

THE THEOLOGY OF THE LAY APOSTOLATE

When Monsignor Murphy requested me to prepare this paper on the theology of the lay apostolate for the 1959 convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America he indicated that the Committee on Current Problems was interested in the topic in order that a course on the subject could be worked into the seminary framework. This seminar, therefore, has a twofold purpose: an inquiry into the theological problems of the lay apostolate and the more practical issue of the relationship of those questions to the seminary curriculum. In order that the second objective might be at least partially realized a letter was mailed to the major seminaries of the United States to determine the present status of the theology of the lay apostolate in the seminary course. Forty-five replies were received and the information can be summarized rather briefly. Nineteen of the forty-five seminaries said that nothing or practically nothing was done. The remaining twenty-six all treated the topic in one way or another, either in elective seminars, special classes or lectures, in extra-curricular activities or in other classes. The most common method was to consider the lay apostolate in courses already in the curriculum, for example in Dogma (*de Ecclesia, de Baptismo, de Confirmatione, de Verbo Incarnato*), in Missiology, Pastoral Theology and Catechetics. In the last three cases the treatment tended to be more practical. Whether or not a special course should be introduced into the seminary is questionable. Those who expressed themselves on this point thought that the curriculum is already overcrowded and that seminarians have too little opportunity for individual study and reflection. One thought it could be handled better through seminars and the personal initiative of the seminarians. Perhaps this is one of the points that could be discussed with profit.

A theological exploration of the lay apostolate presents two major difficulties. In the first place there is such a vast sea of literature—and the forecast is for more—that practically speaking it is impossible to be acquainted with everything. Moreover, much of the literature tends to emphasize motivation and technique rather than the theological foundations of the lay apostolate. Secondly, as Aubert points out, the field constitutes a new object for theological analysis.¹ This very newness gives it a fluidity that makes it difficult to organize. Father Francis Keating in his review of Gerard Philips book *Le rôle du laïc dans l'église*, surmises: "It would seem that a satisfactory structure for a theology of the laity has yet to be attained."² Père Congar of Le Saulchoir, the real giant of the field³ upon whom I have relied to a great extent, in the original French shrewdly entitled his book, *Pointers to a Theology of the Laity*. Needless to say, this paper makes no pretense of being the awaited millenium.

In order to meet the difficulties the subject has been limited to the lay apostolate. An entire theology of the laity including such questions as the theology of terrestrial realities, the laity and the teaching authority of the Church, etc. is beyond my intent. Secondly, I have avoided the questions of technique since these pertain more to the carrying out of the apostolate in a practical manner than to the theology underlying the lay apostolate. The outline I will follow is the following:

- I. What is a layman?
- II. What is the apostolate?
- III. The layman in the apostolate of the Church.
- IV. Forms of the apostolate.
- V. The obligation to participate in the apostolate.
- VI. The Liturgy and the apostolate.

¹ Roger Aubert, *La théologie catholique au milieu de XXe siècle*, Casterman, Tournai, 1954, p. 52.

² Francis M. Keating, S.J., review of Gerard Philips, *Le rôle du laïc dans l'église*, *Theological Studies*, 16:1 (March, 1955), 151.

³ Congar is the one who has done the most to go beyond the merely practical aspects and consider properly theological problems. Cf. Aubert, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

I. WHAT IS A LAYMAN?

The first task to be undertaken in an attempt to uncover the theological foundations of the lay apostolate is to determine what a layman is. *Agere sequitur esse*. When used in theology the word lay does not mean "profane." It has none of the undertones associated with the European term "laicism"⁴ or the English word "secularism," both of which imply a positive exclusion of God and religion from public life. Defining a layman amounts to taking a number of ideas, putting them together and saying they spell layman. The layman is a member of the people of God, is baptized and confirmed, is the recipient of charisms, is Christ visible in the world and differs in function, from the cleric, in state of life, from the religious. Consider these points one by one.

