

5. See Malta, Vocation Centre Archives. Album 1. The statistics of the population of the Seminary of Malta show that the diocese of Malta began having less vocations in 1977. From 1956 and 1964, there were 103 new seminarians (15 in 1957, 13 in 1959, 8 in 1960, 16 in 1961, 10 in 1962 and 41 in 1964). From 1965 to 1974, there were 112 new seminarians (26 in 1966, 18 in 1967, 10 in 1968, 19 in 1970, 18 in 1972 and 21 in 1974). From 1975 to 1984, there were 49 new seminarians (13 in 1976, 6 in 1978, 15 in 1980, 6 in 1982 and 9 in 1984). From 1985 to 1994 there were 54 new seminarians (7 in 1985, 6 in 1986, 4 in 1987, 6 in 1988, 6 in 1989, 6 in 1990, 6 in 1991, 5 in 1992, 5 in 1993 and 3 in 1994). From 1995 to 2000, there were 24 new seminarians (5 in 1995, 4 in 1996, 4 in 1997, 3 in 1998, 3 in 1999 and 5 in 2000).

It can therefore be said that when the Maltese family bears more children, there is a bigger possibility for the children of the Maltese family to choose the vocation to the priesthood as the will of God for them and as their way of life for the future. In recent years the Maltese population increased but the Maltese family bore less children and this may be one of the causes for the drop of vocations and therefore the cause of a lesser number of priests to serve the Church today and in the future.

#### *1.4.2 Imparting an inadequate sex education in the family*

Considering the results of the survey that was held among the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations, it was found that 20% of the respondents of the survey who wanted to follow the priestly vocation said that they received sex education from their parents while 9% of all the respondents of the survey said that they received their sex education from their parents.

But it is the family that has to give the first and most important aspect of sex education which is love. Each member of the family builds his relationship with the other persons on the recognition that the other person is his equal and therefore he has to be respected and not manipulated. This kind of relationship is based on love. Every human being is made to live in a communion of life which is based on reciprocal love. A human being is a sexual being, because he is either a man or a woman. The difference between the two is not just a biological one; but it is a difference that makes man and woman two completely different personalities. Notwithstanding the different personalities which woman and man have, they are both integrated, harmonized and united in love. Man and woman reach their full maturity when they succeed in integrating their personalities in love by giving themselves to one another.

Whether a human being gets married in future or chooses virginity for one reason or other, he/she has to develop his/her sexual maturity in a way that it helps him/her to relate to other human beings as a man or as a woman being always ready to live for others. When parents do not impart this kind of sex education to their children, this is an indication that their children are not being given a good preparation to devote their lives for the love of others when they get married or when they follow a vocation in the priesthood or in consecrated life. This is because, man and woman can take two different attitudes towards the maturity in love: they can either have an egoistic attitude whereby each one or one of them satisfies one's own needs at the expense of the other; or they may have an altruistic attitude whereby



they love one another by giving themselves to each other or one of them gives oneself to the other. This reciprocal love between two persons or the lack of it, can also be seen in a supernatural way because each one of them or at least one of them sees Jesus in the other person and loves the other person for the sake of Jesus (see Mt 25, 45); the lack of this reciprocal love may become sinful.

When they live in a Christian way and when they exercise the act of marriage, the husband and wife or the father and mother do so out of complete self giving to one another. This is the attitude that is immediately transmitted to the fruit of their love: their child or their children. The offspring feels from the very first moment of its existence that the aim of its life is to give itself to others. In this way, without mentioning sex or without directly giving sex education to the children, parents impart a balanced and mature sexual attitude to their children. Far from the egocentric way in which children, young people and adults may live their sexual life, parents impart a sexual attitude to their children that is all imbued with the love for others. Sex education means teaching others to donate themselves to other persons and helping children and young people to develop a true and authentic maturity and an equilibrium that makes them feel at home with all kinds of persons. This sexual attitude towards others has its origin in the love of self which succeeds to fulfill the golden rule: love your neighbour as yourself. This love for others which is characterized by self-giving, is also the source of the virtue of purity which means the fullness of the love for others for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

#### *1.4.3 Living a superficial Christian life*

Within the Maltese family, Christian life is supported by different moments of prayer. The survey listed these moments of prayer in order to help the ex-members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations to say what preference they had given to these different moments of prayer. The result of the survey showed that participating in the Mass had top priority whether they participated in it daily (40%), often (56%), or rarely (04%). A small percentage opened the day with a morning prayer (14%), while an equal number paid a visit to the Blessed Sacrament during the day (14%). Very few attended prayer meetings (09%). At the end of the day, many found time for prayer by saying the Rosary (22%).

Back in 1967, when a Mass attendance survey was held in the diocese of Malta, Monsignor Annetto Depasquale, while presenting the results of this survey, pointed out that a good number of children were missing Mass on Sunday and that one had

to worry about the future of these children.<sup>6</sup> Although this survey about Mass attendance has nothing to do with the survey that was carried out among the ex-members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations, it can be said that a decrease in Christian faith among children has been coming down to our day for some time and it can easily lead to a drop in the number of vocations to the priesthood. In fact there was sharp drop in the number of seminarians, in the number of new seminarians and in the number of ordinations which occurred in the last years of the twentieth century. Vocations presuppose a strong faith in Christ and in the Gospel in persons who want to offer their lives for the service of the Church.

Today something radical is needed to develop a very deep Christian life in the Maltese family in order that it may reach the ideal which the Church presents to the Christian family to become “the domestic Church”<sup>7</sup> which is modeled on the words of Jesus, “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in their midst.”<sup>8</sup> Pastoral work among the families should emphasize the fact that the married life of a man and a woman should be lived in Christ and that the sacrament of marriage is a sign and efficacious instrument of the presence of Christ among the married couple and the family. This relationship between husband and wife in marriage is lived in the fullness of reciprocal love.

The Christian family can help its children grow in their Christian life by following the example of the maturity of the family of Nazareth which helped Jesus to grow “in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.”<sup>9</sup> In order to do so, it is quite evident that parents need outside help in order to give a good Christian and spiritual life to their children. The help of religious associations and of the movements of Christian living is more than necessary for children, adolescents and young people to develop their Christian and spiritual life.

#### 1.4.4 Encouraging less the vocations to the priesthood

The survey that was held among the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations has shown that 49% of the respondents discussed their vocation to the priesthood with their parents. This percentage goes up to 60% among the respondents

6. See *Seminar Pastoralis*, 59

7. See SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL: *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 11; see also *Lumen gentium*, 11; cf. also *Familiaris consortio*, 21.

8. See Mt 18, 20.

9. See Lk 2, 52.

who chose the priestly vocation as their way of life. Ninety eight percent of all the respondents said that their parents would have rejoiced if their sons said that they wanted to become priests.

The survey made two different questions to assess the reaction of the parents to the priestly vocation of their sons. One question asked whether the parents were against the priestly vocation. The response to this question showed that 01.5% of all the respondents said that their parents objected to their priestly vocation. This percentage was a little higher (02%) among those respondents who wanted to become priests.

Another question asked whether the parents were indifferent to the priestly vocation of their sons; 18% of the respondents said that their parents would have been indifferent had they wanted to become priests. This percentage was much lower (02%) among those respondents who chose the priestly vocation.

The contribution of the family to bring to maturity the children and especially those who have a vocation to the priesthood can only take place when the family is evangelised with the Word of God and when it lives this Word in a radical way. The family today needs to be re-evangelised by the announcement of the Commandment of love. This does not strictly mean that the Gospel is announced word for word; but that it is announced by making the persons who make up the family believe that they are following Jesus. Vocations are the results of a life based on Evangelisation rather than the end product or a happy ending to a discussion about vocations between parents and their children, the fulfillment of the desire of the parents that their children become priests or the encouragement which parents make to their children to reach to the priesthood.

Every priest in the Church knows very well the role which his family played in his vocation to the priesthood. In the Synod of Bishops of 1990 about *The Formation of priests in the circumstances of today*, Bishop Norbert Wendelin Mtega of Tanzania made a very important contribution to show the role of the family in vocations. Bishop Mtega said that the families are “the guarantee for a natural and balanced growth of character” and “the school for psychological, spiritual and human growth.”<sup>10</sup> James Cardinal Hickey of the United States said in the same Synod of

10. See Dronigi Tettamanzi, *La Formazione dei Sacerdoti nelle Circostanze attuali*, Roma 1990, 209.



Bishops “that united and healthy families marked by a deep faith and prayerfulness, have a significant part in fostering vocations and formation.”<sup>11</sup>

The Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis* gives the reason why a very special responsibility falls upon the Christian family in the pastoral work for Vocations. It says that “the sacrament of Matrimony shares in its unique way in the educational mission of the Church, the Teacher and Mother”<sup>12</sup> and Vatican II says that “the families themselves, generously accepting the gift of human life, are as it were a first seminary.”<sup>13</sup>

However, an important warning comes from the well known writer Igino Giordani about the rising and the fall in the number of vocations to the priesthood vis-à-vis the life of the family. He says that “the priesthood must sanctify the family; and the family must give life to the priesthood...the family and the priesthood correspond for the better or for the worse; as the moral level of the family goes up, the dignity of the priesthood becomes higher; and the more the priesthood goes down in dignity, a lesser number of vocations comes from the family. If the priesthood is not lived well, the family will fall in adultery, divorce and abortion; if the virtue of chastity disappears from the life of the family, there will be no more vocations for the seminaries or for the religious houses.”<sup>14</sup>

#### *1.4.5 Implementing the pastoral plan of the diocese for the Maltese family*

In 1985 the Archdiocese of Malta published its Pastoral Plan (1986-1991) and it said that the Church in Malta wanted “to strengthen the Maltese family and to maintain its Christian identity”<sup>15</sup> because by so doing “it will also strengthen the Maltese society.”<sup>16</sup> The work that had to be done in favour of the family aimed to achieve better relationships between husband and wife, the nurturing of children, paternal and maternal responsibility, formation for a Christian life and the apostolate

11. See Ibid, 52.

12. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis* 41.

13. See *Optatam totius*, 2.

14. See IGINO GIORDANI, *Laicato e sacerdozio*, Roma 1964, 149.

15. See ARCIDIOCESI TA' MALTA, *Pjan pastorali* 1986-1991, 1985, 94.

16. See *ibid*, 95.

of the family or the domestic Church.<sup>17</sup> This Pastoral Plan of the Archdiocese of Malta said that it was important that Christian parents in nurturing their children should help their children in recognizing their vocation.<sup>18</sup> But the Plan did not simply say that the parents should promote vocations in their families but that they should create a family atmosphere whereby the spirit of faith and prayer that permeated the family made the family “the first seminary for its children.”<sup>19</sup>

### ***1.5 The socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts of priestly vocations in Malta.***

The family prepares children and young people to continue developing their personality in places of leisure and in voluntary work, in schools, in religious associations, and in parishes. The survey about the socio-cultural and ecclesial environments of priestly vocations examined the impact of these contexts on the life of the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations and in particular on their choice of vocation to the priesthood.

The Gospel and the teaching of the Church are needed for the understanding of the socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts of priestly vocations today. The Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* speaks of “Gospel discernment”<sup>20</sup> as “the criterion for making practical choices in the new and unique reality of the teaching of Jesus Christ”<sup>21</sup> with regards to vocations to the priesthood.

When examining the results of the survey, one can notice that there are positive and negative elements in the socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts where the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations spent their years of childhood, adolescence and youth life. Besides, both the positive and the negative elements of these socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts present a challenge to educators and young people so that they will be able to change the environments with the life of the Gospel.

17. See *ibid.*

18. See *ibid.*, 82.

19. See *ibid.*

20. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 37.

21. See *ibid.*

When the socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts in which children, adolescents and young people grow become evangelised, then they will help the persons who live in them to become mature human beings and Christians. This Christian environment will also help these persons to be the protagonists who will bring a further change for the better in society and in the Church. It is expected that from among these young Christians there will be more people who will be able to offer their lives to the Church and serve her in the vocation to the priesthood.

### ***1.5.1. The social context***

#### ***1.5.1.1 Leisure***

An important factor in the life of young people is the time for leisure. The questionnaire made a distinction between the leisure which the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations experienced in adolescence and in youth. Sports, religious associations, friends, outings, discos and feasts were the sources of enjoyment for the members of the Vocation Centre.

In adolescence, the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations preferred principally sports (38%), religious associations (16%), friends (15%), outings (10%) and discos (07%). While in youth life, the members preferred discos (26%), friends (23%), outings (19%), sports (13%) and religious associations (06%). In adolescence, the respondents of the survey who opted to become priests preferred religious associations (18%), sports, (14%), outings (14%), friends (12%). In youth, those who opted to become priests preferred friends (27%), outings (16%), discos and cinema (10%), sports (08%), music (06%), and religious associations (06%).

#### ***1.5.1.2 Voluntary Work***

Another factor which contributes to the formation of young people is the amount of social openings which help them discover that they can contribute to the well being of others with their voluntary work. Lay associations, old people's homes, parishes, homes for the disabled, foreign missions, and children's homes are the environments where the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations worked for the benefit of others who were in need of help.

Most of the members of the Centre did voluntary work in religious associations (30%), with old people (23%), in parishes (14%), with disabled persons (09%), abroad in the missions (07%), and with children (03%). And those who opted to



become priests did voluntary work with old people (42%), charitable associations (20%), in parishes (10%), abroad in the missions (10%), and with children (08%).

### ***1.5.2 The cultural context***

#### ***1.5.2.1 The school and Christian formation***

The survey that was held among the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations showed that 32% of the respondents went to the Government schools including the Junior Lyceums, the area Secondary Schools and Trade schools. While 65.5% went to Private schools run by the Church or other institutions. 02.5% did not mention the school they attended.

There were 75% among those respondents who opted to become priests who said that they attended the Church schools. The biggest number frequented the Minor Seminary (28%), followed by De La Salle College (10%), St Augustine College (10%), and St Aloysius College (08%).

When asked what kind of environment did the school create around the members of the Centre, 69% of the respondents said that the school environment helped them live a Christian life; while 31% said that no help was provided to them to live a Christian life.

The respondents who opted to become priests were more positive in their evaluation of the kind of environment that the school which they attended provided to their students. Of these respondents, 82% said that the school helped them live a Christian life; while 18% said that the school did not help them to live a Christian life.

The respondents of the survey provided the reasons why the school helped them to live a Christian life. The environment was described by the majority of the respondents as “a religious environment” (18%). But others were more specific when they said that the environment in their schools was imbued with a human aspect of education (18%) and with prayer (15%). While teaching, good Christian formation, religion lessons and vocation activities helped them to live the Christian life.

Those who opted to become priests mentioned religious activities (20%), teachers who gave them good examples (16%), and Christian formation (16%) as the main

reasons why the school helped them to live a Christian life.

When the survey asked the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations to say whether the school created any difficulties to them for living a Christian life, 69% of the respondents said that they found no difficulties, while 31% did find difficulties to live a Christian life in the school.

One hundred and twelve gave a reason why the school created difficulties for them to live a Christian life. Most of the respondents mentioned bad friends (41%) and others just said friends (18%). Other respondents mentioned an indifferent attitude to religion (15%), and the environment in general (14%).

Among the respondents who opted to become priests, 18% said that the school created difficulties for their Christian life. They blamed their school mates because they were bad boys (55%) and because they were indifferent to Religion (45%).

#### *1.5.2.2 The school and vocations*

The survey also questioned the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations to see whether the school helped their vocation to the priesthood. One hundred and seventy one of the respondents gave a positive answer.

Among the reasons they gave as to why the school helped the students in the choice of their vocation to the priesthood, 45% mentioned the vocation meetings and 39% mentioned the people in the school who helped them in this regard.

Those who opted to become priests mentioned the following reasons: 30% mentioned counselling, 18% the vocation meetings and 08% said that their teachers spoke to them about the subject of their vocation.

When asked whether the school discouraged them to maintain their vocation to the priesthood, some said that they were discouraged to follow their vocation.

When they were asked to give the reasons how the school discouraged their vocation to the priesthood, 50% blamed their friends, 18% said that the subject of vocation was given very little importance and 18% said that other ways of life were given priority to the vocation to the priesthood.

Very few of those who opted to become priests explained how the school discouraged their vocation to the priesthood; there were only a few answers.

A specific question was put to the members of the Vocations Centre to glean from them more information about the reaction of the schoolmates regarding the vocation of their friends. Most of the members of the Centre or 87% said that they were not annoyed if their friends knew that they attended vocation meetings. But 13% said that they were annoyed by their friends when the latter came to know that they attended vocation meetings.

### **1.5.3 The Ecclesial environment**

#### **1.5.3.1 Religious associations**

Most of the members (49%) of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations attended the Society for Christian Doctrine or as it is commonly called the M.U.S.E.U.M. (*Magister Utinam Sequatur Evangelium Universus Mundus*). Other respondents were members of other religious associations like Youth Centres (08%), Catholic Action (07%), Legion of Mary (05%) and Altar Boys (04%).

The members of the Vocations Centre who became priests attended the same religious associations as the other members and with an equal percentage.

When the survey that was held among the members of the Centre asked what kind of help did the environment of Religious Associations and Movements of Christian life offered them to grow in their Christian life, an interesting list of helps was given, priority being given to prayer (25%), help in general (23%), instruction (16%), Christian formation (09%), and counselling (07%).

The members of the Centre who opted to become priests gave priority to Christian life (14%) and then they mentioned almost the same helps as their friends had done: prayer (14%), help in general (10%), doctrine (10%), and spiritual life (7%).

The survey asked what kind of help did religious associations give them to find their vocation. The respondents mentioned help in general (39%), counselling and spiritual direction (14%), vocation guidance (13%), instruction (10%), prayer (07%) and witness (03.5%).



The members of the Centre who opted to become priests mentioned help and support in general (42%), spiritual help (14%), life of prayer (12%), talk to a priest (09%), freedom to choose (04.5%), good example (04.5%).

### *1.5.3.2 The Witness of Priests*

The presence of priests in the life of the members of the Vocation Centre can be considered as part of their ecclesial environment.

When the members of the Centre were asked whether they had a spiritual director, 57% said yes. And 72% of those who opted to become priests said that they had a spiritual director.

Then they were asked whether they met priests who left a good impression on them. Those who said yes were 89% while those who opted to become priests were many more and they amounting to 98%.

The survey asked what kind of impression did the priests leave on them. The respondents in general mentioned virtues (40%), pastoral dedication (35%), priestly vocation (07%), moral and spiritual life (06%), sermons (06%), joy (05%) and the life of prayer (02%).

While those who opted for the priesthood mentioned pastoral commitment (45%), spiritual life (35%), time for young people (10%), and happiness (10%).

The survey also asked whether the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations met priests who impressed them by their bad behaviour. Of all the respondents, 48% said yes and 52% said no.

Those who opted to become priests, 67% said yes and 33% said no.

The survey wanted the respondents to specify what kind of bad impression did they receive from priests.

In general, the respondents mentioned principally sense of superiority and pride (37%), shouting (15%), non-contact with the world (15%), avarice (12%), hypocrisy (11%), indifference (10%).

Those who opted to become priests, 22% mentioned shouting, 11% indifference, 11% egoism, 07% childishness, 07% too busy, 07% quarrelsome.

The survey asked whether the members of the Vocations Centre were in favour of the celibacy of the priest. Of all the respondents, 76% said that they were in favour while 88% of those who opted to become priests said that they were in favour.

Finally the survey asked the members of the Centre to say what impression did they get of the priest when others would speak about him.

Out of all the respondents 49% said that they had a good impression of priests when they heard priests or others talk about them on the radio; the number lowered to 42% when they heard priests talk or others talk about them on television; and the number went further down (31%) when respondents read articles of priests or about priests in the papers.

Those who opted to become priests said that they had a good impression of priests when they heard them talk or others talked about priests on television (38%); the number lowered among these respondents when they referred to priests on radio (36%); and only 18% said that they had a good impression of priests when they read articles of priests or about priests in the papers.

## ***1.6 Christian life and vocations***

The Second Vatican Council put the achievement of holiness as the ideal of every Christian and the Apostolic Constitution *Christifideles Laici* said that “we come to a full sense of the dignity of the lay faithful if we consider the *prime and fundamental vocation* that the Father assigns to each of them in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit: the vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of charity. Holiness is the greatest testimony of the dignity conferred on a disciple of Christ.”<sup>22</sup>

Only a deep spiritual life based on evangelisation can give the right attitudes to children, adolescents, young people and adults to discern the will of God for them and in particular the vocation to the ministerial priesthood.

22. See JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, 16.

The survey that was held among the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations has shown that although the family, the parish community and the Vocations Centre somehow helped to introduce the members of the Centre to the spiritual life as the Church conceives it today, it can be very clearly seen that some of these members do not know the true meaning of spiritual life and they do not live a deep spiritual life that can help them give themselves totally to God especially in the priesthood.

The survey has also shown that some of the members of the Centre still believe that the spiritual life is the sum total of a number of prayers. Besides that, they also consider that the spiritual life is a personal concern and therefore they still retain an individualistic attitude when they pray with others. This way of conceiving spiritual life is not in conformity with what the Church teaches today.

“Life according to the Spirit, whose fruit is holiness (see Rm 6:22; Gal 5:22), stirs up every baptized person and requires each to *follow and imitate Jesus Christ*, in embracing the Beatitudes, in listening and meditating on the Word of God, in conscious and active participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church, in personal prayer, in family or in community, in the hunger and thirst for justice, in the practice of the commandment of love in all circumstances of life and service to the brethren, especially the least, the poor and the suffering.”<sup>23</sup>

Such a life of holiness as the Church presents it to its members can easily lead some of them to dedicate their lives for the others by accepting to become priests when this is the will of God for them. Some of the respondents of the survey did accept their vocation to the priesthood. In prayer they put themselves in the presence of God and they believed that He was calling them to the priesthood. They also succeeded to move through the stages of the spiritual life that was presented to them especially by the Centre for Diocesan Vocations.

### **1.6.1 Life of prayer**

#### *1.6.1.1 Meditating the Gospel in daily life*

When asked about their commitment to make their meditation on the Bible, only 04% of the respondents of the questionnaire said that they prayed with the

23. See *ibid.*



Bible daily, and 36% said that they prayed often with the Bible. The rest of the respondents rarely prayed with the Bible.

Those who opted to become priests were more committed to the reading and meditating on the Bible; 08% of these respondents said that they prayed with the Bible daily and 56% said that they often prayed with the Bible.

In the vocation meetings which are held in the Seminary on Saturday mornings and during the weekend retreats, it has become a must that the members do their meditation on the Bible. They are divided into groups of ten young people each and they read a passage from the Gospel under the guidance of a seminarian. They are encouraged to make that passage from Scripture the guiding motif of their behaviour in the following hours in which they live with their friends.

At the end of the day, in the presence of the Eucharist and in a quiet and prayerful atmosphere, the young people share with the other members of the group the experiences they lived as inspired by the Word of God.

The members are again encouraged to continue to do their meditation on the Word of God if possible on a daily basis. However very few succeed to do it and the reason for this is that when they are alone they lack a Christian community, however small it is, and whoever its members are (members of their family, friends or members of a religious association).

#### *1.6.1.2 Participating in the Mass and prayers*

There is a very important link between the Word of God and the participation in the Mass.<sup>24</sup> The Word of God leads those who listen to it and live it to meet at the Eucharistic table. Because of this, in the vocation meetings, the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations are told to participate in the Mass if possible daily.

The survey showed that 40% of the members of the Centre were keen to go to Mass daily and 56% went often to Mass.

24. Ibid, 3; "the call to holiness is rooted in Baptism and proposed anew in the other Sacraments, principally in the Eucharist."

But the respondents who later became priests were even more keen to go to Mass daily, 66% said that they went to Mass daily and 26% said that they often went to Mass.

Many of the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations consider it important for them to grow in their spiritual life by participating in the Mass. But it can also be said that many times the Mass is just another form of prayer for many young people and they can easily discard it when they are pressed for time as during their examinations period.

The members of the Vocations Centre were asked to say what preference they gave to the different forms of prayer. A large percentage or 27.5% said that they preferred evening prayer to any other kind of prayer and 21.5% gave their second preference to the Rosary. But only 14% said that they liked to pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and only 09% said that they preferred to pray with others in prayer meetings.

However those who opted to become priests showed a more mature choice of prayer, 24% said that they preferred praying with others to any other way of praying. This is the fruit of the spiritual formation given to the members of the Centre where much emphasis is put on praying together.

### *1.6.2 Living the values of the Gospel*

The spiritual life of the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations was tested where we presented to them three values which are very evident in the Gospel message, and asking them whether they lived their daily life according to these values.

#### *1.6.2.1 Sharing, Helping and Forgiving*

Sharing with others, helping others and forgiving others, are three values which outline the love which one has for others, especially if one builds one's life on the foundation of the Gospel. We may call them also the demands which Christ makes of those who accept to become His disciples. These values are important for anyone who wants to follow the vocation to the priesthood which is a ministry of service.

Many of the members or 67% of the Centre said that at some time in their life

they gave something of their own to someone who was in need of it. This percentage was higher or 84% among those who opted to become priests.

A smaller number of members of the Vocations Centre or 59.5% did voluntary work for a period of time by helping the sick, old people and people with some kind of disability. This percentage went up to 78% among those who opted to become priests; sometimes the members of the Centre are taken to orphanages and old people's homes to help and to visit the inmates.

The survey showed that the most appreciated value which is lived by the members of the Centre is forgiveness, 87% said that they forgave others. Also in this case a higher number or 96% of those who opted to become priests said that they forgave others.

These three values of generosity, helping others, and forgiveness are recurring themes in the vocation catechesis presented to the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations during the years of their formation. Besides offering well-prepared talks and personal counselling on these themes, the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations are encouraged to live these values by sharing goods among themselves, helping in orphanages and old people's homes and also sharing their joys and sorrows among themselves; and in the playground, games' rooms, and during walks they are helped to be able to live peacefully, share ideas, and get to know new friends.

#### *1.6.2.2 Detachment*

The Gospel value of detachment was presented in the questionnaire which was given to the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations as a test case to assess the members regarding their readiness to leave behind everything for the sake of Jesus in order to follow the vocation to the priesthood if this is their call.

Many of those who opted to become priests or 98% said that they did not worry at all about detaching themselves from money. But of all the respondents of the survey there were 77.5% who said that they did not worry about money were they to accept their vocation.

Of those who opted to become priests 82% said that they did not worry about detaching themselves from a career. While there were 59% of the respondents in general who said that they were ready to do the same.



Only 46% of those who opted to become priests said that they did not find it difficult to detach themselves from a family of their own, while 50% said that they would find it very difficult to detach themselves from a family of their own, and 04% said that it was too difficult for them not to have a family of their own. As it is expected few or 35.5% of all the respondents of the survey said that they did not find it difficult not to have a family of their own in order to live a celibate life.

### *1.6.2.3 Difficult situations*

In order to assess the difficult situations which the members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations had to endure in their life as young people, the questionnaire asked them what confused them in their adolescence.

Personal relationships are the main cause of confusion in the life of the members of the Centre followed by indecision, sex, and doubts about faith.

Most of those who opted to become priests did not mention any particular situation that disturbed them in their adolescence: one mentioned misunderstanding on the part of parents, six mentioned difficulties with sex, four said that they found it hard to study, three mentioned doubts about their vocation, and two experienced the death of someone who was dear to them, a death which troubled them.

## *1.7 Summary*

This panoramic view of the socio-cultural and ecclesial contexts wherein the ex-members of the Centre for Diocesan Vocations have grown up in the period between 1976 and 1993, has shown that this environment was strong enough in faith as to help a number of respondents of the survey to answer positively to the call to the priesthood. Maltese young people were helped in a special way to follow their call to the priesthood both by the Vocations Centre and also by the different components of the Christian community.

The Centre succeeded to attract a good number of young people who had received the sacrament of Confirmation by inviting them to its vocational activities. It has been through these activities that the Vocations Centre helped a good number of young people to accept the call to the priesthood and others who opted to become religious. At the same time, a large number of young people who had already begun to attend the vocational activities, “lost their vocation” or they were “expelled”

from the Centre. It is important that the Centre for Diocesan Vocations builds its structure and programme for the pastoral work for priestly vocations on the principles of the Gospel.

The components of the Christian community contributed to create the favourable environment for vocations to grow in number and in quality. The category of priests which tops the list of the components of the Christian community in helping vocations did so by their pastoral dedication; the parents helped vocations by having a good number of children and by welcoming the latter's vocation. And the schools, both government and private, whether of the Church or of other institutions, together with religious associations, provided an environment where students and members could live a good Christian life. But the bad impression which some priests left in the Christian communities, the lack of encouragement to attend vocation activities on the part of parents, and the factor of bad friends in schools as hindrance to the Christian life and priestly vocation, may have contributed to a decrease in the number of vocations to the priesthood.

An important factor that helped a continuous flow of vocations to the priesthood in Malta was that the members of the Vocations Centre and, in particular, those who opted to become priests, were encouraged to lead a Christian and spiritual life based on the reading of the Bible daily or often. They also participated in the Mass, many of them daily or often, and they built their lives on the Gospel values of sharing, generosity, forgiveness and detachment. It was not hard for them to face difficulties or, perhaps, they accepted them as a way of life as proposed by the Gospel.

What is necessary now and in the future is to continue to help young people to develop their lives on the principles of the Gospel in order that they may be first of all true Christians and, if this is the call of God for them, to become priests; and if God calls them for some other way of life, they live a true Christian life that creates a healthy Christian environment in the world and in the Christian community where they live. This is what the conclusion of these studies will explain at length and propose as a structure for a programme of a pre-seminary formation.

## **2 A PRIOR SEMINARY EVANGELISATION PROGRAMME OF FORMATION**

What is needed today is an evangelisation of the socio-cultural and ecclesial

contexts wherein children, adolescents, young people, and adults live and grow in their Christian maturity. As St John wrote in the beginning of Christianity, "I have written to you, young men, because you are strong and God's word has made its home in you, and you have overcome the evil one."<sup>25</sup>

Evangelisation is needed because "our century is marked by the manifestations of cultural transition which though rich in potential is very unstable and uncertain"<sup>26</sup> and it affects young people in general and prospective candidates to the priesthood in particular. Very often young people who ask to be admitted to the Seminary are good Christian people who come from families, schools and associations which create a good environment in many cases; but it must be said that many of them did not have a serious evangelisation neither in the family nor in the parish. In the Synod of Bishops about "The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of Today" (1990), Cardinal Moreira Neves said that "a big number of young people received not more than just colouring of faith and institutional religiosity."<sup>27</sup> The result of a lack of evangelisation is a weak faith.<sup>28</sup> This weakness in the faith of young Christians is revealed when they have "to make a personal sacrifice and enter for a permanent commitment be it in marriage, in the priesthood or simply in the leading of Christian life."<sup>29</sup>

Several Synod Bishops suggested that it was very important to impart a "systematic catechesis to help young Christians to grow in their Christian faith."<sup>30</sup> The seeds of this new hope in the life of Christians are already present. John Paul II enumerated these seeds of hope when he said that in the life of Christians today there is "a powerful thirst for justice and peace, possibilities of evangelisation, the

25. See 1 Jn 2, 24.

26. See SECRETARIAT OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS 1990, *Instrumentum Laboris* (1990), 1. The working document of the Synod of Bishops of 1990 explained that this "cultural transition is deeply affected by materialism and its manifestations such as consumerism and pragmatism, by religious indifference and atheism and particularly by secularism and by the phenomenon of de-Christianisation."

27. See TETTAMANZI, 44.

28. Ibid, 65; Cardinal Edward Bede Clancy said that "a weak faith makes an inadequate provision for the cross."

29. See *ibid*.

30. Ibid, 66; Bishop Leonard Lagaspi also said that "young people must grow in a communitarian environment and begin from an early age to opt to help the poor people."



thirst for God and for an active meaningful relationship with him,"<sup>31</sup> as well as "forms of voluntary service and participation in spirituality groups whether traditional but renewed ones or of more recent origin."<sup>32</sup>

## ***2.1 Prior Seminary formation***

The need of the introduction of a prior Seminary formation was already announced in the *Relatio ante disceptationem* of this Synod of Bishops by the relator Cardinal Moreira Neves who said that "a post conciliar novelty, *res omnino nova*, should be mentioned: the propaedeutic seminaries that prepare the candidates for entrance into the Major Seminaries."<sup>33</sup>

The first references to this novelty in the formation of candidates to the priesthood are found in the Second Vatican Council Decree on the Formation of priests, *Optatam totius*. The Council said that "special attention must be given to adolescents and young people who are receiving their formation in the Minor Seminaries or in alternative institutes as well as in institutes which are established to give the necessary formation to those who receive the call of God in adult life."<sup>34</sup> What is meant by the formation which is necessary prior to entrance to the major Seminaries is specified by the Council decree when it says that the Bishops must establish a period of time in which the seminarians receive "a more intense spiritual training."<sup>35</sup> But at the very beginning of their formation in the Major Seminaries, the Council decreed that the students of the Major seminaries should be introduced to the Mystery of Christ which influences the whole history of man, is part and parcel of the life of the Church and it appears most evident in the priestly ministry.<sup>36</sup>

## ***2.2 The contents of the prior Seminary formation***

### ***2.2.1 Human formation***

The pre-seminary formation was referred to consistently by the Synod Fathers in the Synod of 1990. Going through the speeches of the Bishops certain

31. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 6.