A. THE LAYMAN A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH

In the theological sense the word lay derives from the Greek which signifies the people of God as opposed to the $\xi\theta\nu\eta$.⁵ The layman, therefore, is essentially a member of a chosen race, a member of the *plebs sancta*. Only in our own times is the theology of the Church emerging from the defensive attitude struck in warding off the errors of Protestantism, Gallicanism and statism. Congar describes two aspects of the Church, neither of which can be slighted if a full ecclesiology is to develop. The first aspect of the Church is the communal principle, the radical meaning of *ecclesia*, expressed in such terms as *congregatio fidelium*, *societas fidelium*, *collectio*, *coetus*, *adunatio*, etc. Under this aspect the Church is made up of her members, and her members contribute to her development and

⁴ Philips cites an interesting example of this. "For the Italian Socialists, the word 'lay' has the same flavor of opposition to all religious influence. When de Gasperi formed his first cabinet, they implored him to appoint a 'layman' for the department of education. And when he answered that he had no intention of having a priest or religious, they were forced to become more explicit; they wanted above all a non-Catholic." Gerard Philips, *The Role of the Laity in the Church*, Fides, Chicago, 1956, p. 7. Hereafter references to Philips are to this English translation.

⁵ Ives M. J. Congar, O.P., *Lay People in the Church*, Bloomsbury, London, 1957, p. 1. Most of this section is based on Congar, pp. 22-52.

being. The Church is constituted from below and is the community of the faithful. The second aspect of the Church is her institutional or hierarchical side according to which she has a certain structure and exists prior to her members. Until recently the hierarchical principle was the capital factor in the treatise *de Ecclesia*.

There is, of course, no conflict between these two aspects. The Church is at once a community and an institution, a structured society and a life. But too much emphasis on either part produces only a caricature of the Church. It is obvious moreover, that a lack of stress on the communal aspect of the Church produces a corresponding de-emphasis on the role of the laity. Lay people tend to be viewed as passive subjects of the ministrations of the hierarchy, the taught people, a rather passive mass waiting for directions. Only when the Church is seen in its fullness as the Christian community can the active role of the laity clearly emerge. As Congar remarks: "At bottom, forgetfulness of the true role of lay people leads both to clericalism in the Church and to laicism in the world."⁶

These two aspects of the Church are united in the concept of the Mystical Body. Christ the Head passes on His power and life to His body, the Church. Like a body the Church has life and structure, each part fulfilling its function for the good of the whole.

If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing?
If the whole body were hearing, where would be the smelling?
But as it is, God has set the members, each of them, in the body
as he willed. Now if they were all one member, where would the
body be? But as it is, there are indeed many members yet but
one body.⁷

St. Paul hardly tires of repeating this theme. It is clear, therefore, that the layman has an active function in the building up of the body of Christ.

B. THE LAYMAN AS BAPTIZED AND CONFIRMED

What is the function of the layman? This body to which the layman belongs has a sacerdotal nature as is expressed in the often-

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁷ 1 Cor. 12, 17-20.

quoted section of I Peter. "Be you yourselves as living stones, built thereon into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. . . . You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood. . . ." ⁸ It is through Baptism and Confirmation that the neophyte is initiated into the priestly society and through the characters of these sacraments the member of the Church shares in the priesthood of Christ. Hence, the question is, how are these two sacraments related to the lay apostolate?

Father Hesburgh defines priesthood in terms of mediatorship. Christ is the mediator and His mediation was effected primarily in the Incarnation and prolonged through the mediatorial act of Redemption.⁹ Since the character is a participation in the priesthood of Christ, the laity as members of the Church have a part in the priestly acts of worship and apostolate.¹⁰ To effect this sharing the characters confer active and passive powers on the recipient. In this context he explains the baptismal character as an initiation into the Church enabling the baptized to take part in Christ's priestly mediation, and particularly, in the Liturgy.¹¹ Confirmation completes baptism and, involving a more complete participation in the priesthood of Christ, confers the light and strength of the Spirit to manifest the faith and the energies necessary for the spiritual warfare against the enemies of the Faith. The character, therefore, serves as the basis of the lay apostolate.¹²

This analysis of Father Hesburgh is based throughout on St. Thomas and manuals of theology, in general, would reflect more or less the same point of view. The BAC series, for example, states that the baptismal character makes one a member of Christ while the character of confirmation makes one a soldier of Christ the King. Through the character of confirmation the Christian has a share in the apostolate.¹³

⁸ 1 Peter 2, 5, 9.

⁹ Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., *The Relation of the Sacramental Characters of Baptism and Confirmation to the Lay Apostolate*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D. C., 1946, pp. 52-57.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 149 ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 167-177.

¹³ BAC, *Sacrae Theologiae Summa*, IV, *de sacramentis in specie, singillatim*, n. 154.

More recent articles, however, show a definite tendency to find the primary effect of confirmation in something other than the strength necessary for an outward manifestation of the Faith. Abbé Luykx maintains that the specific object of confirmation is the active participation in eucharistic worship and only secondarily does it strengthen for battle.¹⁴ Father Crehan in a survey of literature on baptism and confirmation concludes to much the same. He writes: "The attempt to select as the principal effect of confirmation the active witnessing to the faith and thus to call confirmation the sacrament of Catholic Action has done good to Catholic Action but harm to the true notion of the sacrament, as H. Zeller remarks."¹⁵

However, whatever the theological relationship between baptism and confirmation they are the sacraments of initiation. They join a person to the people of God and confer a participation in the priesthood of Christ. Hence the laity as members of a living sacerdotal society which has a mission or apostolate share in that apostolate. Although it would be contrary to the present trend of theological investigation to overemphasize the connection between the lay apostolate and confirmation, it would be understating the case to deny all relationship between the two. The fundamental factor seems to be the insertion into the body of Christ and the witnessing this involves. Whether it comes specifically from confirmation awaits further research but there is little doubt that membership in the Mystical Body implies apostleship. It is common to read that we are baptized for ourselves and confirmed for others. Perhaps it would be better to say that two sacraments operate in both directions and that confirmation is the sealing of Baptism.

C. THE LAITY AND CHARISMS

The Austrian Jesuit Karl Rahner¹⁶ includes charisms given to

¹⁴ Boniface Luykx, O.Praem., "Confirmation Today," *Worship*, 33:6 (May, 1959), 333.

¹⁵ Joseph Crehan, "Ten Years' Work on Baptism and Confirmation," *Theological Studies*, 17:4 (December, 1956), 515.

¹⁶ Karl Rahner, S.J., "L'apostolat des laïcs," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, 78 (1956), 9-10. A condensation of this article is found in *Theology Digest*, 5:2 (Spring, 1957).

the laity as a factor in the theology of the apostolate. By charisms he does not mean the spectacularly unusual but rather such things as a message received from heaven and transmitted to the Church, the power of an especially saintly life or the uncovering of a new aspect of Christian faith or life. It is necessary only to recall Fatima, a Matt Talbot or Frederick Ozanam to realize that the Spirit breathes where He wills.¹⁷ He ranges throughout the entire *societas fidelium*. Ecclesiastical authority, of course, has the right and duty to discern what is or is not of the Spirit.

D. THE LAITY AND THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST

The laity make Christ visible in the world. Father Baumgartner in the introduction to Rahner's article refers to the current trend among German theologians to view the Church as a sacrament. The Church, and therefore, the faithful, is the actual, sensible presence of Christ in the world. Hence, the baptismal character ought not to be envisaged exclusively as an ontological, invisible reality. Since it integrates a person into the community of salvation it admits of an essentially visible element.¹⁸

E. DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE LAITY AND CLERGY

The distinctive mark of the clergy is service at the altar. Clericature is a function in the Church entered into by ordination.¹⁹ Canon Law clearly states the difference. *Ordo ex Christi institutione clericos a laicis in Ecclesia distinguit ad fidelium regimen et cultus divinus ministerium.*²⁰ The clergy, therefore, possess the powers of

¹⁷ Philips cites some examples of growth from below in the Church: Julianne of Cornillon, Paray-le Monial, the Beguinage movement, the Franciscan revival, Bridget of Sweden, Catherine of Sienna, Gertrude, Mathilda, Lutgarde, Joan of Arc. Philips, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹⁸ Ch. Baumgartner, S.J., in the introduction to Rahner, *art. cit.*, p. 3. Congar is also fond of the notion of the Church a sacrament. It is one that goes to very heart of ecclesiology. Cf. Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

¹⁹ Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

²⁰ Canon 948.

jurisdiction and order by divine institution. The layman does not possess these powers. He has not the competence of orders.²¹

In this connection Karl Rahner's opinion has caused some controversy. Holy Orders, he says are not necessary for the transmission of every power of orders and jurisdiction. In those cases where it is not necessary function determines status. Hence, if someone legitimately and habitually possess a liturgical or juridic power surpassing the fundamental rights of baptism he is no longer lay in the proper sense of the term. He is acting in a manner beyond that which is specifically lay.²²

The idea is attractive but it is not without its difficulties. Pius XII in his Allocution to the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate apparently had this opinion in mind when he said that the layman remains a layman even when associated with the hierarchy by a special mission.