32. See *ibid*, 9.

33. See TETTAMANZI, 233.

34. See *Optatam totius*, 3.

35. See *ibid*, 12.

36. See *ibid*, 14

characteristics of the pre-seminary formation were underlined. Among these characteristics, the candidates to the priesthood must have a good psychological and physical state of health, a religious experience of God, and an adequate affective equilibrium.<sup>37</sup> Some Bishops spoke about the human maturity that is necessary for those who want to be candidates to the priesthood because “many crises of priests are based on psychological and emotional immaturity.”<sup>38</sup> In particular human maturity is necessary for anyone who wants to embrace the state of celibacy. Canadian Bishop Frederick Bernard Henry said that the charism of celibacy calls for a high degree of psychological-sexual development and it needs to be presented in positive terms.<sup>39</sup>

Prior to seminary entrance candidates should be carefully assessed not only in terms of their call to pastoral ministry but also for their overall human maturity and in particular for their ability to live a chaste-celibate life.<sup>40</sup> And therefore there should be means by which the human maturity of the candidates can be assessed. Bishop Robin Walsh Leamy coming from the Pacific said that “candidates for the seminary need to have good selection procedures and screening methods.”<sup>41</sup> Reverend Timothy L. Castello from the United States who was invited as an expert at this Synod of Bishops, affirmed that “the Seminary has its own programme and it cannot be the place where to resolve conflicts of development related to adolescence and adult life; it is presupposed that the candidate has a good basis of personal maturity.”<sup>42</sup>

### 2.2.2 *Spiritual formation*

When speaking about the prior Seminary formation, certain Bishops spoke about the construction of the interior man. Bishop Bala of Cameroon identified the one propaedeutic year with the spiritual year.<sup>43</sup> Cardinal Michele Giordano spoke of the pre-seminary formation as a time of spiritual beginning, clarification of vocation motivations, construction of the “interior man” so as to acquire the certainty of

37. See TETTAMANZI, 272.

38. See *ibid*, 157.

39. See *ibid*.

40. See *ibid*, 76.

41. See *ibid*, 159.

42. See *ibid*, 98.

43. See *ibid*, 159

faith to be called by Christ to the ministry of the Church.<sup>44</sup> The emphasis on the spiritual life of the candidates to the priesthood is enhanced by the fact that today many seminarians come from the public schools and de-Christianized environments. His Beatitude Stephanos II Ghattas of Egypt said that “because the majority of those who are admitted to the inter-rital and inter-diocesan Major Seminary in Cairo do not come from the minor seminary but from the public schools, we have had to institute one or two years of propaedeutics during which new comers receive an intense religious and spiritual formation; the basis of Christian doctrine, the identity of the priest, the demands of the priestly life, the habits of a life of piety and a regular community life.”<sup>45</sup>

Listening to the Word of God, initiation into personal prayer and the Liturgy, to the life of the community and to the sense of responsibility were some of the themes suggested by the Bishops of the Synod for the pre-seminary formation. Bishop Joseph Satoshi Fuhahori of Japan said that “from the beginning of his formation the candidate for the priesthood must learn to read the Bible as the Word of God and to listen in faith the call that the Lord makes to him and he needs to learn the life of a disciple.”<sup>46</sup>

### 2.2.3 *The right attitude towards the vocation to the priesthood*

Bishop Margeot said that “experience shows that the discernment of motivations for the vocation to the priesthood made at the very beginning is very useful.”<sup>47</sup> Prior Seminary formation helps the clarification of the vocation to the priesthood and this can come about by a good spiritual direction. Archbishop Pio Laghi, the Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education said that “only a correct spiritual direction guarantees the Church a healthy and stable discernment and makes the answer to the divine call be based on faith. It is only then that it will be in a position to perceive the sense of the vocation and its requirements.”<sup>48</sup>

Special note should be made of the intervention given by Cardinal Danneels of Belgium who asked: “Where are the obstacles? No serious search has been carried out on this point; one hypothesis is that there is no question of a lack of generosity among

44. See *ibid*, 109.

45. See *ibid*, 177.

46. See *ibid*, 126.

47. See *ibid*, 134.

48. See *ibid*, 245.



young people, they commit themselves for great horizontal humane ideals. But for God? It is the vertical level of theological faith in young people and in communities which is too low.”<sup>49</sup> Commenting on the intervention of Cardinal Danneels, Donato Negro says that this point goes to the roots both of the deficiencies in the human and Christian formation and also of the socio-cultural phenomena in general.<sup>50</sup>

### 2.3 *Evangelising the Christian environments*

Together with the Bishops of the Synod about *The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of Today*, John Paul II asked for “a sufficient period of preparation prior to Seminary Formation.”<sup>51</sup> The reason for the establishment of this pre-Seminary formation was given by John Paul II himself when he said that “while in the past most candidates came from the Minor Seminaries and the Christian life of the community offered a suitable Christian instruction and education, this situation in many places has changed.”<sup>52</sup> In the society of today, even though boys, adolescents and young people are brought up as Christians, yet “certain deficiencies are found too often in young people and they regard not only the Christian and spiritual formation, but also the human and cultural formation.”<sup>53</sup>

Hence it is more than necessary that the pastoral work for Vocations that is carried out today is “aimed decisively and primarily towards restoring a Christian mentality: one built on faith and sustained by it.”<sup>54</sup> This is the aim of the Evangelisation that Christ introduced in the world when he said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.”<sup>55</sup> This is the entire mission of the Church and at the same time it is “her most profound identity”<sup>56</sup> because it is through Evangelisation that the Church is built up into a community of faith or “a community that confesses the faith in full adherence to the Word of God which is celebrated in the Sacraments, and lived in charity.”<sup>57</sup>

49. See *ibid*, 136

50. See DONATO NEGRO, *Anno Propedeutico: vera novita' del Concilio Vaticano II*, in *Seminarium* 32 (1992), 605.

51. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 62.

52. See *ibid*.

53. See G. CAPRILE, *Il Sinodo dei Vescovi Ottava Assemblea Generale Ordinaria*, Roma 1991, 541.

54. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 37.

55. See Mk 16, 15.

56. See PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 14.

57. See JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici*, 33.

Only through a mature Christian community can a true Evangelisation and Catechesis be made in countries which are dominated by an economic well-being and consumerism which co-exists with poverty and misery and where life is lived as if God does not exist. But such a mature Christian community can also give life to Christians who are dominated by traditional piety and devotion which can easily be the prey of secularism and of different sects.

Mature Christian communities can also beget new vocations to the priesthood because in itself the Christian community is a community that is called by God to live up to the ideals of the Gospel. When the Church as a whole can respond to the call of God, each individual that inhabits the Christian community can also respond to the will of God to live up to his holiness. But the begetting of vocations to the priesthood by the Christian community is also a challenge to the whole Christian community “to care for the birth, discernment and fostering of vocations, particularly those to the priesthood.”<sup>58</sup>

### 2.3.1 The family

*Christifideles Laici* says “that what is first needed for the evangelisation of the world is the formation of those who will evangelise.”<sup>59</sup> The Christian family plays the most important part in the evangelisation of the world and it bears the responsibility to foster the birth and growth of vocations both priestly and religious as well as in the lay state.

In the Synod of Bishops, Bishop Norbert Wendelin Mtega of Tanzania said that “if we want to solve some of the serious problems of vocations, formation to the priesthood and even of celibacy let us begin to teach catechesis in our families and make them true Christian families.”<sup>60</sup> It is only from such Christian families can important human and natural virtues begin to take root in the life of the children, adolescents and young people. What is meant by Christian families is “united, healthy families marked by a deep faith and prayerfulness”<sup>61</sup> which become as it

58. See JOHN PAUL II, Discourse at the end of Synod (27 October 1990), in TETTAMANZI, 318.

59. See JOHN PAUL II, *Christifideles laici*, 35.

60. See TETTAMANZI, 209.

61. See *ibid*, 52.



were “a first seminary” in which children can acquire from the beginning an awareness of piety and prayer and of love for the Church.”<sup>62</sup>

### 2.3.2 *The school and associations*

The school works hand in hand with the family as “an educating community.”<sup>63</sup> It is the school that can infuse “in the hearts of boys and young people a desire to do God’s will in that state of life which is most suitable to each person, and never excluding the vocation to the priestly ministry.”<sup>64</sup> *Pastores dabo vobis* mentions the lay faithful who would include the catechists, teachers, educators and youth ministers and it says that “the more they inculcate a deep appreciation of young people’s vocation and mission in the Church, the more young people will be able to recognize the unique value of the priestly vocation and mission.”<sup>65</sup>

*Pastores dabo vobis* mentions “the groups which promote vocations whose members make an important contribution by prayer and sufferings offered up for priestly and religious vocations, as well as by moral and material support.”<sup>66</sup> It also mentions “the groups, movements and associations of lay faithful which are proving a particularly fertile field for the manifestation of vocations to consecrated life, and are truly the environments in which vocations can be encouraged and can grow.”<sup>67</sup>

### 2.3.3 *The parish and communities*

The parish is a “fertile ground where vocations are born and mature.”<sup>68</sup> However, the parish is alive and can provide the necessary Christian environment when it is truly the gathering of the family of God or a community that is animated by the commandment of love for God and for one another. A parish becomes a Christian community when it is renewed by the principles of the Gospel, namely: first of all by the Word of God that should not only be listened to and celebrated, but above all

62. See SYNOD OF BISHOPS (1990) on *The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of today*, Propositio 14.

63. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 41.

64. See SYNOD OF BISHOPS 1990, Propositio 15.

65. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 41.

66. See *ibid.*

67. See *ibid.*

68. See TETTAMANZI, 95.



lived and then shared by the members of the community; secondly by fraternal union that leads to a new and practical commitment to love one another; thirdly by the celebration of the Eucharist which leads to the rediscovery of the profound meaning of the sacraments unifying liturgy and life in the paschal mystery; and finally by prayer or union with God which gives rise to a completely new relationship with God not only on the personal level but also on the communitarian level.

In the parishes thus renewed, like the first communities, the new Christian communities experience the presence of the Risen Lord which was promised to those who are united in his name. Such parishes become schools of Christian life in which the Christians live for one another and in which each Christian is able to find his place and role and his own vocation. In these parishes “an exceptionally fruitful apostolate and authentic conversions”<sup>69</sup> take place as well as new vocations come forward because young people hear or hear again the call of God and become priests and deacons, while others become religious and still others become committed lay people.<sup>70</sup>

A new source of vocations to the priesthood are the new spiritual movements born before and after the Council period by promoting Evangelisation in the ecclesial communities. The *Lineamenta* of the Synod of Bishops about *The Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of Today* mention three main characteristics of these ecclesial communities:

1. They are a sign of our times and they have a strong impact on youth;
2. They stimulate conversion and they awaken a sense of God and initiate persons into a life of prayer and give them an apostolic spirit;
3. They give birth to a number of religious and priestly vocations.<sup>71</sup>

Bishop Klaus Hemmerle affirmed that today there are two main sources of vocations:

69. See *ibid.*

70. See *ibid.*

71. See SYNOD OF BISHOPS 1990, *Lineamenta*, 18.

1. there is an increase in the number of those who have already learnt a profession and later on they discover their vocation to the priesthood;
2. there is certainly not a lack of vocations coming from the new spiritual movements.

Sandro Panizzolo says that “vocations are forthcoming from the ecclesial movements because the members of these movements live their Christian life in an intense way.”<sup>72</sup> According to Panizzolo, these ecclesial associations have three things in common:

1. a strong spiritual experience and brotherly life;
2. a serious commitment to service and mission;
3. a lifestyle that is fresh, enthusiastic and direct.<sup>73</sup>

And Bishop Derek Worlock found that the reason for the increase of vocations coming from the new ecclesial movements is “that vocations often come from settings in which young people experience a community of faith.”<sup>74</sup> John Paul II gave his approval to such ecclesial communities when he described them as a “fertile field for the manifestations of vocations to consecrated life and true environments in which vocations can be encouraged and can grow.”<sup>75</sup>

## **2.4 The means for Evangelisation**

### **2.4.1 Prayer**

The first means for evangelising the Christian communities and help them give birth to new vocations for the priesthood is prayer. Praying for vocations is an act of obedience to Jesus’ persuasive and demanding invitation to “pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest (*Mt* 9, 38).”<sup>76</sup> In the 1990 Synod

72. See SANDRO PANNIZZOLO, “Seminari e movimenti, gruppi e associazioni, cammini ecclesiali”, in *Seminarium*, (1990) 278.

73. See *ibid.*

74. See TETTAMANZI, 263.

75. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 41.

76. See *ibid* 38.

of Bishops it was affirmed that prayer for vocations is necessary both when vocations are lacking and this is an act of faith in God whereby it is acknowledged by the Church that vocations to the priesthood are a gift from God; and also “when vocations are thriving because in prayer the Church finds the support necessary to have a happy result for the greatest number of vocations.”<sup>77</sup>

The communitarian aspect of vocations must be very much emphasised because “it is the Church, in her dignity and responsibility as a priestly people, that possesses in prayer and in the celebration of the Liturgy the essential and primary stages of her pastoral work for vocations...and this is required not only of individuals but of entire ecclesial communities.”<sup>78</sup> The communitarian aspect of the prayer for vocations is expressed in the Liturgy and especially in the Eucharist because the Liturgy and the Eucharist make Christians participate in the Paschal Mystery of Christ and therefore they join the Christians to Christ who “freely and willingly made his way in obedience to the Father’s call (see Jn 13,1).”<sup>79</sup>

The Liturgy and the Eucharist also show the Church as a priestly people and a community structured in the variety and complementarity of its charisms and vocations. Being members of the Christian community and participating in the priesthood of the faithful, all the members of the Church must be educated to pray for vocations in order that the Church may have the priests who are necessary to lead her in the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

“It is necessary to educate boys and young people so that they will become faithful to prayer and meditation on the Word of God so that in silence and listening, they will be able to perceive the Lord who is calling them to the priesthood and be able to follow that call promptly and generously.”<sup>80</sup> John Paul II says that “prayer for vocations should become an ever more continual and widespread habit within the entire Christian community.”<sup>81</sup>

77. See TETTAMANZI, 140.

78. See SYNOD OF BISHOPS 1990, *Propositio* 15.

79. See *ibid.*

80. See *ibid.*

81. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 38.



### 2.4.2 Proclaiming Vocations

Proclaiming vocations and calling its members to follow the call to the priesthood is a commitment which the Church bears towards its members. The Church must show her members that as she herself received from the Father through Christ the call to love the Father and that she responded to the call by loving the Father in Christ through the Holy Spirit; in the same way she proclaims to them the call of the Father to love Him and if he also calls them to love Him by becoming ministers of Christ, she helps them to respond in a positive way.

As *Pastores dabo vobis* says, “the Church feels herself irrevocably committed to the task of proclaiming and witnessing to the Christian meaning of vocation, or as we may say, to the Gospel of vocation...it is also important to make a direct preaching on the mystery of vocation in the Church, on the value of the ministerial priesthood and on the urgent need which the people of God has of the ministerial priesthood.”<sup>82</sup> The catechesis of vocation or the imparting of the teaching on vocation to children, adolescents, young people and adults must include some main aspects like clearing doubts and correcting mistaken ideas about the vocation to the priesthood; but it must also help “to open the hearts of believers to accept the gift of the vocation to the priesthood to create the favourable conditions for the birth of new vocations.”<sup>83</sup>

John Paul II said that “the time has come to speak courageously and there should be no fear that one is thereby conditioning them or limiting their freedom when one presents the vocation to the priesthood as a priceless gift and a splendid and privileged form of Christian living when there is a real possibility for young people who demonstrate the necessary gifts and talents and when this invitation is made at the right time.”<sup>84</sup> The direct call to the priesthood which is made to young people is not necessarily made by words, but it must be made first and foremost by “the joyful witness of priests which can raise questions and lead to decisions, even definitive ones.”<sup>85</sup> The witness of priests which can speak very loudly to the young

82. See *ibid*, 39.

83. See *ibid*.

84. See *ibid*.

85. See *ibid*, 40.

people of today was emphasised by Bishop Joseph Mercieca when he said that “the life of priests in the parishes, with their presence and their way of life, greatly influence the young people and the candidates to the priesthood when the latter hear priests say that they are happy in their priesthood.”<sup>86</sup>

The direct calling to the priesthood that is addressed to the young people leads to the formation which young people need in order to be prepared to be ready to receive the call and to be able to answer it in a responsible and mature way. “The Church fulfils her mission when she guides every member of the faithful to discover and live his or her own vocation in freedom and to bring it to fulfilment in charity.”<sup>87</sup>

#### 2.4.3 *The Christian formation of young people*

It is very interesting and important to see that the Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* sees “children, adolescents and young people” as the addressees of her educational role and in particular when it sees them as the persons in whom it wants to instill “the will to follow Jesus Christ in a total and attractive way...so that God with his call reaches the heart of each individual, and the Spirit, who abides deep within each disciple (see 1 Jn 3,24) gives himself to each Christian with different charisms and special signs.”<sup>88</sup> The formation that must be imparted to children, adolescents and young people must first and foremost aim to form a true Christian life in them and only when they become true Christians can they perceive the true meaning of the call to the ministerial priesthood. This is because as Bishop Klaus Hemmerle said “the stages of formation of the priest are the following: 1. to live as a baptized person; 2. to live as a disciple of Christ; 3. to be fully available to the people in need, and 4. to be capable of carrying out the priestly ministry.”<sup>89</sup>

When young people live the common priesthood as all Christians should do, they will have the most solid foundation of the vocation to the ministerial priesthood because as Cardinal Aloysius Lorscheider said “the more the common priesthood is exercised and developed the more will priestly vocations increase.”<sup>90</sup>

86. See TETTAMANZI, 187.

87. See JOHN PAUL II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, 40.

88. See *ibid.*

89. See TETTAMANZI, 97

90. See *ibid.*, 64.

Two principal means that are needed to give the best formation to young people to listen to the call to the priesthood are spiritual direction and the service of love. Children, adolescents and young people are to discover this important means whereby they can discern the call of God through the medium of those people who represent God especially priests. On the other hand it is the responsibility of priests “to devote time and energy to this work of education and the personal spiritual guidance of young people.”<sup>91</sup> Children, adolescents and young people should make an experience of the service of love which makes them participate in the “charity of Christ”<sup>92</sup> and which finds its expression in the priestly vocation. The service of love gives to young people the spirit of sacrifice, a love for others and especially unconditional self giving.

### *2.5 A specific programme of Christian formation: the spirituality of unity*

In his speech to the Synod of Bishops 1990, the author made it very clear what he wanted to present to young people when they attend meetings for vocations to the priesthood was to help them understand that instruction alone is not enough. What is important for them is to live the Gospel and to experience it personally. Only in this way may their vocation be built on rock, according to the words of Jesus: “Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock.”<sup>93</sup>

#### *2.5.1 Young people live the Gospel*

In vocation work, one is very often struck by how different young people listen to an abstract vocation catechesis and how they listen when they are told to view life in the right of the Gospel. The aim of vocational groups is that their members commit themselves to live the Word together. Periodically, it is proposed to everyone – from ten to twenty years of age – to go more deeply into one phrase of Scripture by putting it into practice in the situation of their daily lives. Then they are invited to share their experiences of living the word. Moreover, during the days and weekends in which the members of the vocational groups live together, they are introduced to the main themes of the Gospel: the discovery of God as love, the commitment to do His Will, love of neighbour, love of one another with Jesus in the midst, the

91. See *ibid.*

92. See *ibid.*

93. See Mt 7, 24.



Eucharist, suffering and coming to life with Christ. Every theme proposed is oriented towards putting it into practice.

### 2.5.2 *Young people are happy with vocations*

Young men like this line of action very much. It can be noted how this commitment to live the Gospel together brings about in them a true transformation. And the one who brings this about is Jesus Himself, the Only Teacher. In this way, young men relive the experience of the early disciples: listening to Jesus and putting into practice His words, they pass from a simply human mentality to an evangelical mentality. This change can be seen in certain points around which the charism of unity is expressed today.

### 2.5.3 *Freedom*

Perhaps the ideal that has most taken hold on the young generations today is that of autonomy and personal freedom. Young people search for “being”, but too often they stop short at “having.” The effects of consumer society are well known and they threaten to suffocate in people every sense of the transcendent. Living the Word frees young people from these easy mirages and makes them discover their true purpose in life. Jesus proposes to young people to put God in the first place, putting aside all the rest. And they do it. It is surprising to see that in so doing young men do not find it difficult to put aside the amusements of their friends.

### 2.5.4 *Love*

The fact is that they find an ideal that is more beautiful than anything the world can offer them. In living the Word, they discover that they are no longer alone but that they have found a Father who loves them and looks after them. “Why, every hair on your head”, said Jesus, “has been counted.”<sup>94</sup> Young men find in this promise the foundation of their life, their true identity. Therefore, they believe in the unlimited love of God for them and they want to respond to this love. Again, it is the Word which shows them the way: “It is not those who say to me, ‘Lord, Lord’, who will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but the person

94. See Mt 10, 30.

who does the will of My Father in heaven.”<sup>95</sup> This makes them discover a religion which is not made primarily of sentiments, but which is expressed in the commitment to listen, moment after moment, to the voice of God as it is manifested to them in the commandments, in the precepts of the Church, in their conscience, in their duties. Confident that it is a Father who speaks to them, they abandon themselves solely to His plans. They know, in fact, that anything they could possibly plan for themselves would always be something limited. Thus their existence is transformed into a divine adventure.

### 2.5.5 *Christian charity*

Furthermore, there is one sentence in particular which impresses young men. Jesus said, “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.”<sup>96</sup> And so they begin to see soon the traits of Christian charity begin to stand out in them: they begin to love everyone without discriminating between the pleasant and the unpleasant, between the young and the old: they find the strength to take the initiative in loving the people they meet; they are ready to serve, to identify with the joys and the needs of others. In doing so, they lay solid foundations not only for the married life but also for a celibate life.

By loving in this way, they are often loved in return, and so they experience the countless fruits of mutual love. This is what happens especially in the many moments when they seek to live together and the *law* of these moments is Jesus’ new commandment: “Love one another as I have loved you.”<sup>97</sup> This is the essence of every moment of living together: from prayer to preparing meals, from manual labour to games. Everything is an occasion of experiencing the new style of life that Jesus brought on earth. And it is even possible to achieve a true communion of goods.

95. See Mt 7, 21.

96. See Mt 25, 40.

97. See Jn 15, 12.

98. See Mt 18, 20.

### *2.5.6 Jesus among us*

This builds among young men a true family atmosphere. And not only this. “Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.”<sup>98</sup> In living the new commandment, the young men find the key to experiencing among them, in an altogether special way, the living presence of Jesus. In a certain sense, it is as if He had come out of the tabernacles in order to live everywhere: in houses, in schools, on the street. And it is because of this presence that the young men become radiant sources of Christian life in the midst of their friends. As a result, in the archdiocese of Malta, there has been a growth from 500 to 1,000 young men who meet at the parish level and in vocational groups.

## **2.6 Living the Word of God**

### *2.6.1 Rediscovery of suffering*

Putting into practice the Word sheds new light on the mystery of suffering. While the world around the young men teaches them to avoid suffering, to fear it, Jesus makes them discover that every experience of suffering, every misunderstanding, doubt, failure, can become an encounter with Him crucified, an opportunity to show Him their love. They suddenly experience that if suffering is loved, it can be transformed into an experience of resurrection, into new love. It is above all in this personal and profound experience of the mystery of Jesus on the cross that those whom God calls to the priesthood find the stimulus to abandon other fascinating prospects, like wealth, a career and a family.

### *2.6.2 Rediscovery of the Church*

There are still other effects of living the Word together: the dynamic discovery of Jesus causes in young men a discovery also of the Church, a convinced acceptance of the doctrine of the Church, an intense love for the Eucharist, in which they see the source and the apex of their unity with God and with one another. The figure of Mary also comes into limelight as the perfect disciple, the model for every Christian. Like her, as these young men are gradually penetrated by the Word of God, they become sensitive to the voice of the Spirit who speaks in their hearts.

### *2.6.3 Rediscovery of the Priestly Vocation*

On this foundation, the call to the priesthood no longer finds obstacles. When



young men are committed to living a life based on the Gospel, then also their particular calling comes into evidence more easily. "I will manifest myself...to the one who loves me."<sup>99</sup> And it is surprising to see how spontaneously they often say their, "Here I am, Lord."<sup>100</sup> Vocations that come to life on this foundation are not motivated, which easily happens otherwise, by outside factors like perhaps the unconscious searching for social or ecclesial position. They are authentic vocations. It is a great joy to see many young men reach the maturity of making themselves completely available to God and to the Church. So it is not so difficult to propose the priesthood to those who show objective signs of being called. This experience which has been going on since 1972 in the diocese of Malta has given some 140 students to the Major Seminary 60 of whom are already giving their pastoral services to the Christian communities of the diocese; others have followed the path to the Consecrated life and many others have committed themselves to live in the Church as laymen.

'Cor Jesu'  
Triq il-Pitkali  
Attard

<sup>99</sup> See Jn 14,21.

<sup>100</sup> See Is 6, 8.

## Two Baptisms in the Acts of the Apostles

John J. Kilgallen SJ

There has long been a discussion, in both exegetical and theological circles, about the relationship between water baptism and Spirit baptism. Certainly, there is reference to both baptisms in Luke-Acts (e.g., Luke 3,16; Acts 8,36-38); unfortunately, Luke does not give us enough data about them so that we can understand them in such a way as to answer all questions. On the other hand, it seems that the two baptisms can be distinguished well enough to give us good understanding of the relation between them and the difference that separates them. It is worth perusing Acts to see just what these two baptisms are, and to make sure we do not confuse the one with the other. We begin with the very early statement of Acts, wherein Jesus calls the Pentecost outpouring of the Spirit a 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' (Acts 1,5).

All told, there are, in Acts, four moments of baptism in the Holy Spirit: Pentecost (2,4), Samaritans (8,17), Cornelius (10, 44-45), the twelve of Ephesus (19,6). The Samaritan and Ephesus experiences are distinguished from the Pentecost and Cornelius experiences by the laying on of hands as the means by which the Spirit comes; as well, Pentecost knows only prophecy as the gift of the Spirit, whereas the other moments imply or speak directly of other gifts.

Thus, a 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' suggests the Spirit's coming as a person to give a person a gift, the effect of which is public. Each of the four moments mentioned above has its own function in Acts and thus its own particular details and observations from Luke. In the case of Pentecost, the disciples receive the Spirit in order that they might give testimony to gathered Jews concerning 'God's marvelous works' (Acts 2,11). Similar to this Pentecost function is what we find in the Peter-Cornelius episode; here the Spirit gives spiritual gifts to Cornelius in order to convince Peter that Cornelius has the faith to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. In the case of the Samaritans, the gift(s) of the Spirit can be seen in the reaction of Simon who "saw" what the Spirit gave. In the case of the twelve in Ephesus, the gifts presumably are for the benefit of others, since prophecy (speaking on behalf of God), a gift on behalf of others, is mentioned. All told, the four moments (Acts 2, 8, 10, 19) are examples of a baptism in the Holy Spirit which accounts for

gifts of the Spirit. Baptism is a proper term to use here, since the Spirit 'envelops' a person as water might when one is immersed (baptized) in it.

In the sequel to Peter's Pentecost speech we hear Peter encourage people to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2,38). How does baptism in the Holy Spirit relate to baptism in the name of Jesus Christ? Above all, are they two terms for the same experience, or do they refer to two different things? In studying the two 'baptisms', the following points surface.

First, regarding **persons** involved in the baptisms, the two figures, Holy Spirit and (the name of) Jesus Christ, are notably different; all the more so if one tries to imagine them as the substances 'into which the baptized is immersed'. From the four examples of baptism in the Holy Spirit, one understands the giving of the gifts of the Spirit. On the other hand, the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ suggests the externalization-formalization of an interior act of personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Second, regarding **effects** of baptism in his name, there is no suggestion that those 3000 (Acts 2,41) who responded to Peter's pentecostal preaching exercised any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as in the case of Cornelius and the twelve of Ephesus. It is true that in the story about conversions in Samaria there is no exercise of gifts mentioned, once Peter has laid hands upon the Samaritans and the Spirit comes to them; yet, what Simon saw and longed to reproduce must suppose such an exercise of gifts. Moreover, one cannot rule out, given the subsequent laying on of hands and its results in the Samaritan story (Acts 8,15-17), that the gifts of the Spirit could be received quite some time after baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, even though, as Luke suggests (8,16) that the gifts of the Spirit are a logical sequence to baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

But, to repeat, there is no acknowledgement in the narration of Acts that in Peter's Jerusalem the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit followed upon baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. One cannot rule out the possibility that the Christian community of Jerusalem did enjoy the gifts of the Spirit, but one cannot assume that the gifts of the Spirit is the effect of, or defines 'baptism in the name of Jesus Christ'.

Third, regarding '**temporal distinction**', there is no need that baptism in the Spirit need follow immediately upon baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Cornelius received the gifts of the Spirit *before* baptism in the name of Jesus Christ; the Apostles in Jerusalem received these gifts *neither before nor after* baptism in the



name of Jesus Christ. Samaria received the gifts much later than, and *independently* of baptism in his name; the gifts of the Spirit were *added* to 'baptism in his name' in the case of the twelve in Ephesus. Thus, in the four cases which can fall under the heading of 'baptism in the Holy Spirit', a clear distinction or separation can be made between this baptism and the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ – these examples can only mean that baptism in the Holy Spirit and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ are two separate entities.

Fourth, regarding the **natures** of the baptisms, one can clearly distinguish baptism in the Holy Spirit and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, as suggested earlier. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, described in Luke 3,16; 24,49; Acts 1,5, is not related by speakers (John, Jesus) directly to faith. Faith should be presupposed, as the contexts of these verses suggest, but the baptism in the Spirit is not an intrinsic to faith and its expression in baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. Logical as it is (Acts 8,15) that the baptism in the Spirit follow upon baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, baptism in the Spirit, as Acts presents it, is an entity independent of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

This last point bring us to consider Acts 2,38, with its exhortation to repentance and baptism, and its promise of the Spirit. Like the baptism administered by John, the baptism of Acts 2,38 caps repentance, a repentance which involves a forgiveness and cleansing and a renewed relationship with God; thus, we have here *two* elements: the person's repentance, God's (hoped for) forgiveness. Unlike John's baptism, the baptism of Acts 2,38 also means faith that Jesus is Christ and Lord and dedication to that Jesus Christ. Thus, in the latter baptism, there are *three* elements: the person's repentance, the forgiveness of God, the faith in Jesus and dedication to him. As one is immersed in water, so one is immersed into Jesus Christ (as one can be said to be immersed in the Holy Spirit). Indeed, the thrust of this baptism, as the formulation of 2,38 indicates, is on 'in the name of Jesus Christ'; it represents the apex of personal turning to Jesus and repentance.

What, then, of the phrase (Acts 2,38) "and you will receive the Holy Spirit"? After considering the four differences we noted above between baptism in the Spirit and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, it seems necessary to conclude that this reception of the Spirit, about which Peter speaks, is a gift of the Spirit different from what is described elsewhere in Acts as the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Particularly, if Peter can assure the 'baptized in the name of Jesus Christ' that they will receive the Holy Spirit, and if these 3000 baptized do not manifest the gifts of

the Spirit, then the reception of the Spirit, referred to in Acts 2,38, must refer to a coming of the Spirit distinct from that associated with baptism in the Holy Spirit. This particular coming of the Spirit is nowhere explained or even expressed in semi-technical language in Acts; we are not given examples of this coming as we are given the four examples of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Clearly this coming of the Spirit follows upon Baptism, as 2,38 shows, but at best it is a part (can we say from Acts, an 'integral part'?) of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. As separated from baptism in the Holy Spirit, this coming of the Spirit seems better associated closely with baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, as Acts 2,38 suggests.

Having said the above, we can perhaps say a bit more about this 'reception of the Holy Spirit' that we distinguish from baptism in the Holy Spirit. First, the verse 2,38 is not applied only to the one-time preaching of Peter at Pentecost. Verse 2,38, as exegetes read it, is paradigmatic; it is understood to describe the three steps associated with all and every 'baptism in the name of Jesus Christ'. The formality of the statement, and its care in expressing the three steps of repentance, baptism, reception of the Spirit argues this. Thus, any other baptism has associated with it a coming of the Holy Spirit, distinct from any 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' which may be experienced by the believer. Second, though the reception of the Spirit is not defined or explained to the reader, one best explains the vigorous and impressive community of Jewish Christians in 2,42-47 as flowing from the powers of the Holy Spirit. It is difficult to ascribe this marvelous activity to faith alone, and, since there is no evidence here of the gifts of the Spirit, it seems ascribable only to that Spirit which is associated with baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

## **Conclusion**

Acts is best understood as conveying that there two distinct comings of the Holy Spirit in the Jesus phenomenon. There is a baptism in the Holy Spirit, which means to bestow on the believer the gifts of the Holy Spirit. There is a baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, which means to incorporate the believer into Jesus Christ, with which incorporation the Spirit is given. In discerning these two kinds of reception of the Spirit and in distinguishing the baptism in the Holy Spirit from the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, there are acknowledged obscurities in the Acts story, lacunae of information we would like to have so that we can be more clear about which Acts teaches.

Part of our problem lies in what might end up being a comfort in this matter.

Theophilus, to whom Luke directs his Gospel and Acts, has already been taught (Luke 1,4) many things; to use the Greek word of 1,4, we can say that Theophilus has already been 'catechized'. It seems most reasonable that Theophilus already knew essential things about the Spirit, about baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, about the gifts of the Spirit. Pauline letters are testimony to what at least Pauline communities knew and believed some twenty years and more before Luke wrote for Theophilus' benefit. For better or worse, many of the blanks in Luke-Acts can be presumed known to Theophilus; that is, Luke builds upon what Theophilus knows and logically can assume basic knowledge on his part. If Luke were starting from the very beginning of catechesis, Acts would necessarily be very much clearer in all its aspects. Given the two choices, 1) that we cannot adequately distinguish the two baptisms Acts mentions and 2) that we can fill in most blanks to come up with a reasonable and coherent understanding of the two baptisms, the second choice seems preferable. Indeed, the first choice leaves one with many more problems, with much more unclarity, than does the second.

The best understanding of Acts, then, leads one to distinguish, on the one hand, baptism in the Holy Spirit from baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and, on the other, the coming of the Spirit with gifts (e.g., prophecy, speaking in tongues) and the coming of the Spirit consequent upon baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

(A minor consideration. Were the Apostles baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ? No matter how one envisions the actual 'baptism-in-his-name' of Acts 2,38 (what actions or words did it involve?), one finds no external deed in the Gospel or in Acts which suggests such a baptism. One can only say that the following of Jesus to the Pentecost, starting with Peter's calling Jesus 'Lord' (Luke 5,8) and his leaving all to follow Jesus (Luke 5,11), suggests that Peter had the dedicatory faith which should lie behind 'baptism in the name of Jesus Christ'. Indeed, on the basis of the already mentioned episodes in Acts 8 (Samaria) and Acts 19 (Ephesus), wherein the baptism in the Spirit followed upon baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, one can argue that there must have been at least the ingredients of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the Apostles because they enjoyed a baptism in the Holy Spirit.)

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## **The Family: A Reflection of the Trinity**

Maurice Eminyan, S.J.

While in God there necessarily is absolute simplicity, because of his infinitely perfect divine nature, in the human person God's image appears, as it were, reflected or refracted into different aspects just as a ray of light falling on a prism comes out split into a variety of rays representing the rainbow colours. Thus both man and woman, in their spiritual and sexual differences, are God's image and likeness. And so is their complementarity and their instinctive urge to be attracted to each other and become one, through mutual love and total self-giving, and thus share in God's creative prerogative by becoming procreators of new life. Thus the family itself, of its very nature, is God's image and likeness.

Reason does not tell us much about God, for God transcends the limitations of a created mind. It tells us what he is not, rather what he is in reality. By reason we know that God is infinite, immense, unchangeable, without beginning or end, unlimited in his perfections and therefore the fullness of being.

Here is, therefore, where divine revelation comes in. In order to assist human reason, so limited in itself as it is and still weaker because of sin, God has deemed it fit to reveal himself to mankind in a way which goes far beyond the natural possibilities of human nature. This is called supernatural revelation, by which man, assisted by God's own help, is enabled to attain further knowledge not only about his own nature and destiny, but also about God's nature and essence. This is in fact the proper task of theology which, using the resources of reason, is always seeking and never reaching final answers and definitive insights.