The layman's acceptance of a particular mission, of a mandate of the Hierarchy, although it associates him in a closer manner with the spiritual conquest of the world which the Church is conducting under the direction of her pastors, does not suffice to make him a member of the Hierarchy, to give him powers of Orders and jurisdiction that remain closely bound to the reception of the Sacrament of Orders in its various degrees.²³

Perhaps a distinction of Journet can explain the matter. The laity, he says, can exercise certain lesser functions pertaining to worship²⁴ and jurisdiction; but they do so not as subjects in whom the powers themselves are found but as vehicles of hierarchical motions.²⁵ Hence, it seems that a layman remains a layman until the Church declares otherwise in its law by the actual granting of

²¹ Congar, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-7.

²² Rahner, *art. cit.*, p. 5.

²³ Pius XII, Allocution to Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, *Apostolic Perspectives*, 2:3&4 (Fall-Winter, 1957), 5.

²⁴ He is obviously prescinding from the participation in the Mass and Sacraments pertaining to the baptized and confirmed, precisely as baptized and confirmed.

²⁵ Charles Journet, *L'église du Verbe Incarné*, I: Bruges, Desclée de Brouwer, 1951, p. 1016.

some power. What the person is doing himself is not sufficient to transfer him from the lay state. As Serrand says: a cleric is one to whom the actual law gives a part of the powers of order and jurisdiction. A lay person is one to whom the law refuses a share in the powers.²⁶

F. DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE LAITY AND RELIGIOUS

Different from both the clergy and laity are the monks who are identified by their state in life—living apart from the world. This distinction is, likewise, recognized by the Code.²⁷ However, in the course of Church history, priests and monks tended to become identified, particularly in the West. But, in reality, there is a sharp distinction between the two.²⁸ Religious are differentiated from the laity not on the basis of differing power but on the basis of two different states in life. The theological significance of the religious life is its making visible in the world the transcendent origin and destiny of the Church.²⁹ The layman remains in the world and is concerned with the things of the world. The religious leaves the world to be concerned as far as possible only with the things of God.

G. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAY STATE

Congar does not give an exact definition of the lay state but he develops two approximations which are the characteristics of the lay state. First of all, the laity proceed to their final end through involvement in the things of the world. In the words of Congar, "Lay people are Christians in the world, there to do God's work in

²⁶ A. Z. Serrand, "Apostolat des laïcs," *La Vie Intellectuelle*, May, 1955, p. 107. This article is in reference to some criticism of Rahner and his response in *Der grosse entschluss*, May, June, July-August, 1954, and January, 1955. Cf. the translator's footnote to Rahner, *art. cit.*, p. 3.

²⁷ Can. 491.

²⁸ Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 407. Journet defines the clericature as a state of life, which it is in a sense, but he points out in a footnote that a cleric is fundamentally one who has a function in the Church and because of his hierarchical function he has obligations which constitute for him a state of life. Journet, *op. cit.*, p. 1006.

²⁹ Rahner, *art. cit.*, p. 7.

so far as it must be done in and through the work of the world. . . ." ³⁰ As a part of God's plan the laity glorify God without disengaging themselves from the world. The second characteristic of the lay state, according to Congar, is that for the layman the things of this world have an interest and value in themselves whereas for the cleric and monk they are interesting only because of their relationship to God. The difference is somewhat the same as that between a theologian and a philosopher. This, of course, introduces the whole question of temporal values and Christian humanism, a thorny area where it is difficult to be precise. Though I do not think purely temporal activity can be considered a part of the apostolate as such, except indirectly, to understand what a layman is theologically one should be aware of the connection between the layman and the world.

II. WHAT IS THE APOSTOLATE?

After the preceding considerations of the theological status of the layman it remains to treat of the apostolate. I am inclined to concur with Father Ferree in his regret that not much has been written on the theological notion of the apostolate.³¹ The word is generic being applied to the hierarchy and laity in analogous senses. It derives from the Greek ἀποστολεῖν, to send forth. Hence an apostle is one sent forth and the apostolate is the mission he is sent forth to accomplish.