### ***God as 'Family'***

It is thanks to this supernatural revelation, contained in God's dealing with his chosen people, subsequently manifested through the prophets and reaching its fullness in Jesus Christ the Son of God made Man, that we now know that God himself is a "Family." This is what we call the mystery of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are distinct persons, but they are so intimately

united as to constitute one entity, one Divine Nature, one God. The communication that goes on between them is infinitely perfect and gives rise to a perfect unity of Persons, or rather to an infinitely perfect communion, an infinitely perfect divine family. We therefore learn from divine revelation that the Godhead, by its very essence, is a Holy Trinity, a Divine Family. The human family, created in God's image and likeness, is at the same time a reflection of the Holy Trinity, three Persons in one Divine Nature.

The Trinitarian mystery, as everyone knows, is the fundamental mystery of Christianity. The greatest theologians, especially Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, have proposed various explanations, not to unveil the mystery, but to illustrate it by means of analogies derived from our experience and from our way of thinking as humans, and thus show that no contradiction can be proved in believing that the three Divine Persons are fully distinct and yet fully united. God knows himself by an infinitely perfect knowledge, and through such knowledge God conceives an infinitely perfect idea or 'word' which is an expression of that knowledge. This divine word, conceived and expressed in the divine mind, is the Son, a perfect image of the Father, proceeding from the Father. But knowledge begets love, and perfect knowledge begets perfect love. As true love consists more in giving than in receiving, in the act of perfect knowledge God elicits within himself perfect 'love' and thus He 'spirates' the Spirit, who is personified Love proceeding from the Father and the Son.<sup>1</sup>

No matter how much one tries to explain or illustrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity, it remains a mystery. One thing, however, also remains true. In the above and similar explanations there are concepts and ideas which, reflecting on the human family, we find analogically reproduced in it.

There is, first of all, the idea of plurality in unity. No matter which kind of family we do have in mind, there are at least two persons in it, and these are united by the bond of love, a love which should be total, faithful and irrevocable, resulting in a union which is as perfect as it can be in this world among two human beings of different sexes.

1. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, 1q27, 3, 5; q. 28 4c; q. 37 1c; q. 41 6c.; *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Revised Edition), Chapman, London 1999, nn. 253-256



Although there exist families which, for one reason or other, do not or cannot have children of their own, the complete sexual expression of conjugal love between the spouses is of its nature open to the begetting of new life, as we shall see further down. Hence, besides unity in plurality, a trinity of persons also belongs to the nature of the human family.

This analogy between the Blessed Trinity and the human family, showing how the former is actually reflected in the latter, has, to my knowledge, not yet been developed in doctrinal theology. We do nevertheless come across a few references of it here and there.

One of these references was made by Bernard Häring, one of the leading theologians in recent times. He writes as follows on this subject; "The fundamental mystery of our faith, the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, is the cornerstone of social theology. Every community has its starting point in the triune life of God, which is its model and ultimate goal [...]. The family is the most intimate and most vigorous natural community of love. Proper love between the spouses and between them and their children is the most perfect earthly representation of trinitarian love.

Here physical love between the spouses, and the blood-tie between parents and children, are embodied in the highest and most self-sacrificing form of love and are inspired and formed by it."<sup>2</sup>

Häring also stresses the fact that love in the family tends of its very nature to become trinitarian, because it is an assent to the creative presence of God, from whom the spouses desire that he should bless their love with a child. "In their adoring assent to the Creator, in their faithful and receptive assent to the child, the love of the spouses is protected from becoming a closed circuit, from being restricted to merely physical love, and from the enslavement resulting from the idolisation of oneself or of one's spouse."<sup>3</sup>

Thus the greatest and most beautiful feature of the family is only discovered when one sees it in the image of the triune community of love within the Godhead, as Häring goes on to write: All true living in human community, but especially in the hallowed bosom of the family, should be a valid manifestation of the impenetrable

2. *Marriage in the Modern World*, Mercier Press, Cork 1965, p. 144; see also by the same author, *Law of Christ*, II, Mercier Press, Cork 1965, pp. 347 ff.

3. *Loc. Cit.*

and eternally inspiring mystery of the triune flame of love in God, and a signpost showing the way there. In marriage, man as a lover, as one gratefully receiving and returning love and gladly and experiencing the fruitfulness of that love, is truly the image of the God who rejoices in the eternal bliss of his threefold love. The mystery of divine love is, to the extent that such a thing is thinkable and possible in the natural order, pictured in outline in the family, but in such a manner that we only recognise the image as an image when God himself has spoken to us about the original picture, about his own central mystery.”<sup>4</sup>

The God revealed to us by Jesus Christ is one; but he is also a God subsisting in three equal and distinct Persons. And man is an image of this God, in whom the trinity of the Persons is the supreme realisation of his Being. Now it is particularly interesting to bring out that Christian revelation presents to us an aspect of the extraordinary and absolutely unique relationship between the divine Persons with a language that is typical of the family nucleus, namely father and son. Furthermore, although it is true that the Blessed Trinity is not a family in the natural sense of the word, it is also true that the notions of paternity and filiation do find in God an entirely objective realisation. It is therefore not far-fetched to say that man’s innate social tendencies are a concrete realisation of his likeness with God even in the natural order. In the nucleus of the family, then, we see the fullest and most typical similarity to God in the natural order.<sup>5</sup>

It is in their capacity to become three that husband and wife joined in marriage reflect the Trinity. When they get married, they are no longer two, but one; but, because of their ability to beget new life by their union, they are potentially three. It is this very image of the Triune God in them that actuates their potentiality to become three and reproduces the divine model in a human family. Their children, in turn, will be the incarnation of the love existing between the spouses, and in fact will contribute in normal circumstances to strengthen and deepen further their spousal love for each other.<sup>6</sup>

4. Op. Cit, p. 145.

5. Cf E. Ruffini, “La famiglia comunità di grazia”, VV.AA. *Matrimonio, Famiglia e Divorzio*, Napoli 1971, 50

6. See I. Galot, S.I., “La famiglia nel piano di Dio”, in VV. AA., *La Famiglia oggi e domani*, Ed. Ancora, Milano 1980, 25-27; see also M. Gilbert, “Soyez feconds et multipliez, Gen 1,28”, *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* 96 (1975) 729-742.

### *Communications within the family*

Just as within the Trinity, so also within the family the communication between its members spells itself in terms of interpersonal encounter. The solidarity which is developed within the family is not a mechanical one, like that of a machine in which the various pieces and gadgets are made to fit into each other and so to move together, but one of persons relating to one another, opening themselves for one another, loving and accepting one another. Having been created in God's image and likeness, man is, like God, a person and therefore, in some sense, an absolute. As a person, man cannot be the *object* of a strict right on the part of another person; he can only be the *subject* of a right. He is the only creature whom God has created for itself. But man's prototype image is God, who is not one person, but a community of three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three Persons not only communicate with, and relate to each other, but their very essence consists in relating to each other, in total mutual giving and receiving, in knowing and being known, in loving and being loved, in an eternal procession of life from one Person to another.

The fact that man is by nature a "social animal", far from limiting his very nature, is an enriching factor for him. His need to relate to others and communicate with them, finding his fulfilment in forming a family, is not to be understood as a stop-gap or a remedy making up for his imperfections, but an innate vocation inherent to his dignity as man. He cannot be himself except by the gift of self. If God, as we have indicated, is a family, then man too, in order to fulfil his destiny, must be a 'family'. There is no other way for man to be like God. He must allow himself to be made one through the binding power of true love. An isolated human being, in no way seeking the oneness of family, does not in fact reflect the Trinity, the divine family. The celibate person, who chooses to be so for the sake of God's kingdom, is no exception to this rule: he or she relates to other persons in a deeper and superior way, he too enriches others and is enriched by them by his service and the loving gift of self. In all truth he or she too has set up a family which, while being of a different but superior order, is no less modelled on the trinitarian family.<sup>7</sup>

"As a matter of fact the ties of flesh and blood, which contribute for the cohesion of the family, are nothing else but signs, engraved into the psychology of man, of

7. See Guido Gatti, "La Proposta Cattolica", in *Proposte Religiose per la Famiglia d'Oggi*, III, Convegno Nazionale, Roma 5-6 Feb. 1983, p.4; T. Forrest, "The Trinity: Model for family life", *New Covenant* 6 (1976) 4-6.



the above-mentioned constitutive vocation of his to realise himself fully in love and communion through communication and self-donation. They bind him to that community of multiple and differentiated effects which is the family, the privileged moment of gratuity and intimacy, a living image of the trinitarian community in the world.”<sup>8</sup>

### *Perfect Model*

Thus, if one wishes to set up an ideal model for the family to imitate, there cannot be a more suitable one than the Triune God himself. The Trinity represents the intimate life of God: the intimate traits of that life can be analogically reproduced by man and woman united by the bonds of marriage. Though remaining two distinct persons, their conjugal union implies the total mutual giving of self in love and can be the source of a third person, also distinct from either of them and yet united to them also by bonds of love and forming with them the triune community, which is the family.

Such is, then, God’s plan: that the human family should be an image and likeness of the divine Family, the Blessed Trinity. If this means anything, it certainly means that the same basic characteristics and traits of a family are to be found in both families. By meditating on the Trinitarian mystery we can have a better insight as to what the human family is or should be. But the reverse process should also be valid: by observing the way in which members of a successful and happy human family relate to each other, we can have an idea of the prototype in Heaven, summing up all the good qualities we find existing in the human family and applying them analogically and in the highest possible degree to the Family in the Godhead.

By using this inverse method, we would be making use of the family as a locus *theologicus*, as theologians call it. According to this method, knowledge about God’s supernatural revelation and theological conclusions regarding it can be acquired not only from the inspired word in Holy Scripture and Tradition, but also, although in a lower degree, from creation itself, especially from those elements in it which are under God’s special and supernatural providence.<sup>9</sup>

8. Gatti, *loc. Cit.*

9. Cf N. Rocholl, *Die Ehe als geweihtes Leben*, Dulmen 1936, 108-110; Ch H. Massabki, *Le Christ rencontre de deux Amours*, Paris 1958, 105; P. Grelot, *Le couple humain dans l’Écriture*, Paris 1969, 99.

Dealing with the interrelationships within a family situation, psychologists tell us about the development of the so-called 'triangular personality' in us. "A human being reaches the necessary fullness of personality only by being able to adjust himself to a 'triangular situation'. This is the stage in emotional development [...] when the child, as boy or girl, forms a relation with the parents in as much as they are a couple, instead of as before when the child tended to feel closer to one parent than to the other. The married couple, on the other hand, achieves its own fullest life only if it is fertile and is the fountainhead from which comes a child, the 'third person'. This is the 'triangular situation'. Following such thoughts, the image of God in mankind can be seen as the relationship between persons, especially among three persons. As for God himself, we know from the full <sup>10</sup> revelation of the Holy Spirit that in his basic essence God is the Mystery of the Trinity

This so-called 'triangular situation' is always potentially there whenever two lovers are bound by the bond of matrimony. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife, even when the latter has already passed her menopause, always has of itself the implied relation to a 'third side' of the triangle, so long as their conjugal union is a sign of their total mutual donation. "If a man and a woman exchange kisses, they alone are involved. But if they have intercourse, becoming one, they create at least the possibility of a third person: a child. At the moment of intercourse, a whole new world of relationships and responsibilities comes into existence. The child, in order to become a good, balanced human being itself, will need in its emotional life a security and stability which the mother alone can give. The mother herself, in turn, needs the sense of security that will come to her only through being close to the child's father."<sup>11</sup>

The well-known preacher and writer Bishop Fulton J. Sheen devotes a whole chapter, entitled "Love is Triune", in his famous booklet *Three to Get Married*, which has now become a classic. After considering marriage as consisting of three distinct elements, namely husband, wife and love itself as something distinct from both, he moves on to consider the family as triune consisting of Father, Mother and Child. Hence he writes the following: "Since love means a mutual self-giving which ends in self-recovery, the love of husband and wife, in obedience to the creative

10. Marc Oraison, *Learning to Love*, Paulist Press, New York 1964, 78-80.

11. Oraison, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

command, should 'increase and multiply'. Like the love of earth and tree, their marriage should become fruitful in new love. There would be mutual self-giving as they sought to overcome their individual impotence by filling up, at the store of the other, the lacking measure; there would be self-recovery as they begot not the mere sum of themselves, but a new life which would make them an earthly trinity. As the three Divine Persons do not lose their personality in their oneness of essence but remain distinct, so the love of husband and wife leaves their souls distinct. As from the love of the Father and the Son proceeds a third distinct Person, the Holy Spirit, so in an imperfect way, from the love of husband and wife there proceeds the child who is a bond of union which gives love to both in the spirit of the family. The number of children do not alter the basic family trinity, for numerous are the fruits of the Most High while he is one [...]. As the riches of the Holy Spirit of love are at the disposal of those who live under his impulse, so marriage, lived as God would have it lived, associates partners to the creative joy of the Father, to the self-sacrificing love of the Son, and to the unifying love of the Holy Spirit [...]. Marriage is a trinity, even when no child proceeds from it through no fault of the parents. But if the child comes, then love is made incarnate."<sup>12</sup>

### *In the Magisterium*

As is often the case with most theological insights regarding other areas of religious and Christian doctrine, the trinitarian dimension of the family, mentioned and sometimes slightly developed here and there by a number of theologians and religious writers, as we have seen, has taken time before it reached the Magisterium and was, so to speak, appropriated by it.

Trinitarian considerations in regard to the family, however, have not been altogether lacking. Back in the year 1940 Pope Pius XII made reference to it in one of his regular meetings with engaged couples at the Vatican. "The family is related to God even on the natural level. It is sacred, first of all because it is at the service of God, and secondly because of God's presence in it at its birth, in its development and in its permanence. The family appears still more splendid if we consider that it is God's image and the likeness of the Trinity. Just as the essential unity of divine

12. Fulton I. Sheen, *Three to Get Married*, Dell Publ. New York 1951, 103-104.



nature exists in three distinct Persons, consubstantial and eternal, so also the unity of the family is realised in the trinity of the father, the mother and the children, all of them living in the unity of fruitful love.”<sup>13</sup>

The same thought is developed further by Pius XII on a later similar occasion, when he said the following: “Just as God’s love for the unity of mankind has brought about the Incarnation, so also the love of the spouses becomes incarnate in the children. Just as God creates, redeems and sanctifies, so also the married couple are called to be collaborators in the creative work of the Father, in the redemptive mission of the Son, and in the illuminating and educating task of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>14</sup>

While there is no clear reference to the trinitarian dimension of the family in the documents of Vatican II, it is nonetheless there in germ, especially in the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, which stresses the divine origin of the family as a community of persons and its God given task of participating in God’s work of creation.<sup>15</sup>

It was no surprise, then, that after the conclusions of the Council in 1965, one comes across numerous references to the family as a reflection of the Trinity in the writings and pronouncements of Bishops from all over the world. Such references, at first implied and made in a general way, became clearer and more pronounced as time went on. This becomes evident by the fact that at the Fifth General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops convoked at the Vatican in 1980 on *The Christian Family in today’s World*, no less than thirty-five interventions by different bishops were made in which one finds explicit and sufficiently developed reference to the family as a reflection of the Holy Trinity. I report here only a few examples. “One of the ways for deepening and enriching the natural law is that of an integral respect for sexuality and conjugal love, which sees in the complementarity of the two sexes an

13. Pius XII, *Addresses to engaged couples*, June 1940, in V. Del Mazza, *La Famiglia nel Pensiero di Pio XII*, Ed. Paoline, Alba 1952, 178.