The Church is sent forth to continue the mission of Christ. "As the Father has sent me, I also send you."³² This mission of Christ which sprang from the love of the Father was accomplished through the Incarnation and Redemption. The Church communicates the

³⁰ Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Unfortunately, at the time of writing I was unable to see Paul Vanier, S.J., "Vocation chrétienne et mission du laïc," *Relations*, 11 (1951), pp. 119-122. (Virginité et mariage"), 200-203 ("Rédemption et action temporelle"), 227-231 ("Le sens rédempteur et de l'action temporelle"). A note in *Theology Digest* I (1953), p. 12, refers to these articles and says his view is quite different from Congar's.

³¹ W. Ferree, *Introduction to Catholic Action*, p. 40, as cited in Hesburgh, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

³² John 20, 21.

redemptive grace of Christ to free men from the power of Satan and bring them the life of God—the *terminus ad quem* of the process of justification. Hence, the mission of the Church is that of salvation. This salvation, however, will not be complete until the Kingdom of God is fully established at the Parousia. At this time the salvific force of Christ will be manifested in all its power and extend to everything.³³ M. Rondet is of the opinion that the doctrine of the resurrection of the body is hardly conceivable apart from the glorification of the universe.³⁴ The Church is struggling to establish the Kingdom during the space between the first and second comings of Christ. The mission of the Church is, consequently, coextensive with the object of the Incarnation and Redemption. It is, however, always being exercised in particular times and circumstances and upon men who are engaged in the things of the world. Since man always lives in connection with his surroundings the mission of the Church is concerned with the affairs of the world. Whatever is connected with the process of salvation is within the orb of the Church's care. St. Pius X expressed it thus:

To restore all things in Christ. . . . To restore in Christ not only whatever is incumbent on the Church in virtue of her divine mission, which is to lead souls to God, but as well that which springs naturally from her mission, Christian civilization in each and all of the elements that make it up.³⁵

III. THE LAYMAN IN THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CHURCH³⁶

Christ did not bestow the mission on His Church in any haphazard or clumsy manner. He chose the apostles and entrusted to

³³ Cf. Abbé Roger Hasseveldt, *The Church a Divine Mystery*, Fides, Chicago, 1954, pp. 128-151.

³⁴ H. Rondet, "A Theology of Work," *Theology Digest*, 4:1 (Winter, 1956), 41.

³⁵ Pius X, Encyclical Letter, *Il fermo proposito*, 1905, as cited in Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 335. In Part I, Chap. 3 of Congar there is an excellent analysis of the Kingdom. Cf. also Most Rev. (now Cardinal) G. B. Montini, "The Mission of the Church," *Apostolic Perspectives*, 2:3&4 (Fall-Winter, 1957), 22-31.

³⁶ This section is based for the most part on Congar, *op. cit.*, pp. 333-378.

them the commission of teaching and baptizing. To enable them and their successors to carry out the mission he conferred on them the powers of jurisdiction and order. To them and them alone did he give these powers. This apostolate of the Twelve is called by some the official apostolate.³⁷ In addition to this sending of the Apostles there was the promise of the Spirit to quicken and animate the Church and He was sent not to the Apostles alone but to all the faithful as well.³⁸ He inwardly consecrates and makes effective the ministry of the Twelve. However the Acts of the Apostles, which abounds with collective givings of the Spirit, makes it abundantly clear that it was not the Twelve alone who were anointed with the Spirit. This giving of the Spirit to the entire Church is the basis for the mission of the faithful. All Christians have a mission *ex spiritu*. St. Paul frequently refers to those who have helped him in the ministry. Contrasted with the mission *ex spiritu* of every member of the body is the mission *ex officio* of the Twelve to which powers were attached.

Here, as in the case of the communal and hierarchical principles of the Church, it would be wrong to see disharmony. The apostolic mission constitutes the mission of the Church in its essence. But the mission of the faithful is necessary for the apostolate of the Twelve to be carried out in its integrity. As Congar writes:

So the mission of the faithful makes them co-operators with and complementary to the Apostles; like the charisms, like all their Christian life, it has to be exercised in such a way as to assimilate it to the work and activity of the Twelve, which is the norm. It does not come from them, it is not constituted (as the mission of the ministers will be) by a participation in the original mission; but it is nonetheless given for the same object, the object of which the Apostles were given first and total charge, in respect of which their authority and action are normative. On the side of its object and rules for action, an apostolic mission is given to the faithful only as a sharing in, an association with, complementary to, that of the apostles.³⁹

³⁷ Jeremiah Newman, *What Is Catholic Action?* Newman Press, Westminster, Md., 1958, pp. 1-2.