14. See *ibid.*, *Address to Engaged Couples*, 5th March 1941, pp. 178 ff.

15. See GS, nn. 47-52 passim. See also G. Caprile, *Il Sinodo dei Vescovi 1980*, Ed. La Civiltà Cattolica, Roma 1981, which contains an exhaustive collection of all relative documents and the texts of all episcopal interventions made in the course of the Synod. For a less exhaustive account of the Synod proceedings in the English language, see: Jan Grootaers and J.S. Selling, *The 1980 Synod of Bishops on the Role of the Family*, Presses Universitaires, Louvain 1983.

aspect of that truth according to which human beings have been created after the image of God one and triune. Such an attitude of esteem leads one to consider also the necessity of integrating body and mind in the very act of conjugal union through which the spouses express and perfect their mutual self-giving.”<sup>16</sup>

“The family, within which the individual is born, grows and develops, is the object of God’s salvific plan inasmuch as he reflects the image of God’s triune love.” From this the Bishop derives a number of virtues which should shine in the married couple and in the family: a love open to life, fidelity, mutual respect and service, moral rectitude, gift of self, communication, participation and sharing, and in brief nuptial, paternal and filial relationships making the components of the family true images of the Holy Trinity.”<sup>17</sup>

“In creating man, God has impressed on his physical and spiritual reality the image of his own life and fruitful love. In fact the christian family is a reflection of the trinitarian life. It is an ideal offered to all without excluding any person, group or culture; with God’s help all can tend towards it according to the measure of their own faith.”<sup>18</sup>

While the value of the human person could be looked upon as a philosophical conclusion, the specific contribution of the Church, in the light of divine revelation, could consist in showing how a life of relationship is essential for man inasmuch as he becomes a person within a communion of persons. The Christian sees this model of person and communion in the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Man too realises fully his own personality when he enters interpersonal relations with others, which take place in a unique and most complete way in the family.”<sup>19</sup>

“It is from the trinitarian foundation of marriage and the family that all conclusions regarding conjugal love can be drawn. From the Father, creative love is learned which looks on the children as a gift of God; one has recourse to the Father in difficult moments, and it is from the Father that one learns how to be truly

16. Joseph L. Bernardin, Archbishop of Cincinnati, Caprile, *ibid.*, 80.

17. Rafael Garcia Gonzales on behalf of other two Mexican delegates, *ibid.*, 85.

18. Maurice Marie-Sainte, Archbishop of Fort-de-France, *ibid.*, 168.

19. Angelo I. Fernandez, Archbishop of Delhi, *ibid.*, 301

solicitous for his family. From the Son the spouses learn the meaning of their intimate and profound union; in Christ the sanctifier they find the efficiency of their matrimony; in the Son their human love is reflected, transformed, consecrated and enriched. It is in the Holy Spirit that they find the secret which unites their family, kindles love in their hearts, reveals God's designs, teaches how to pray and leads to prayer, is a source of joy and happiness, renders sweet their sacrifices, gives strength and interior freedom in their service of God, helps them to overcome selfishness and fear."<sup>20</sup>

"In holy matrimony takes place the mutual donation and acceptance of the spouses in the totality of their personality. In this they reflect the image of the divine Persons. The union and the intimacy of the spouses is ordained to the procreation of new persons: and this is not only a physiological fact, which is entirely lacking during the sterile periods. The spouses, however, must always remain open for the person of the other partner and for that of the child."<sup>21</sup>

After the conclusion of the Synod, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Doctrine, addressed a letter to the Catholic Clergy all over the world, in which he explained briefly the main pastoral and doctrinal points discussed at the Synod on the Family. Among other things, he wrote the following: "God himself is not solitude. Man was created for love, in God's image and likeness; it is for this that God has made man, he who lives in three Persons, that is in his relations of self-giving, self-finding and self-loving. Since, however, man is an incarnate spirit, that is, a soul expressing itself in the body, and a body informed by an immortal soul, he is called to love in this totality of his. Love permeates also his body, and his body is in turn involved also in the spiritual act of his love."<sup>22</sup>

The above are only a few examples showing how widespread among the Bishops of the Church was the idea of the family as having its source and pattern in the Holy Trinity. In its unity and distinction the Trinity is analogically considered the

20. Paul Hisoia Yasuda, Archbishop of Osaka, *ibid.*, 310.

21. Philippe Delhay, Secretary of the International and Pontifical Theological Commission, *ibid.*, 393.

22. *Ibid.* 585.



source of the family, because both unity and distinction together are indispensable for the family as a community of persons in which the spouses, as distinct entities, become one in their mutual self-donation. Their fruitfulness too, as a result of their mutual love, has its counterpart in the Blessed Trinity. Thus, from this trinitarian pattern, the way is open for a better and deeper understanding of the family itself.

### ***Pope John Paul II***

Shortly after the Bishops' Synod of 1980, the Holy Father John Paul I published his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* regarding the *Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World*, to which we have already referred. Although several references are made in this pontifical document, presenting the family as having its origin in God himself who created man and woman in his own image and likeness and endowed them with the prerogative of sharing with him his creative power, one looks in vain in it for an explicit statement regarding the trinitarian dimension of the family. This was probably so because of the pastoral nature of the Exhortation, in which one would not normally expect to come across elaborate digressions of a doctrinal and theological nature. There is no doubt, however, that John Paul II has very much at heart presenting the family as a reflection of the Blessed Trinity, as can be gathered from other papal documents.<sup>23</sup>

By way of example, it is worth mentioning a beautiful statement in this regard made by Pope John Paul II, addressing the population of Puebla during one of his missionary journeys in January of 1979. On that occasion he said the following: "We must make this beautiful and deep consideration that our God is not a solitude, but a family, because there is within himself paternity, filiation and the essence of the family which is love. This love in the divine family is the Holy Spirit. The theme of the family, then, is not at all extraneous to the divine essence."<sup>24</sup>

Not long after the Puebla occasion the Pope took up again the same theme in

23. See *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, Lib. Ed. Vaticana, 29 volumes (1978-90), containing all pronouncements of John Paul II in the original language, sometimes also their Italian translation.

24. *Ibid*, Vol. II, ni, p. 182.

greater detail in his address at the General Audience on the 14th November 1979. On that occasion, explaining the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis, he made the following beautiful analysis of the family itself as the image of the Triune God: "If we wish to draw from the narrative of the Yahwist text the concept of 'image of God', we can deduce that man became 'the image and likeness' of God not only through his own humanity, but also through the communion of person which man and woman form right from the beginning. The function of the image is to reflect the one who is the model, to reproduce its own prototype. Man becomes the image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion. He is in fact, right from the beginning, not only an image in which there is reflected the solitude of a Person who rules the world, but also, and essentially, an image of an inscrutable divine communion of Persons. In this way, the second narrative could also be a preparation for the understanding of the Trinitarian concept of the 'image of God', even if the latter appears only in the first narrative."<sup>25</sup>

To conclude this brief consideration on the family as the reflection of the Triune God, I find it appropriate to quote, by way of confirmation of the foregoing considerations, what the Apostle Saint Paul has written to the Ephesians: "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named."<sup>26</sup>

This is probably best understood as follows: just as a family comes from a father, so every family has God for Creator, Father and model. While the same triple affirmation can be made in regard to every human being, here Paul has only the family specifically in mind. What is here, therefore, understood is not only God as source of all things including human beings, but God as 'family', that is God's triune essence reflected in the human family.<sup>27</sup>

As Jack Dominionian put it, "the discoveries of our age are priceless gifts to expand

25. John Paul II, *Original Unity of Man and Woman: Catechesis on the Book of Genesis*, St Paul's Editions, Boston 1981, pp. 73ff
26. *Eph.* 3, 14–15. The word 'family' here translates the Greek word 'patria', which means family; in the Latin Vulgate it is rendered, less appropriately, by 'paternitas', and in some English translations (e.g. Knox) by 'fatherhood'; see F. Prat, *Theology of St Paul*, vol. 2, Burns and Oates, London 1964, 139.
27. See Prat, *bc. cit.*; D.J. Leahy, "The Epistle to the Ephesians", in *Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, Nelson, London 1953, 1123.

the theology of marital love, as an expression of openness to life, life in this world caught up and divinised here and now, but already reflecting the mystery of the eternal relationship of life between man, woman, and the Trinity.”<sup>28</sup>

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28. J. Dominian, *Proposals for a new sexual ethic*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1997, 84.



## **Family Values and Social Policy in member and applicant countries of the European Union\***

Anthony M. Abela

This paper explores the relation between family values and options for social policies of representative citizens from thirty European societies, constituting member and applicant countries of the European Union. It seeks to understand the values and value orientations supporting specific family structures and options for social policies of distinct groups of nations, corresponding to the various waves of accession or application for membership to the European Union. These include European Union (EU) members identified for an IPROSEC (Improving Policy Responses and Outcomes to Socio-Economic Challenges: changing family structures, policy and practice) project according to their welfare system and wave of EU accession as Continental (France, Germany, Italy [joined in 1951]), Universal (United Kingdom, Ireland [1973]), Latin Rim (Greece [1981], Spain [1986]) and Nordic (Sweden [1995]) countries; post-communist (Hungary [applied in 1994], Poland [1994], Estonia [1995]) and Mediterranean (Malta [1990]) applicant countries (Hantrais 2001); and the remaining countries taken together: members, applicant and non-applicant countries of the European Union.

### ***Theory***

Social policies are profoundly affected by the wider cultures that surround them and into which they are delivered. Nevertheless, very few comparative studies of welfare have taken social values seriously. In fact, over the past fifty years academic social policy has avoided the issue of culture - understood as the values and norms represented in social behaviour - and its effects on welfare development. Whenever culture was taken into consideration, it was seen as the context and the problem rather than the source of welfare values. The modernist view held that social policy should be used to change social values (Baldock 2000: 122-126). By contrast,

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contemporary sociologists are adopting new approaches and examine the impact of everyday life activities on social welfare (Cahill 1994). A few others analyse welfare ideologies (George and Wilding 1994), and elaborate theories emerging from modern and late modern thinkers on welfare (George and Page 1995). More recently, Esping-Anderson (1999: 5) has observed how public welfare is an expression of social values that are predominant when welfare services come to be institutionalised. Of course, the crucial question is which values, and whose values are institutionalised into welfare systems.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the observed economic and social changes of late modernity is leading to substantial cultural shifts often identified as post-materialism (Inglehart 1990, 1997) and its related post-traditional (Abela 1991, 2000; Harding, Phillips and Fogarty 1986), individualised (Ester, Halman and deMoor 1993) and masculine-feminine components (Abela 2000; van Deth and Scarbrough 1995). Distinct social groups are becoming increasingly differentiated in terms of the risks they face and the values they hold, and that these changes have profound implications for social policy. In this social context, sociologists are investigating the fit between culture and social policies. They have come to examine whether and if so how the values of people from distinct social groupings - as distinct from the values of elite leaders and their respective organisations of the post-war welfare state - have an impact on and shape social policy. The post-industrial context is marked by "Third way" or "eclectic social policy", where culture is believed "riven with particularistic, contradictory, shifting sometimes bigoted, often exclusive value positions" (Baldock 2000: 132-134).

The task ahead is to identify those value priorities and their related issues in social policy that command the support of significant majorities in the European countries under consideration. Accordingly, the current study seeks to identify differences and similarities between and within the European countries under consideration. It explores the factors contributing to socially differentiated value orientations and the corresponding policy options. What is the relation between traditional/materialist and post-traditional/post-materialist value orientations and social policy? Is the left-right political divide relevant to understand differences in policy options of distinct social groupings and of specific groups of countries with similar welfare systems in Europe? Alternatively is the left-right divide giving way to middle ground positions, variously identified as "Third Way" politics? Is there any discernible convergence between European member- and applicant-countries on core value orientations and the corresponding options for social policy?

## *Methods*

A draft questionnaire for the third wave of the European Values Study (EVS) was first drawn up in English and then translated into all other languages where the study was to be carried out. It was then pre-tested in all participant countries, and the final version of the questionnaire was agreed upon at a methodology meeting for all principal investigators held at the end of January 1999 in Leuven. Fieldwork was carried out during 1999 and 2000 in over thirty participant countries. The first comprehensive EVS data file was available for analysis exclusively to EVS participants by January 2001. The English version of the EVS (1999/2000) questionnaire is reproduced in the source book of the third wave of the European Values Study (Halman. *ed.* 2001:299-334) and in a comparative study of values (Abela 2000: 294-327).

In all participant countries a random sample of over 1000 respondents was drawn from the total adult population, 18 years and older. For the eleven countries under consideration an overall sample of 15,120 was obtained. A total of 38,881 respondents were obtained from 30 European countries. Specially trained interviewers carried out interviews in the homes of respondents. To ascertain comparability between countries the data file was weighted by age and gender. [Table 1].

The following study reports results from questions on family values and social policies of representative citizens from thirty European societies, including member and applicant countries of the European Union. These are France, Germany and Italy; United Kingdom, Ireland and Northern Ireland; Greece and Spain; Sweden; Hungary, Poland, Estonia; Malta. Together they represent different types of welfare systems including the Continental, Universal, Latin Rim, Nordic, and post-communist group of countries. Results for the five types of welfare systems are compared with the average for all eleven countries as well as with the average for all thirty European countries taken together, and where appropriate by a breakdown for each separate country. As the resultant European average is not restricted to the values of the European Union, but includes those of Northern, Western, Eastern and Southern European countries, it is more representative than the one obtained in earlier studies (Abela 1991, 2000).

### *Profile of sample*

All over Europe, generally, there are more women than men respondents. Thus



in the eleven IROSEC European countries taken together women (53%) outnumber men (47%) respondents. Only in Nordic Sweden the two genders are equally represented. In most countries, older people (over 55 years old) are equally represented as their younger (18-34 years old) and middle-aged (35-54 years old) counterparts. The Universal and Latin Rim Mediterranean countries of the European Union report a higher percentage of younger adults relative to their Continental counterparts who have higher percentages of older people. Nordic Sweden, Latin Malta and post-communist EU applicant countries have higher percentages of middle-aged people. Such a situation reflects a greater longevity, that of women in particular, in increasing ageing European societies.

Quite a few IROSEC respondents, older citizens from Mediterranean and Universal welfare state countries in particular, do not have an adequate schooling. Many others (23%) have only a primary level of education. Quite a few (11%), however, in addition to a terminal primary education have completed basic vocation training. This is the case in continental countries (14%), but even more so in post-communist applicant countries of the European Union (25%). Many others have reached a secondary level of education (13%) or its equivalent in vocational training (7%). Others (17%) have completed a maturity qualification or an upper-secondary level of education. Quite a few (8%), especially those from Nordic Sweden (23%), have completed a university first degree. A few others (9%), respondents from Universal welfare states (20%) in particular, obtained a post-graduate qualification.

More than half of respondents in the eleven countries under consideration (52%), those from Universal (56%) and Nordic (62%) in contrast to Latin Rim (43%) welfare states, are chief wage earners in their household. In the same way, respondents from Nordic Sweden (53%, 10%, 35%) and post-communist applicant countries (42%, 3%, 29%) are more likely to be in full-time, part-time or on retirement pensions than their counterparts from Latin Rim (33%, 9%, 13%), Continental (36%, 9%, 22%) or Universal (36%, 11%, 18%) welfare states. In fact, relative to the IROSEC average (12%) greater percentages from Mediterranean Malta (31%), the Latin Rim (21%), Universal (15%) and Continental (13%) countries but not from post-communist applicant countries (4%) are housewives. The highest rates of unemployment are reported in the post-communist countries (8%), but also in Universal (7%) welfare states of the European Union. Of all unemployed men and women, the long-term (over two years) unemployed are more likely to be found in Mediterranean Malta (54%) as well as in Universal (47%) and Continental (38%)

welfare states than in post-communist applicant countries (27%) or Latin Rim (22%) welfare states of the European Union.

With respect to living arrangements, quite a few respondents, in the main younger adults from Latin Mediterranean, Malta and post-communist applicant countries but fewer from Continental and Universal welfare states live with their parents. By contrast, very few respondents from Nordic Sweden (6%) live with their parents. Generally in all European countries under consideration, the majority of respondents (69%), those from Mediterranean Malta (76%) and Latin Rim EU welfare states (71%) in particular, have a stable relationship with a partner of the opposite sex. Generally, the greatest majority of those in stable relationship are also legally married to their partner (82%). However lower percentages of respondents with a stable relationship from Nordic Sweden (70%) and Universal welfare states (68%) are actually married to their partner. Relative to their other European counterparts (28%), prior to their current relationship the latter (46%, 45%) are more likely to have had a stable relationship with another partner.

Similarly, fewer respondents from Nordic Sweden (47%) and the Universal welfare states (48%), in contrast to their counterparts from Malta (67%), Latin Rim (62%) and Continental Europe (60%) are currently legally married. Instead, respondents from Nordic Sweden and Universal welfare states are more likely to have been divorced (20% Sweden, 6% Universal), or are currently divorced (7%, 8%), separated (13%, 3%) or in other unconventional marital relationships (23%, 13%). By contrast, higher percentages from Malta (26%), Continental (26%) and Latin Rim countries (28%) have never been married, than their counterparts from Nordic Sweden (5%).

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of children they ever had. Relative to the IPROSEC average (1.72), respondents from universal welfare states (2.23), report the highest rate of children ever had, much higher than in Malta (1.84) and Latin Rim countries (1.64) or Continental (1.56) and Nordic (1.48) welfare states. In fact, considerable numbers never had any children in Latin Rim (34%) and Nordic (32%) welfare states, much higher than in post-communist countries (23%) or Universal (27%) welfare states.

Single-person and/or single parent households are more common in Latin Rim (35%) and Nordic (30%) countries, in contrast to Mediterranean Malta (7%), Continental (16%) and Universal (15%) welfare states, or post-communist countries

(14%). In fact, the mean household adult occupancy is lowest in Nordic Sweden (1.88) but highest in Mediterranean Malta (2.83). At the same time, however, Latin Rim countries report the highest number of teenagers (57%), children aged between 5 and 12 year olds (57%) as well as under five year old children (57%) living in their households. Similar findings suggest that whereas Nordic Sweden has higher rates of single-occupancy households, Latin Rim countries have higher rates of single-parent households with dependent children. [Tables 2,3,4].

### *Value priorities*

In all European countries under consideration, without distinction, the family has top priority. Thus, the majority of respondents from Mediterranean Malta (96%), Universal (90%), Nordic (89%), Continental (86%), and Latin Rim (86%) welfare states but also post-communist applicant countries to the European Union (83%) find the family very important in their life. It seems that the value of the family, irrespective of an observed diversity in personal family arrangements, unites citizens of the European Union and its applicant members.

Most member states of the European Union assign second importance to work closely followed by friends and leisure. They assign much less importance, however, to religion and politics. Universal and Nordic welfare states, however, displace the importance of work by friends and leisure time. [Table 5].

In contrast to Nordic Sweden (11%) or the average European country (21%), Mediterranean Malta (67%) and to a lower extent Latin Rim countries of the European Union (31%) find religion very important in life. Respondents in Malta (49%), however, are closer to Nordic Sweden (54%) and Universal welfare states (45%) in the importance they assign to leisure-time than either their neighbouring Latin Rim (33%) or Continental (32%) European countries. It seems that Malta's greater interaction through overseas travel and tourism from Universal and Nordic states leads to a greater appreciation of leisure time, but not of friends and acquaintances. Similarly, Maltese respondents (13%) are closer to Nordic Sweden in the importance they assign to politics than their Continental (8%) or Latin Rim (6%) counterparts. Such an occurrence, however, does not seem to undermine their high regard of religion. A strategic distance from friends and acquaintances, which together with their close family ties, family-oriented work and leisure, remain distinctive characteristics of the Maltese national identity. In the same way, it is to be expected that closer ties and interaction between citizens of European Union



member states and applicant countries, favour the sharing and shaping of common values but also a greater appreciation of national identities in an ever-widening European milieu in the making.

Closely related to the value of the family is the legitimacy of marriage as a social institution. Just as with the overriding importance of the family, the majority of respondents in the European countries under consideration, with some variations between and within countries, find marriage as a valid institution. Thus, the greatest support for the institution of marriage is reported in Mediterranean Malta, closely followed by post-communist EU applicant countries, the Latin Rim and Nordic Sweden. A slightly lower majority support is obtained in the Continental and Universal welfare states of the European Union. With the exception of Nordic Sweden most respondents from the other European countries think that a long-term relationship is important for a happy life, and that children need both parents to grow up happily.

Overall in all the European welfare states under consideration, the majority (70%) are also of the opinion that parents are to do their utmost for their children. Similar percentages (72%), except in Nordic Sweden (44%), respondents think that children are always to love their parents.

Moreover, all over Europe, irrespective of living arrangements, the majority (88%) are concerned about the well being of their immediate family, and a greater majority (94%) are willing to help members of their family. In this way, the values of marriage and the family or their alternative long-lasting stable family-type relationships serve as a foundation for the conviviality of people with different lifestyles. [Table 6].

### *Partners' issues*

Respondents from post-communist applicant countries, Mediterranean Malta, Latin Rim and Continental welfare states of the European Union are more likely to hold traditional views about family relationships than their counterparts from Nordic or Universal welfare states. Thus, most of the former unlike respondents from Nordic or Universal welfare states, agree that women and to a lesser extent men need to have children for fulfilment, that children need both parents to grow up happily, and that a long-term relationship is necessary for happiness.

### *Gender Issues*

Similarly, greater majorities from Nordic Sweden relative to other member and applicant countries of the European Union, support feminist positions on gender relations. Thus, respondents from Nordic Sweden are more supportive of working mothers with children (84%, compared to an overall 68% in IPROSEC countries), women's independence through work (80%; 72% IPROSEC), for both partners to contribute to household income (88%; 76% IPROSEC), and that fathers are equally suited to look after children (91%, 71% IPROSEC). By contrast, they are significantly less in agreement that pre-school children suffer when their mother works outside the home (36%; 57% IPROSEC; Malta [88%], Continental [66%] and Latin Rim [62%] welfare states in particular), that women prefer homemaking and child-caring (37%; 52% IPROSEC: Malta [69%], post-communist [65%] and Latin Rim [59%] welfare states in particular), or that being a housewife is equally fulfilling as having a job (46%, 51% IPROSEC: Malta [86%], post-communist [55%] and Latin Rim [54%] welfare states in particular). Contrary to expectations, however, in contrast to their European counterparts (50%), respondents from Nordic Sweden are more of the opinion that men are less able to handle emotions than women (63%). Such a situation suggests the cultural construction of country-specific feminist views on gender. [Table 7].

### *The meaning of marriage*

Similar to results from earlier studies (van den Akker, Halman and De Moor 1993: 102; Abela 2000: 61), the analysis of marriage values in the eleven IPROSEC European countries has identified three basic orientations for a successful marriage. These consist of an interpersonal bond between partners, cultural homogeneity and situational conditions. The interpersonal bond in marriage is characterised by spending time together, discussing mutual problems, showing respect and appreciation, understanding and tolerance, talking about mutual interests, faithfulness, and to a lesser extent sharing household chores, enjoying happy sexual relationships and having children. Cultural homogeneity refers to partners' common social background, sharing religious beliefs and agreement on politics. Finally, situational conditions include living apart from in-laws, having happy sexual relations, an adequate income, good housing and sharing household chores. [Table 8].

In most European countries under consideration, interpersonal relationships between partners have primary importance whereas common cultural background

and situational conditions are of secondary importance. Thus Nordic Sweden just like Mediterranean Malta, the Latin Rim, Continental and Universal welfare states of the European Union attach great importance to interpersonal affective qualities including respect and appreciation, faithfulness, understanding and tolerance. But whereas Latin Rim and Continental welfare states give greater importance to companionship qualities like talking about mutual interests and spending time together, Nordic Sweden and Universal welfare states have a higher preference for partnership qualities like the discussion of mutual problems, respect and appreciation, and the sharing of household chores. Similarly, Mediterranean Malta and Latin Rim countries attach greater importance to situational conditions and cultural homogeneity between partners than their Nordic counterparts. All this suggests that citizens of Nordic Sweden and Universal welfare states are more likely to hold post-traditional and post-materialist values than their Mediterranean and Latin Rim counterparts. [Table 9].

The culture shift towards postmaterialism observable in the public spheres of the advanced industrial societies (Inglehart 1990, 1997) has its counterpart in the private and intimate sphere of marriage and the family. In most European countries, it seems that postmaterialism and its post-traditional component are most evident in the changing values of marriage and the family. The silent revolution is embedded in the transformation of the meaning of marriage where intimate interpersonal relationships have come to have pride of place.

### *Value orientations*

As in earlier European studies values are organised into traditional-post-traditional, materialist-post-materialist value orientations. For this purpose respondents were requested to choose five priorities from a list of eleven qualities they think important for children to be encouraged to learn at home. Indirectly such an exercise reveals the value priorities of respondents in a given society or country. This is because respondents' options for the transmission of values to future generations are an expression of the deepest convictions. As in our previous studies, the main value orientations are identified through the application of factor analysis. This allows for comparisons between distinct social groups, societies and countries.

The application of factor analysis to the eleven values under consideration extracts two factors for the eleven IPROSEC European countries taken together. Overall in the IRROSEC member and applicant countries of the EU the first factor



runs from a set of newly aspired qualities obtaining a negative polarity including independence, determination and perseverance, and responsibility to conventional attributes with a positive polarity for obedience, religious faith and good manners. The second factor extends from conventional society-oriented and materialist qualities obtaining a negative polarity for thrift, saving money and things and hard work to positive polarities for the newly aspired values of unselfishness, imagination, tolerance and respect. The first factor has a social conformity-autonomy orientation with contrasting traditional and post-traditional polarities, extending from conformity to external authority towards self-direction and a sense of responsibility. Then, the second factor represents the materialist-post-materialist orientation obtaining negative polarities for traditional hard work and materialist thrift, saving money and things and contrasting positive polarities for post-traditional and post-materialist qualities. [Table 10].

As in earlier studies of European (Harding *et al.* 1986) and Maltese values (Abela 1991, 1994, 1997), with some improvement to account for middle-ground positions, respondents choosing at least three out of five traditional values are identified as traditional whereas those choosing at least four out of six post-traditional qualities are identified as post-traditional. To ascertain a greater accuracy, similar to the classification of 'materialists', 'post-materialists' and 'mixed' materialists-post-materialists on Inglehart's battery of questions, respondents opting for a mix of two traditional and three post-traditional qualities are identified as 'mixed' traditional-post-traditional. On this basis respondents are identified as traditional, 'mixed' traditional-post-traditional or post-traditional depending on their value options. The measurement of traditionalism and post-traditionalism makes possible the comparison of groups of individuals constituting social groups, societies and countries. In this way respondents with diverse social characteristics are situated on the traditional-post-traditional continuum.

### ***Traditionalism and marriage values***

The analysis of marriage values by traditional and post-traditional value orientations reveals how post-traditionalists are more likely to understand marriage as a partnership where respect and appreciation, understanding and tolerance, discussing problems and happy sexual relations have pride of place. On the other hand, traditionalists give more importance to companionship, adequate socio-economic conditions and the sharing of a common culture for success in marriage. Thus, traditionalists relative to post-traditionalists give more importance to

faithfulness, children, talking about mutual interests, spending time together, sharing household chores, adequate income, good housing, agreement on religion, politics and common social background. [Table 11].

### *Traditionalism and gender relations*

The analysis of marriage values by traditional and post-traditional value orientations reveals how traditionalists, in contrast to post-traditionalists favour close family ties. Thus traditionalists are more likely to think that people, women in particular, need to have children for fulfilment and that children need both parents to grow up happily. They are also more likely to require a long-term and stable relationship for a happy life. On the other hand, postmaterialists are more likely to think that marriage is an outdated institution, approve for a single mother to raise a child without a stable relationship with a male partner, and do not see any necessary connection between happiness and having children.

Similarly, post-traditionalists are more supportive of feminist issues including women's reconciliation of motherhood with a working career, women's independence through participation in the labour market, the contribution by both partners to household income, and for fathers' sharing in childcare responsibilities. By contrast, traditionalists differ significantly from their post-traditional counterparts in their strong views on how pre-school children suffer when their mother works outside the home, that women prefer to have a home and children, that housework is equally satisfying as working for pay, and that men are less able to handle their emotions. [Table 12].

### *Traditionalism in EU welfare states*

On the traditional-post traditional continuum, Nordic Sweden stands at the extreme post-traditional end whereas the post-communist EU applicant countries and Mediterranean Malta in particular, are situated at the extreme traditional end. Thus, in descending order of traditionalism we find Mediterranean Malta and post-communist applicant countries closely followed by Universal, Latin Rim, Continental and least of all Nordic welfare states of the European Union. [Table 13].

### *Issues in Social Policy*

The Values Study enquired about respondents' political orientations and their

priorities on a number of issues on politics and social policy. The series of questions under investigation are concerned with respondents' preferences between (1) left and right political ideologies; (2) their choice of either freedom or equality; their views on (3) competition as either good or harmful; (4) whether the state should give more freedom to firms or to control them more effectively; (5) whether individuals should take more responsibility for providing for themselves or for the state to ensure that everyone is provided for; (6) whether unemployed people should have to take any job available or lose their unemployment benefits or alternatively that they should have the right to refuse a job they do not want; (7) the importance or otherwise to guarantee basic needs for all in terms of food, housing, clothes, education and health; (8) to recognize people on their own merits; and (9) to eliminate big inequalities in income between citizens. For a number of political and social policy issues respondents were requested to indicate their position on a 10-point or a 5-point scale, which for our purposes have been collapsed into three values (two opposite extremes and a middle value).

A final question (10), designed by Inglehart (1990, 1997) for the construction of a materialism-postmaterialism index asked respondents to identify what they consider to be the first and second aims for the coming ten years in their country from a list of four items. On this basis respondents choosing two materialist qualities ('maintaining order in the nation' and 'fighting rising prices') are identified as materialists, those choosing two post-materialist values ('giving people more say in important government decisions' and 'protecting freedom of speech') are post-materialists, whereas those choosing a mix of one materialist and one post-materialist value are termed 'mixed' materialists/post-materialists.

### *Social policy in European welfare states*

Overall in the European countries under consideration, very few respondents support extreme left or extreme right political ideologies. Instead, the majority favour middle ground positions standing between left and right political orientations. A higher percentage of respondents from Latin Rim, Nordic and Continental European welfare states support a left political ideology. Middle-ground positions or 'third way' politics have the greatest support by respondents in Malta, post-communist applicant countries and Universal welfare states of the European Union.

Similar political middle-ground positions are accompanied by a greater



preference for the principle of freedom over and above equality, and a support of the free market where the state has only a limited control over firms. Thus, many respondents from the countries under consideration, Nordic Sweden and Continental European welfare states in particular, agree that the unemployed should have to take any job available or lose their unemployment benefits. Very few agree that they should have the right to refuse a job they do not want. In fact, most respondents from Malta, the Latin Rim, Universal and Continental welfare states of the European Union, prefer middle-ground positions between a total imposition of duties by society and the protection of absolute individual rights.

Middle-ground political ideologies are also supportive of joint welfare responsibilities to be shared by the individual and the state. Respondents from Nordic Sweden, Universal and Continental welfare states are more likely to agree that individuals should take more responsibility to provide for themselves. By contrast, respondents from post-communist applicant countries and Latin Rim welfare states of the European Union are more likely to agree that the state is to ensure that everyone is provided for. In most welfare states and applicant countries of the European Union there is a general consensus for the state to guarantee the basic needs for all in terms of food, housing, clothes, education and health (92%); and to recognize people on their own merits (80%). Fewer respondents, however, find important for the state to eliminate big inequalities in income between citizens. State intervention to ensure an egalitarian society is more supported by respondents from the Latin Rim and post-communist applicant countries than by their counterparts from Continental, Universal welfare states of the European Union; Malta and Nordic Sweden in particular.

On Inglehart's index of materialism-postmaterialism, respondents from post-communist EU applicant countries, closely followed by those from Mediterranean Malta are in the main materialists, whereas their counterparts from Nordic Sweden are more post-materialists. The majority of respondents from Continental, Universal, Latin Rim and Nordic welfare states, however, are 'mixed' materialists-postmaterialists. [Table 14].

### *Post-traditionalism and social policy*

Finally, this section explores the relation between traditionalism/post-traditionalism and respondents' options on issues of social policy in the welfare states under consideration. The social policy issues under consideration are cross-

tabulated by post-traditionalism and in turn examined by the chi-square test of significance for relations between variables.

Results show that there is a significant relation between post-traditionalism, political ideologies and most issues in social policy. Thus, on the one hand, traditionalists are more likely to support a right political orientation, give greater importance to equality over freedom, think of competition as harmful, expect the state to control firms more effectively, favour state responsibility for social welfare, give importance for state intervention to eliminate big income inequalities in society, and possess a materialist value orientation. By contrast, post-traditionalists and mixed traditionalists/post-traditionalists in particular, are more likely to support a left-wing or 'third way' political orientation, give greater importance to freedom over equality, favour competition and a measure of free enterprise, require individuals and intermediate social groupings to be responsible for the provision of their needs, give less importance for state intervention to eliminate big inequalities in society, and possess a post-materialist or mixed-materialist-postmaterialist value orientation.

The greatest majority of traditionalists (92%), mixed traditionalist/post-traditionalists (91%) and post-traditionalists (92%), however, without distinction, give great importance for the state to guarantee basic needs for all in terms of food, housing, clothes, education and health. This suggests that in the European countries under consideration there is a widespread consensus for state intervention to guarantee a modicum of social welfare. After the elimination of material scarcity, however, the majority of respondents in the European welfare states under consideration tend to favour middle-ground positions requiring the joint efforts of the state, the individual and intermediate social groups for the provision of post-materialist social needs. [Table 15].

The observed relationship between the present right-wing politics and egalitarian policies generally associated with political 'old left' ideologies is counterintuitive. It seems that in the European welfare states under consideration, the 'new left' is shifting towards a third way politics, reconciling traditionally liberal right-wing positions with new left-wing ideologies.

### *Conclusion*

The foregoing analyses have identified the family values, value orientations and the corresponding options for social policy of representative citizens from

Continental, Universal, Latin Rim and Nordic welfare states as well as post-communist and Mediterranean applicant countries of the European Union. The study has acknowledged differences but also similarities on specific values and social policies between and within the European countries under consideration. Irrespective of the observed differences over specific values, constituting distinct cultures and welfare state traditions, the study identified common orientations that cut across and serve as a potential source of unity between European countries. Accordingly, the traditional/post-traditional value orientation and its materialist/post-materialist component, common to a diversity of European welfare states, has a direct bearing on people's options for social policy.

Results from the study give evidence on how the 'old' left-right political divide and the corresponding options in social welfare are giving way to middle-ground positions, variously identified as 'third way' politics. At a time when material scarcity has been eliminated, the majority of citizens in the European welfare states under consideration tend to favour third way policies requiring the joint effort of the state, individuals and intermediate social groupings to meet post-materialist social needs in a free-market society. Similar findings suggest that a culture shift is taking place from traditional materialism towards individualised postmaterialism displacing the various types of welfare states by increasingly complex multicultural and post-traditional European welfare societies.