³⁸ Philips, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

³⁹ Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

Does this mean that the adequate subject of the mission of the Church is "the pair priesthood-laity?"⁴⁰ Congar says yes and quotes as approval A. Graf, J. Amberger and the *Directoire pour la Pastorale des Sacraments* of the French Bishops. This is not to be understood, of course, in the sense that the whole Church shares in the powers of the hierarchy. "On the other hand we do speak of the priesthood and of the laity as a single subject of the exercise of Christian life and of the activities it includes."⁴¹

This theological analysis of the lay apostolate is in full harmony with the famed definition of Catholic Action as the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy. The term participation obviously excludes a sharing in the powers of the hierarchy as the German and French Bishops made perfectly clear.⁴² Pius XII referred to Catholic Action as the collaboration of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy and extended the scope of the term Catholic Action. Pius XII and Pius XI were saying the same thing, however. It would be a mistake to burden the definition with what Congar calls "over subtle commentaries."⁴³ Lay people in virtue of their mission *ex spiritu* and in subordination to the Bishops cooperate in the Church's own mission of the evangelization of the world.

In commenting on the different terminology of Pius XI and Pius XII Philips observes that the term collaboration brings out the idea that the laity are not mute instruments in the hands of the hierarchy. As creatures of reason they exercise a certain autonomy in a "personal and free engagement." Pius XII, therefore, emphasizes the personal elements of Catholic Action.⁴⁴

How is the layman to exercise his mission? The question is not one of technique but rather a specification of the layman's role according to his position in the Church. Rahner says that the layman carries out his true apostolate in that place in the world in which he finds himself by witnessing to the faith. The layman is

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 358.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 347-348.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

⁴⁴ Philips, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

an apostle and missionary by leading an exemplary Christian life.⁴⁵ That he fulfills his role as an apostle by activity in the world is true. But it is less easy to agree with Rahner in categorizing good example as the form of the apostolate. One of the characteristics of the lay state is involvement in the affairs of the world. His apostolate is to Christianize these affairs in what Pius XII calls the *consecratio mundi*. He says:

The "consecratio mundi" is, essentially, the work of laymen themselves, of men who are intimately a part of economic and social life, who participate in the government and in legislative assemblies.⁴⁶

As Philips says, the lay apostolate is established in the very heart of the world and "that is its essential mark."⁴⁷

Father John Courtney Murray develops this idea in an arresting manner.⁴⁸ The Church is to spiritualize the temporal order but in so doing two essential freedoms must be preserved. First, spiritual freedom of the Church ought not to be jeopardized by directly political and economic actions. The Church must be wary of involving herself in all sorts of temporal conflicts lest she endanger her essentially religious goal.⁴⁹ Secondly, on the other side of the coin the secular order ought to be free in those things that pertain to it.

In face of this mission the Church must avoid two extremes: angelism and clericalization. Hence, the only means through which the Church can spiritualize and redeem the temporal is through the laity, who belong to both the Church and the world. This is, in fact, the precise function of the laity. The laity are:

a complementary organ of the hierarchy, from which it receives the word of life, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the command to act, in order that having been thus received into a participa-

⁴⁵ Rahner, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

⁴⁶ Pius XII, Allocution to the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, *Apostolic Perspectives*, 2: 3 & 4 (Fall-Winter, 1957), 6.

⁴⁷ Philips, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

⁴⁸ John Courtney Murray, S.J., "Towards a Theology for Laymen," *Theological Studies*, 5:1 (March, 1944), 69 ff.

⁴⁹ Philips, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

tion in the apostolate of the hierarchy, it may prolong the salvific influence of the Church into a sphere of human life from which the hierarchy as such is excluded.⁵⁰

IV. FORMS OF THE APOSTOLATE

However, since the call to the apostolate is not addressed to all alike but in accordance with the circumstances of the individual, it can assume different forms. These can be broken down into two general categories, the personal and organized apostolate.⁵¹

(1) Personal apostolate. In his address to the First World Congress of the Lay Apostolate Pius XII remarked how difficult it is to draw a line to show where the true apostolate of the laity begins:

Should it include, for example, the education given by the mother of a family, or by the men and women teachers engaged with holy zeal in the practice of their profession? . . . Many would be inclined to answer in the negative, seeing in all these examples merely the accomplishment very laudable in itself but obligatory of the duties of one's state.⁵²

In his address to the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate he seems to have adopted this opinion. "It, therefore, follows, that it is preferable to refer to the apostolate of prayer and personal example as an apostolate in the wide or improper sense of the term."⁵³ Using this as a basis it might be well to classify as apostolic actions, whether organized or not, those which are ordained toward accomplishing the mission of the Church. This could be done either directly (for example, in the instruction of converts by a lay person) or indirectly (for example, in our milieu a professionally competent scientist who through his achievements in science reflects credit on the Church.)