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Table 1. Respondents in IPROSEC and all other countries

	<b>IPROSEC countries:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Sum Percent</b>
Wave/Welfare system				
1. <i>Continental</i>				
	France	1615	4.2	4.2
	Germany	2036	5.2	9.4
	Italy	2000	5.1	14.5
2. <i>Universal</i>				
	United Kingdom	1000	2.6	17.1
	Northern Ireland	1000	2.6	19.7
	Ireland	1012	2.6	22.3
3. <i>Latin Rim</i>				
	Greece	1142	2.9	25.2
	Spain	1200	3.1	28.3
4. <i>Nordic</i>				
	Sweden	1015	2.6	30.9
5. <i>Post-communist</i>				
	Estonia	1005	2.6	33.5
	Hungary	1000	2.6	36.1
	Poland	1095	2.8	38.9
	<b>All IPROSEC</b>	<b>15120</b>	<b>38.9</b>	
6. <i>Mediterranean/Latin Rim</i>				
	Malta	1002	2.6	41.5
	All other countries*	22759	58.5	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38881</b>	<b>100</b>	

\* Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in EU welfare systems\*

	Contin- ental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPOSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Gender:</i>									
Male	47	48	43	50	46	48	47	47	47
Female	53	52	57	50	54	52	53	53	53
<i>age groups</i>									
18-34 years	31	33	33	32	32	29	32	32	32
35-54 years	36	36	35	39	37	40	36	37	37
55+ years	32	31	32	29	31	31	32	30	31
<i>highest level of education</i>									
inadequate education	8	20	21	0	9	4	12	5	8
compl compulsory educ.	26	12	27	17	26	26	23	16	19
compl elem ed+basic voc qual	14		1	6	25		11	12	12
2nd, interm vocational qualification	4	14	5	19	2	9	7	18	13
2nd, interm general qualification	15	14	15	16	3	42	13	12	13
full 2nd maturity certificate	17	13	17	12	24	9	17	20	19
higher educ- lower-level 3d cert	7	6	5	29	5	7	8	6	7
higher educ- upper-level 3d cert	8	20	8	0	6	3	9	10	10



Table 3. Employment in EU welfare systems

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPOSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Chief wage earner	52	56	43	62	53	47	52	55	54
<i>Employed</i>									
30h a week or more	36	36	33	53	42	40	38	44	42
Less than 30h a week	9	11	9	10	5	3	8	6	7
Self employed	6	8	7	2	4	4	6	4	5
Retired/pensioned	22	18	13	35	29	15	22	24	23
Housewife	13	15	21		4	31	12	7	9
Student	7	4	6		5	3	5	6	5
Unemployed	5	7	5		8	4	6	8	7
Other	2	1	4		2		2	2	2
<i>How long unemployed</i>									
Less than half a year	25	25	30		27	5	26	23	24
Half/one year	16	9	18		23	15	17	13	15
One year	6	7	22		8	7	10	8	8
One -two years	11	8	6		8	10	9	11	10
Two years	5	4	2		6	10	5	8	7
+ Two years	38	47	22		27	54	34	37	36

Notes: EC = European countries

Table 4. Living arrangements in EU welfare systems

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPROSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Living arrangements</i>									
Living with parents	17	18	22	6	21	21	18	19	19
Stable relationship	67	61	71	68	69	76	68	69	68
<i>of which:</i>									
Legally married to partner	87	68	86	70	85	85	82	85	84
stable relationship before	28	45	28	46	18	22	28	23	25
<i>Current legal marital status</i>									
Married	60	48	62	47	59	67	57	60	59
Widowed	7	8	7	3	11	5	8	10	9
Divorced	5	8	1	7	7	0	5	7	6
Separated	2	3	1	15	1	2	3	1	2
Never married	26	21	28	5	22	26	23	22	22
Other		13		23			4		1
Been divorced	5	6	3	20	9	1	7	9	8
<i>Number of children ever had</i>									
0	29	27	34	32	23	31	28	24	26
Mean	1.56	2.23	1.64	1.48	1.65	1.84	1.72	1.66	1.68
<i>Adults in household over 18 years:</i>									
1	16	15	35	30	14	7	19	16	17
2	50	49	31	56	47	43	47	49	48
3+	34	36	33	15	38	50	34	35	35
Mean	2.37	2.50	2.22	1.88	2.46	2.83	2.36	2.40	2.38
<i>One or more children in household</i>									
13-17 years old	17	25	57	15	22	25	26	21	23
5-12 years old	20	27	57	19	23	23	28	22	24
Under 5 years	12	17	53	10	15	13	20	14	17

Notes: \* weighted cases by age, EC = European countries

Table 5. Value priorities in EU welfare systems

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPOSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Very important in life:</i>									
Work	58	43	60	54	62	75	56	58	57
Family	86	90	86	89	83	96	86	83	84
Friends acquaintances	44	61	36	71	29	32	45	36	40
Leisure time	32	45	33	54	25	49	35	29	32
Politics	8	6	6	11	5	13	7	7	7
Religion	18	24	31	11	24	67	22	20	21

Table 6. Marriage and family relations in EU welfare systems

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPOSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Marriage valid institution	77	76	85	80	86	93	80	81	81
Long-term relationship to be happy	63	35	70	41	77	64	60	64	62
Children need both parents	88	64	89	56	95	92	82	84	84
<i>Immediate family</i>									
Concerned about	89	75	94	97	93	96	88	82	84
Willing to help	95	93	96	98	93	99	94	91	92
<i>Parents-children relationships</i>									
Do utmost best for children	68	78	75	67	65	92	70	68	69
No sacrifice of well-being	21	13	15	22	21	5	18	22	21
Neither	11	9	10	10	14	3	11	10	10
<i>Children-parents relationships</i>									
Always love parents	69	71	78	44	81	92	72	72	72
Parents have to earn respect	31	29	22	56	19	8	28	28	28



Table 7. Partners' and gender issues in EU welfare systems

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPROSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Partners' issues</i>									
Women need children	55	16	58	23	74	44	49	54	52
Men need children	44	14	43		63	34	39	49	45
Children need both parents	88	64	89	56	95	92	82	84	84
Woman single parent	34	31	46	30	35	15	35	46	42
Marriage outdated	21	22	14	19	13	6	19	18	18
Long-term relationship to be happy	63	35	70	41	77	64	60	64	62
<i>Gender issues</i>									
Working mother and children	67	69	70	84	65	59	68	72	71
Job independence women	77	57	76	80	71	44	72	64	67
Household income contribution	75	66	78	88	83	71	76	73	74
Fathers looking after children	71	66	66	91	72	62	71	68	69
Children suffer with working mother	66	36	62	36	65	88	57	53	55
Women want home and children	53	35	59	37	65	69	52	57	55
Being a housewife	48	52	54	46	55	86	51	53	52
Men handling emotions	49	49	47	63	49	50	50	48	48

Table 8. Factor Analysis of Marriage values in 11 IPROSEC European countries

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>
Discuss problems	0.68	-0.06	0.25
Respect & appreciation	0.63	-0.01	0.00
Understand & tolerance	0.62	-0.02	0.06
Talk mutual interests	0.62	0.17	0.23
Spend time together	0.59	0.16	0.26
Faithfulness	0.54	0.14	-0.16
Children	0.36	0.23	0.21
Happy sexual relations	0.29	-0.08	0.63
Same social background	0.02	0.73	0.09
Same religious beliefs	0.21	0.72	-0.15
Agree on politics	0.07	0.68	0.01
Apart from in-laws	0.00	0.00	0.62
Adequate income	-0.07	0.48	0.51
Good housing	0.05	0.52	0.50
Share household chores	0.34	0.05	0.50
Variance explained %	17.73	14.32	12.15

Varimax Rotation

Table 9. Marriage values in EU welfare system

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPOSEC 11 EC	other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>very important in marriage:</i>									
Respect & appreciation	86	83	85	94	81	97	85	81	82
Faithfulness	83	92	84	88	77	97	84	79	81
Understand & tolerance	80	82	83	87	72	94	80	75	77
Discuss problems	72	85	77	81	67	95	75	66	69
Happy sexual relations	61	66	69	59	61	81	63	56	59
Children	55	52	72	58	72	69	61	63	62
Talk mutual interests	54	50	59	43	42	82	50	42	45
Spend time together	47	55	57	37	48	87	50	42	45
Apart from in-laws	47	45	41	41	48	56	45	42	43
Household chores	29	49	41	52	38	54	38	34	36
Adequate income	30	38	51	19	43	40	37	38	38
Good housing	27	40	48	29	46	38	37	37	37
Same religious beliefs	17	24	33	13	22	57	21	19	20
Same social background	14	22	24	7	13	51	17	15	16
Agree on politics	8	8	16	6	8	24	9	7	8



Table 10. Factor Analysis of traditional/post-traditional values in 11 IPROSEC countries

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>
Obedience	0.63	-0.02
Independence	-0.51	0.28
Religious faith	0.49	0.01
Determination & perseverance	-0.45	0.04
Feeling of responsibility	-0.44	0.05
Good manners	0.36	0.04
Hard work	0.07	-0.63
Thrift	0.16	-0.54
Unselfishness	0.28	0.51
Imagination	-0.12	0.46
Tolerance and respect	0.02	0.40
Variance explained %	14.12	12.81

Varimax rotation

Table 11. Traditionalism and marriage values in IPROSEC countries

	<b>Post-traditional</b>	<b>Mixed</b>	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Total</b>
	%	%	%	%
<i>Very important:</i>				
Respect & appreciation	87	84	83	85
Understand & tolerance	84	79	77	80
Discuss problems	77	74	74	75
Happy sexual relations	63	64	62	63
Faithfulness	79	85	88	84
Children	51	63	68	61
Talk mutual interests	48	51	53	50
Spend time together	42	51	56	50
Apart from in-laws	45	46	45	45
Household chores	35	38	41	38
Adequate income	26	38	45	37
Good housing	25	38	46	37
Same religious beliefs	9	20	34	21
Same social background	10	16	23	17
Agree on politics	6	9	12	9

Table 12. Traditionalism, partnerships and gender issues in IPROSEC countries

	Post-traditional	Mixed	Traditional	All
	%	%	%	%
<i>Partners' issues</i>				
Women need children	39	51	58	49
Men need children	27	41	48	39
Children need both parents	75	84	88	82
Long-term relationship to be happy	50	61	67	60
Marriage outdated	23	19	14	19
Woman single parent	40	36	30	35
<i>Gender issues</i>				
Working mother and children	76	69	62	68
Job independence women	77	72	67	72
Household income contribution	77	76	75	76
Fathers looking after children	78	71	65	71
Children suffer with working mother	49	57	64	57
Women want home and children	37	53	64	52
Being a housewife	39	52	60	51
Men handling emotions	46	50	53	50

Table 13. Traditionalism in EU welfare states

	Conti- nental	Universal	Latin Rim	Nordic	Post- communist	Malta	IPROSEC 11 EC	Other Europe	Total 30 EC
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Post-traditional	40	22	25	65	17	9	31	25	27
Mixed	33	36	40	28	34	30	35	35	35
Traditional	27	42	34	7	49	61	35	40	38



Table 14. Social Policy in EU welfare states

	Conti- nental %	Universal %	Latin Rim %	Nordic %	Post- communist %	Malta %	IPOSEC 11 EC %	other Europe %	Total 30 EC %
<i>1. political ideology</i>									
a) left	20	11	25	22	13	8	18	16	17
b) middle way	66	77	59	62	70	78	68	67	67
c) right	14	12	16	16	16	15	14	17	16
<i>2. freedom or equality</i>									
freedom above equality	50	52	48	62	51	57	51	54	53
neither	9	7	6	4	8	4	8	6	6
equality above freedom	40	41	46	35	41	38	41	40	41
<i>3. competition good or harmful</i>									
a) competition good	44	47	40	55	48	63	45	54	51
b) middle way	44	46	48	41	41	32	44	36	39
c) competition harmful	12	7	12	4	11	5	10	10	10
<i>4. firms and freedom</i>									
a) state to give freedom to firms	37	31	22	46	18	34	30	30	30
b) middle way	43	55	49	48	39	45	46	39	41
c) state to control firms	20	14	29	6	43	21	24	32	29
<i>5. individual versus state</i>									
a) individual responsibility	38	37	20	41	18	33	31	31	31
b) middle way	44	49	51	51	51	45	48	43	45
c) state responsibility	17	14	29	8	31	23	21	25	23
<i>6. unemployed take any job</i>									
a) take any job	51	28	35	50	36	28	41	37	38
b) middle way	35	48	48	40	39	48	41	38	39
c) right to refuse a job	14	24	17	10	25	24	18	25	23
<i>7. basic needs for all</i>									
d) important	91	94	94	88	92	96	92	91	92
e) middle way	6	5	4	8	6	3	6	6	6
f) not important	2	1	2	4	2	1	2	2	2

<i>8. recognizing merits</i>									
d) important	77	82	80	75	86	88	80	85	83
e) middle way	16	13	14	18	9	9	14	10	12
f) not important	7	5	6	7	4	3	6	5	5
<i>9. eliminating inequalities</i>									
d) important	63	62	83	45	74	36	67	64	65
e) middle way	25	26	13	32	19	32	22	21	21
f) not important	12	12	4	24	7	32	11	16	14
<i>10. postmaterialism</i>									
materialists	23	21	23	6	43	35	26	31	29
Mixed	56	62	60	71	53	57	58	58	58
post-materialists	21	16	17	22	4	7	16	12	13

Notes: respondents scoring (a) 1-3, (b) 4-7, (c) 8-10, on 10 point scale; (d) 1-2, (e) 3; (f) 4-5, on 5 point scale.

Table 15. Traditionalism and social policies in IPROSEC countries, and chi-square tests

	post-traditional %	Mixed %	traditional %	all %	Pearson Chi-Square Tests		
					Value	df	Sig.
1. <i>political ideology</i>							
a) left	24	17	13	18			
b) middle way	66	69	68	68			
c) right	10	14	19	14	242.1	4	0.000
2. <i>freedom or equality</i>							
freedom above equality	56	49	49	51			
Neither	8	8	7	8			
equality above freedom	36	43	44	41	67.4	4	0.000
3. <i>competition good or harmful</i>							
a) competition good	44	47	44	45			
b) middle way	46	43	44	44			
c) competition harmful	10	10	12	10	21.4	4	0.000
4. <i>firms and freedom</i>							
a) state gives freedom to firms	33	31	26	30			
b) middle way	49	45	43	46			
c) state control firms	19	23	30	24	188.0	4	0.000
5. <i>individual versus state</i>							
a) individual responsibility	35	31	28	31			
b) middle way	50	48	46	48			
c) state responsibility	16	21	25	21	145.2	4	0.000
6. <i>unemployed take any job</i>							
a) take any job	37	41	45	41			
b) middle way	44	41	38	41			
c) right to refuse a job	19	19	17	18	57.9	4	0.000
7. <i>basic needs for all</i>							
d) important	92	91	92	92			
e) middle way	6	6	6	6			
f) not important	2	2	2	2	4.6	4	0.335



8. <i>recognizing merits</i>							
d) important	78	81	83	80			
e) middle way	16	14	12	14			
f) not important	7	5	5	6	45.9	4	0.000
9. <i>eliminating inequalities</i>							
d) important	62	67	72	67			
e) middle way	26	22	20	22			
f) not important	13	11	8	11	117.7	4	0.000
10. <i>postmaterialism</i>							
Materialists	15	24	37	26			
Mixed	57	61	55	58			
post-materialists	27	14	8	16	915.7	4	0.000

Notes: respondents scoring (a) 1-3, (b) 4-7, (c) 8-10, on 10 point scale; (d) 1-2, (e) 3, (f) 4-5, on 5-point scale.



## BOOK REVIEW

Carlo Buzzetti, *Bibbia per noi*. Leggere, attualizzare, comunicare, Editrice Queriniana, Brescia 1997, ISBN 88-399-1858-2, 151pp.

A very short book that may prove to serve as a useful tool in the hands of pastors, catechists, or leaders of groups. Carlo Buzzetti offers such folks of whatever denomination, since ignorance of the Scriptures has been found to be endemic of all churches whatever their theological mark, this 'manual' or 'guide' [the author himself describes it as a 'libretto guida' (p.10)] to help them formulating a down-to-earth and practical programme of biblical pastoral ministry for school classes, groups, or even parishes or churches. For while all agree that Scripture reading is essential to Christian living, not everybody knows how to teach Scripture in a way that marries scientific knowledge of the text with helping people to build their spiritual life through the text of the Bible. Biblical pastoral ministry is supposed not simply to diffuse the message of the Scriptures but to help people discover that the Scriptures are relevant to their daily life.

Carlo Buzzetti, the author of this short volume, has been well prepared for writing this pastoral manual. He has studied at the Theological Seminary of Bergamo, Italy, then at the Pontifical University of the Gregoriana, and finally at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome from where he received his doctorate with a thesis on Bible translation under the direction, among others, of Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini. He worked for the Bible Society in Italy on the inter-confessional translation of the Bible, *Parola del Signore. La Bibbia in Lingua Corrente* published in the eighties, and is currently involved in the revision of this Bible as well as in the revision of the official Bible of the Italian Bishops' Conference. CB is a Salesian priest teaching translation principles at the Pontifical Salesian University as well as at the Pontifical Biblical Institute but at the same time he works for the United Bible Societies as Translation Consultant for Europe and the Middle East.

This volume consists of a presentation (pp.5-8) by don Giuseppe Bettori who was then at the head of the department for Catechesis and Evangelization for the Conference of Italian Bishops, and is now Bishop and secretary of the Bishops Conference in Italy, three pages of introduction by CB himself in which he explains the aims of his work (pp.9-11), six chapters covering several areas attached to



biblical pastoral ministry, in which the author means(cf. p.11) to give readers particular skills(pp.15-92), a number of exercises in the form of questions on each chapter(pp.93-101), and copious notes in which CB situates his contribution within the Church's and modern biblical pastoral ministry(pp.103-152). One should not think of reading CB's text without consulting these notes very carefully.

What does CB offer in this short volume? He offers answers to a number of questions that should be asked by people involved in this branch of pastoral ministry. What does a scientific approach to the Scriptures mean? How may one pass from a historical-critical reading of a biblical text to its use as 'Word of God' for its reader? What is fundamentalism in Scripture reading and how to avoid falling into it? How may one decipher what his 'constituency' actually need regarding biblical pastoral ministry? Suppose I understand correctly what a biblical text says, how am I to communicate its message? How are we to choose the right biblical texts for our constituency? How to plan a continuous biblical pastoral ministry with our constituency? What is '*lectio divina*'? How may one arrive to a correct understanding of a biblical text when one is not an expert in biblical languages? CB's answers to these and other questions are usually clear, short(and hence not very detailed though in the notes he refers to other contributions of his own and to those of others, in Italian and at times in other languages), and accessible to readers without enormous theological preparation(though some preparation is necessary to understand and make use of this manual). People with huge pastoral responsibilities and little time will find this contribution handy. It is a good service to the Church and the publishing house has done well to include this volume in its series 'guides for ecclesial praxis'. Perhaps this manual merits to be put at the service of a wider audience by having it translated into English.

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