⁵⁰ Murray, *art. cit.*, p. 72.

⁵¹ Newman divides the apostolate three ways: personal, familial and organized. The familial can be grouped under the personal apostolate as the fulfillment of one's vocation and duties of state. Cf. Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

⁵² Pius XII, Allocution to the First World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, *Catholic Action*, 33:11 (November, 1951), 4.

⁵³ Pius XII, Allocution to Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate, *Apostolic Perspectives*, 2: 3 & 4 (Fall-Winter, 1957), 7.

(2) Organized apostolate. The organized apostolate is either mandated, sometimes called official,⁵⁴ or non-mandated. The mandate adds a new title for the layman to engage in the apostolate.⁵⁵ The non-mandated would include apostolic organizations working on their own initiative and responsibility.⁵⁶ Organization itself is a technique but one especially adapted to our times. Journet finds theological significance in the fact that the organized apostolate is the mission which the hierarchy have conferred on the laity.⁵⁷

Finally, it should be noted that the terminology of Catholic Action has been revised by Pius XII. Catholic Action is to be used in its generic sense and applied "only to the whole of organized movements of the lay apostolate recognized as such, nationally or internationally, either by the Bishops on the national plane, or by the Holy See for movements aiming at having an international status."⁵⁸

V. THE OBLIGATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE APOSTOLATE

There seems to be rather general agreement that the individual Christian has an obligation to participate in the apostolate. Father John F. Murphy in his thesis reaches the conclusion that the laity are obliged to engage in some form of the organized apostolate unless they are excused by reason of good faith, lack of competence or by some other reason rendering it impossible.⁵⁹ He bases his conclusions on baptism, confirmation, social justice and obedience to the directives of the hierarchy.⁶⁰ Newman adds that the obliga-

⁵⁴ Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁵⁵ Congar, *op. cit.*, pp. 351 ff. His analysis of Catholic Action is marvelous.

⁵⁶ Newman, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁷ Journet, *op. cit.*, pp. 1019-1020.

⁵⁸ Pius XII, *loc. cit.*

⁵⁹ John F. Murphy, *The Moral Obligation of the Individual to Participate in Catholic Action*, Catholic Univ. of America Press, Washington, D. C., 1958, p. 149.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 100 ff.

tion, which is of a very general nature, is determined by one's opportunities and circumstances.⁶¹ If one is fitted he cannot disregard the organized forms of the apostolate.

VI. THE LITURGY AND THE APOSTOLATE

The Liturgy and the apostolate have the following basic relationships.

(1) The Liturgy, in a sense, is the goal of the apostolate.⁶² In Mass all creation is returned to the Father through Christ Our Lord. *Per ipsum, et cum ipso, et in ipso est tibi Deo Patri omnipotenti, in unitate Spiritus Sancti, omnis honor et gloria.* The apostolate is seeking to aggregate all men to Christ in order that all mankind might share in the great public work of sacrifice. Participation in the Liturgy and in apostolic action are both functions of the common priesthood.⁶³

(2) The Liturgy provides the animation for the apostolate since it is the chief channel of grace. Moreover, psychologically, the Liturgy ought to make Christians conscious of the fact that in being united to Christ they are united to one another. They ought, therefore, to be concerned with building up the body of Christ and feel a holy unrest in seeing so many who do not worship in Christ Jesus.

JAMES E. QUILL,
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⁶¹ Newman, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21. Congar is of much the same opinion. "... There is a universal obligation to apostleship in the wide sense, but not to the specific apostolate of Catholic Action." *Op. cit.*, p. 361.

⁶² Cf. John Gilbert, "Have This Mind In You," *Apostolate*, 5:4 (Fall, 1958), pp. 2-13.

⁶³ James E. Rea, *The Common Priesthood of the Members of the Mystical Body*, Newman, Westminster, 1947, pp. 229-233.